An Investigation into the Relationship Between The Individual and The Collective in Emerging Performance Ensembles

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis proposes that an ensemble or community is perpetually shifting and changing, operating in the *between* of the subjectivities 'I' and 'We'. It argues that the established ensemble does not assume a static entity, and that the notion of a fixed state of the community may not be as straightforward as often assumed.

Positioned within a Practice as Research methodology, this thesis weaves together examples from a longitudinal study of an ensemble, within a closed and, subsequently, open laboratory, with the investigation into the degrees of participation between the ensemble members. This thesis entwines discourses of the ensemble and specific task-based practices, to investigate the individual movement towards, within and alongside the co-appearing of ensembles. This understanding of the collective ensemble is framed by the philosophy of ontology surrounding community as articulated by Jean-Luc Nancy (2000). This embodied practice, reveals new ways of articulating a phenomenology of ensemble practice, understood as a continuous state of fluidity between individual and collective states of being.

The thesis traces the emergence of an ensemble in a closed laboratory environment, placing the practice in dialogue with specific contemporary performance collectives, followed by an account of the laboratory in varying open environments. The research is presented both as a written thesis and as an online platform, which the reader is invited to explore alongside each other. These interactions establish the context, methodology, documentation and critical analysis of the Practice as Research investigation. The online platforms can be accessed by following the URLs in the footnotes. A complementary USB memory stick provides the option to watch highlights of the tasks and ensemble, offering a visual and auditory impression of the process.

This longitudinal study of an emerging performance ensemble aimed to demonstrate the *between* state of the individual and the collective as continually taking place. The formation of the ensemble supported participation and interaction, which revealed important implications such as the non-fixed entity of contemporary performance ensembles and the language of *becoming* when discussing ensembles and community.

Digital Documentation and Dissemination

All the video documentation for this PhD has been stored on YouTube, as this permitted a near infinite amount of data and functioned as a simple distribution Open Access method. In respect of the need for the submission to be understood as a presentation of 'static' data, each video uploaded to YouTube has a unique URL and has a publicly displayed upload date; therefore, if a video should be removed or re-uploaded with a change, the previous URL would cease to work, which allows the date and integrity of the work to be validated. Furthermore, all the videos are 'unlisted', which means that they can only be accessed if the viewer has been provided with the URL. As a result, once the URL link has been inserted into this submitted thesis, it cannot be removed or re-uploaded to YouTube as this would render the URL in the thesis redundant.

Although YouTube offers some editing tools, these are limited to colour, brightness, saturation and trimming. These features do not allow the content or meaning of the videos to be altered as each clip has been selected and edited prior to being uploaded to YouTube. The editing process for each clip has been carried out using Adobe Premier Pro; YouTube was used as a storage and delivery platform, not an editing tool.

The second installation was livestreamed, which is the transmitting of live video and audio coverage of a live event over the Internet as it is taking place. YouTube was chosen as it provided a platform to reach multiple users and, again, provided a unique URL. The URL for the event was embedded into the digital scrapbook; this meant the YouTube link was hosted and accessed by a third party, in this case the digital scrapbook. It was intended that, by viewing the livestream event on the digital scrapbook, it would promote further interaction and access to digital media with the digital documentation.

The URLs within this document have been selected to highlight moments from the practice and offer greater insight to the process and the (re)formation of the ensemble. The URLs allow the reader to watch highlights of the laboratory process in action and, therefore, operate in direct relation to the specifically indicated components of the thesis. These URLs are located in the footnotes and can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink, or copying and pasting the URL directly into an Internet browser. It is my intention that following these

links will facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the content, form, process and documentation of the investigation.

The dissemination of the video footage was an ongoing process that took place throughout the project, rather than something that was done at the 'end'. YouTube allowed the videos to be uploaded and embedded into the digital scrapbook, resulting in the videos existing as a part of the practice and not as a representation of the process.

In addition to the online digital documentation, a complementary USB memory stick has been submitted along with the written component of the thesis. This contains edited videos to provide the reader with the option to watch an overview of the development of the tasks, ensemble and laboratory environment, both open and closed. Should the reader not have Internet access, the USB offers a visual and auditory impression of the process. Unlike the URLs, these video clips are not directly connected with specific moments of discussion in the thesis; however, the structure of the video files echoes the structure and sequence of the argumentation of the thesis. The USB supplements the written component of the submission, whilst also working in conjunction with the URLs.

Throughout this document, I use the pronouns 'I' and 'my'. While this may seem to work against an ethos of collectively in the context of ensemble work, I do so due to my direct involvement and participation in the ensemble. The use of personal pronouns is to incorporate the collaborative nature. It is not an indication that I intend to assert an unqualified subjective opinion.

Introduction

This thesis argues that the relationship between ensemble members is perpetually in flux and exists between the singular and the plural. It is possible to note that there are some limitations in the existing research and reflections on ensemble formation, whether conducted by the collectives or by theorists in the field, such as Harvie and Lavender (2010), Britton (2013) or Bottoms and Goulish (2007). It is my suggestion, however, that these limitations occur through a lack of explicit acknowledgment of the *between* of the individual and collective within performance ensembles, instead focusing on the collective nature of the ensemble. My practice attempts to draw attention to the complexity of acknowledging the transitional phase *between* the 'I' and the 'We' of the collective ensemble, arguing that this shift is continual and concurrent. This investigation has been supported by insights gained from the theories of Jean-Luc Nancy (2000), particularly his writing surrounding community and plural identity, during which he contemplates a movement between the pronouns 'We' and 'I' (Nancy, 2000). In doing so, this thesis facilitates a fresh perspective on performer training that acknowledges explicitly the 'I' and 'We' of emerging performance ensembles, thus generating new insights into the formation of emerging performance ensembles.

This investigation was conducted through the deployment of task-based contemporary performance techniques, which enabled the practice to centre on *doing* rather than *performing*, thereby shifting the focus within the laboratory towards *each other,* as the ensemble reformed *each time* the task was encountered. This created an access point for

interaction founded in the unknown as the ensemble perpetually entangled and disentangled.

This thesis draws from existing and historical performance ensembles and practitioners, such as Jerzy Grotowski, The Wooster Group, Elevator Repair Service and Goat Island, to highlight how task-based practice exists within performance ensembles. Furthermore, such comparisons allowed me to emphasise the limitations in the discourse. Moreover, this enabled me to demonstrate how my practice facilitated the movement *between* whilst actively acknowledging it, thereby supporting an investigation and new knowledge to offer greater understanding of the formation of performance ensembles.

For two years, I worked in a closed laboratory environment with four participants, with the aim of generating, documenting and reflecting on fragments of task-based performance using objects, tasks and rules. The documentation relating to the process of the closed laboratory is referred to throughout the thesis to acknowledge and evidence new insight into the movement between 'I' and 'We'. The closed laboratory environment and the use of tasks permitted an exploration of ritual, *flow*, the liminal space and shared ownership to generate fresh insights into the formation of ensembles, witnessing and acknowledging the movement between subjectivities expressed in reflective discourse by the pronouns 'I' and 'We' as I located my findings and observations in the *between.*

In addition to the closed laboratory, four phases of open events were undertaken. Phase One was the first installation, 'Monday's Scrapbook', which took place on 6th May 2015. This installation allowed me to begin to place the closed laboratory in an open context in order to demonstrate our process. Guests were invited to interact with the documentation and process to facilitate an exploration of the *between* space of the ensemble as it emerged

in a public setting. However, the framing of this installation became overly static in its form, and restricted participation.

In response, Phase Two consisted of a durational installation, 'The Laboratory is Open', which took place over four days from 21st to 24th March 2016. This installation was open to the public as well as live-streamed and was designed to establish a framework that resisted ideas of 'performing', to allow the focus to remain on tasks and *doing*. Consequently, the ensemble behaviour in the open environment could echo that of the closed, in turn making the work and group more accessible and available for participation. Phases Three and Four represent the final stages of the investigation and indicate the ways in which my practice can be situated in a wider social context, simulated through a journey of 'activation' and participation.

This investigation into the formation of performance ensembles allowed me to emphasise that my task-based practice promoted changing responses *each time* a task was undertaken. The ensemble engaged in the unknown, which enabled me to locate my findings in the 'singular plural' (Nancy, 2000, p.92). In other words, the individuals within the ensemble no longer functioned continually as individuals. Indeed, they operated and existed in relation to the others present in the space, continuously functioning in a state of flux. It is this explicit acknowledgement of the *between* of the singular, as well as the plural of the ensemble, that offers new insights into the formation of emerging performance ensembles.

The process of taking a 'traditionally' closed practice into the public realm allowed me to discover that the task-based interaction between the core ensemble members and guests generated complex interactions. Therefore, as the individuals came together it facilitated

moments of being or being-with. In the field of performance the discussion surrounding task-based performance has been predominantly led by practitioners. However, this investigation contributes to the field of performer training, identity and community from within the laboratory process. As such, expanding the discourse surrounding task-based performance from the viewpoint of a facilitator, researcher, practitioner and ensemble member. This discussion is preoccupied with and by the movement within the ensemble in the laboratory environment, in turn resisting social and cultural ties and implications. This resistance has allowed for the tolerance of the laboratory before and after it was opened to the public to be traced, explored and tested. Furthermore, this investigation has considered the tensions that revealed themselves when a public begins to participate in systems of rehearsal and training. This investigation offers fresh insight into the transferability of training amongst non-performers and how the approach can be adopted by those outside of the immediate training. Through the process of testing the tolerance of the laboratory, developing the laboratory practice and finding ways of sharing that with the public, it has been possible to generate physical and digital intervention and dissemination of a training approach with experts and non-experts. This has led to an emerging interest into participation and the impact of taking a closed laboratory process into an open environment and the effect this may have on the training approach and formation of the ensemble. Therefore, the discoveries made throughout the PhD, in response to participation, task, and ensemble, formulated new ways to apply task within a training system.

Thesis Overview

The first chapter introduces my understanding of 'ensemble'. I assert that, by transferring the focus from *ourselves* and directing it towards *others,* it is possible to create an

environment where discovery and creation have free rein. The *ensemble* is not a fixed entity; rather, it is a continual movement *between* the singular and plural. I state that training is integral to the process of forming and sustaining an ensemble; it functions to shift the focus away from the individual and towards *each other,* refusing a prescribed or prearranged sense of ownership. When examining notable ensemble practices, such as Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre, The Living Theatre, The Open Theatre, The Performance Group, The Wooster Group, Elevator Repair Service and Goat Island, it became clear that these collectives were clearly defined, shaped and influenced by one or two significant members. However, they often contested the title of director, whilst they found themselves at the centre of the discourse.

Chapter 2 explores 'The Biscuit Task' in which I observed the ensemble 'co-appear' (Nancy, 2000, p.59). This exploration assists in the acknowledgement of the function and purpose of the individual *within* the collective. I explore theories of community, Being and co-appearing alongside the laboratory practice; to form new insights into the relationship between the ensemble *each time* the ensemble members come into contact with each other, objects and tasks. The third chapter offers an insight into my methodology, establishing and developing the vocabulary used to articulate my primary method that of Practice as Research (PaR). This enabled the investigation to be driven by a central mode of creativity, one which is present *in* and *from* the practice. As such, the practice and documentation of video, audio and complementary writing are entwined as a form of 'multi-modal inquiry' (Nelson, 2013, p.29).

This thesis then addresses, in Chapter 4, the function and importance of task-based practice. I comment on 'task' as an activity of the moment, taking place and revealed in the

instance of creation to establish the importance of *doing* rather than performing when creating a task-based performance. A distinction is made between the terminology of task and game, arguing that the use of task over games ensures the focus remains on *doing*, as the task is reactivated and reencountered each time the ensemble come into contact with *each other*. When discussing shared ownership within the ensemble I suggest the focus on *each other,* which is activated through task, can facilitate a continual movement between the subjectivities 'I' and 'We' rather than assuming a fixed collective state. The function of objects within my practice is investigated in Chapter 5 their fluid, changing and developing nature within the laboratory *each time* the ensemble encountered them is discussed. This is supported by a discussion of 'collage' and 'montage' effect, and considers how this reflects and embodies the movement between the 'I' and the 'We' of the ensemble.

The thesis then examines in Chapter 6 how the use of task-based performance can lead to an embodied state of *flow*, as defined by Csíkszentmihályi (1988-1997). It explores the impact *flow* can have on the ensemble's awareness of the *between* space of 'I' and 'We' in an emerging performance ensemble supported by an account of 'The Paper Aeroplane Task'. Within Chapter 7 I discuss the warm-up process, detailing the elements within the framework of ritual. In particular, I draw from Arnold van Gennep (1960) and Victor Turner (1969) when considering how these ritualised elements of my practice permit an engagement with the 'extra daily', as defined by Eugenio Barba (2005). This discussion is supported in Chapter 8 with an account of the function of the liminal space, as defined by Susan Broadhurst (1999a). This discussion is supported by Chapter 9, which considers the impact of rules when entering into unknown limits of exhaustion and how this might blur conceptions of *mine* and *yours.*

The thesis will then move on to discuss the four phases of public engagement. Chapter 10 details the first installation, 'Monday's Scrapbook'. The second durational installation, 'The Laboratory is Open' is discussed in Chapter 11. Subsequently Chapter 12 explores the effect of flow during participation and immersion, drawing from the 'The Skipping Task' during the second installation. Chapter 13 continues to reflect on the second installation by analysing the creation of 'The "new" Task' created throughout the second installation. These chapters offer new insight into the movement between 'I' and 'We' as the ensemble proves itself to be in continuous entanglement and disentanglement. The practice promotes participation, as the *between* extends beyond the ensemble formed in the closed laboratory.

The third phase, the creation of a performance is reviewed in Chapter 14, considering the process of development that demonstrated the tasks within a non-participatory performance setting. This allowed for greater consideration of the tools, processes, situations and structures, presenting new insights into the formation of ensembles in response to the ever-changing and developing tasks.

The final phase of the public engagement is addressed in Chapter 15, which was the establishment of a workshop, which considered how the now established tasks and rules might be understood outside of the closed laboratory and pre-existing ensemble. I considered how this wider social context can permit greater acknowledgement of the continuous forming and reforming of ensembles in response to task and object. This discussion is contextualised by the facilitation of a workshop with seven participants, from varying backgrounds, who were introduced to our rules and objects and invited to (re)create the associated tasks. Chapter 16 offers a conclusion, which accentuates how my

practice drawing from task, ritual and the liminal space has allowed the discoveries to be established in and from the practice. This allowed the analysis of the subjective interrelation between the ensemble members, which offered fresh insight into the fluid movement between the individual with the ensemble as a state of becoming. In addition, the thesis highlights emergent outcomes that evolved from this process, in particular, 'participatory performance'. This moved the investigation into the area of spectator-participant and 'expert' and 'non-expert' when disseminating the training and practice into wider social contexts generating emerging outcomes.

The first appendix consists of *The Rule Book,* providing descriptions of all the tasks and rules that are detailed and referred to throughout the thesis. Please note these rules and tasks are the outcomes of the laboratory process and they have been created throughout the two-year process, shifting and developing each week; they were not the starting point for the process, but were derived from the process. The second appendix is the USB memory stick, as discussed, that contains edited videos to provide the reader with the option to watch an overview of the development of the tasks, ensemble and laboratory environment, both open and closed.

1. The Ensemble and The Contested Status of The Director

I argue that the understanding of an *ensemble* goes beyond a collection, group or team with something in common. I suggest that it is not a notion of being *synchronised,* on 'the same page' or, as advocated in *Ensemble Theatre Making,* 'the strong bond among members [...] the one that makes us feel a part of something special' (Burnett-Bonczek & Storck, 2013, p.7). Rather than referring to ensembles in this way, as a 'feeling' or sense of being together at the same time, I assert ensembles are not based upon individuals with a deep connection or bond. This is established throughout this investigation as a sense of *becoming* or being-with. The distinction between bond and *becoming* is the changeable or fluid nature of *becoming*. It is not something that can be broken or can conclude as it is continually forming and reforming in response to *others.* By shifting the focus from ourselves and placing it on others, it is possible to create an environment where discovery and creation have free rein. I argue that it is not a case of the ensemble as a fixed entity; rather, the ensemble is a continual movement *between* the singular and plural, operating in the *between* space of 'I' and 'We'. As such, within my practice, the work did not belong to one person; rather, the changing and shifting roles in the ensemble created a shared ownership. The ensemble was born *between* the ensemble members; there was a continual shift or redistribution of ownership when solidifying tasks, rules or objects.

This notion of the between space of the ensemble is seldom acknowledged as a fundamental element of the ensemble. However, this being said, performer Zbigniew Cynkutis attempts to articulate his experience with the theatre director Grotowski. He commented that '[e]verything […] was born *between* me and Grotowski' [original emphasis] (Cynkutis in Wolford & Schechner , 1997, p.194). If, as claimed, the work is

formed between, it is necessary to consider what impact a leader or director has on the formation of an ensemble, while the ensemble attempts to resist hierarchal structures. Growtowski attempts to articulate his role within the *Polish Laboratory Theatre,* by stating:

> I must stress that in the end, I am not the author of our production […] Grotowski is not a one-man band […] my name is, in fact, only there as a symbol of a group and its work in which are fused all the efforts of my associates. And these efforts are not a matter of collaboration pure and simple: they amount to creation. In our productions, next to nothing is dictated by the director. His role in the preparatory stages is to stimulate the creative associations for which the impulse comes from the actors and to organise the final structure. (Grotowski in Wolford and Schechner, 2001, pp.116-117)

The above quote is significant when considering the impact and role of a director of, or within, an ensemble. It could be argued that what takes place is, as Grotowski stated, 'collaboration pure and simple'. However, I believe this basic assertion does not provide a sufficiently clear image of the complex shifting roles and ownership between the ensemble members.

To provide a greater understanding of what takes place in the laboratory, I will firstly reflect on The Living Theatre (1947-1985), The Open Theatre (1963-1973) and The Performance Group (1967-1980). Each of these collectives claimed a collective 'voice' whilst working in the shadow of one or two key figures that guided and shaped the work.

The Living Theatre was founded in 1947 and was based in New York City. It was directed by Julian Beck and Judith Malina, who attempted to provide an alternative model of living and creating theatre. The ever-changing company aimed to provide a space within the company for each performer's individual identity.

> [A] collective, living and working together towards the creation of a new form of nonfictional acting based on the actor's political and physical commitment to using

the theatre as a medium for furthering social change. (Heddon & Milling, 2006, p.39)

Julian Beck stated he saw the role of the director as an interpreter, with productions ultimately moving towards collective authorship and communal creation, for example, Mysteries (1964) was cited as collaborative work with Beck commenting 'at the end no one knows who was really responsible for what' (Beck, 1972, pp.84-85), yet Beck and Malina retained their dominant position as directors. The objective was to combine collaborative multidimensional events with performances that belonged collectively to the actors, as they were known during this period. This offers a critical insight into the notion of 'moving towards the collective state' in that it is contentious, as it suggests a constant cohesive state. I argue that this is not the case; rather, the ensemble is formed from movement back and forth, *between* the individual and collective*.

Likewise, The Open Theatre (1963) aimed to focus on the experience of an ensemble. Their ensemble has been described as having no clear leader, although Joseph Chaikin's influence can be seen throughout their performances and approach, even though he tried to avoid direct leadership.

> He tried not to be, but it was inevitable. His kind of leadership was indirect, a matter not of asserted authority but of the force and perseverance of his presence. (Smith in Bottoms, 2006, p.171)

However indirect his leadership may have appeared, Chaikin remained the leader. The strength of Chaikin's presence indicates a directorial nature to his role. Whilst he continued to state that he '[...] felt a terrific longing for a kind of ensemble' (Goldman, 1969, p.135). This statement functions to further highlight the unspoken paradox between ownership and leadership within ensembles.

The Performance Group (1967) was productive for 13 years, functioning as a fluid ensemble. However, throughout this time, Richard Schechner did not shy away from his role as a director. He was explicit in naming this as his role within the ensemble. '[He was the] indisputable, albeit controversial, guiding force of The Performance Group' (Puncher in Harding and Rosenthal, 2006, p.307). The notion of a *guiding force* is important when reflecting on the role of the director and functions to highlight Schechner's clearly defined role. Within my own practice I would prefer *guiding influence*, as force suggests an element of control and direct leadership, whereas I am arguing for shared ownership, acknowledging the continual negotiation between individuals.

This confusion between ensembles and directors continues to be evident in contemporary performance ensembles. These difficulties are particularly noticeable in The Wooster Group (1975), Elevator Repair Service (ERS) (1991) and Goat Island (1987-2009), which are all seemingly underpinned by a non-hierarchal, non-singular creation process whilst functioning under the watchful eye of a director or leader. It is apparent there is a tension between group-decision making and individual leadership within that decision-making process.

The Wooster Group formed in 1975 and are based in New York. They emerged from Richard Schechner's The Performance Group (1967). The Wooster Group establishes an on-going ensemble creating work at The Performance Garage in Soho. The collective aim to recognise the power of the actor's presence on stage by altering the relationship between actor and audience. The Wooster Group (1975) , founded under the direction of Spalding Gray and Elizabeth LeCompte, rejects the traditional hierarchy of performance. LeCompte works with dedication to layer and develop the material, combining the

technical with the physical, the aesthetic and the political, bringing to the stage images that

are both controversial and unconventional. LeCompte aims to create performances that

are without 'linear structure'. Therefore, the fragments of performance become consistent

components in the piece: 'the fragments of reality are held together and made part of the

work of art by the work's constructive principle' (Graver, 1995, p.31). When commenting

on her role within The Wooster Group, LeCompte has stated that she was a director *in* the

group, not a director *of* the group. In an interview with Linda Yablonsky she expanded on

how she views her role within the ensemble:

> [A] lot of the time I'm trying to get something I saw them do that [is] then lost. It's
> not that I'm trying to get something I see in my head. I'm trying to get something
> that I know they can do. Most everybody brings something of themselves to the
> pieces, so even though it looks like my thing, they've brought something equal that
> I have to take [...] I'm forced to find something in them, even when it's totally
> wrong. I make my mind fit into their bodies, I make the project fit them. (LeCompte
> in Yablonsky, 1991)

John Collins, who worked with The Wooster Group, comments that the company's

collaborative structure 'exists somewhere in between egalitarianism and traditional

theatre hierarchy [relying] heavily on the input of the group; nevertheless [...] the directors

word is final' (Collins in Britton, 2013, p.243). LeCompte's approach to working *in* the group

is built on a method that she refers to as a 'kind of a joining, overlapping and stitching that

goes on between the technical and the performers, me, and the play' (LeCompte in

Radosavljević, 2013, p.77). When describing The Wooster Group's process LeCompte

places herself as the director distinct from elements such as the technical, the performers

and the play. She is *in* the ensemble whilst simultaneously deconstructing the fragments

of the ensemble. Despite this clear deconstruction, LeCompte also acknowledges that it is

the combination of these distinct elements and her presence in the rehearsal space that has contributed to the longevity of The Wooster Group:

> […] the space gives people more of a place and a sense of ritual that's not around one person. I do direct all these pieces and it's a very powerful position. So the space allows people to think that they're coming to the space, they're not coming to me, and I am functioning in the space as they are, and that's my job (LeCompte in Radosavljević, 2013, p.79)

The Wooster Group and LeCompte's role within it highlights a focus on working as a collective, joining and stitching the work together. Whilst LeCompte's respect and acknowledgment of her 'powerful position' distinguishes her as the director, the paradox of the situation is emphasised: she is both *in* the ensemble and embodies *the* ensemble.

Elevator Repair Service's (ERS) success, much like The Wooster Group, is associated with their ensemble identity. ERS are an experimental contemporary theatre group based in New York. The ensemble were founded in 1991 and are directed by John Collins, who is distinguished as the artistic director.[1] The collective work with found objects, improvisation, words, tasks, rules, functional actions and movement. These methods permit the creation of unpredictable performance, carrying out finely orchestrated, highly calibrated movement, resisting the mechanical nature of choreography within their work. This adds to their ability to create performance that appears unplanned and non-theatrical. As such, they provide an internal logic to their pieces that guides the audience through the fragmentation, held together via vanishing themes, disparate connections and musical connotations (Harvie and Lavender, 2010). The collective decision-making process allows the collective to function outside of the traditional theatre-making spectrum, resisting the

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[1] ERS are directed by John Collins and co-directed by Steve Bodow.

singular and the hierarchal theatre-making process; functioning to establish a democratic experience. When Collins was asked the question 'What fuels your impulse to make creative work?' during the *Doris Duke Artist Award* in 2014, Collins's reply offers further insight into how he views his role and place within ERS:

> As a director, I've got some responsibility to bring a plan to the table. I work with an ongoing ensemble, and they rely on me to provide a spark when we're getting started on new work. But any plan I make is always, in some sense, a hoped-for failure. I don't seek failure, but I anticipate that the best successes come from my original plans falling apart […] A new problem calls for a new process and tests my skills and intuitions as a theatre-maker. A solution to the kind of problem I like can only be attained through work and experimentation with my ensemble. When plans give way to interesting and compelling problems, then I'm in a good place to work. (Collins, 2014)

Collins's acknowledgment that he remains the most constant contributor to the work of what he calls 'my ensemble', whilst asserting that the authorship of the work belongs to the ensemble not an individual, further underlines the tension between leader and collective ownership. Collins states 'the director's word is final', much like The Wooster Group, however he goes on to state that this is 'mitigated by the emphasis I [Collins] place on collective action and agreement among the ensemble' (Collins in Britton, 2013, p.243). The method of creation within ERS is founded on the understanding that it is performer-led with a fluid open democratic ethos built from collective authorship. Whilst resting on the complicated reality of depending on a director who has authority one moment and the next moment that same director 'relies entirely on the impulses of the ensemble members' (Collins in Britton, 2013, p.243).

Goat Island also functioned as a collective with a strong ensemble identity pushing against hierarchal structures, whilst operating under the watchful eye and creative leadership of

Lin Hixson. Founded in 1987 and based in Chicago, Goat Island worked to create collaborative performances developed by the collective members themselves, whilst trying to prompt the audience into questioning their own understanding of the everyday. Goat Island used performance methods such as duration, repetition, and physical exhaustion to explore current and historical issues. The collective completed nine works, the last of which was The Lastmaker in 2009. Goat Island's process of creation facilitated an environment in which all members of the collective contributed to the conception, research, writing, choreography, documentation, and educational demands of the work. The collective made extreme physical demands on the performers as they performed a personal vocabulary of movement. They created visual and spatial images to encapsulate thematic concerns, incorporating historical and contemporary issues through text and movement (Bottoms and Goulish, 2007). Hixson is described as the director of the collective (Bottoms and Goulish, 2007), and it is apparent that Hixson's leadership and development of the ensemble was of great importance and influence to the collective. Hixson commented on her role as director, stating that:

> The nature of performance is very collaborative and working in a group makes it especially so. But my issue, and I think what's a little different […] I wanted to direct. I was a director in Goat Island […]. I have to say for me to direct, even in Goat Island, is also about looking at and editing the material. (Hixson in Picard, 2013)

The collaborative endeavour undertaken by Goat Island is one that attempted to generate a continuing, fluid process of decision-making and negotiation. This is demonstrated through the weaving of instructions issued for one another during the process. The process of making the work was shaped by the experience it has on both spectator and performer. This environment allowed the practitioner-participant a creative response that was generated individually and then composed collectively. Hixson's approach attempts to

evoke as Bailes states 'a kind of agency, a kind of active engagement' (Bailes, 2013, p.16). However, much like the collective authorship seen in The Wooster Group and ERS, the creation rests on the director's approval before the work leaves the rehearsal space. Hixson's earlier comment concerning her role in which she stated it involved 'looking at and editing the material' functions to further highlight the strain between individual agency and collective creation. Her distinction as director suggests the need for an outside eye that can monitor the creation and offer a sense of 'finality' or 'authority' to the ongoing fluid process. As the collective stated in *Small Acts of Repair* (2007) 'We needed confidence, and for that we turned to Lin' (Goat Island in Goulish and Bottoms 2007).

Within my approach I would align myself as director *in* the ensemble much like LeCompte's acknowledgment. However, I would not deconstruct the ensemble into such clear roles of technical, performer, director and 'the play', rather these roles are merged and distributed among the ensemble and the ownership is shared. Within my process, the decision-making process is collective, much like Collins's approach in ERS, it is initiated by me and what I bring to the laboratory. When considering my role as director/leader/facilitator *in* the ensemble, it is significant that each time we met I brought a new task and, by bringing this task to the laboratory, I produced a plan and reason to work, whilst not having a predetermined outcome for the task. As a result, the ensemble were able to take immediate ownership of the task and, as such, it belonged to everyone and was no longer *my* singular task. As reiterated by one ensemble member: 'I don't consider it [the work] "mine", the work "belongs" to the ensemble' (Tansey, 2016).

There is a strain between agency and engagement, as I monitor the creation from my position outside of the task. Hixson's comments on her process highlights the importance

of the relationship between spectator and performer within my own practice. When I function as the outside eye, I can offer fresh perspectives and promote greater creative response amongst the ensemble, whilst simultaneously monitoring and guiding the process. Within my practice I remain in a position of assumed authority and it is that concept of authority that emphasises the paradox in my practice I am *in* or *with* the ensemble but I also function *as* the ensemble. The work is owned by all members of the ensemble whilst 'my word' or 'voice' carries with it associations of 'finality' or 'power', which are moderated by my own understanding of the value of collective impulses and creation. Critically, the work can leave the laboratory without being 'finished' or 'approved' by myself, which again redistributes the connotations of power. Rather than signaling 'authority' it could be that I offer 'guidance' throughout the fluid process, as expressed in the earlier comment by Goat Island, providing a sense of 'confidence' in the practice and process.

This continual tension between director and ensemble allows me to further analyse my own experiences in order to question how this impacts the formation of the ensemble.[2] Hixson describes her experience in a way that resonates with my own:

> I find the word collaboration inadequate to describe what we do, but then I would find any single word problematic. In fact, I can't even start with words to describe my experience in Goat Island. I can begin with a physical sensation; my head enlarging to six heads; my legs jumping up and down with twelve feet; my body restricted by five other bodies. (Hixson in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.6)

This physical sensation of a body, enhanced by the capabilities of four other bodies, facilitates the following discussion. In the laboratory environment, I am not one person

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[2] In this case, I am referring to the laboratory with the current collective and our process. However, this account and expression of my function and role within an ensemble is applicable to my experience of my role within any ensemble.

with one role; rather, I am enhanced with the capabilities of four other bodies. This enables me to filter, collate and develop fragments of performance that are derived from this physical sensation rather than an individual outlook. My role within the ensemble is diverse; I am teacher, director, instructor, facilitator, timekeeper, mentor, researcher, and rule keeper. Furthermore, I have taken on the role of demonstrator critically in an open setting or event; I do not usually perform or undertake the tasks that have been created in the laboratory environment.

The implications attached to my multiple roles were conveyed by one of the ensemble members:

> [You were a] director at the start when we had no idea what we were doing! Then, although still director, [you] became facilitator as we were given the freedom to express our ideas and run with them. (Tansey, 2015)

The process of shifting and moving through these roles allowed me to combine a personal vision with a focused and driven commitment to the ensemble. The multiplicity of my role was further articulated by another member of my ensemble as they attempted to explain my role:

> [A] creative director… an 'inspiration instigator' even for us. You would come with an idea and we would develop on it. A mentor I think would be a good one. Even more than coach, you were a mentor for us to succeed and motivate ourselves. (Agratini, 2015)

The training, or coaching, elements of my role were driven by the development of the body(ies)-in-space responding to the individual and collective physical sensation(s) as the task unfolded. Again, this sense of responding was expressed by another member of the ensemble:

> You were definitely a coach! And I'd say director, too. Coach during the warm-up, showing different ways we could use our bodies, e.g. showing/correcting our […] technique. (Joachim-Farrow, 2015)

Clive Barker, a member of Joan Littlewoods's Theatre Workshop and performance commentator, states 'The director who acts as a coach and trainer of an ensemble […] is conceived as steering rather than ordering' (Barker in Hodge, 2010, p.122). Similarly, I am led by the physical sensation of the multiple body(ies), which enabled me to collect, steer and sift along with the ever-changing vision, rather than presenting a coherent voice. Here, one ensemble member attempts to explain how and why this change between passive and active leadership might occur:

> You switched between a passive and active leadership role when you thought necessary. For example, some days you'd give us a stimulus and leave us be and other days, when we're tired or struggling with ideas, you'd take more of an active role so our [session] could still be productive. (Wood, 2015)

This particular element of my practice can be likened to Brecht's directing approach. He stated that he sees the director's task as 'waking and organizing the actor's […] productivity […] [the director] understands a process of trying out. [The director] has to insist that at

any one time several possibilities are brought to bear' (Brecht in Britton, 2013, p.131). By working in this way, I could facilitate an environment that was open and full of possibilities, driven by the collective physical sensation rather than the singular director.

When considering the multi-functions of my role within the ensemble, it is the *within* the ensemble that becomes significant; I am not the leader *of* the ensemble. The work is not attributed to one member or voice; the work is attributed to the ensemble itself. This notion of being the leader *within* an ensemble becomes hard to qualify and explain, although I believe that, by considering my role as a physical sensation of multiple bodies in the laboratory, it removes some of the confusion as the role or sensation is not singular, much like the ensemble is not singular.

It is also important to consider what impact or effect my role as a researcher had on my role *within* the ensemble, as this affected the way in which the ensemble formed in direct relation to my role as leader or director and how the methods and strategies I adopted impacted the formation of the ensemble. A statement frequently directed to me by the other participants was 'Well, it is your PhD!' This declaration illuminates an essential element of my Practice as Research (PaR) methodology. The primary way that I can attempt to qualify my role as a researcher and respond to this statement is to explain a shift in my use of time. My division of time in an average week can be broken down approximately as follows: I spend eight hours a week in the studio, 16 hours a week watching and editing video footage from the studio, five hours on the digital scrapbook, five hours on the physical scrapbook, four hours planning the studio time, two hours a week proofreading my work, one hour communicating with the ensemble and the remainder curating and creating this document. My experience of the ensemble is greater than the eight hours I

spend in the studio with the other ensemble members. My thought process is taken outside of the laboratory environment and my responses to objects and tasks are based on a wider conception of the process, developed through each activity I undertake. It is possible to think of my role as a researcher as 'subjective time' rather than 'distinct time' (Ornstein, 1969, pp.37-52), where the sense of action is independent of external markers such as clocks or calendars, and time is dependent on endogenous events or 'cognitive markers' (Ornstein, 1969). This division of time can be further qualified by three particulars. Firstly, I ask questions of myself and the others involved in the project; questions that do not have *doing* attached to them, but have *thinking* attached to them. Secondly, I set new documentary methods and ensure these are conducted each week. Finally, I reflect in a detailed way on the process outside of the laboratory environment.

Significantly, it is my failure (not switching on equipment), provocation (asking questions) or forgetting (to do an element of documentation), of these three particulars that prompted the following response: 'Well, it is your PhD!' It would seem that the other ensemble members saw these particulars as outside of the creative response to objects, rules or tasks, resulting in an unspoken definition of these elements of the practice as 'research' and outside of their responsibility as performers. It is important to note that, when these elements 'went well', the distinction does not seem to be applied. All participants will help turn on the camera, set up the voice memos, answer questions and contribute to the documentation. It is only when an answer is unknown, or a job is forgotten, that the responsibility falls on my shoulders and is momentarily distinguished as part of 'my PhD'.

As the ensemble has developed over the two years, there has been a reduction in the number of times this question has been directed at me, evidenced here by an ensemble member:

> […] we've kind of developed along with [you] and learnt so much without realising. So, Jenny will say something, and we'll be, like 'I don't know, it's your research, it's your PhD!' And then we *do* know without realising. We've built that up over the two years. (Wood, 2016)

It appears that, over the two years, my role as 'a researcher' has, to the other members, become less significant. Their development and understanding of the process, or rather their conception of *mine*, *ours* or *yours*, has subsided and has been replaced with a deeper sense of shared ownership.

My shifting and changing role *within* the ensemble functioned to guide and inspire the ensemble through the process of creation in an environment that embraced chance and task. All members had a significant and growing creative contribution, while I responded to their impulses by setting tasks, challenges or problems to be solved – not by me or the individual, but by the ensemble. The role of the conventional director is highly contested; however, by embracing the *within* of the ensemble, I can, within my process, create an environment where my status as a leader is in flux.

The question surrounding the leader as 'of', 'within', or 'for' the ensemble, is one that continues to perplex, although it has been established the ensemble within my practice is born *between* the 'I' and 'We', supported by shared ownership and a greater focus towards *each other*. I have argued that the leader shapes and guides the process, while often refusing the associations attached to the title. Furthermore, I have brought my practice

into dialogue with the task-based theatre practised by specific performance groups to

investigate how the individual functions in an emerging performance ensemble.

2. Reflections on Intersubjectivity and Task

I have drawn from the beginning elements of the creation of 'The Biscuit Task' in the closed laboratory. A description of the task and the rules for the final task can be found in section 10 of *The Rule Book*. The process of creating this task permits a discussion surrounding co-appearing within ensembles as the members come into contact with each other, tasks and objects.

When developing the movement patterns used in 'The Biscuit Task', the ensemble were initially presented with the following instruction: 'Write a movement down with one rule not to be broken, the movement must have a moment of height/speed/stillness.' We then began the process of learning, sharing and relearning. This was realised by the person who created each movement pattern, demonstrating while everyone else copied, asked questions and learnt the individual movement patterns. These were the movements and rules:[3]

1. Movement: Spin with arms in the air like a ballerina. Stop abruptly after 360 degrees.
   Rule: Every other spin, spin as fast as possible.
2. Movement: Lunge forward on your right leg.
   Rule: Keep your hands raised above your head for the duration of the lunge.
3. Movement: Roll (however you want). Crouch on all fours, extend one leg, rock back onto it and stand.
   Rule: You can only ever move on diagonals.
   Rule: You can only move when your eyes are covered.
4. Movement: Raise your right arm above your head, keeping it straight.
   Rule: You can only move when the person on your left stops moving.

This process created a repetition of movement that was founded in the collective 'We', as we collectively (re)learnt the movement patterns, while simultaneously emphasising the

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[3] These can also be seen by following this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/12/01/movements-and-rules-recap/

individual by witnessing the differences in the movements from body to body. This is reminiscent of Deleuze's (1968) discussion surrounding repetition and difference; he states 'repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it' (Deleuze, 2014, p.93). This indicates that the copying of movements and proposed repetition is disrupted in the singular. It is the familiarity of the movement that takes it into the plural; the movement becomes a return and as John Cage stated in his Lecture on Nothing, 'repetition is only repetition if we feel that we own it' (Cage, 1961, p.110). To draw on Jean-Luc Nancy (2000), if the movement exists in the *between* of 'I' and 'We', there can be no singular ownership. Cage's indication of ownership refers not only to possession, but also to understanding, recognition and familiarity. It is this process of the repetition and differentiation of the microelements of the movement, achieved by combining and recombining that generates familiarities located in the singular and the possibility of the movement existing in the singular plural.

This sharing of actions and the dissimilarity in the repetition is an important part of the *between* of the ensemble. It was possible to notice a shift between *mine, yours* and *ours* as each member of the ensemble acquired shared ownership and responsibility *of* or *for* the movement. At the start of the task, the ensemble asked questions and copied the 'leader'; however, as the process developed, there was a shift as all the ensemble members began to demonstrate 'insider' knowledge of the movement. Through the learning, sharing and relearning, the ensemble *co-appeared* through the set objective. Nancy (2000) states that a major factor of *being-with* is evidenced in *co-appearing*; he defines this as the process of shifting the focus away from the individual and towards each other. As a result, the focus is not on the individual response, but rather collective ownership. Nancy

comments that co-appearing is not 'appearing' in a physical sense; rather, it is re-entering the social space with others, to reinvent the outcome, 'appear[ing] together with one another [is] co-appearing' (Nancy, 2000, p.63).

The ownership of the movement has shifted into the *between* space of the ensemble, thereby suggesting the between space was in motion. The ensemble members were operating in dialogue with the 'We', but functioning from a new sense of individual ownership over the movement. The short extract below demonstrates and evidences how the ensemble members were beginning to move towards a sense of shared ownership over the movements and operate in the *between*:

> CW: Right, so down over, step in, and step out [demonstrates].
> JW: So it's the leg that leads that you then move, yeah? Try again [CF demonstrates].
> AA: Do you roll your arms a certain way?
> CT: No.
> [AA: demonstrates].
> CW: There, you start like this [demonstrates] and after you've done that you're squatting like that [demonstrates]. I guess it make sense to step out and squat.
> CT: Yeah, do whatever's easier.
> CW: Charlie's going back to the original, the original [demonstrates].
> JW: So, Charlie, she keeps her foot there [points].
> CW: Right, so down over, step in, and step out [demonstrates].

This element of the task was followed by a secondary task, which was to place the individual movements into random combinations and build a movement score.

The use of the phrase 'score' is reminiscent of the Fluxus movement, an international and interdisciplinary group formed of artists, composers, designers and poets established in the 1960s. The Fluxus movement was known for experimental contributions which focused on unpredictable, ordinary and ephemeral moments in everyday life. As part of this movement, 'events' were produced during which performance was based on the principles

of music. This use of text as a 'score' derives from John Cage's work, notably *4'33* (1952) which directs the performer to remain silent during three 'moments' of chance-determined durations. As such, constructing an 'Event Score' formed from a series of 'notes' or movements that would allow *anyone* to replicate the performance. This is pertinent to my practice in that any member of the ensemble can pick up the written instruction and carry it out, this use of 'scores' allows the construction process of the movements to take place in isolation, which in turn removes a sense individual ownership over the construction or organisation of these 'scores'.

Therefore, within the context of this task each member constructed a movement score; a distinguisehed movement pattern developed by adding speed variants. This allowed us to create a complexity to the repetition of the movement scores. At this point in the task, each ensemble member had five movements with their own speed. I then asked the ensemble to take/borrow/steal a movement and speed from another member and add this to their score. They adopted the speed and linked it to their score to create greater crossovers between the speeds to advance the sense of repetition or non-repetition, gradually revealing a movement vocabulary which seem both emptied of and charged with meaning due to the similarities and differences embodied within the repetition of movement.

This stretched the conceptions of what could be *ours* or *mine,* as the ownership of the movements were shifting continually between the ensemble. There was an unspoken certainty among the ensemble that what was understood as *mine* could not be relied on; it was no longer fixed in the singular. All the movements became ours; there was no isolation of the 'I' as we were continually in the *between* space of the 'We'.

This can be likened to Nancy's (2000) clarification of his use of hyphenations in his phrase 'being-singular-plural'. He states the hyphen leaves each element to its isolation and its being-with-the-other (Nancy, 2000). Much like Martin Heidegger (1962), who used hyphens to demonstrate an activity or movement, Nancy is emphasising the importance of a semantic movement between division and unison:

> [...] this co-essence puts essence itself in the hyphenation 'Being-singular-plural' which is a mark of union and also a mark of division [...] leaving each term to its isolation and it's being-with-the-others. (Nancy, 2000, p.37)

It is in Being and Time (1962) that Heidegger introduces the ontological language of being. Heidegger places being outside the traditional boundaries of 'definition'; therefore, being becomes self-evident, manifesting, moving and shifting in its position towards other entities. Heidegger states that the ontology of Being assumes a 'pre-ontological state' (Heidegger, 1962, p.32). However, Heidegger is clear that this is not to be understood as 'Being-ontological', but rather existing in such a way that the Being understands its own Being. Thus, the being itself wants to be recognised as one with one another. This correlates with Nancy's sense of Being-with or Being-between. Heidegger offers clarity on the phrases 'Being-in' and 'Being-in-the-world', by placing emphasis on the *in*, therefore, *in* is not a property, but rather an activity. Heidegger states that the *in* holds within it connotations of the relationship between Being and entities, suggesting that there is a greater purpose to the *in*. Consequently, the Being-in-the-world becomes visible, and the recognition of the 'Others' is, in fact, working to reposition the Being. The isolation of the 'I' needs to be overcome in order for the Being-in to become Being-with Others. The Being's recognition of the Other is, in fact, working to reposition the Being, overcoming the

isolation of the 'I'. Detaching the Other from which the 'I' stands out, compels the Being, according to Heidegger, to see itself as the Being-with Others. Nancy's (2000) reading of Heidegger generates a co-essentiality of the two terms being and Other. Thus, Nancy's conception opens up the question of Otherness with being and, as such, he suggests that there is the possibility of a movement between individuals.

The concept of Being-singular-plural is essential to my understanding of *ensemble;* the hyphenation suggests a sense of belonging that is in continual movement *between* the individual and ensemble. The sharing and movement of the 'I' and 'We' in each moment of the laboratory creates a co-presence: where the individual can present themselves to *each other*, as different and distinct individuals. When creating 'The Biscuit Task', the ensemble did not function to work side-by-side or alongside-each other; rather, the members were working independently *for* each other as they developed the movement scores. This does not mean that, at each moment, there was a sense of unity or a perpetual disunity, but rather they were able to shift and negotiate *between* agreement and disagreement. The singular member of the ensemble can function and exist through the engagement and entanglement with the ensemble.

Within my laboratory, the shift of focus away from *self* and towards the *others* of the ensemble is accessed through multiple possibilities reencountered *each time* a task is encountered. When this is combined with a greater focus on *doing* and responding functionally to the rules and sub-rules, it functions to establish an ensemble built from the individual engaged in the *with* and *between.*[4] The exploration of the ensemble in the

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[4] A sub-rule is the name given, within my practice, to the layers within the overarching task. My use of this phrase refers to the layering process each individual task has been through.

laboratory environment allowed for a greater analysis of the function of the ensemble and role of the individual when considering the entanglement and disentanglement of the 'I' and 'We'. This permits an investigation into the *between* of the *singular plural* and how this shift and movement occurs; the ownership of the movement, task, idea or rule then becomes blurred and the space *between* these conditions is exposed.

3. Methodology

This chapter aims to explain the methodology of this PhD, which can be expressed as predominantly Practice as Research (PaR), and how this informed, shaped and framed my research project. I will make clear the function of the investigation into the formation of the emerging contemporary performance ensemble and the perpetual state of flux between 'I' and 'We'.

I will begin with an account of the process of forming the ensemble and our working conditions and parameters, followed by a review of PaR and how this functions within the parameters of my PhD. I will then discuss my use of documentation and how this impacted and operated within the investigation.

3.1 Forming the Ensemble

I worked with four students from the University of Salford from September 2014 to June 2016, meeting each week for three hours each time. We met in the same dance studio at the University; it was important that we met in the same space as this provided continuity and familiarity with the structure, environment and experience of the laboratory environment.

As part of the inquiry, I intended to establish a group; however, I did not set out to train the ensemble, but rather to share my knowledge of tasks, objects and rules. Much like Gilbert Ryle's (1963) discussion in which he articulates knowing *how* as distinct from knowing *that*. The knowledge about the practice is distinct from being able to analyse or explain how and why it is effective. The knowledge of *how* is, therefore, embodied in my conduct of the creative process.

> It is not a case of having a prior theoretical knowledge of what should be done […] and putting these ideas into practice; nor is it a question of envisaging the work in theory and finding a physical form to illustrate that idea. Rather […] the action is embedded *in the doing*, of which she may not be reflectively aware. (Pakes in Butterworth& Wildschut, 2009, p.12)

To support this, two elements were introduced and framed as the 'principles' of the process:

- Pay little attention to 'why' or 'what for', but instead focus on 'what if'.
- There is no conception of right or wrong; 'if I go left, and you all go right – that's fine'.

These two statements are vital to my approach; they intend to set the precedent that we will work on and explore all the options of 'what if'. This is intended to build a culture of spontaneous action and reaction. Moreover, by dictating that there is no right or wrong, while highlighting the notion that the ensemble did not need to adjust their movements to match my own, shifts the power and the focus back to *each other* and away from one person.

The focus on physically moving during the task rather than the form, shape or pattern of the movement, allowed the ensemble to become unconstrained. They were not afraid of doing the *wrong* movement, distanced from any concerns of not being able to move or perform the action in the *right* way; as such, their actions were less restricted.

Goat Island's director Hixson comments that providing a task is a gateway or opening into creating physical work. Hixson claims that this can provide those with 'little formal training in dance, a way into the physical' (Hixson in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.152), facilitating an environment in which task becomes action. Furthermore, Hixson stated, while exploring task-like activities with non-dancers, that the 'self-consciousness and pretension [fell]

away, leaving an immediacy to the activity' (Hixson in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.70). The use of *task as action* aided the collective's characteristic physical movement scores by adding to and developing the vocabulary of movement.

The overarching nature of my laboratory was relaxed, partially due to the lack of pressure to conform or be 'right'. There was an attempt to resist the pressure or desire to 'understand'. Instead, we focused on the unknown or the 'what if'. To do this, the laboratory sessions were constructed around the people in the room at the time and a trust in a loose plan:

> [...] We were ourselves. You came in the room with some sort of plan. The outline of a plan. And by following that plan, I started looking at things from outside the box. You put me in situations which were foreign to me. The atmosphere was relaxed. You were relaxed [...] we chatted about everyday stuff. And then suddenly talked about the actual [work]. (Agratini, 2016)

This ensemble member was expressing the culture of transparency in the laboratory; thereby indicating that, through the exposing of the plan or rules, the ensemble can respond spontaneously and with ownership. By refusing concepts of 'my idea,' the ensemble could share ownership and be free in their response. The ensemble did not feel as if I was training them: 'I don't think you actively trained/taught us. You let us into your way of working, placed rules in the space and we adapted to them and slowly grew an understanding' (Wood, 2016). This approach is reminiscent of dance practitioner Trisha Brown. It has been noted by Sally Banes (1987) that Brown would often work with non-performers or untrained dancers and it is through the experience of sharing in her process that they become trained in her techniques (Banes, 1987). Within my practice, rather than focusing on training, I concentrated on sharing 'something' with them, which allowed them to develop alongside my approach.

The willingness to endure physical extremes was founded in the knowledge that we would work to the extreme of our endurance, supported by the knowledge that the rules would then be put in place to maintain the endurance required. An example of this can be seen in 'The Biscuit Task' (see section 10 of *The Rule Book*). During the process of creating the task, we miss-measured The Biscuit Square so it was too big by 3cm each side; furthermore, the type of biscuits chosen were the wrong texture. When combined with the larger square, this resulted in the ensemble members feeling physically sick, with one member having to step out.

> [...] those biscuits, wow, literally probably the worst 23 minutes of my life. I'm being dramatic, it's probably not the worst 23 minutes of my life, but it's up there. Biscuit square was horrendous today, just horrible, deeply unenjoyable. (Tansey, 2016)

> We did biscuit square all the way through to the very end for the first time and it was incredibly difficult. Unfortunately we got the number wrong for how big the square was meant to be [...] we did 146 cm and it was just way too big and we think we have to make it even smaller than the 143 it's meant to be! [...] it just seemed very tortuous and not enjoyable to watch towards the end because it got so hard to eat all the biscuits [...] and it turned from something quite fun and playful into something quite hard to watch. (Joachim-Farrow, 2016)

Consequently, the task crossed a line from being fun and challenging to being unbearable, emphasising the need for rules and the difference between just *carrying* out an action and working through a balanced task. The process of layering rules slowly and considering the value of them is of utmost importance to the process. Here, we showed careless disregard for two of our rules, namely the size of the square and type of biscuit, meaning that the task 'failed' as endurance levels were too high and it became too physically challenging. Despite this experience, the ensemble remained confident in the task and process, knowing that by exploring the 'what if' we would find and create new rules, as emphasised here in these reflections:

[…] we had a big discussion afterwards, so hopefully we'll, you know, talking about umm shortening the square and biscuit selection is clearly quite key […]. (Tansey, 2016)

[…] we add more rules in order to restrict ourselves so that the overall product is more layered. (Agratini, 2016)

The combination of commitment to *doing* and transparency during the process encouraged mutual trust, as the focus on *each other* was generated by an implicit, tacit knowledge, amongst the ensemble, that the tasks and rules would become self-evident throughout the process. This shared or tacit knowledge provided the basis for the ensemble to communicate with each other and co-ordinate their actions. This allowed the members to draw on the knowledge, that they held tacitly, by reproducing the routines and structures of the process. This can be likened to Clive Lawson and Edward Lorenz's (1999) article *Collective Learning, Tacit Knowledge and Regional Innovative Capacity* in which they state '[m]uch of this knowledge is tacit in nature. Members of the organization are able to co-ordinate their action and act capably without needing, or necessarily being able, to articulate in words or diagrams exactly how they accomplish this' (Lawson & Lorenz, 1999, p.307).

These unspoken or 'tacit' principles of the laboratory remove the complexity of 'training', resulting in an apparent simplicity in my approach, as detailed by an ensemble member here: '[Jenny's] way of working I'd say is coming into the space, removing shoes and socks, setting up equipment, doing a warm-up and creating tasks' (Wood, 2016). By embodying the outlined principles, I was able to create a collective language and method wherein the commitment to *doing* and 'what if' fuels an endurance and dedication to tasks and rules.

This approach is situated within my overarching methodology of Practice as Research (PaR), which frames and drives the modes of research undertaken. The following sub-chapter will determine the vocabulary used to articulate my primary methodology of PaR, to address the paramount concern of this thesis, the acknowledgement of the fluid relationship *between* the individual and collective, thus providing new insights into the formation of performance ensembles.

3.2 Practice as Research

This investigation was undertaken using Practice as Research (PaR). It was understood the main forms of understanding and knowledge would be found and discovered in my laboratory practice, to facilitate the exploration of the function of tasks and found objects, in relation to the *between* space of the ensemble.

In order to facilitate the use of PaR, I am discovering a new vocabulary to articulate my discoveries located in, as Robin Nelson expressed, 'doing-thinking' (Nelson, 2013, p.44). 'Doing-thinking' is concerned with a mode of practice based knowledge production that can only be understood or explored through practice. Thus, the terminology indicates that the theory is imbricated in the practice and serves as the primary evidence of the research insights. As such, 'doing-thinking' seeks to position written elements as attempting to locate, illuminate and explore insights gained through the process of 'making'. Nelson expands on this, stating it is the 'dialogical interplay of know-how, know-what and know-that' (Nelson, 2013, p.45). Within this investigation 'Know-how' can be understood as embodied through the laboratory based practice, critical reading and spectatorship provides the 'know-that' and the input of critical reflection forms 'know-what'. It is the triangulation that permits Nelson to convey the relation(s) between 'doing-reflecting-

reading-articulating-doing' (Nelson, 2013, pp. 32-33) as 'doing-thinking' or 'theory imbricated within practice' (Nelson, 2013, pp.32-33). Within my own practice, I am endeavouring to adopt a method of 'doing-thinking'; therefore, through doing and making, I am able to carry out informed critical reflection and knowledge, gained through specific experiences and practice in both the closed laboratory and the open installations. Such critical reflections and learnt knowledge are experienced, tactic and embodied in the practice.

When considering 'What is PaR?' or 'How can PaR be understood?' Baz Kershaw (2011) offers a useful description, characterising it as '[a] post-binary commitment to activity (rather than structure), process (rather than fixity), action (rather than representation), collectiveness (rather than individualism), reflexivity (rather than self-consciousness)' (Kershaw & Nicholson, 2011, pp.63-64). Therefore, the enquiry within my PhD can be understood as being driven by a *creativity,* committed to the activity of *doing* and focusing on the process rather than the product. Consequently, my PhD is active in its *action*, with an inclination towards collectiveness and the open nature of reflections. This approach is woven together throughout the PhD through my laboratory, documentation and a language of 'doing-thinking'; therefore, my approach exists *in* and *from* the practice. My use of PaR, as informed by both Kershaw (2011) and Nelson (2013), has allowed me to embody 'theory imbricated within practice' (Nelson, 2013, pp.32-33).

PaR allowed me to intertwine the practice, documentation, reflections and laboratory work and, as such, create a 'multi-mode inquiry' (Nelson, 2013, p.29) that draws from the coexisting elements of my investigation. This approach to PaR was influenced by Nelson's three multiple modes of evidence to reflect multi-mode research. The first of these modes

is detailed as 'a product (exhibition, film, blog, score, performance) with a durable record (DVD, CD, video)' (Nelson, 2013, p.26). Within my PhD, this output takes the form of the two installations, a performance and a workshop, which took place as live events, whilst also being documented. Secondly, Nelson states that the inquiry might include 'documentation of process (sketchbook, photographs, DVD, objects of material culture)' (Nelson, 2013, p.26). This is evidenced via the digital scrapbook, physical scrapbook and video clips, which are referred to throughout this document. This allows me to capture moments of insight from the laboratory and documentation within the writing. Finally, Nelson states that there may also be ''complementary writing', which includes locating practice in a lineage of influences and conceptual framework for the research' (Nelson, 2013, p26). I present this component within this document, as I located my practice in a lineage of similar practices. Consequently, the specific inquiry is set within broader contemporary debates. These three approaches were central to my methodology, allowing me knowingly to bring them into dialogue with each other. I can respond to the qualities between them and have been able to locate this research in response to all the disparate elements.

PaR allowed for *active* thinking or *doing* that facilitated a process in which the practice is the research, and the research is the practice. This applies not only to the use of video footage, but also to the form of digital and physical scrapbooks, which have allowed the ensemble as well as those outside of the closed laboratory to be actively involved in the *doing.* I will now detail the form, process and nature of the documentation process undertaken to provide a '[...] durable record [...]' (Nelson, 2013, p.26). It includes, but is not limited to, videos, audio, notebooks, and photographs, as I consider the elements of

my practice that situate it inside an investigation into the movement between individual and ensemble.

3.3 Documentation

Each laboratory session has been recorded using a static camera and an audio recorder. I then used Adobe Pro Cs6 to edit the footage, syncing up the sound from the audio recorder with the video footage and making short clips of the work carried out in the laboratory. These were then uploaded to YouTube, as well as retaining all the original footage. Alongside the video footage, pictures were also taken periodically throughout the process; these helped us to remember visual images. In addition to the static camera, from October 2015 onwards we also used a GoPro camera to capture different viewpoints and angles; we experimented with wearing it, attaching it to the ceiling, floor and windows. This allowed for greater documentation of the laboratory sessions, placing static footage next to the dynamic footage taken on the GoPro.

Video footage, as Caroline Rye (2003) states, can become 'a substitute that cannot provide evidence of exactly the thing it purports to record' (Rye, 2003, pp.115-123). My concern with the use of the video documentation is that the disjointed, fragmented, multi-vocality, multi-perspective and polyphonic nature of the laboratory may become lost. The phrases multi-vocality, multi-perspective and polyphonic refer to the collaborative nature, the overlapping of conversations, the quick pace between ideas and the microscopic details that are formed in the moment of 'doing-thinking'. These minute elements make the process what it is, the indecipherable habitually experienced moments embodied by the ensemble.

The use of static cameras undoubtedly results in the *action* or multi-perspective nature of the laboratory being lost or ineffectively conveyed, as the image is static and filmed from a distance. Despite this, the use of the static camera reduces the interference with the process itself, as there is no need to move or adjust the camera. The use of the video footage allowed for ideas or moments of physical movement to be captured and, subsequently, revisited or altered; we did not, in the laboratory, aim to create a representation of the work, as the video footage still remained within the laboratory. The documentation was a part of the process and a part of the practice – not, as Nelson confirms, becoming the practice itself, '[t]he audio visual evidence of the ephemeral event can never be mistaken for the practice itself' (Nelson, 2013, p.86).[5]

From October 2016, we also recorded voice memos directly after each laboratory session. These were carried out by each member in private allowing for an instantaneous reflective process on their experience, thoughts and ideas arising from the laboratory. Furthermore, these voice memos allowed me unimpeded access to the ensemble's experience of the practice, from which I have been able to draw in order to support or investigate theories surrounding task, found objects and the *between* of the ensemble. The decision to use a vocal recording was chosen for three reasons. Firstly, it was quick and did not require more time from the ensemble; secondly, the vocal nature reduced the pressure to 'say the right thing', instead following the participant's train of thought; finally, as the vocal recordings were unscripted and unedited, they offered a candid response.

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[5] This is much like the Peggy Phelan and Philip Auslander debate on *Liveness* that began in the 1990s. The debate has been pivotal to the discourse on liveness in the field of performance studies. Auslander's book *Liveness* (1999) is formed in response to Phelan's influential construction of performance as 'representation without reproduction' (Phelan, 1993, p.31).

An important element of the process has been the digital scrapbook. This digital scrapbook was always open to all members of the ensemble and was used to document our thoughts, reflections, pictures, research, videos and memories of the laboratory process.[6] It created a secondary space where the ensemble could form and share their experiences and ideas outside of the immediateness of the laboratory space. As Lisa Stansbie states in *The SAGE Handbook of Digital Dissertations and Theses* (2012) 'using a digital format is appropriate when it acts as an imperative tool in the progress, process, methodology and presentation of the research itself.' (Stansbie in Andrews et al., 2012, p.402). The digital scrapbook provides a space for reflection; as such, the digital scrapbook became a space for retrospective documentation, practice and research: 'the means of digital documentation and the ease with which images can be collated and organised offers potential to archive the research and allows for its sequential presentation.' (Stansbie in Andrews et al., 2012, p.394). This approach helped keep the laboratory process present, while also allowing for historical documentation of the environment and process. The digital scrapbook also provided a space where the videos of each laboratory session could be uploaded, watched, and re-watched, and allowed the ensemble time and space to reflect on the collective process individually.

In addition to the digital scrapbook, we also kept a physical scrapbook with notes, drawings and rules scribbled down during the laboratory environment. The physical scrapbook allowed us to document on-the-spot ideas, rules and sub-rules available for instant recall and visual explanations of seemingly impossible layouts or movement sequences. Towards the latter part of the process, the physical scrapbook became an invaluable source of

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[6] You can view the whole digital scrapbook by following this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/

documentation, referred to and relied on as a source of sub-rules and rule clarification. The combination of the digital and physical scrapbook allowed each member of the ensemble to have a sense of individual ownership over the collective process, as both scrapbooks were collated *by* and *for* the ensemble.

These methods of documentation, videos, voice memos, and drawings, as well as the physical and digital scrapbooks, when combined with this written document, function to offer an insight into the multi-perspective and polyphonic nature of the laboratory environment, while situating my practice within a wider context. It is my intention that, by engaging with all aspects of the process, a greater understanding of the formation of performance ensembles will be evident.

4. Tasks in The Laboratory

Within the laboratory environment, we have used task-based methods for performance, meaning that each action, movement or investigation derived from a seemingly simple task. These tasks were then layered throughout the process with more rules and instructions within my practice; this layering process is referred to as generating 'sub-rules'. The use of these sub-rules allowed each task to become complex and developed, creating a deep level of understanding of the tasks without needing to return to notes or documentation. This allows the tasks to become learnt, understood and, sometimes, reduced to single phrases; for example, 'contraption', 'candle' and 'final build'. These abstract phrases hold within them the complex and seemingly contradictory simple approach that can allow a task to be reduced to a few lines. For instance, these notes from the physical scrapbook detail how, by the time of the first installation, we were able to translate the following basic instructions into a complex task and vice versa:

Final Build
- *Sweep sand into centre – Charlie compress sand*
- *Claire fold skipping rope – hopscotch and pennies*
- *Charlie roll the tape*
- *Ciara duck, pond and benches*
- *Ada candles and wrappers*

Psychologist Vera John-Steiner, in *Creative Collaboration* (2006), comments that 'the shaping of a shared language' (John-Steiner, 2006, p.204) is a vital element of a collaboration and it is through this shared language that we were able to start to negotiate a common ground, to be understood within this context as a 'coming together' of ideas. The shared language that emerged was born from the balance *between* collective creation and individual creation, '[t]he ensemble's interaction gets its meaning from the layers of

contexts in which it is embedded' (Granott, 1998, p.62). As such, the context of the tasks allowed the ensemble to develop a shared language that existed in relation to both the individual and collective response to the task. It is not my intention to state that the shared language led to, or created, a bond between members; rather, it functioned to blur conception of *mine* and *yours* as the ownership over the task was further re-disputed, moving away from the original moment of creation and from its original form, as each task forms and re-forms as the process develops.

The use of tasks created a sense of freedom within the work, as the rules for the task did not necessarily translate into the rules for their application; 'the imposition of a specific task [created] a degree of freedom within the structure' (Auslander, 1997, p.45). This freedom functioned to promote collaboratively developed material, while the task became active in the decision-making. By embedding the task process, it created an 'activity of the moment', which was impacted by the immediate circumstances. As a result, the task and the process of creation were inherently linked and connected, generated from a circular relationship between what the task *can be* and what the people with the vision or creative drive can achieve when discovering the task. In the quote below, Auslander attempts to express this connection:

> Task and vision, vision in the form of a task; the work's vision is the task as performed by a certain group of people, and the task is a vision of what the performance should be and what those people can do. […] There is a certain frankness to the approach; the performer's image is generated by the activity of the moment, by what the audience sees him doing under the immediate circumstances. Task/vision, vision/task. (Auslander, 1997, p.45)

This quote emphasises the simultaneous nature of tasks in the process. Auslander is suggesting that the task is revealed only in the moment of its creation. It is both a vision of what the task can be, combined with the capabilities of those carrying it out. The image

the performer presents is generated by the task unlocked as an activity that is taking place in that moment, which exposes the immediateness of the physical process of creation. As such, it is possible to argue that the process of *doing* is so directly embedded into the structure of the task that the two become indistinguishable, resulting in the process of creating the task becoming the task. A direct example of how task-based activities take on a sense of *doing* is highlighted when Coco Fusco asked ERS performer, Rinne Groff, the following question: 'So what *do* you do in rehearsal?' Rinne Groff replied: 'Basic task-oriented kinds of things' (Groff in Fusco, 1998), encapsulating how the act of *doing* becomes the task.

For Grotowski, the performer ultimately becomes a *doer* rather than a *performer;* the performer would not be *showing*, but rather *doing.* Grotowski states in *Towards a Poor Theatre* (1976) that reacting to an action is the thing that must always be done '[…] always do [an action] as a spontaneous action related to the exterior world, to other people or to objects […] [s]timulations, impulses and reactions' (Grotowski, 2002, p.225). Grotowski's suggestion that spontaneous action allows for *doing* rather than *performing* in turn aims to create for the performers a sense of their physical actions and responsibilities. The performers are driven by a sense of focus on *doing* their own actions, which then builds and develops a responsive atmosphere with each performer responding instantaneously, resulting in the impression of impulse actions, actions that appear improvised and responsive. This is explored through movements and association exercises such as, 'Exercises Plastiques' (Schechner & Hoffman in Wolford al ed., 1997, p.42), which were free-flowing movements and association exercises designed to create absolute unity between the physical and the psychophysical, to assist with 'transforming the body movements into a cycle of personal impulses' (Schechner & Hoffman in in Wolford al ed.,

1997, p.42). Grotowski's method aimed to facilitate the activation of body memory: the impulse, action and expression held within the physiological make up of an individual, allowing for impulse and expression to be concurrent:

> The result is freedom from the time-lapse between inner impulse and outer reaction in such a way that the impulse is already an outer reaction. Impulse and action are concurrent: the body vanishes, burns, and the spectator sees only a series of visible impulses. (Grotowski, 1968, p.16)

Likewise, The Wooster Group endeavour to create physical actions for performance, which give the impression of being improvised and responsive. This appears to be evocative of Grotowski's systems of performance, in that The Wooster Group create impulse-based scores of physical action. However, The Wooster Group apply their physical actions within a complex directorial structure and the 'psychological subjectivity of the director and/or performers as subject matter' (Dunkelberg in Meerzon, 2013, p.394). This differs from Grotowski's impulse actions, as each physical action The Wooster Group use has been collaboratively created but *composed* by the director. As a result, the audience see 'something' that was originally formed out of impulse, taking place in the rehearsal or laboratory, but has been captured, framed and reshaped for the performance.

> The smoothness and apparently effortless precision with which the actors perform their tasks […] is due to LeCompte's meticulous attention to detail. Even sloppy actions are the result of conscious choice. (Arratia in Schneider & Cody, 1992, p.130)

The use of impulse actions is echoed within my own practice, as many of the tasks and impulse actions are derived from improvisation and then subjected to a period of editing and sculpting. However, within my laboratory, the process of sculpting and editing was collective; this allowed each of us to give each action a sense of purpose, by working with

the individual and the collective to sculpt the actions. This functioned to enhance the sense of shared ownership as the actions did not belong to any one person.

It has been noted by Harvie and Lavender (2010) that, by asking performers to concentrate on the task, it can offer them something to *do* or focus on. Thus, the task becomes an action that is both physical and functional. LeCompte has always stressed that The Wooster Group's process places task-based activities at its core, commenting that the task is the centre for everything: the beginning point of the action and creation process, where 'everything comes out of physical tasks' (LeCompte in Champagne, 1981, pp.24-25). LeCompte claims not to make any distinction between *doing* and performance, although she attempts to articulate the difference here:

> [Performing] means I can see the work being done and I don't want to see that [...] [tasks or *doing*] usually has to do with the performer finding some pleasure. Real, deep pleasure, and by deep pleasure, I mean a pleasurable connection with the stage, the materials I'm using, that makes me want to watch them. (LeCompte in Yablonsky, 1991, p.53)

One method used to facilitate *doing*, within my laboratory, is to initially focus on agreed simple or understandable tasks, such as skipping or completing a hopscotch. This results in rules or actions that are physically embodied during the task. By using tasks in this way, it promotes a unity between the ensemble, thus creating a sense of focus and purpose in the movement and an internal logic:

> Focusing on agreed tasks, obstacles and impediments as a way of treating and preparing material [...] furnishes each show with an intensity of focus, though that focus might remain indecipherable to its audience while unifying the behaviours of the performers. (Harvie and Lavender, 2010, pp.95-96)

By using tasks to offer a sense of active decision-making during the process, it provided the ensemble with something to *do* physically and mentally, resulting in a lack of self-consciousness during the process. The tasks within my laboratory become functional, existing to achieve or *do something* active within the process.

This approach is also echoed in The Wooster Group's attention to the physical task, resulting in an atmosphere that shifts the focus of the audience or watchers away from trying to establish the *character* and towards the physical action. Willem Dafoe, a member of The Wooster Group, comments that the focus on task over emotion resulted in a greater satisfaction as a performer:

> It is just about being it and doing it […] this leaves the mind free - instead of trying to fill the moment with emotions analogous to the [character], the performer is left to explore his own relationship to the task he is carrying out. (Dafoe in Callens, 2005, p. 96)

Similarly, in my practice, I am using task and movement to distance the ensemble from pre-established notions of *performance* in order to develop and create a new way of thinking, and accessing the task. Through the physical exploration, a new corporal language becomes imbedded in the vocabulary of the ensemble, which presents a possible gateway into the physical, establishing a collective corporal language which transports the individual action into the realm of the collective. This can be seen in 'The Biscuit Square Task' (see section 10 of *The Rule Book*), where the ensemble created an individual movement, rule, duration and speed before combining and sharing their individual response with other ensemble members responses. This resulted in the physical movements being distanced from personal attachment and, instead, moved towards interaction, which consequently opened up greater possibilities for the task.

My use of task-based performance is formed from the gathering of tasks and movements to allow for greater focus on the physical or gestural action of the task, rather than an emotional or affective response to task. By placing the action over the effect of the action, the identities of the ensemble flow and change as the ownership of the task becomes shared. Each ensemble member focuses on the internal logic of the task, which reveals an innate emphasis towards physical expression. The tasks facilitate a sense of personal and collective determination to complete, even when the ensemble member is absorbed by the impossibility of the given task. When considering how the task process contributed to the establishment of my ensemble, it is possible to see that the use of task provides a gateway into the physical, forming a collective corporal language, bringing the individual act into the realm of the collective.

I will now distinguish between the terms *games* and *tasks* in my practice to further enhance the importance of *doing* not *performing*. The use of *games* within performance is established as a method of creating narrative and understanding through entertainment, agency, immersion and exploration among audience members. I assert that the fundamental difference within my practice is that tasks are not designed to provide entertainment or create agency for wider social change. Although it is possible to think of some of the tasks crated in the laboratory as games, or deriving from games, I would emphasise that the difference is my definition of task emphases a sense of *doing* rather than developing or building narrative during the closed or open processes. This forms a sense of active response that maintains associative connections, as each task stands on its own; they are not sequential. For example, the outcome of 'The Paper Aeroplane Task' will not affect 'The Skipping Task' and vice versa, as each task is being carried out for the satisfaction of completion rather than to build a narrative. This is unlike a *game* in which

the rules follow and depend on each other to provide a winner or loser, as reiterated here by Gordon Calleja, author of *In-Game: From Immersion to Incorporation* (2011), who states 'Certain goals are pursued due to their intrinsic value within the game system' (Calleja, 2011, p.161).

The process of creating tasks within the laboratory is detailed and layered, in the below example each rule provides more elements of *doing* rather than narrative or clarity. Although narrative might be applied by the guests as a sense-making tool, the tasks themselves do not offer any sequential narrative or connections. The task adds rules only to build focus and commitment in order to *do* the task.

> *Paper Fortune Teller Task.*[7]
>
> - Do 10 jumping jacks.
> - Stand in front of the video projector and watch for three and a half minutes.
> - Switch your fortune teller with someone with brown hair and proceed with theirs.
> - Go to display 6.
> - Make an orange paper aeroplane.
> - Stand still with your eyes closed and listen to the room for 1 minute.
> - Blow up a balloon.
> - Go to display 8.
>   (Agratini, Joachim-Farrow, Tansey, Wood, Willett, 2015)

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[7] A paper fortune teller is an origami toy often used as a guessing or fortune telling device. Based on chance, multiple colours and number combinations a fortune or prediction is revealed. To work a paper fortune teller, the guest must place a thumb and index fingers of each hand individually in the four pockets on the underside of the paper fortune teller. The guest will then pick a number, and count this number out whilst alternating a pinching and pulling motion with the paper fortune teller. Each pinch will expose four of the colours written on the inner flaps, and each pull will expose the other four colours written on the alternate flaps. Due to the folded nature, only fifty percent of the colours can be exposed at once. The guest will spell out the colour, again using the alternating pinching and pulling motion with the paper fortune teller; for example if the colour is blue, the letters of the word blue, B-L-U-E are spelt out. After spelling out the colour, the paper fortune teller will be showing one of the other sets of four colours, after which one final colour is picked. Traditionally under the final colour, a fortune or prediction is read out, however in the installation it was a task that was revealed, read and carried out. To see the unfolded paper fortune tellers used to provide this task, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/06/18/paper-fortune-tellers/

The process of carrying the task allows the act of *doing* to become collective, and the ownership shared, as each element of the task is developed collectively and experienced individually. The task transcends an individual sense of winning or completing as there is not a final end purpose. There can be no winner or loser as the focus is on the process of carrying the tasks out and *doing*. This notion is vital, as it highlights the co-ownership and *between* of the ensemble; the tasks cannot be completed individually. Each member of the ensemble needs the other in order for the task to take place. This is seen in each of the tasks, but a specific example of this is 'The Paper Aeroplane Task'. During this task, each person has an individual task to complete: throwing all their paper aeroplanes as well as a collective task, to tie all paper aeroplanes to a single piece of string (see section 2 of *The Rule Book* for greater clarity). The nature of the task means that the individual cannot 'win', as they cannot complete the task without the other individuals. The 'success' of the task rests in the *between* space of the ensemble in order to carry out the task. This allows for attentiveness, described by Nancy as always 'on the edge of meaning' (Nancy, 2007, pp.7-10). The task is more creative, seeking relationality as conceptions of *mine, ours* and *yours* interweave and invite sharing.

It is possible to refer to the first installation (see Chapter 10), where the guests were given agency over direct tasks; they were encouraged to explore the tasks, but these tasks did not affect the outcome of the installation. These tasks were to *do something* in the space, something that may or may not affect their experience of the event, but did not change the outcome of the event itself. However, during the second installation, the guest's tasks did hold the potential to affect the outcome of installation, but the potential outcomes were restricted to the space of the installation. As such, the potential outcomes did not transcend into the wider social sphere. The tasks, within both installations, were not

created with the intention of encouraging the guests to discover social meaning. I argue

this is one of the distinctions between my definition and the use of the term 'task' over

games: task is not attempting to create an immersive environment that promotes agency

of a wider social change; rather, task is used to explore the possibility for *doing something*

in the moment that the task is taking place*.*

The theatre company Coney, co-founded and co-directed by Tassos Stevens (2016), who

describe themselves as interactive theatre-makers, state that they:

> […] create games, adventures and play where people can choose to take a meaningful part. Our work takes place anywhere that people gather: in theatres, schools, museums, on the streets and online and always follows the principles of adventure, curiosity and loveliness.[8] (Coney, 2006)

Within Coney's work, they are attempting to reactivate a sense of social engagement

through games and play. They are attempting to realise a fictional event that the audience

can participate and become immersed in. The act of game and play is undertaken

individually and collectively, asking the audience to be responsible for the decisions taken.

Coney's production of *Early Days (of a better nation)* (2014-2015), which took inspiration

from the 2011 England riots, as well as the rise and fall of Occupy. It required the audience

to explore, through game and play, the possibilities of nationhood and democracy,

accentuating the fact that, within Coney's productions, the emphasis is on wider social

change, or the ability to foresee change. The audience was actively taking part in the

decisions that would lead to such a change; therefore, they developed a sense of agency.

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[8] Although Coney do not offer a definition or explanation of the phrases 'loveliness', within the context of this investigation, it is possible to determine that this suggestive language is referring to the aesthetic principles of their performances and the open nature of their provocations, activated via games. There is an active awareness within the work of Coney to welcome the audience *into* the world of the performance, emphasised through their alluring and intriguing use of language.

The use of the terminology 'task' is critical to my understanding of the formation of the emerging ensemble, as well as how task-based practice can operate in an open, public environment. Within my practice, tasks create new methods of responding, shifting the ensemble's attention towards *each other*. This, then, functions to shift their attention towards *doing* not *performing* as they move away from the self-conscious and towards the physical. This focus on the physical establishes a collective corporal language. It is not a case of using *games* to create a narrative, entertainment or insight for the player, but rather the focus is on *doing* to create a sense of collective ownership. The task becomes co-operative and more creative, as the objective of the task is to work together to explore the potential of the task, thus shifting the individual action into the realm of the collective.

4.1. The Shared Ownership of Tasks

This chapter discusses how the shared ownership of tasks, actions and rules can translate the object and task into an abstract visual language that transcends between the identities of the ensemble. This discussion of shared ownership and redistribution of tasks, physical actions and rules provides a greater understanding of the formation of performance ensembles. The process of capturing and reframing movements derived from the task allows the ownership to be shared among the ensemble. This, in turn, removes the sense of isolation to embody a sense of *being-with-other.*

The process of lifting, copying and repeating movements and capturing them within my laboratory takes two forms. Firstly, as mentioned in Chapter Two, there are 'movement scores' which are understood as longer, more distinguished movement patterns. These scores are thorough and consist of multiple movements that are consciously arranged. Secondly, there are 'movement bursts', which are short, unexpected single movements. These single movements are captured and reserved for another point during the laboratory process and called on to unlock moments of frustration, hesitation or complication. Eugenio Barba (2005) also referred to 'a score of physical and vocal actions'; however, he defined this as the '[…] succession of details […] fixed in an irrevocable way [which] imposes a discipline which seems to contradict the free flow of life, the performer's spontaneity, even her/his individuality' (Barba, 2005, p.130). As such, the score that Barba refers to needs to be embodied so that it can be repeated without having to think about what comes next. This is different from my use of the term 'score', as within my practice the scores are continually referred to. This is seen in 'The Biscuit Task', where the ensemble referred to their scores throughout the task, this was achieved by using paper grids that documented

the required movement, speed and duration, examples of these grids can be seen in Section 10 of *The Rule Book*. This allowed for the movement scores to be layered and complicated without requiring the ensemble to remember the score, which in turn added greater clarity to the movements, as they drew from multiple members' responses to the original task, further distributing the ownership.

Furthermore, Barba insisted that the score must be made up of action and not movements, in that 'a "physical action" is the "smallest perceptible action" and is recognizable by the fact that even if you make a microscopic movement […] the entire tonicity of the body changes' (Barba, 1997, p.128). This understanding of the score of action is an important distinction, Barba is suggesting that the microscopic movements should be built into and become a part of the score. However, within my practice, we are working with movements and the score is a way of capturing those movements, whilst *allowing* for microscopic changes each time the movement score is encountered. This approach allows the movement to be taken from one ensemble member and distributed among several others. As such, the action can be derived from one member of the ensemble and reused and repeated by another member; this allows the ownership to move between one and another within the process as the ownership becomes plural.

The process of decontextualising and repurposing the material via the use of 'movement scores' translates the objects and tasks into an abstract visual language formed of lifted, copied and repeated movements. The use of approaches such as chance composition, improvisations, repetition, fragmentation, games and task can be likened to dance and movement practitioners, such as Yvonne Rainer, Anna Halprin, Steve Paxton and Simone Forti, who aimed to isolate movement and be examined as objects themselves. Dance and

movement practices in the 1960s saw a shift towards a new use of time, space and the body, using task as a method for creating impersonal, concentrated and 'real' movements. These movements were goal or task orientated and, as Banes states, 'The use of objects […], improvisation, spontaneous incidents, task, games and relaxed structures all engender new possibilities for dance movement' (Barnes, 1987, p. 17). This allowed associative and unexpected connections to develop, while the logic of the task or movement ran through the process, which offered a sense of meaning, whilst also providing an intensity and focus. Therefore, by adopting methods of chance, task and repetition within my practice, as explored in the dance and movement practice in the 1960s, it functioned to generate a task-based framework combined with a focus on seemingly illogical rules. This, in turn, allowed the individual's task to become the collective's.

When, in the laboratory, tasks combined the individual movement with the collective language, as each performer is permitted the space to respond individually to the initial investigation. The individual response is re-distributed among the ensemble before being brought back into the collective language. For example, when developing 'movement scores', the ensemble members would each write an instruction on a piece of paper, then switch with another ensemble member, who would then physically carry out that instruction, spending time learning and developing their movement before teaching it to the ensemble. As the ensemble physically embodies the movement, it brings the language of movement full cycle from individual to collective.

This can be compared to one of Goat Island's educational activities called the 'Impossible Dance'. During this activity, participants are asked to write down a task that they deem to be impossible; they are then asked to switch this task with another participant, who must

interpret the given impossible task and physically do or carry out their interpretation, translating it into a repeatable physical task. Bailes (2010) states that the 'Impossible Task':

> [d]escribes an approach to creative practice that is intrinsically collective yet individually pursued (to begin with) whilst establishing a performative territory based on actions that seem un-doable. (Bailes, 2010, pp.110-111)

The act of creating an un-doable action is intrinsic to the task as well as to the development of the ensemble. This asks the performer to think outside of the 'imagined' limits of their capabilities; to let go of individual or personal attachments to movement via the switching and sharing of the impossible task, therefore, bringing the individual into the realm of the collective.

The seemingly impossible physical nature of the tasks, within Goat Island's work, compels the performer's urgency and desire to complete the task and drives the physical endurance. Matthew Goulish, a performer and commentator on the work of Goat Island, comments on this experience of physical urgency:

> [...] a lot of what we do is organised around a task or a series of tasks and the way to deal with those tasks – I'm talking as a performer now – is with a feeling of urgency [...] in performance we become possessed by the spirit of the action, by the impossibility of doing it correctly. (Goulish, 2007, p.70)

Within my own practice, the physical nature of the task drives the participants to find urgency in their work as they move away from the self-conscious, through the active *doing,* capturing and framing of the physical movement within the task.

The nature of the seemingly un-doable singular action is echoed in 'The Skipping Task'. The task required all four participants to be able to successfully jump over the skipping rope, as well as turn the skipping rope in time to assist those jumping. This resulted in a singular

action being carried out by each member of the ensemble, who wanted and needed to jump over the rope and complete their individual routine (see Section 3 of *The Rule Book* for this routine). However, the task could not be completed in isolation as both jumping participants needed to clear the rope in order for the routine to be completed. Further to this, the jumping could not be completed without the other participants turning the rope consistently. Therefore, in order for the individual task to be completed, the participant's focus must shift and move between supporting and encouraging the other ensemble members, as well as focusing on their own task, so that the ensemble could complete the overall task, changing the focus from the sense of individual 'success' towards group 'success'. In this task, the ensemble were perpetually shifting *between* singular and plural states, creating an *in-between* space, as the nature of the task required both a singular action and completion, as well as a collective or plural action for all to 'successfully' complete the task the ensemble were working *for* and *with* each other. The intangibility of the ownership over the task can be likened to Nancy's (2000) language of being-towards-others, which is understood as a transcendence between identities into the plural self. A transcendence is qualified as a continual merging, rather than a localised movement, perpetually transcending and shifting in the space *between* singular and plural, repeatedly removing the sense of isolation of the singular to embody a sense of being-with-others.

Tasks and rules within my practice become both an individual and collective act; they are dependent on self and other, while the 'collective sharing is dependent on the individual responsibility […] a certain state of being/doing' (Carrer & Camiller, 2014, p.42). The task becomes the action for the individual, while simultaneously becoming action for the ensemble. Each member of the ensemble becomes focused on the task and action is built from lifted, copied, shared and repeated movements. In order to both create and

'successfully' accomplish the task, the ensemble are actively working *for* and *with* each other.

This thesis will now discuss the use of found objects within the laboratory environment and the unlikely and multiple connections established *between* and *with* the objects. It will consider how the application of these objects affects and impacts the process of developing tasks and the formation of the ensemble.

5. Objects for Tasks

Within my practice, the tasks that we create are often borne out of objects; these objects are found rather than chosen, and they are not consciously brought into the process. We store all the objects in the 'object box'. This box is vital to the process as it contains starting objects, such as string, paper, pens and tape. As tasks develop, the objects will be used to fulfil many roles; they may then be supplemented with 'new' objects borne out of the process. These objects are established out of a sense of foundness, with each object exposed through unplanned discoveries; this, in turn, provides each object with its own sense of history, as it moves through the laboratory environment, shifting and changing, but ultimately containing a fixed sense of belonging to the process.

Within the laboratory process, we have worked with string, paper, sand, paper plates, wooden skewers and balloons. Each of these objects were *found* because of a quality they held; for example, balloons allowed us to experiment with breath, post and pre-exhaustion, following a task. This allowed us to unlock previously unseen potential, or add rules and sub-rules when developing tasks. Once an object had been brought into the laboratory environment, it would be brought back every time, even if the object was not directly linked to the task in progress. This approach meant that each object, whatever it may be, was held as highly as every other element of the laboratory. By having all the objects with us in the space at all times meant we were free to return to ideas and movement, or even create new tasks from objects that may have been previously discounted, or even used before. This highlighted the multiple possibilities held within any object when placed in the laboratory environment.

These disparate sources are used to create unlikely connections, allowing the connotations to become associative, translating the objects or material into task. This process of finding material that is *open* with multiple possibilities, can attempt, according to Harvie and Lavender (2010), to 'combine and displace the usual function of an object, character or spoken text without a predetermined outcome' (Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.92). This statement is of great importance to my own practice; the use of objects that are formed out of unlikely connections permits a greater sense of possibilities. By distancing the objects from their normal function, it resists predetermined outcomes. For example, I presented the ensemble with paper plates, wooden skewers, string and the concept of spinning; the object that was created was far from anything that could be predesigned or imagined.[9] The ensemble created an object, using the paper plates as wheels and fashioned the string and skewers into supports, and began pushing the object around the space from this object, when the rest of the task was created. A further example of this is the use of a deck of cards as a starting object; this led to physical movements in response to each suit, from which a complex process of ordering the cards began, which depended on each member of the ensemble 'completing' the movements.[10]

The lack of theme allows for the physical task to derive from the ensemble rather than a pre-existing idea or accepted understanding of the object. This echoes The Wooster Group's process. LeCompte states she starts with nothing other than the objects:

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[9] To see some images of the object, please follow these links:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/img_2613.jpg
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/contraption-6.jpeg
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/contraption-3.jpeg
[10] To watch a clip of this task please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/02/29/card-line-run-through/?iframe=true&preview=true

> When I go downstairs [to the studio] I don't have any thematic ideas – I don't even have a theme. I don't have anything except literal objects – some *flow*ers, some images, some television sets, a chair, some costumes I like. In the last piece, something someone brought in by mistake. That's it. And then ideas come after the fact (LeCompte, in Kaye, 1996, p. 260).

Similarly, Hixson (in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007), director of Goat Island, states that their rehearsal process begins without a fixed idea or direction; rather, it is a 'seed'. This idea of growth is highlighted by Stephen Bottoms: he states that each new performance began with a 'deliberately open-ended question or inquiry, usually suggested by director Lin Hixson' (Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.13). This method of open-ended enquiry, within Goat Island's approach, rather than a prefixed idea or theme, creates an environment in which each member of the group can respond individually to the initial investigation. This process within Goat Island's work creates what Karen Christopher refers to as a 'system of roots underground, the sources of material [fanning] out in several directions with many forks and diversions along the way' (Christopher in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.13). It is possible to acknowledge Hixson as the starting point for the collective's 'system of roots', as she provides the initial suggestion and objects. Hixson describes her process for finding material, phrases, text or images that function to draw the performer away from the emotional and into the physical, as:

> […] a way to draw from the everyday, the familiar and the mundane. I look to task for metaphor, for taking the familiar and using it to designate something else, to leap across meaning to criss-cross ideas (Hixson in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.152).

The work of ERS differs from that of Goat Island and The Wooster Group, as there is often a theme that the collective works around, although the original theme may not be recognisable in the final performance. For example, in their performance *Room Tone*

(2002), the collective's theme was 'haunting', 'spiritual transformation' and 'possession'. By working in this way, ERS are exploring the impulses in the room, encouraging the associative connections between *found* objects to form 'a poetic sphere of connotation' (Lehmann, 2006, p.79), and thus creating performance that becomes 'theatre making sense musically' (Collins in Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.86). ERS's unconnected, random application of objects, text and stimuli resonates with my own, as the objects and their application within my own laboratory are placed together in unexpected ways.

However, I would not enter a process with a theme; rather, I would use objects. This functions to generate greater shared ownership, as the objects are disconnected from preconceived personal attachments, which allows for the individual to respond to each other in the moment of creation. The situation or environment follows an undetermined, unfixed and unplanned path that is formed by the ensemble, in response to the object, rather than placing individual value on the objects, forming disparate connections which provide multiple possibilities for task. Arguably, each time or moment of discovering, or repurposing, the found object permits the ensemble to exist in a *between* space, during which a singular conception or origin of meaning attached to the found object belongs to each 'I' (the individual) and the plural concept or re-imagined use of/for the object belongs to the 'We' (the ensemble).

Each time the object is re-encountered the meaning of that task it is not what formulates a becoming or *between.* It is not based on a shared understanding of the meaning of the task, rather each time we come together we encounter it anew. Within my practice, the meaning of the found object can be understood as being in a *between* state, rediscovered *each time* the ensemble comes into contact with it; the meaning is translated, changed and

altered as the meaning of the found object becomes plural. For example, the meaning

attached to the string, paper plates and wooden skewers, as mentioned earlier, shifted

each time the ensemble encountered them; for instance, a second object was made from

the same items to form a washing line effect. There was a shift between their individual

understanding and the plural understanding of how the objects could be used borne out

of the process of repurposing the objects and finding disparate connections. By not fixing

any form of central idea prior to, or after, the work, it allowed for new associations, ideas

and possibilities to continually and freely emerge. By adopting the approach of found

objects, the meaning of the object does not belong to the 'I', the individual, but rather to

the collective 'We', rediscovered each time it is encountered.

When considering how the disparate material's used for the tasks function together

throughout the laboratory, whilst permitting the ensemble to discover the association that

implicitly binds the objects, rules and task, David Graver (1995) in *The Aesthetics of

Disturbance: Anti-Art in Avant-Garde Drama* noted that the use of disparate objects can

result in two possible styles: 'collage' or 'montage'. This thesis will now distinguish

between 'collage' and 'montage', drawing from The Wooster Group and ERS, to offer fresh

insights into the application of these styles within my practice.

Graver (1995) refers 'Collage effect' as working with disparate materials to build and create

ideas and tasks for a performance that illuminate the individual pieces of the work, while

pointing towards a centralising interpretation. Graver comments that a collage effect

results in a 'constructed whole [that] is never greater than the [individual] parts. Rather,

collage construction allows the parts to shine forth in the heterogeneous individuality'

(Graver, 1995, p.33). As a result, the 'found' use of the objects within a collage effect has the potential to make the objects more recognisable than their original function.

A 'montage effect' is defined by Graver (1995) when fragments of the original function of the found objects are held together and made part of the performance by the manner in which the performance is constructed, through its deliberate incompleteness:

> [A] montage flaunts the cohesive power of its constructive procedure through its intentional incompleteness [and] in its incompleteness it establishes irreverent connections [from] the elements of which it consists [...] the sources from which these elements are drawn and [...] the central purpose that hold the elements together.' (Graver, 1995, p.33)

Graver is suggesting that a montage effect is inherently incomplete; as a result, it creates disparate connections between objects and task and it is these disparate connections that function to hold the elements together.

I put forward the idea that there are a great deal of crossovers between Graver's (1995) distinctions between a collage and montage approach, and I find the assumed function of the found objects can seep into 'performance', although this may not be the intention within my laboratory. Nevertheless, it is the overall value placed on found objects, within my practice, that situates my work predominantly with a collage effect, as the configuration of the whole of the work is never greater than the value of the individual tasks.

The Wooster Group embody a collage method of gathering materials for performance. It creates a random, unstructured, unplanned, stumbled-across nature to the assemblage of objects (Graver, 1995). This is referred to by The Wooster Group as a sense of *foundness* within the materials, understood as objects that point 'persistently back to the world they

came [from]' (Graver, 1995, p.31). As such, this causes a disruption to any assumed autonomy or unity in the work. This disruption, within The Wooster Group's work, is facilitated by taking multiple *found* objects, which are often provided by the collective. For example, during the creation of the performance *L.S.D.* (1984), LeCompte asked each member of the collective to bring a music album of their choice to the rehearsal process, together with one line of text from *The Crucible* (1953). This method differs from my own practice, as I would not set the ensemble tasks in this way; I would not ask them to bring specific objects to the space. My approach differs, as the objects we have been working with have been used to create different fragments of task rather than to create a final performance. The closed nature of my laboratory and the removal of a final event reduces the need to create the sense of unity between the objects as our process has not been driven by an overarching sense of finality. This lack of conclusiveness allows us repeatedly to return to tasks, always searching for ways to develop the tasks, which allow us to add more rules and layers to our tasks. We are not working for meaning, or working to apply meaning for performance. This results in each task appearing, therefore, more complex and less immediately accessible.

The collage effect used by The Wooster Group provides a personal and collective wealth of material from which their scores of physical actions are created, allowing LeCompte to take fragments that are without fixed meaning and place them with, next to or alongside other fragments. As such, she is forming an interwoven network of objects that create the text or performance, resulting in an active process rather than a linear attachment to the objects. There becomes a tangible connection, 'a sense of the objects' arbitrary nature is preserved […] by virtue of its dislocation within the text' (Savran, 1986, p.51). There is a

juxtaposition between the dissimilar as the fragments are interwoven combining gestural, verbal, visual and musical texts within their performance.

> [A]nything can co-exist together – without, you know, losing its own uniqueness – without being absorbed and regurgitated. They are separate and they can stay separate and at the same time inform each other – within the same work. (LeCompte, in Kaye, 1996, p. 257)

Similarly, within my process, the tasks and objects function independently, yet their application allows them to inform each other and the objects become active in the process. The method used to discover the objects within the laboratory created disparate and unseen connections that continue to hold the objects together. For example, during 'The Skipping Task' and 'The Swing String Task' (see sections 3 and 6 of *The Rule Book),* both used string in different ways, while these objects informed each other during the creation process, thus sparking connections.

ERS use multiple unrelated sources that are often translated, changing the form of the source and adding depth and detail, developing the layers within the performance and aligning the process with a montage effect. For example, in *Room Tone* (2002), they drew from extracts from a psychological study by William James and combined this with Henry James' novella *The Turn of the Screw* (1898). The use of a theme created connections between the interests of the ensemble and objects used as stimuli, as Bailes states '[…] the eclectic sources brought in during the first days will to some extent influence the direction activities take' (Bailes in Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.89). This allows ERS to use sources to develop new material in conversation with the *found* material. Performer Rinne Groff comments on the importance of multiple objects within ERS's work:

> We [ERS] need a lot of junk around to interact with, to make things start to happen: movies, or any piece of material. It starts in a rehearsal process, usually, the first couple of days might just be watching movies. We write things down and rewind [...] (Groff in Fusco, 1998)

By working in response to the disparate material, ERS are able to suggest a series of moods and directions contained in one performance. The unconnected nature of the material is accentuated, contributing to the open structure seen within their work. This layering of materials functions to 'illuminate the separateness' (Bailes, 2010, p.16). ERS's use of montage is dense and consists of fragmented, disjointed images, interrupted and forced apart by musical recordings or sound that juxtapose the stage images, thus creating disjunctive, layered and visual landscapes. For example, *Cab Legs* (1997) and *Total Fictional Lie* (1998) are described as:

> [...] a montage of layers of overlapping material demonstrated through accurate vignettes, presenting character-types often rendered bizarre by the isolation of a detail [...] displaced fragments of spoke, found and original text; samples of prerecorded music and soundscapes made from disjunctive samples and found sound bites and the surprisingly awkward manipulation of bodies and objects in space. (Bailes, 2010, p.149)

As such, the words are disengaged from the action and the reactions are removed from characters, resulting in a 'subjective abstract visual language' (Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.93), thus muddling the narrative structure and perception of meaning.

> [M]eaning is not, therefore, derived from the original context of the fragment itself but produced by the combination of fragments that the 'new' art work arranges. (Bürger in Bailes, 2010, p.165)

The translation and overlapping of materials, objects and text in ERS's process alludes to a working method that the collective label as 'dislocatory practice', a term the collective borrowed from Edwin Prevost (2002), the music theorist. The application of this term offers

a 'relocation [of] the anticipated and the dislocation of the expected' (Bailes, 2010, p.151). As such, ERS use the 'unexpected' within the framework of 'expected', resulting in unexpected connections and ideas. Within my practice, the use of everyday objects was placed in an unexpected framework, as the objects were repurposed and used in unexpected ways and distanced from their original or every day function.

The use of found objects and the application of a collage effect within my practice can be seen as having two major roles: the creation and formation of the ensemble, and the creation of the tasks. These two roles are interchangeable and operate in a circular nature; one does not always precede the other. I believe the use of found objects, with seemingly disparate connections, allows the ensemble to move into a plurality of understanding and repurposing of the object *each time* they come into contact with it. The use of disparate objects for the creation of the task permits an environment where the possibilities for the objects are unplanned and unrestricted, while the meaning is shifting 'between its reality and its possibility' (Sheppard, D. 1997 et al., p.131).

 The continual use of the objects within my practice builds a sense of history throughout the laboratory process, meaning the task connected to the object may change and shift, but there is always a fixed sense of the object belonging to the process. As such, by applying a collage approach to the layering of these tasks and objects, it allows the ensemble to form an interwoven network of objects and tasks, with each of these working independently. The application of the objects throughout the laboratory allows the ensemble to discover unnoticed associations that implicitly bind the objects and tasks together. This creates greater ownership of both the tasks and objects, allowing for the

configuration of the whole of the work never to be greater than the value of the individual

tasks, thus promoting a plurality of understanding within the ensemble.

6. Flow and Task-based Practice

This chapter will examine the function of *flow* in my practice, advocating that the relationship between *flow* and task-based practice is inherently linked. The state of *flow,* when accessed through an engagement with tasks, has revealed *flow* to be of vital importance to the development, formation and reformation of the ensemble. Within this discussion, I am drawing from *flow* as defined by Mihály Csíkszentmihályi (1988; 1990; 1996; 1997). He suggests that *flow* is not a physical movement, but rather a state of total immersion in the given task, which is embodied as an energised state of concentration. This understanding of *flow* allows for the tasks within the laboratory to be understood as part of the ensemble formation process and, therefore, offers significant insight into task-based contemporary performance and how this can facilitate a movement between the individual and the collective.

Flow has often been described as a process of discovering something new. It has been suggested by Csíkszentmihályi that the experience of *flow* compels people to stretch themselves, to always take on another challenge. It is this careful balance between challenge and skill that permits *flow* typically to occur in structured activities, such as 'ritual events, games, sports, or artistic performances' (Csíkszentmihályi, 1998, pp.30-31). These types of activities have relatively clear goals producing a harmony within the self, as the participants' attention can be totally invested in the activity at hand, resulting in a 'merging of activity and awareness' (Csíkszentmihályi, 1998, p.32). As a result of this enhanced awareness and attention, *flow* often leads to a distorted sense of time, in which the clock no longer offers a parallel to the temporal quality of experience; as a result, the self emerges from *flow* strengthened. This quality of the *flow* experience makes it '*autotelic* or

intrinsically rewarding' [original emphasis] (Csíkszentmihályi, 1998, p.34). As such, the

activity is undertaken in order to undertake it, not to reach the end or complete it.

Csíkszentmihályi has argued that the experience of *flow* can reveal a sense of happiness or

enjoyment, experienced on completion of the task, suggesting that this state of happiness

is more stable and constant as it of our own making. Therefore, the experience of post-task

enjoyment functions to further strengthen the self, which can lead to greater immersion

in the task at hand:

> [t]he happiness that follows *flow* is our own making, and it leads to increasing complexity and growth in consciousness [...] the more it resembles *flow* activities, the more involved we become, and the more positive the experience. (Csíkszentmihályi, 1997, pp.32-38)

When developing the tasks in the laboratory, the experience of *flow* allowed for the

development of complex, convoluted and repetitive rules and sub-rules within each task,

which permitted the development of, and engagement with, tasks that were both

individually and collectively intrinsic to the process.

It was this positive experience, post-task, which drove the ensemble to engage and re-

engage with tasks that appeared physically challenging or laborious. The detailed layering

of seemingly over-complicated rules provided the ensemble with a sense of lasting

achievement. For example, in 'The Paper Aeroplane Task', as detailed in section 2 of *The*

Rule Book, each time a paper aeroplane landed in the correct area marked on the floor, the

participants displayed vocal and physical responses, such as cheering and jumping up and

down.[11] This evidenced a clear desire to realise or complete the task, which would, in turn, provide or reward the ensemble member with a sense of achievement coupled with:

> [a] sense that one can control one's actions [because they know the rules]; that is, a sense that one can in principle deal with the situation because one knows how to respond to whatever happens next [by following the rules]. (Nakamura & Csíkszentmihályi, in Lopez & Snyder, 2002, p.90)

The internal awareness amongst the ensemble demonstrated that their own engagement with the task would provide them with a sense of enjoyment or happiness post-task, despite the physical and mental challenges of the task. This permits the participants to experience the activity as intrinsically rewarding; the aim of the task (successfully landing the paper aeroplanes) became an excuse to engage in the process and experience the release of happiness or feeling of post-task enjoyment (Lopez and Snyder, 2002).

Furthermore, the structure of the over-complicated tasks, rules and sub-rules added complexity and a greater degree of challenge to the original task. Elliot and Dweck (2005) comment that, in order to continue experiencing *flow*, participants need to identify, for themselves, increasingly greater challenges and, over time, the balance between the challenge and the participants' skills enhances their competence. Csíkszentmihályi reinforces the importance of this balance stating that, in order '[t]o remain in *flow*, one must increase the complexity of the activity by developing new skills and taking in new challenges' (Csíkszentmihályi, 1998, p.30). Therefore, the relationship between challenge and skill functioned to heighten the ensemble's awareness of the intrinsic nature of tasks within the laboratory environment, much like Richard Mitchell's comment that '[f]low

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[11] To watch this fragment with all the rules in place, please watch this video link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/03/16/layering-planes-week-18/
Additional clips demonstrating some of these responses can be seen by following this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/02/12/paper-aeroplanes/

occurs in an existential middle ground. We experience it when a balance is achieved between abilities and responsibilities' (Mitchell in Csíkszentmihályi, 1988, p.36).

The commitment to the moment-to-moment nature of aiming, throwing and repeating within 'The Paper Aeroplane Task' required the ensemble to engage in the unknown elements of the task, such as environmental considerations, duration, success rate and speed of the task. These challenges functioned to continually balance the task between the ensemble's known abilities and the unknown challenges produced by the rules and the environment. Therefore, the '[e]xperience seamlessly unfolds from moment-to-moment and one enters a subjective experience' (Lopez & Snyder, 2002, p.90). The experience of the task of throwing the paper aeroplanes became mutually informing, produced by the structures or rules in which the task was experienced; the experience of the task determined how an individual could act and react to the task.

During 'The Paper Aeroplanes Task', the ensemble were engaged with the aim of landing the paper aeroplanes in the correct sections, locating themselves in an environment that was continually being (re)produced through the previously established environment. This environment can be likened to a state that Bourdieu has coined *Habitus*, or a 'feel for the game' or a 'practical sense' (Johnson in Bourdieu, 1993, p.5). *Habitus* can be founded on a collective privileging a state of *flow*, which unconsciously forms collective and repetitious tasks that ultimately lead to a social or cultural meaning. As such, *Habitus* can be described as a 'system of durable transposable dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72), which generate and organise practices without 'presupposing a conscious [aim]' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72). *Habitus* consists of habits, norms, values and traditions that are unconsciously formed and

developed, whilst retaining important influences on how activities and environments are managed.

These diverse strategies are 'regulated [with a] disposition to generate regulated and regular behaviour' (Bourdieu, 1990, p.65), which is crucial for generating an optimal experience and sustained engagement amongst a group. This is much like the experience of a state of *flow*, where the activity contains ordered rules that make action and evaluation of action automatic and unproblematic (Csíkszentmihályi, 1975). This can be seen in the 'Paper Aeroplane Task', as the structure for the task contained rules that permitted the ensemble's actions and reactions to become automatic, based on the outcome of the previous action. Bourdieu (1977) states that *Habitus* is an internalised structure, which is 'determined by the past conditions which have produced the principle of their production' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72). This unconscious collective habit is generated by an engagement with *flow*, which provides the participant with an intrinsically rewarding system of principles, which affect the management of the environment.

In principle, the ensemble knew how to respond to the unpredictable nature of the task due to their past experiences of the task, which determined or affected the way in which that same task would be carried out the next time it was encountered. Therefore, *Habitus* formed an environment in which collective and repetitive tasks became synonymous with the social or cultural meaning of the laboratory.

The ensemble's engagement with *flow* combined with an understanding of the tasks, and the environment in which they had been created, permitted a continual balance between skill and challenge, which produced an internalised structure. Furthermore, the activation of *flow* continually reignited the ensemble's will to engage in the physical and mental

challenges within the tasks. This engagement with the demanding nature of the task originated from the awareness of a reliable sense of enjoyment or post-task-happiness, which then inspired the ensemble to perpetually re-engage with the seemingly exhausting and convoluted tasks. By generating tasks that facilitated a state of *flow*, it is possible to see how the moment-to-moment structure of the task surpassed the isolation of the rules and sub-rules and, in turn, removed the isolation between the ensemble members. They were not locked in individual tasks, but were engaged in a task that, collectively, they understood to be intrinsic to the process. The ensemble responded to particular situations in a way that was not just deterministic or consciously calculated, but was, instead, derived from a set of predispositions surrounding the purpose of the laboratory, internalised in the structure of the task *and* in the aspirations of the ensemble.

The following chapters will introduce some of the tasks that have emerged out of this closed laboratory process. These tasks are by no means linear, extensive or finite. I have chosen these task as they best allow for a description of the process and to highlight central elements of my methodology and process. I will begin with a discussion of 'The Warm-Up' followed with an account of two tasks: 'The Hopscotch Task' and 'The Skipping Task'. Each of these tasks have been placed next to a 'phrase' that signals the transitional subjectivities evident throughout the PhD. This is not to suggest that these 'phrases' of ritual, liminal and exhaustion apply only to these tasks, but rather these tasks highlight the continual presence of these 'phrases' throughout the laboratory. It is my intention that, by exploring these tasks and phrases, it will be possible to provide greater insight into the particulars of the closed laboratory and how task and rules function within my practice.

7. The Ritualised Warm-up

> *My feet are bare, the music starts, I start, I move, I jump, I run, I bounce, I lead, I am led, I push myself, I don't think, I do think. It is happening to me, with me and for me. My movements are different from the others, but somehow we are united by the same movements or the attempt to carry out the same movements. I can do anything I like and I will not be alone in it. I am tired but I carry on. It is unimportant what I do, but it is important that I do it. Movements are flowing without active thought. As the music stops, the movement stops, but this is only the beginning.*
> (Willett et al., 2014)

This chapter will focus on the function and role in my practice of the ritualised warm-up on the formation of the ensemble and consider how this affects the 'shift and flux' between the individual and the ensemble, demonstrating how the environment within my laboratory permits and allows for this state of flux, while inspiring individual ownership within the ensemble.

The use of ritual is referring to Arnold van Gennep in *The Rites of Passage* (1960), during which he defined *Rites de Passage* as 'rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position and age' (Van Gennep in Turner, 1969, p.94). For Van Gennep, these rites of passage, rituals or transition phases are divided into three phases: separation, margin (sometimes referred to as Limen), and aggregation. Van Gennep's writing was hugely influential on Victor Turner's research and his text, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (1969). Within this, Turner (re)defines these stages of ritual. The first, separation, is defined as the symbolic behaviour to signify the detachment from the social position. The second stage, margin, otherwise known as Limen, is when the characteristics of the ritual are embodied, resulting in the subject becoming ambiguous. The third stage,

aggregation, also known as reaggregation or reincorporation (Turner, 1969), sees the subject enter into a new set or state where they 'behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards' (Turner,1969, p.95).

One of the first elements of the laboratory was removing our shoes and socks; from here on, the feet will remain bare when in the laboratory environment. This not only becomes an anti-slip measure, but, most importantly, it creates the continual underscoring sound of the physical body(ies) in the space while forming a connection with the environment in which we are working. The connection of the bare feet on the floor forms the sound of the laboratory. This sound and continual connection with the floor creates a physical sensation. The value of the physical sound is not solely placed on the body(ies), but on the environment in which the sounds are generated.

The value of the feet is asserted in *The Grammar of the Feet* by Tadashi Suzuki, where he asserts 'the actor composes himself on the basis of sense of contact with the ground' (Suzuki, 1986, p.8). 'The Suzuki Method' works to build an actor's awareness of their body, especially the centre. This method requires a great amount of energy and concentration, with the intention of the actor to become more aware of their natural expressiveness and to allow them to commit more fully to the physical and emotional requirements. Suzuki training also attempts to integrate physical and mental systems to create 'body-mind', which requires concentration and strength of will. This heightened awareness with the body and connection with the ground creates, for Suzuki, a heightened physical awareness providing 'the sensation of putting down roots' (Suzuki, 1986, p.8). This connection with the environment through bare feet allows the ensemble to distance themselves from their daily experience and enter the laboratory with focus, commitment and a greater physical

awareness. This was enhanced by the use of physical duration and endurance, which is required to complete the physical activities during the warm-up when placed in conjunction with the enhanced corporeal connection with the floor, which can result in a sense of separation from daily associations. This can be likened to Arnold van Gennep's (1960) first stage of ritual, *separation*. Van Gennep states that there is a symbolic separation that is comprised of symbolic behaviour, 'signifying the detachment of the individual or group' (Van Gennep in Turner, 1969, p.94). Although Van Gennep is not applying his theories of ritual to performance, it is possible to identify that bare feet signal the 'detachment' of the individual and instigates a process of entering into a collective sense of agreement, distancing the ensemble from their *normality* through the connection of their bare feet with the environment.

The warm-up begins with physical movement to music. These initial movements are led by myself; however, as time goes by, this role shifts and changes. As the warm-up progresses, any talking dies down, normally due to the shortness of breath and increased heart rate. Throughout the warm-up, the energy and movement increases, demanding a greater commitment to the movements. The movements are simple and easy to follow; there is no obligation to copy, imitate or exactly follow the movements. We will run, jump, lunge, squat, lead, follow, sprint, clap, wiggle, shake, wave, be small, be big, build our physical ability, be impulsive, and challenge ourselves to move in new ways. This will last for approximately thirty minutes, depending greatly on the energy levels, which vary from week to week.[12]

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[12] To watch an example of our warm-ups, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/warm-up/

Loud music starts the warm-up and triggers movement. This music is chosen by the ensemble and signifies the *beginning* of the laboratory session and forms a common identification with the songs. The music is instigated by myself, but can be brought in by anyone and the songs can be changed throughout the warm-up. The music functions in an important way to my working methodology of the ritualised warm-up. Adam Seligman states, 'both ritual and music rely more on pure form than most other activities. Both work at the edge of perfection and reality' (Seligman, 2008, p.172). The loud volume and continual presence of the music in the warm-up demand that the ensemble listen and focus, changing the atmosphere of the room, drawing the collective away from the normal rhythm and pattern of conversation. When the music begins, there is little or no verbal communication, as we move physically, responding to the music, shifting the method of communication away from verbal and towards a purely physical expression of movement. This frames the warm-up, which takes place each time the ensemble comes together, signalling the beginning of the laboratory session, as well as signifying the ensemble coming together.

The importance of *coming together* is also noted in ERS's work, although they use dance rather than music, or rather a *performance* of a dance, as a method of beginning and bringing the collective together. These *dances* display a well-practised and rehearsed clumsiness, resulting in enthusiastic awkward movement displacing the narrative and interrupting logic:

> [t]he dances function as disarticulatory interludes and are constructed out of well-practised movements made to retain their clumsiness [...] anarchic but tamed by fierce precision. (Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.82)

The dance is repeated each time the collective come together, physically bringing the ensemble together, 'providing an activity the group could practice together every day' (Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.91). ERS's artistic director, Collins, states '[a]ll I know I have to do is find a task for myself, something I can come into the room and "do" for each piece […] then I'm okay' (Collins in Harvie and Lavender, 2010, p.91), thus immersing the collective in a physical task when developing and expanding a body of material.

This is much like my warm-up process, which is completed each time, regardless of the mood or energy levels, taking the collective through a series of movements that symbolise a coming together. However, ERS's use of *dance* differs, as the movements within my process are not learnt or repeated in a sequence; rather, they are the act of 'doing the same thing', which is always carrying out a warm-up to music, much like the removal of shoes and socks that signals a beginning and coming together.

Karen Christopher, performer in Goat Island, also states that their warm-up operates in several ways: 'it brings us together through the performance of a series of simple actions; it lays a foundation of agreement: we agree to perform these movements together; we agree to breathe in unison' (Christopher in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.146). Much like Christopher's statement, the warm-up in my practice represents the operation of simple actions, which we have agreed to carry out. This also resonates with Van Gennep (1960) and his second phase of ritual, *Limen*, which can be understood as a state in which the body is lost to, or in, the ritual, where the characteristics of the ritual are embodied and the body of the subject becomes ambiguous (Gennep 1960). Within my practice, the acknowledgement that the ensemble has come together, reaching a physical understanding through the use of music in the ritualised warm-up, means the ensemble

were able to give their body(ies) over to the movements in the warm-up, working *with* and *for* the other individuals functioning in an ambiguous state. By coming together in this way, it builds a collective understanding that we will physically move until the music stops, coming together to focus purely on the task in hand.

The use of movements and exercises to promote a shift through physical movement and actions encourages a new way of thinking. The use of undetermined physical movement permits the ensemble members to develop their physical strength and endurance. During the warm-up, the ensemble carry out physical activities for an extended period of time; responding or reacting to the situation around them, focusing on the body(ies) and their response to the initial experience of physical duration. The emphasis here is not on the 'correct' or 'right' movements or direction of movement, but rather the movement itself. As a result, the ensemble enters into a state of *flow*, as discussed in Chapter 6. This immersion in a state of *flow* functions to distance the ensemble from the time pressures associated with the day-to-day as they enter into the 'extra-daily'. The term 'extra-daily' was developed by Eugenio Barba (1995), who described it as the process of searching for 'micro-movements', the techniques hidden in the body's daily movements. Barba stated, 'to engage with the "extra-daily" is to amplify these [movements] to increase the power of presence' (Barba, 2005, p.9). The warm-up process was significant to the notion of freedom or extra-daily associations; it shifted the focus away from the 'normal' or the daily and towards *doing* and *being* active in the space. The commitment that was shown to the warm-up process demonstrated a willingness to be together in a joint expression of action; it is this expression of willingness and action that frames the commitment to endurance.

The movements used within the warm-up can be seen to amplify the body's daily possibilities or daily use of movement. The ensemble is engaged with the movements throughout the warm-up; the movements are explored through duration and repetition. This allows the participants to go beyond their daily expectations of their ability to physically move, and begin to adjust their expectations of *right* or *wrong* movements and perceive the possibilities of the 'extra-daily' within the laboratory environment.

The duration of the warm-up functions in two ways. Firstly, the continual use of physical movement and strength-building activities fortifies and develops the physical ability of the collective, as we work continually to improve endurance and recovery time. Secondly, the physical duration works to distance the collective from the duration of time. The extended period of movement, rather than being controlled by the clock, is working *for* and *with* the time of the body. By attempting to reframe time, I am creating an environment within the laboratory that draws us, the ensemble, away from the normality of our day, our routine and as a result 'there is a transformation of time, space and identity, creating a shift from the "ordinary" or "daily" quality, to an "extra-ordinary" or "extra-daily" dimension [as] coined by Eugenio Barba' (Cremona al ed., 2004, p.82).

A single movement or action can be repeated multiple times. The length of time given to the repetition of movements was extended beyond normal expectations, functioning to fracture the 'normal' understanding of time and, combined with exhaustion, created a contradiction of suspension and extension of time. The daily routine of the ensemble is *suspended* by the distorting of time through the duration of the repetition of physical movements, which *extends* the normal conception of the *value* of time. The implicit repetition collapses the notion of productivity that reigns in the *ordinary*, resulting in a

manipulation of time, thus causing an *extra-ordinary* experience of the *value* of time. By generating a timeframe that stretched convention, the ensemble were required to suspend their relationship with time.

The use of time as transformation was also explored in Goat Island's work, although a critical distinction is that their reflections refer to *performance* and *audience,* whereas mine refers to *process* and e*nsemble*. Typically at the start of a Goat Island performance, there would be an extended length of time, used to draw the audience and performer away from the daily patterns and rhythms of their day-to-day lives and asks for a commitment to the unknown *value* of time. Goat Island acknowledged that they were facilitating a breakdown at the beginning of their performances 'to pull spectators away from wherever they have been, mentally, during the day, and to bring them into this space, now' (Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.51). This would be aided by the manipulation of time, the extension or duration of 'a similar gesture, or series of images repeated for a longer-than-expected length of time […] asking the audience to go somewhere they don't know and to follow without understanding' (Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.51). Goat Island used time within their approach to establish an alternative narrative for the experience of time through duration and repetition.

Goat Island performed a vocabulary of movement that often placed extreme physical demands on the performer. Through my warm-ups, I was using the physical demands and duration of the physical movements to alter the ensemble's perception of time. My use of duration and time within the warm-up functions to alter the 'narrative' of the laboratory, or to shift the pattern of the laboratory away from the daily understanding of time and movement into an 'extra-daily' understanding. The 'extra-daily' of my laboratory

environment places its value on presence and, therefore, inherently promotes process over product, allowing the 'extra-daily' and the 'daily' to work in tension (Barba, 2005), simultaneously maintaining a functional relationship without either state being isolated or separated. The transition into the 'extra-daily' through the repurposing of time creates an environment in which our understanding of time can be reformulated. The process of *beginning* becomes the transitional period between 'daily' and 'extra-daily'. The warm-up process becomes ritualised and integral to the beginning of the laboratory sessions and signals a joint process of coming together; this leads each member of the ensemble through the same movements, altering the individual perception of time and, thus, leaning towards a collective conception of time.

The importance of these stages of the warm-up extends beyond the singular laboratory session and extends into the overarching foundation of the process. By entering into a ritual, the ensemble has a sense of possession or ownership over the 'unknown' element of the making process. Goat Island's director, Hixson, comments on the value of the consistency of the warm-up process and the lasting impact of entering into a ritual process:

> We didn't know what we were doing yet but we did a warm-up every time; the one consistent thing we did was this warm-up […] we discovered that the warm-up was the most interesting thing [...] You could see the body getting tired; you could hear the involuntary breathing of the performer after running. As director, I found this visible commitment to the performance of physical tasks to be very powerful. So we said, OK, well this is going to be physical. (Hixson in Bottoms and Goulish, 2007, p.147)

The ensemble, within my practice, enters into a transitional phase, resulting in a form of tacit knowledge understood as a sense of undetermined knowledge that is embodied both in the brain and body; 'somatic tacit knowledge – with knowledge embodied in society – collective tacit knowledge' (Collins, 2010, p.2). This collective knowledge becomes inherent

within my process as it lays the foundation or provides the structure for the laboratory environment. The structure of the warm-up creates a spontaneity in action; the 'rules of action do not contain rules for their application [,] the rules "regress"' (Wittgenstein in Collins, 2010, p.2). Pierre Bourdieu (1997) refers to 'spontaneity' as a non-conscious, pre-reflective activity, which is not predictable. Likewise our warm-ups cannot be seen as spontaneous as each warm up follows the pattern of the original, as such the warm-up environment is reminiscent of Bourdieu's theory of 'Habitus', as introduced in Chapter 6:

> […] the strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations, are only apparently determined by the future. If they seem determined by anticipation of their own consequences, thereby encouraging the finalist illusion, the fact is that, always tending to reproduce the objective structures of which they are the product. (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72)

Therefore, the physical movements within the warm-up cannot be seen as spontaneous, despite the unplanned nature, rather, the actions are determined by the previous warm-ups, creating an unpredictable yet predetermined environment; which can be understood as 'Habitus'.

This state of the Habitus can be likened to Van Gennep's (1960) third state of ritual, *aggregation*. However, I draw from Turner's alternative terminology, *reincorporation* (1969).[13] As Turner's terminology suggests a lack of external forces, thus the individual is entering into a new state of self from an internal sense of immersion, as opposed to the use of *aggregation*, which suggests an external force leading or herding the individual into the new state of self. As the ensemble enter a new state of self, realised through the

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[13] Victor Turner (1969) coined the term 'Reincorporation' in response to Van Gennep's (1960) term 'Aggregation'.

conditions of the laboratory, their actions become determined by the internal sense of immersion in the extra-daily environment.

The warm-up carried out as part of my practice functions to lead the ensemble into the 'extra-daily'. The ritualised warm-up led the ensemble through *Separation* (give self over to other), *Limen* (losing body to the ritual) and *Reincorporation* (entering into the new embodied state of self). As such, the collective is able to understand the value and multiple possibilities, accessing the undefined structures, rules, roles and parameters of creation.

8. The Liminal Space and The Open-Ended Possibilities of 'Tasks'

This chapter discusses 'The Hopscotch Task' (see section 1 of *The Rule Book*) in relation to the liminal space, as defined by Susan Broadhurst (1999a): '*liminal* performance can be described as being located at the edge of what is possible' [original emphasis] (Broadhurst, 1999a, p. 12).[14] It is my intention that this will provide greater insight into the laboratory and the function of task and rules when forming an ensemble as a fluid entity with greater focus on each other. The initial task was to carry out the traditional 'game'/procedure of *hopscotch.* This task was subsequently layered with rules and sub-rules. This led to the creation of multiple new/reformed/altered *hopscotches*, each with varying patterns and rhythms, moving away from the 'traditional' understanding of the formation of a *hopscotch,* instead forming dislocated patterns and movement sequences.[15] The new movement patterns and methods were then carried out by the collective for an extended period of time. The duration resulted in a further dislocation with the original task as, the longer the movement sequence was carried out, and the more the action became distanced from the original task of *hopscotch.[16]* This task was then further layered with speed, direction and leg pattern/variation, with each participant's sub-rules varying.[17] This created different patterns and variations, culminating in a period of approximately 17 minutes of repetitious physical movement.

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[14] The Liminal or Liminality is taken from Limen (which is Latin for 'threshold') and is closely linked with Victor Turner's discussion of a no man's land betwixt-and-between, a place of 'fructile chaos […] a storehouse of possibilities, not by any means a random assemblage but a striving after new forms' (Turner, 1990, pp. 11-12).

[15] To see pictures of these reformed hopscotches, please follow this link. Please note that these changed as the process progressed: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2014/11/06/hopscotch-patterns/

[16] Please follow this link to watch the hopscotches in action. The movement starts at approximately 1 minute 37 seconds https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2014/11/18/large-hopscotch-wk3/

[17] You can view some of our notes surrounding these rules and sub-rules here: https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/hopscotch-rules.pdf

Broadhurst (1999a) attempts to provide a theorisation of the aesthetic of liminal performance, describing it as a marginalised space that holds within it the possibility of potential new forms, structures and desires. She expands on this notion of possibilities, stating that it is conceivable to place liminal performances on the 'edge of what is possible' (Broadhurst, 1999a, p.12). She notes that an important element of the liminal is the centrality of non-linguistic modes of signification, favouring 'visual, kinetic, gravitational, proximic, aural and so on' (Broadhurst, 1999a, pp.12-13). She also notes other central traits such as, 'indeterminacy, fragmentation, a loss of the auratic and the collapse of the hierarchical distinction' (Broadhurst, 1999a, p.13) as vital elements of liminal performance.

It is possible to expand on the notion of the liminal space by retuning to Victor Turner (1969), who states that liminality can be regarded as a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action, 'a period of securitisation of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs' (Turner, 1969, p.167). Turner is suggesting that the units of space and time are momentarily enfranchised from the norms and values that govern the public lives. Turner's reference to structure becomes a 'simplification or removal of the social structure, the social relationship is simplified, while myth and ritual are elaborated' (Turner, 1969, p.167). The removal or suspension of social structure and the emphasis of the visual, kinetic, proximic and fragmentation can be seen in my process through the use of this task-based activity; for example, within my laboratory environment, the liminal space allows for an environment in which the open-ended possibilities of can 'task' be explored and embodied by the ensemble. The removal of the traditional rules and restrictions surrounding hopscotches functioned to establish a freedom for the participants to create tasks that exist on the edge of what is possible. Furthermore, the

collective's shift into the liminal space allowed for method(s) of completing the *hopscotch* to be redesigned and altered, with each person undertaking a varying reformed *hopscotch*. The use of task and generative rules to allow for practical solutions to be discovered in the making process of each task inspired material that was open and full of possibilities.

The liminal environment is activated by the ensemble's engagement with the warm-up as a transformative method and is sustained through the tasks, providing a space for possibilities to be explored through repetition and alteration of the task; as such, a sense of displacement is implied to each task. The displacement of *task* both fractures and obstructs presence; 'it displaces and deforms the unity of the signified and the signifier' (Broadhurst, 1999a, p.49). This structure of displacement functions to alter the dependence on the original task; in fact, to depend on an original substitution.

The use of alteration and repetition shifts the task and alters the identity of the task, to hold within it a 're-mark' (Broadhurst, 1999a, p.59), 'a mark that contains the necessity of repetition […] a mark with it that can be followed and that also identifies it as belonging to something else' (Broadhurst, 1999a, p.59). The continual disrupting of the sequential arrangement of events blurs the line between the original task and a reproduction of the task indicating a '*difference*', 'supplement', 'mark' or 'trace' (Derrida, 1981, p.25). Each time the task is encountered the search for the origin leads to the borders or edge or the task. The construction of the liminal has permitted barriers and boundaries to be continually stretched and transgressed (Derrida, 1977; 1980). By placing the task of 'hopscotch' in the liminal space, through the alteration and application of our rules and sub-rules, the ensemble was able to create a task that carries the identification of an original task, in this instance the hopscotch. Yet, the rules and sub-rules alter the

boundaries of the ensemble's understanding of the original task. The original task remains fixed and functions to hold the collective within the framework of the task, while continually working in an 'extra-daily' state within the liminal space.

9. Exhaustion as a Method of Being-Time

I will now examine the impact and function of exhaustion during task-based activities using 'The Skipping Task' to illustrate my discussion (see Section 3 of *The Rule Book*). I will discuss the impact of rules when entering into unknown limits of exhaustion, as well as expanding on the importance of a continual challenge on which the next task depends. The function of exhaustion will be placed next to the transformation of the body into the liminal, to argue that blurring the conception of *mine* and *yours* through exhaustion generates greater focus on each other and new insights into the *between* of the individual and collective.

To complete 'The Skipping Task', the ensemble had one skipping rope.[18] In order to use the skipping rope, two members of the ensemble turned the rope while the other two jumped over the rope, for four jumps, then eight, and finally 12, alternating between the roles of turning the rope and jumping over the rope. We then added a routine to the jumping, see Section 3 of *The Rule Book* for greater clarity, this routine added an element of complexity to the task. However, after much practising, we felt the method of jumping over the rope could be further explored to provide a greater challenge, so we created and added to this task by changing the way the participants jumped over the rope, experimenting with different styles and methods of jumping (see Section 3 of *The Rule Book*). We then combined the new methods of jumping with the original routine, as detailed above, to build a more detailed pattern of movement.[19] We then created different scores of movement using all of the methods for jumping.[20] Each time we carried out this task, we

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[18] To see a picture of our skipping rope, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2014/11/14/the-creation-of-our-skipping-rope/
[19] To see a clip of the skipping and turning with the rules and sub-rules in action, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2014/12/19/skipping-week-8/
[20] Please follow this link to see our method of documenting these combinations and routines
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/skipping-rules.pdf

changed the scores of movement so that they were shorter, longer or more complicated. We added in a rule for errors: *Should there be an error or mistake during your jumping, you must start that section of the movement score again from the beginning.* This meant that, sometimes, the movement score would get stuck and the length of time skipping for those ensemble members could feel never-ending, as the more they attempted the routine the greater their exhaustion became; this, in turn, increased the possibility of *error*. [21] This method of restarting and repeating was designed to keep the participants focused and distanced from the *errors*.

The ensemble was suspended between the known and the unknown, entering into unknown limits of exhaustion, while remaining in the known limits, or rules, of the task in hand. The exhaustion provided a continual challenge on which the next task depended; for example, the next element of the routine depended on the success of the previous element. The ensemble's persistence to physically move into and towards their unknown limits of physical exhaustion translates and shifts the unknown into the known. The nature of the physical exhaustion required an intense level of *presence* to complete each task, while asking for an *absence* as the exhaustion moved the body beyond preconception of the known limits of the body. The absence of *self* through this exhaustion created the presence of *the* task. It is possible to draw from Deleuze who in 'The Exhausted' (1996) indicates that exhaustion can be read as the performers' way of being in time to define the temporal structure of the performance. The exhaustion is not about the self-presence of a

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[21] Please note that the use of the term error has a different understanding to that of *right* or *wrong*. An error refers to something such as tripping, sneezing, etc. Thus, this would not be classed or thought of as going *wrong*, as it is not *wrong* but rather human error.

real body versus the representational illusion of acting, but about the difference of the body from itself as revealed in the process of becoming-exhausted.

Choreographer and performance artist Augusto Corrieri (2011) comments, when working with the performance duo *Lone Twin* (2011), Gregg Whelan and Gary Winters, that the state of exhaustion creates a paradoxical state, where the distance between presence and absence, self and other, is distorted. For example, the performance *Ghost Dance* (2011) required the performance duo *Lone Twin*, who were dressed as cowboys, to slowly carry out a repeated line dance routine for 12 hours, perfectly synchronised, while blindfolded, as exhaustion set in, the performers become fragile and broken down. Corrieri commented that the performance *Ghost Dance* (2011) permitted the performer to become:

> [L]ost in the private pain and imaginings of an 'internal' experience [allowing] the performances to be both present and absent, available and withdrawn [...] so as to allow for other elements to come into play. (Corrieri, in Williams and Lavery, 2011 p.151)

This generated, within *Ghost Dance*, a kinetic presence of untrained bodies purposefully exhausted, in turn, highlighting the absence of sameness and similarity whilst working against integration and togetherness. The movement creates a complex and unrepeatable pattern, the layering of exhaustion, with each performer completing the physical task according to the constraints of their body.

The repetition of the physical action of skipping, endured over an extended period of time, undoubtedly places the body under duress; as fatigue sets in, the body slows and it becomes harder for the participants to jump high enough to clear the rope. The physical commitment to the movement lingers and creates an unspoken urgency among all involved as the task comes to a close, with the last participants still striving to jump with

unseen motivation. They are continuing to push their bodies into unknown limits of exhaustion, supported only by the recovering breath of the participants who are now turning the rope, urging them on towards completion and reminding them that, although it seems impossible, an end is within sight. Time loses its value, speed loses its meaning, and movement becomes the only currency. The visible exhaustion is fuelled with a desire to complete the task; completion is followed by a pause and, only then, can the next process towards exhaustion begin.

The ensemble moves from task to task, pushing their bodies to the limit of exhaustion, the absence and failures of the body(ies) are felt and, ultimately, ignored as the body(ies) become present, driven to complete, pushed to the limits of physical exhaustion and creation, simultaneously embodying the known and unknown, shifting in-between multiple possibilities via the realisation of the of the possible. It is articulated here by one ensemble member: 'I cannot go further [...] this my limit, no it's the next one' (Agratini 2016). The ensemble's refusal to accept exhaustion and to recognise their own known limits of exhaustion is demonstrated in the perpetual movement and completion of each task, which blurs the conception of *mine* and *yours* through the shared exhaustion and common physiological constraints, '[t]he difference of the body form itself as revealed in the process of becoming-exhausted' (Cull, 2013, p. 200).

The ensemble demonstrated an innate inclination to continue to allow the *exhaustion* to exist, through their willingness to continue even when in a state of exhaustion, as revealed in 'The Skipping Task' as each jump moved them closer to exhaustion. The exhaustion became the effort, endurance, impulse, inclination and undertaking to maintain the *exhaustion*, which exposed the sense of being-with among the participants. This act of

exhaustion can maintain the ensemble; however, the unsustainable nature of the exhaustion represents the non-stable state of the ensemble.

The convoluted repetition of 'The Skipping Task' functions to further enhance the liminal space; the exhaustion exhibited by the ensemble creates a space in which to witness the transformation of the body into the liminal. This transformation, through exhaustion, results in, as defined by Barba, '[a] pre-expressive body' (Barba, 2005, p.222). The exhaustion functions to form a *pre-expressive body*, which has committed itself to a *zone* that does not function to perform a narrative. By carrying out the task of skipping, it simulates a transformation of the *daily body* at the pre-expressive level (Barba, 2005). The ensemble's process of exhaustion led to an encounter with numerous exhausted bodies, which formed a series of transformations; the perpetually exhausted body did not reveal a *dead-end* or even the end of the task, but indicated rejuvenation of the task through the circular nature.

The task exhausts all possibility of meaning; by never offering a finite conclusion, the meaning is always in transformation, reformation and dissolution. This is reminiscent of Joan Davis (2004) an influential dance practitioner who pushed against the boundaries of traditional dance and pioneered in contemporary performance. She established a form of dance called '*Maya Lila'*. These are dance performances, in which realities are continually and endlessly changing as the movement emerges and transforms. Her dance based movement attempts to transform perception of everyday objects. Dance scholar Emma Meehan (2010) comments that a *Maya Lila* simultaneously creates and destroys realities as it shifts and changes so that there is a cycle of 'ongoing construction-deconstruction, destroying creating' (Schechner, 1993, p.42). With Davis's work the continual dissolution

and transformation of images, created by the dance movement, reflects the necessity for deconstruction in order for the next impulse to appear. Therefore, the meaning of the movement is continually reforming in response to the fatigue or exhaustion of the movement before. This continual deconstruction witnessed as the exhaustion of the movement, in turn, functions to distance the audience from the original or starting point, challenging their understanding of the meaning of the movement.

Similarly, within the laboratory the fatigue of the ensemble member is echoed in the fatigue of the meaning of the task. This distances, or removes the signification or meaning of the original task. The physical repetition of movement, and the ultimate exhaustion that follows, results in a 'translation' of meaning, as Nancy comments, '[…] a stretching or spreading […] from one origin-of-meaning to another' (Nancy, 2000, p.87). The task exists on the edges of distorted meaning and liminal space and, as a result, the potential for transformation is exposed.

Exhaustion functions within the tasks to permit entry into the unknown limits of exhaustion while remaining in the known limits of the task. The experience of exhaustion over a period of time permits a liminal phase, where change is made possible. The body is pushed through its preconceived limits of exhaustion as it is driven to complete each element of the task, while the refusal to accept exhaustion blurs the conception of *mine* and *yours*. The exhaustion functions to expose the sense of being-with among the participants as the body moves towards the liminal. It is in this state that the body becomes pre-expressive – not performing a narrative, or towards a *dead-end*, but rather rejuvenating the task through the perpetual exhaustion and reactivation of each element of the task. By never

offering a finite conclusion, the meaning of the task is always in transformation, reformation and dissolution.

10. Phase One: The First Installation

This thesis will now progress to the four phases of open public engagement. Each of these chapters functions to address the following questions: 'What happens to the formation of the ensemble when it is transferred into an open public environment?', 'How does the process of transferring rules and tasks to a new environment affect the formation the ensemble?' and 'Do the rules and tasks facilitate participation with the event?' By considering these questions in relation to my practice, I intend to discuss the transferable nature of my practice outside of the closed laboratory, while addressing the overarching question and investigation: how might my practice offer a greater understanding of the *between* of performance ensembles.

The first installation was designed as an open laboratory and took place on Wednesday, 6th May 2015 between 7 pm and 9 pm in the DPL at the University of Salford, Media City.[22] The open nature of the laboratory attempted to allow the guests to enter and take part in the process to explore the interactions between the pre-established ensemble and the guests. The installation was advertised via social media and through the use of posters and flyers, with no ticket requirement. However, it is important to note that the guests at the installation mostly comprised of friends, family and academics. It is possible that the willingness of participants to join in is increased if they are friends and family. Some guests arrived late during the installation, but it was my intention that the moment-to-moment nature of the tasks allowed for an equal opportunity to interact with the installation, regardless of arrival time. The installation was designed so that guests could drop in and

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[22] Please follow the link below to watch the video footage of the installation. However, there are URLs indicated within the chapter to specific moments:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/06/16/the-installation/

out throughout the duration of the installation, although it was indicated that there was a beginning at 7 pm, a middle at 7.30 pm, an end at 8.45 pm and a finish at 9 pm.[23]

The installation was signposted using hopscotches marked on the floor, leading up to the door of the installation.[24] There was a small entrance space for the guests to collect a paper fortune teller.[25] The guests were also instructed to leave their shoes, socks and coats in the entrance space, as this is something we always do when entering the laboratory space to form a connection with the environment. It was my intention that, by having bare feet for the duration of the installation, the guests might form a connection with the environment and become part of the laboratory process.

The entrance room was decorated with balloons in the colours blue, green and yellow. As the guests entered the laboratory space, a large screen played our video documentation, which could be seen at the opposite end of the space.[26] The laboratory space was set up with raised chairs flanking four viewpoints of the room. From the celling at various points, there were hanging noticeboards offering reflections, tasks and information for the guests.[27] Projected onto the floor, in the far left-hand side of the room, just in front of one of the sections of raised chairs, were projected pictures from our closed laboratory environment.[28] Next to this was a pile of uninflated blue balloons. Towards the right-hand side of the room, near the entrance, the digital scrapbook was displayed on a touch screen

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[23] To see the poster for the installation, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/poster-best.pdf
[24] To see pictures of the installation space as it was being set up, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/06/18/noticeboards/
[25] See Footnote 7 for information about paper fortune tellers.
[26] To watch this video footage, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/06/19/installation-video-footage/
[27] To see these noticeboards, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/noticeboards.pdf
[28] To see these pictures, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/slideshow.pdf

computer. There was a table next to the digital scrapbook with three stacks of coloured cardboard in blue, green and yellow; above this table, a noticeboard indicated this was where paper aeroplanes could be made and, just to the side of this, was a wall for feedback. Towards the back of the space, on the right-hand side, the physical scrapbook was displayed on a lectern. There was also an assortment of objects lined up on the far right-hand side of the room: wooden dice, green sand (green to represent green grass), toy watering cans, a small spade and a dustpan and brush. Tucked under the raised seating, against the left-hand wall of the room, were four cupcakes, each complete with a single unlit birthday candle, a lighter and a birthday candle without a cake. Visible in the centre of the room was a piece of string, thrown over a metal bar from the lighting rig, with the ball of string resting on the floor, forming a pulley system. Furthermore, in the centre of the room, in front of the piece of string, were four hopscotches marked on the floor.[29]

As stated, the installation was set up with raised chairs flanking four different perspectives of the room. This raised seating was envisioned as a space or method in which to allow the guests to look down on, or into, our laboratory environment. However, the raised chairs were not successful and did not function as I originally intended. This was because the chairs were not raised as high as I had imagined, due to the limitations of the space; as a result, rather than giving the impression of looking down, they looked too staged and formal. I originally wanted to have the seating raised, as I felt that the installation needed to be a space for exposing and reflecting on our work in the laboratory process, rather than a space of participation. However, my understanding of the installation shifted throughout

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[29] Please follow this link to see the video footage of us sticking down the hopscotches. This took place in the dance studio, again linking the installation back to our process in the laboratory: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2015/03/23/hopscotch-and-tape/

the process and I felt it would be more beneficial to explore how the context of our work in a closed laboratory could be accessed, explored and discovered by others in an open environment.

At the beginning of the installation, I noticed that most, if not all, of the guests chose to sit on the higher level. This could have been a result of the layout of the environment signifying a 'performance', resulting in the guests associating their role with 'audience' and, therefore, fulfilling this expectation or role. This again highlighted my main concern with the raised seating: it was not high enough for there to be any possibility of looking down at, or into, the space. The raised chairs, in fact, functioned to reduce participation and interaction.

The guests, who sat on the raised seating, were actively watching the events taking place. This led to what felt like a shift in the atmosphere amongst the ensemble, as there was a consensus that we were being watched. As Paul Woodruff, author of *The Necessity of theatre: The Art of Watching being Watched* (2010), states: 'there is an art to watching and being watched [...] watched too much, or in the wrong way, we become frightened. Watching too much, we lose the capacity for action' (Woodruff, 2010, p.10). I believe this transpired in this moment of the installation. By placing a version of the laboratory in an open environment, it resulted in a seating choice that was too driven by design or dramaturgy. This raised seating, although visible to the pre-existing ensemble, was intended to hold similarities to Jeremy Bentham's (1791) *Panopticon*, which allowed a single watchman to observe the whole of an institution without the inmates being able to tell whether or not they were being watched. As such, the inmates cannot know when they are being watched and must act as though they are being watched at all times. This would,

in theory, function to create an environment in which the inmates would be controlling their own behaviour, raising questions as to whether this would be a form of observation or active participation (Bentham 2010). However, as the ensemble were consciously aware of being watched, the ensemble began to show or demonstrate our work and began to perform the tasks rather than *do* the tasks. Furthermore, it limited the opportunities for the guests' participation, as the seating created a physical and psychological barrier, creating *performers* and *audience members.* This indicated a development point for the second installation; for there to be participation between the guests and the ensemble, both parties needed to actively be involved in a moment of creation or exploration without being 'overly' watched.

As the installation progressed, I noticed a change in the guests' seating habits, in that they began to move around the installation environment and explore the space. The guests moved towards the ensemble, tasks and objects, no longer needing or wanting to distance themselves, but *becoming* a part of the outcome of the installation through their participation. Bruce Gladwin of Back to Back Theatre comments that, in their interactive performance of *Tour Guide*, they found that 'initially, [the audience] can be quite cautious and they stand back, but after about 15 minutes people want to get as close to the action as possible […]' (Gladwin in Machon, 2013, p.169). This shift in behaviour indicates that, as the space of interaction became more familiar, there was a greater 'possibility' of *becoming* involved in the installation reflecting, as defined by Bishop, a state of 'activated

spectatorship' (Bishop, 2005, p.11).[30] This activation altered the unspoken distinction between the guests and the ensemble, as the guests moved close to and into the action.

Within the installation, the ensemble carried out a task using paper aeroplanes (see section 2 of *The Rule Book*). To facilitate this, there was a secondary task that required the guests to make paper aeroplanes. A table was set up with a noticeboard hanging from the ceiling, asking the guests to use the coloured paper provided to make paper aeroplanes.[31] This noticeboard also stated the rules for the task that would require the paper aeroplanes later in the installation, yet the method for making the paper aeroplanes was up to the guests. Some of the guests visibly relaxed when they saw the task and began making paper aeroplanes as they entered the installation. It is possible to speculate that the task of building paper aeroplanes offered a safe and recognisable task that most, if not all, of the guests had completed or undertaken at some point previously.

This may have provided an element of recognition and shared history, as it allowed the guests to add their own understanding to the space. The reframing of the everyday task within the context of 'audience-participant' allowed the process of making the paper aeroplanes to become particular or unique to the specific event; 'the history of everyday activity and social relations, alongside the immediate activity of the audience-participant in that space during the immersive event, is defamiliarised and made special' (Machon, 2013, p.134). Furthermore, it is possible that the physical manifestation of the installation

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[30] Bishop in Installation Art (2005) summarises that the active viewer participation is attributed a particular value by the politicised art environment in the 1960s and 1970s. 'Many artists and critics have argued that this need to move around and through the work in order to experience it *activates* the viewer, in contrast to art that simply requires optical contemplation (which is considered to be passive and detached). The activation is, moreover, regarded as emancipatory, since it is analogous to the viewer's engagement in the world. A transitive relationship therefore becomes to be implied between "activated spectatorship" and active engagement in the social-political arena' [original emphasis] (Bishop, 2005, p.11).
[31] To see the noticeboard that was hanging above the paper aeroplanes table, please follow this link: https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/noticeboard-paper-aeroplanes.pdf

could have permitted an instinctive physiological response, which could be understood as '[…] the sense of being, or becoming, that the participants experience […] as they become absorbed into the installation' (Rubidge in Broadhurst & Machon, 2006, p.112). By altering the parameters for the creation of the task, in the installation setting, the guests were able to directly affect and impact the outcome of the task. In this moment, the guests' role shifted from passive watchers to 'becoming' active members of the ensemble, and it is possible to argue that they became 'active participants as opposed to active voyeurs' (Ranciere, 2009, p.4).

As a result, the guests appeared highly engaged with the task and they watched intently. This engagement impacted on the task and ensemble. The ensemble instantly began to 'over' express their own frustration with the task, demonstrating a desire to express their own *skills* or *success* during the task. The task shifted so the ensemble were *performing* the task, trying to demonstrate their best abilities, rather than moving through the phases of the task.

The members of the ensemble were not just moving through a task; rather, their self-conscious nature was fuelled by being watched, creating a sense of *performing*. By placing the task in an open environment, it shifted the process from *doing* to *demonstrating*. When further layered with the documentation and framing of the installation, this may have indicated to the guests that the ensemble were working from a script or 'something' that had been learnt or done before, rather than indicating work in progress. Whereas, if the laboratory had been open for a longer period of time, or throughout the whole process, the focus might have shifted away from demonstrating and back to *doing* as the presence

of the guests may have become normalised, allowing the ensemble to work *with* rather

than *for* the guests.

As the ensemble finished throwing the paper aeroplanes without instruction, the guests

lined up and began to copy the task they had just seen, throwing the paper aeroplanes into

the boxes. This action aligned the guests with the ensemble through participation; as a

result, the task lost its *performance* element and shifted back towards *doing* a task. In this

moment, there was a change in the distinction between the guests and the ensemble, as

the guests had learnt what to do with the material at hand and wanted to participate more

fully, as Sarah Rubidge, a practitioner and reader in digital performance states: 'the

participating "viewers" themselves become active elements in the installation

environment' (Rubidge in Broadhurst & Machon, 2006, p.112).

As outlined, the objects needed for the tasks had been removed from the object box and

displayed around the installation space and which, on reflection, created a distance

between the 'fictional' space and the 'real' space, much like the definition offered by Anne

Ring Petersen in Art Installation:

> In an installation, this frame, which defines the work, is rarely as physically
> localisable […] its frame-setting is perhaps best described as meaning laden
> coupling between objects of elements, a spatial organisation that places things in
> another light than the reality and functionality. In short, a 'scenographic' utilisation
> of space that makes the view's gaze register the creator's intention in constructing
> an installation. (Ring Petersen, 2015, p.287)

It is possible that this framing and 'meaning laden' relationship between the objects placed

around the space of the installation resulted in a dialectic experience for the guests, as the

'the visitor must constantly traverse between an intense bodily and sensory absorption in

a spatial ambiance and the intellectual detachment and exclusion that the installation's

defamiliarising and different frame-settings create when they position one as a viewer of a spatialized image' (Ring Petersen, 2015, p.287). I believe that, as a result of this dialectic experience, it permitted a 'performativity' from the guests. An example of this was when a guest sat down on the floor and played with the newly positioned green sand and subsequently moved the string attached to the pulley system. The guest was simultaneously investigating the objects, whilst reconfiguring space in response to her sensory engagement.

I am now going to reflect on my own role within the installation in relation to these actions carried out by the guests. This engagement with the objects created, for me, a surge of panic and I was unsure of what to do or how to respond. I felt an unexpected sense of the unknown as I feared the guest would move or use the sand, preventing or hindering the task it was needed for. Critically, when the guest moved away from the sand to read the scrapbook I felt relieved.[32] I had a strong desire to coach or lead the guest on a different path, restoring the objects to my own sense of the known. This sense of 'leadership' in the closed environment would have undoubtedly been fulfilled, and I would have interacted with the participant, (re)discovering the objects together. However, in this new open environment I became passive, watching the impact of this unknown interaction on the space, wondering how else the guest might use the object in unexpected ways and how we might respond.

This highlights an interesting element surrounding my role within the ensemble. My multiple roles are revealed as limited in this open setting; as each object's function had

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[32] This was partly due to the examiners' presence in the space and my desire to do well in their eyes. Naturally, this desire impacted on the installation and ensemble's aspiration to 'do well', a feeling that we do not normally associate within the laboratory environment, where there is little sense of right or wrong.

been predetermined, the chance and play demonstrated by the guests nullified the authority of a 'director'. I could not locate myself in relation to this interaction and, as a result, was unequipped to respond. This implied that the predetermined nature of the installation inhibited my own understanding of my role, causing me to question my own attachment and sense of ownership over the objects within the now open space. My lack of intervention blurred my own understanding of what was open, closed, rehearsed and spontaneous, as well as my position as instigator or creator. These moments exposed a state of uncertainty, as I was uncertain how to deal with the guests' use of the objects. I was aware the objects were not *mine*, but open to everyone in this instance, while also aware of the history and purpose of the objects beyond the installation and their sense of belonging to *something* that has already happened. This was a direct effect of placing something that had been closed into an open environment. The nature of the closed laboratory resulted in a sense of attachment with the objects and tasks; however, the nature of the open environment forced me to abandon this sense of ownership and embrace the unknown. The 'semiotic framing' (Ring Petersen, 2015, p.183) of the installation placed 'extra' value on these objects, whereas if the whole laboratory process had been open, these items would not have been placed in the *new* environment with such importance; or, if the creation of the installation had focused on 'opening' rather than demonstrating, there would have been no need to frame the objects or space. During 'The Skipping Task' when carried out in the installation (see Section 3 of *The Rule Book*), the digital scrapbook was utilised when a guest played a video of the ensemble discussing and negotiating the skipping during the closed laboratory process.[33]

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[33] To see this clip that was activated from the digital scrapbook, please follow this link: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2014/12/19/skipping-week-9/

As a result of this interaction and activation of the digital scrapbook, the value of the process leading up to the creation of this task was reemphasised, as this moment added a greater sense of history. It was also uncanny, as the sound of the skipping, both past and present, could be heard in the moment of the installation, thus, '[t]he weaving of digital technologies into our surrounding [seemed] to inflict on the subjective experience of proximity, location, positioning and special orientation [building] bridges between physical and virtual worlds' (Ring Petersen, 2015, p.447). The guests' use of the digital scrapbook had a direct impact on the task; by adding a layer of history to the process, it exposed and acknowledged that the task was both past and present, creating an uncanny space 'where the familiar meets the unfamiliar and provides liminal dimensions' (Germaná in Edwards & Monnet, 2012, p.68), thus filling the space with the process that led to the product, keeping the value attached to the task or the process rather than the finished performance or event. The guests were acknowledging and drawing from the process that had previously taken place, influencing the task that was happening now, in the open installation. It is possible to liken this to Brian Massumi's notion of event and memory. He comments that the effect of an event can take many forms and that there is a reactivation of the past which:

> [cut] transversally across dimensions of time, between past and future, and between pasts of different orders. This in-between time or transversal time is the time of the event. This temporality enables, and requires you to rethink all of these terms - bodily capacitation, felt transition, quality of lived experience, memory, repetition, seriation, inclination - in dynamic relation to each other. (Massumi, 2015, p.49)

This notion of the memory and in-between time allows for a consideration of the guests' participation as taking place both now and then, past and present.

Towards the end of 'The Skipping Task', the guests were asked to help turn the skipping rope so that all the ensemble members could jump over the rope at once. In order to help the guests find and keep the rhythm of the skipping rope, the ensemble counted out to a rhythm: *one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four* and so on. The counting was undertaken by the ensemble, but carried out for the guests. This created a sense of a new task being learnt by all, indicating a starting point for understanding the new element of the task. In this moment of direct engagement with the task, the guests shifted as both the guests and ensemble were now directly involved in the process and success of the task. There was a sense of achievement and involvement, highlighted by a round of spontaneous applause when the task was finished, as if the 'newness' of the moment was experienced and appreciated by everyone engaging in the learning process. I would have liked to have asked more guests to be involved in this moment, possibly using multiple skipping ropes to provide more guests more opportunities to directly engage with the task and potentially create more rules, sub-rules or outcomes for the task. Although this would need to be carefully handled, it is possible that, instead of activating the guest, this level of participation may have confused the guests. The reactivation of the task may have been too much of an obligation to place on the guest, particularly within the 'semiotic framing'; there might have been 'a risk of illegibility [...] which might reintroduce the artist as the principal figure' (Bishop, 2006, p.194). Rather than opening the ensemble, it may too firmly indicate a leader or instructor.

Throughout the installation, there was evidence of the documentation of our process; this was realised by playing some of the video footage onto a large projector screen, projecting pictures from the process onto the floor and displaying both our physical scrapbook and digital scrapbook. As Rubidge states, 'immersive installations are not simply "pictures" or

images to be viewed from the outside, which artefactualises the installations, but are essentially ephemeral and experiential events […] they are primarily multi-sensory experiential environments, designed to be inhabited rather than views as an artefact or event' (Rubidige in Broadhurst and Machon, 2006, pp.112-113). The installation, combined with the documentation, connected the guests to the history of the laboratory, showing tasks and rules as they were carried out, creating a history and a collective understanding of the tasks as still under development, to emphasise the precedent, purpose and *proper* place of the laboratory. It was intended that the documentation would indicate that the process had longevity and continued to go on, despite its 'finished' appearance in the installation.

The digital scrapbook played an important role in the installation, echoing the sense of history of the ensemble; it could be heard playing over the top of the 'live' sounds. This layering of historical documentation, together with the *now* of the installation, it was my intention that this would add multiple perspectives, as the multiple sounds and images would fragment the presence and temporality of the ensemble and encourage more inclusivity for the guests. The layering of the documentation attempted to reiterate the tasks themselves, demonstrating that they were still under development and, in that moment, being revisited, emphasising the process of layering and repetition throughout the closed laboratory and the open installation. The access to the documentation and process of the closed laboratory offered an access point for the guests to connect with, or experience, the ensemble's process, providing opportunities to share in our process resulting in a sense of shared ownership of the event:

> […] the sharing, diffusion or impregnation of an identity by a plurality wherein each member identifies himself only through the supplementary mediation of his identification with the living body of the community. (Nancy in Bishop, 2006, p.61)

By opening the closed laboratory, it was possible to witness moments when the ensemble extended itself and moments when it withdrew into itself. The guests' engagement with the tasks, particularly the paper aeroplanes, allowed the guests the possibility to directly affect the outcome of the task as well as to learn, mimic and develop the tasks, sharing a sense of achievement with the ensemble. As the installation progressed, the guests physically integrated with the laboratory and moved away from watching and into creating fleeting moments with the ensemble. This demonstrated a flux between the guests and the ensemble, one that was fragile and new, existing in the moment of creation. This installation 'framed' the closed laboratory by using set tasks and objects for both the ensemble and the guests which, in some respects, resulted in moments where the ensemble and the guests showed signs of moving towards each other. The documentation attempted to add detailed layers and history to the installation, although the set-up of the tasks and objects conflicted with the concept of 'ongoing' or 'developing'. The 'framed' open environment created an unseen or unvoiced expectation that the work was finished. The framing of this installation raised many questions about the impact of participation on the nature of *tasks* and how to resist the desire to *perform* when placing something 'closed' in an open environment.

The framing of this installation, on reflection, is reminiscent of the activities that arose out of Black Mountain College. These activities developed an increasing interest in process over product, combined with the breaking down of boundaries between art forms and new relationships between audience and artist. This was realised by drawing on approaches

such as repetition, alogical structure, simultaneous events, noise in music, real objects and functional actions (Stanford, 1995); in an attempt to question the indeterminacy of action. These approaches led to performance taking place in new and unexpected environments, challenging the audience's response and understanding. In particular, Happenings which embodied the rejection of representational reality through seemingly unstructured one-off performances. Happenings may have appeared improvised, yet they were highly structured and the task was always composed during the process. As Kirkby states, '[t]he action in Happenings is often *indeterminate* but not improvised' (Kirkby in Stanford, 1995, p.8). The compartmentalised structure seen in *Happenings* facilitates the blurring of the role of the performer with that of a facilitator. The audience were unable to rely on their perception of what is taking place as performed reality and what they understand to be taking place in non-performed reality. This can be likened to the environment of the installation which attempted to blur the line between *performing* and *doing*. However, as noted, the 'framed' tasks created by the ensemble and seen in the first installation restricted participation. This called into question the importance of composing 'new' tasks in the installation alongside predetermined tasks; in order to witness a movement between the guests and pre-established ensemble.

Likewise, the Fluxus movement, also taking influence from the activities at Black Mountain College, offers subsequent insight into the effect of the structure seen in this installation. Fluxus events explored duration, chance and movement within a non-intentionally determined situation and were structured using a random chance process in an attempt to eliminate the subjective point of view. Similarly in the installation, the desired effect of the random tasks provided for the audience, via the paper oracles, attempted to create a chance-based structure within the fixed structure of the installation. However, within the

context of my practice, and participation, these similarities in the design and framing of the installation in fact functioned to restrict participation between the ensemble and the guests. There was still a visible distinction between artist and audience, although the boundaries had been blurred. Therefore, the second installation will be required to do more than this in an attempt to further remove such distinctions. As such, allowing the second installation to function in a greater state of coexistence, moving between states of *mine, ours* and *yours*. Thus, the *collaboration* may become a group of individuals moving and shifting in response to 'others'. The first installation, however, inadvertently lent itself towards theatrical habits that saw the guests 'view' the tasks as *performance,* while the ensemble responded to the presence of the outside eye by *performing* and, in turn, fulfilling the roles of audience and artist.

This thesis will now reflect and discuss the second installation, 'The Laboratory is Open'. This attempted to remove these concepts of 'theatricalism' and 'demonstration' by creating a replica laboratory environment, which functioned to promote interaction without becoming a demonstration of the closed laboratory.

11. Phase Two: The Second Installation

I designed the second installation with the aim of exploring how guests participated with the ensemble, considering how the use of task-based practice can facilitate a forming and re-forming of both the core ensemble and the wider public in the space of an encounter. It was my intention that, by attempting to ensure that the focus amongst the core ensemble remained on *doing* rather than performing, there will be an openness in response, which was not grounded in a singular understanding. It was my aim that, by taking a closed process into the public realm for a durational period, it would allow me to discover that the task-based interaction creates a complex interaction as the individuals come together, generating moments of *becoming* and being-with. It was my intention to realise this by changing the form and delivery of the second installation, developing my research aims and objectives, whilst addressing the outcomes of the first installation.[34]

The experience and reflections gained from the first installation raised the question of how to demonstrate the ensemble's process without altering the behaviour or methodology, while still attempting to facilitate a movement between the 'I' and 'We' of the ensemble. This predicament can be likened to Derrida's question of 'how to bear witness to a specific authenticity or originality without destroying that originality itself' (Derrida in Devisch, 2013, p. 51). I wanted to allow guests to witness the laboratory as it would take place in the closed environment, without demonstrating or performing a representation of the closed environment which would, and did in the first installation, destroy the originality of the process for a the creation of an open event.

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[34] To watch the video footage taken from the livestream of the second installation 'The Laboratory is Open', which took place from 21st to 24th March 2016 in the DPL at the University of Salford, Media City, please follow this link: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLx6T8AuJI1FtT8BYjlXCY1Vt2UdVWmZzo

Consequently, I framed the second installation differently in an attempt to overcome this predicament. I decided to (re)create an environment as close in size and shape to our original studio, imitating as closely as possible the closed laboratory environment. I used the same measurements and layout of space as the closed laboratory environment, and these measurements and reproductions were superimposed on the new space. The installation was not meant to return the guest or ensemble to the laboratory environment; rather, it placed them in a temporal location. Ignaas Devisch, author of *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Question of Community,* suggests that a 'return [to a historical location] cannot operate as a transhistorical gesture. Moreover, a *finite* reconstruction of a past event is a temporal gesture that cannot be divorced from the site where the plea for this reconstruction occurred in the first place' [original emphasis] (Devisch, 2013, p.55). This was an important notion, as the event of the installation was not designed to be a return to a process previously undertaken, yet the installation cannot be divorced from the process that led to the need to create an installation. The process of the closed laboratory resulted in 'something happening' that has passed, yet remained in direct relation to the 'something' that took place in the 'now' of the open installation. It was my intention to create what was consciously and explicitly a replica laboratory environment, not a replica process. Thus, the authenticity or originality of the closed laboratory process could be witnessed without destroying the originality of the laboratory itself; while not becoming caught up in a mimetic structure. A *return* would have rendered the originality of the event inoperative; by returning to it, we might have become caught up in the representational structure, much like the first installation. A representational structure would betray the origin we wish to preserve; the process of the closed laboratory would be compromised for a product.

In an attempt to realise this, we carried out a series of four open laboratory sessions. These four sessions were consecutive, symbolising a month of our closed laboratories, which take place each Wednesday, demonstrating a month of our work in a condensed four-day period each day the laboratory was open, from 10 am to 10 pm, with the installation fully active and accessible during that time. Each day, the time was split into two sections: the daytime, consisting of my research, writing and day-to-day activities, and the evening, consisting of the time the ensemble spends together creating tasks and rules. In addition to the division between the two durational periods, there was, as mentioned, a division in the space creating two areas, each with a different function in the day and evening. It was my intention that, by dividing the space, it would function to distance the guests from a singular event and passive audience role. These two spaces represented the areas in which the ensemble congregate, work, talk and come together with both spaces operating in slightly different ways. This attempted to fully open up our process and expose our working method.

On entering the repurposed DPL, there was a dividing wall, splitting the space in half; this was formed by two large, two-way mirrors hanging from the lighting rig, just above head height.[35] The mirrors were flanked either side by two large black panels. To the left, there was a small gap covered with a semi-transparent cloth, which created an entrance to the other side of the mirrors.[36] Masking tape marked a rectangle on the floor; all the objects in the space were within the perimeters of the tape. On the right-hand side of the space,

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[35] To see images of the environment, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/03/29/the-environment/
[36] To see images of the mirrors, please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/03/28/the-mirrors/

next to the entrance of the DPL, were two television screens, each displaying one side of

the dividing mirrors, the image on the screens provided by the livestream.[37] There was a

board, immediately after entering the DPL, with instructions reading:

> Anything you see can be used. Nothing is off limits, we are showing you all of
> ourselves. As you enter the space you might encounter music, other people,
> screens, livestreams, computers, editing, touch screens, the digital scrapbook, and
> physical documentation of our process, us, or information about us… But, of course,
> there is more, it is up to you what you do with it. Part one is mostly daytime
> activities. Part two is mostly evening activities. This is not normally how we do
> things. This is a one off, lasting only four days. This is not our normal space, but we
> have done our best to fit in. Be careful – blink and you might miss it. The laboratory
> is open.

Directly beyond the instruction board there was a table with a large, built-in touchscreen

computer displaying the digital scrapbook. On the table, next to the touchscreen, was a

stack of paper; this was a printout of our online conversations. Attached to the wall, on the

left and outside of the tape, were pens and a roll of paper, labelled the 'feedback wall'.

Tucked just behind the touchscreen computer, towards the left-hand side of the mirrors,

were three boxes; these were filled with objects used for tasks, such as the skipping ropes,

the timers, tape, straws, paper, and dice. Next to these boxes there was also a mop and

mop-bucket. Outside of the tape, attached to the left-hand side black panels, which formed

part of the dividing wall, were pictures of the ensemble and some light-hearted

information about us. There was a small table, towards the right-hand side of the mirrors,

outside of the tape, covered with paper aeroplanes, sticky labels, pens and the following

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[37] Livestreaming is the transmitting of live video and audio coverage of a live event over the Internet as it is
taking place.

instructions: 'If you have a message/thought/ idea, Write, Stick, Throw over… Anything goes'.[38]

There was a large desk towards the right-hand side of the room, with an assortment of objects on it including, but not limited to, laptops, paper, pens, notebooks, water bottles, food, a kettle, mugs, tea, biscuits, a speaker, beauty products, calendars, pictures, to-do lists, recording equipment and external hard-drives.[39] Close to the desk were five chairs, coats, bags and a bin. Pinned to a grey noticeboard, behind the desk, were ideas, pictures and lists. This space was a recreation of an office, my office. When looking through the mirrors, there was an empty space with another rectangle area marked out on the floor and five smaller squares taped out, running parallel with the left-hand side of the rectangle, all in white masking tape.[40] During the day, the projector screen was playing 'old' video clips of us working in our normal closed environment; the space was otherwise empty. During the evening, the screen showed the live Twitter wall.[41] The space was full of bodies and objects, again all within the parameters of the white masking tape. This space was a recreation of dance studio two.

Within the installation, the process of creating two areas – which, as discussed, exposed and placed the 'off stage' elements such as TV screens, props, cameras, computers, notes and personal objects into the audience's space – consequently meant that the audience were unable to rely on their perception of what was taking place as performed reality and

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[38] The paper aeroplane table:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/1915962_10154033108891306_40542246443521 11651_n.jpg
[39] The desk: https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_3911.jpg?w=700
[40] The studio space: https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_3894.jpg?w=700
[41] The Twitter wall: https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_3941-2.jpg?w=508&h=381

what they understood to be taking place in non-performed reality. As such, there becomes a paradox between what is traditionally understood as performance and the performer. Thus, this can provide performers with a sense of freedom, built around the removal of the performer's expectation to produce, for the audience, as there is little or no significant difference between the process and product.

I felt it was necessary to bring both these spaces to the DPL and that they needed to be (re)constructed as accurately as possible, as close as possible in design and layout to their original, to demonstrate that we had imposed our environment(s) on this new, reformed space. As a result the first half of the space, when initially entering the DPL, was measured to be the size and shape of my office. This was marked out using tape and all the objects found in the non-replica office were placed and arranged within this tape marking out the replica office. Any additional items belonging only to the replica were outside of this marked space. This was the first area encountered in the DPL, which formed the entrance and exit to the replica environment; it mirrored our own experience in the closed laboratory as we start and end each closed laboratory in the office.

The second space towards the back of the DPL was also measured and marked out using tape to be the size and shape of the dance studio. We were careful to ensure that fixed points such as the doors, windows, the sound system and camera were located geographically correctly, to make sure we were creating for ourselves, as well as the guests, an environment that represented the studio and to protect the authenticity or originality of that environment. We framed the space so that the wall with the windows in the original dance studio ran parallel with the wall displaying the projector screen in the DPL. This allowed the 'windows' to represent a metaphorical viewing point in The Open Laboratory.

In the daytime, this viewing point allowed guests an additional vantage point into the closed environment, as the projector displayed 'old' video documentation from the previous closed laboratories. In the evening, the viewpoint shifted, as the projector displayed the Twitter wall; this was a live projection of guests' tweets as they posted or 'tweeted' them on Twitter. The Twitter wall displayed the guests' thoughts, ideas and questions, which allowed the ensemble a vantage point into the guests' thoughts and experience of The Open Laboratory. The space where we place our belongings in the studio was also marked out with tape, creating five squares, one for each ensemble member. This ensured that we had the same working space as in the closed laboratory. As mentioned, the dance studio is lined with mirrors along one wall; this held an interesting opportunity to replicate or duplicate the space while creating an observation point for the guests.[42] Richard Schechner's (1973) production of Sam Shepard's *Tooth of Crime* also used a dividing structure he used 'a large structure that divided the performance space into "public" and "private" sides requiring the audience to move around and assume different positions as scenes shifted from side to side.' (Vander Lugt, 2014, p.180). The difference between Schechner approach is that he incorporated the dividing structure into, the performance, whereas in my installation the dividing mirrors did not attempt to hold performative elements; rather, they offered a sense of public and private space for guests and the ensemble.[43]

The two-way mirrors were hung in the DPL along the taped edge that mirrored their location in the studio. It was hoped the familiarity of the presence of the mirrors would not

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[42] The Mirrors: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/03/28/the-mirrors/

[43] A video of Schechner's performance, which shows the dividing structure, can be seen by following this link: http://hidvl.nyu.edu/video/000033716.html

distract or impact us. Furthermore, these two-way mirrors functioned to create a viewpoint into the studio from the office; however, when looking through the mirrors from the studio, the view was distorted and showed one's own reflection, reminiscent of Jeremy Bentham's (1791) *Panopticon*. This permitted the mirrors to generate a physical, yet opaque, divide between the guests and ensemble. The fact that these mirrors had clearly been constructed and added to the space, rather than an original feature of the space, functioned to further acknowledge the 'event' being witnessed had been purposely constructed in the space.

It was my intention that the use of these two-way mirrors would distance the ensemble from notions of audience and performance*,* as the replica environment would allow the guests to see us without us seeing them. In turn, the ensemble would be less likely to *perform for* the audience (as they could not know if they were present or watching) and, instead, work in response to the guests' interaction. Additionally, it was hoped that anonymity for the audience members would create an environment in which the guests had a greater sense of freedom; '[a]nonymity may then serve to encourage freedom by increasing the scope of actions not susceptible to official observation, records and interpretations' (Hooke in Prozorov, 2016, p.62). As such, the guests might be encouraged to work *with* the ensemble; moving alongside the ensemble, rather than existing outside of the process as passive audience members.

 It is important to mention that, once the mirrors were hung and the lighting was in place, when looking through the mirrors from the studio side, it was possible to see outlines and shapes of the guests if they came very close to the mirrors. However, we would have to have been looking very carefully and with full concentration for this to take place and as

we were busy working on our tasks, these fleeting shapes were easily forgotten or missed, having little or no impact. It was my intention that the use of the two-way mirrors would simultaneously replicate the 'original' spaces, while acknowledging the reconstructed nature of the environment, and facilitate anonymity via the recognition of fleeting shapes in the unseen yet visible environment.

At any point during The Open Laboratory, guests were able to physically attend the installation or, alternatively, to watch the whole event via a livestream accessed through the digital scrapbook. In order to facilitate this, I placed a wide-angled camera in both areas of the space and these were streaming constantly. The nature of this livestream meant that our work and process were uncensored; this allowed the process of The Open Laboratory to be completely exposed. It was my intention that the fully exposed and uncensored nature of The Open Laboratory, via the replica of the closed laboratory, would reject ideas of a constructed performance or demonstration, allowing the focus of The Open Laboratory to remain on the process rather than a product.

After The Open Laboratory, and when watching the video footage, I have been able to watch all the footage from both cameras, allowing me to reflect, observe and comment on The Open Laboratory both as an insider and outsider. The uncensored nature of the event resulted in an oddly voyeuristic effect of my own process of watching the documentation of The Open Laboratory. In these moments, I was watching what seemed to be private or obscure experiences. This intrusive nature of the documentation places a new shift on my experience as I questioned my role: am I a researcher, director or ensemble member?

 In these moments of reflection, it was not possible for me to see myself as anything other than a researcher, a researcher that, in this case, is researching herself as well as guests

and ensemble members. As I reflected on the process of The Open Laboratory, as well as my own role and experience, I was overwhelmed with a sense of 'documenting the documentation'. This, in turn, functioned to distance myself from the event that took place. My ability to distance myself was undoubtedly framed by my conception that the event was no longer taking place in the here and now.

As such, my experience of watching this footage was very different from the process of *being in* The Open Laboratory. I became acutely aware of the research and how this impacted on the creation of the second installation – although, I was not actively aware of my role as a researcher when in The Open Laboratory, which highlights the gap between embodied research practice and reflection. This experience is much like the moments during The Open Laboratory when we remembered the presence of the camera and livestream, which functioned to jar my response away from a creative response and towards an archival response. In this way, the livestream permitted a sense of privileged voyeurism fuelled by the hyperreal nature of the documentation process, where my 'anticipation of the event coincides with its reproduction' (Baudrillard, 1994, p.117). [44]

In this role as a researcher, I was privileged to have the ability to not only comment on the event, but also comment on the guests' experience and reaction to the livestream. It is clear the guests and ensemble forgot they were being recorded and livestreamed, evident from the apparent lack of self-consciousness in the guests' responses, which suggested the guests did not consistently remember that they were being recorded. It appeared that the

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[44] Baudrillard defines the hyperreal as a space that is no longer '[T]he real and its concept. No more imaginary coextensivity […] no longer measures itself against either an ideal or negative instances. It is no longer anything but operational […]' (Baudrillard,1994, p.2). This distinction allows me to distance myself from the event as it was taking place (in the *real*) and situate myself within the representation of the event as it was taking place (in the hyperreal accessed via the video footage) and in turn, distance myself from the '(truth) value' and already place my experience within 'simulation value' (Baudrillard, 1994, p.108).

guests and the ensemble were freed by the 'privacy' of the mirrors; they were not consciously aware of being visibly watched by anyone else in the physical space.

As for the presence of the cameras, the ensemble was familiar with a camera being in the space as we recorded each of our closed laboratory sessions, so the camera's presence was not unusual. For the guests, it was my intention that, by integrating the television screens into the office space and placing the camera in plain sight, the guests' experience of the camera would correlate with their experience of all the other objects in the office space, functioning *for* and *with* them, to enhance their experience of the laboratory to expose the process, not their experience; as such, becoming normalised in the space.

The uncensored behaviour of the guests was acutely noticeable during our warm-ups, particularly on the third night, when there was clear enjoyment as the guests tapped their feet, swayed, sang and danced along to the music as they watched us carry out the warm-up.[45] During The Open Laboratory, the guests talked about us, to us, took off their coats, put their bags down, ate our food, read our documents, looked at our computers, diaries and online conversations, all carried out with freedom or licence, with no evidence to suggest that they were hesitant or that they felt they were being watched. They were not cautious in their actions. It was this lack of self-awareness that suggested guests 'forgot' about the livestream, which was evident in their uncensored attitudes and responses. It is possible to speculate the guests could have been 'performing' for the livestream; however, due to the durational nature of the experience, interactive environment and the lack of

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[45] To see examples of this dancing, please follow this link: https://youtu.be/8F4hkG1HWUs

acknowledgement by the guests of the cameras, I do not believe that the guests could have been consistently and continually 'performing' for the livestream.

This uncensored nature of The Open Laboratory extends to the ensemble's experience. Throughout the process, our conversations and discussions were uncensored; no self-monitoring was evident, although there were periodic changes in the ensemble's behaviour as occasionally we would suddenly stop and comment on being recorded.[46] These moments presented themselves as if we had been caught carrying out a private act. These sudden moments of self-awareness were followed by a verbal response that expressed desire to be 'professional' or 'perform' *for* the guests, however, the ensemble seemed to rapidly remember that The Open Laboratory permitted authenticity, which prompted a short verbal confirmation amongst the ensemble members that their behaviour was 'okay'. Indicating that the construction of the replica laboratory environment, when combined with the uncensored response, permitted the possibility for non-self-conscious reactions, which went seemingly unjudged.

Another element of the re-design and replica environment was the three fundamental communication tools to allow for interaction and communication *by*, *with* and *for* the guests and ensemble. These were: microphones, a twitter wall and hand-written paper aeroplanes. These were designed to promote interaction and prevent the dividing mirrors becoming a physical barrier between the ensemble and guests.

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[46] To see an example of this please, follow this link: https://youtu.be/tHSsGy-dP_o?list=PLx6T8AuJI1FvLaL5EjgbiwjXS5fbWvqPk

<u>The Microphones</u>

The guests could talk to us via a microphone, on their side of the space. This offered a direct and instant method of communication that allowed the guests to impact on the tasks as they were taking place, while also acknowledging their presence in the space. The sound from the microphone penetrated all areas of the environment, which highlighted the impermanence, translucence and 'invisibility' of the dividing mirrors. On the first and second nights, this microphone was hardly used, with only one guest briefly talking to us; this was possibly due to the guests being concerned about being identified, as the microphone might have seemed to offer less anonymity than using social media. However, on the third night of The Open Laboratory, there was an important development to the structure and framing of the installation, namely the addition of a second microphone to the studio space. This change directly impacted the environment and *between* space of the ensemble and guests. The decision to add the microphone to the studio space was in direct response to the feedback, left on the Twitter feedback wall from the second night, which stated: 'You don't like requests?'[47] When we read this tweet, our initial response was that of frustration:

> AA: They are called suggestions not called requests and, second of all, some of them actually interrupt our time and what we are doing […]
>
> JW: It's weird isn't it? I guess that's the whole challenge of opening something that is normally completely closed and that's what we've got to think about it. I don't think there is any such thing as bad feedback, it's just how we respond to that.

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[47] To see this discussion, please follow this link: https://youtu.be/NeUVwjlXjnQ

On reflection, I noticed that we did indeed receive some tweets that were constructed as questions, rather than ideas, and these had been missed, probably due to the fact that we were in the space 'doing'. The process of creating tasks and rules can be very absorbing and we might not have been paying attention to the Twitter wall. As a result of our 'busyness', we did not have time to pick up our phones, log in to Twitter, find the tweet and answer the tweet. This process of answering the tweets would have meant interrupting the laboratory and stopping the process or the task in a very unnatural way and for an extended period of time.

I decided the best way to quickly address the tweets and respond to questions would be verbally, so I added a second microphone to the dance studio space. In the closed laboratory, there were moments of discussion and conversation; as a result, these moments of response via the second microphone, in The Open Laboratory, might feel natural to the ensemble and not shift their behaviour away from 'doing', while also reducing the need to interrupt the process to use a digital platform to respond to guests.

Twitter

The second method of communication was, as mentioned above, a live Twitter wall displayed on a large projector screen visible in both areas. This allowed guests to tweet ideas, thoughts, or reflections directly to the ensemble using the hashtag 'gofish' or my own Twitter handle. Additionally, as discussed, the ensemble could tweet replies, calls for help or post pictures. This form of digital communication functioned in the physical space, while also widening the platform of communication to guests who were not physically in the space and were watching on the livestream. As Caroline Heim, author of *Audience as Performer* (2013), states, 'currently twitter is fast becoming the most immediate form of

communication between actors and audience members and is re-defining the actor/audience relationship' (Heim, 2015, p.115). Although Heim goes on to remark this communication normally takes place outside of the theatrical event, she asserts that 'audience that make a personal connection with performers through tweeting naturally feel more of a kinship during the performance' (Heim, 2015, pp.115-166). This element of the installation also changed over the course of the four days; on the first day, we had a small screen, which was not directly or easily visible through the mirrors, which might have excluded the guests, while potentially reducing the 'importance' of the tweets due to the reduced visibility of them in the space. Furthermore, there was a technical error and the Twitter feed did not refresh on the projection; therefore, in order to check the Twitter wall, we had to use our phones and laptops, which was disruptive. In response to this, on the second night we moved the Twitter wall onto the large projector, making it much bigger and prominent in the space so that guests could easily see it reinforcing the value of the tweets. We also created a widget for the Twitter feed that would refresh every thirty seconds; however, there was another technical error and the feed stopped refreshing part-way through, caused by guests re-tweeting other guests' tweets.[48] By the third night, all the technical glitches were resolved and the Twitter wall worked smoothly and effectively, supported by the addition of the second microphone, which allowed us to respond and communicate directly with the guests.

Throughout all four days of The Open Laboratory, it appeared to me that the ensemble were showing little or no awareness of the Twitter wall. They did not seem to be overly checking, waiting or watching it; rather, only occasionally would they look up and check for

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[48] A widget is an application, or a component of a program, enabling users to correspond directly with a computer, which enables a user to perform a function and access a service – in this case, Twitter.

tweets. Those moments, however, only seemed to happen in breaks or moments of discussion away from the task in hand. These breaks seem significant when considering our attention to the Twitter wall, as Joanna Holden, a performer for Cirque du Soleil, comments: 'I find, ideas come to people sometimes, not when they are under pressure in the rehearsal room, but quite often it's in the break that you go – "well, I could try this" and "What about this!?"' (Holden in Radosavljević, 2013, p.110). With this in mind, it was possible that, in our breaks, we were exploring ideas and searching for ideas and, as a result, referring to the Twitter wall.

On the second night, there was a drastically different reaction to the Twitter wall when we noticed it had stopped working. Our reaction was one of extreme disappointment. In this moment, the ensemble's desire to be open and present *for* the guest was unmistakable, as was evident in our response:[49]

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[49] To see this disappointment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/NKC_Gq3pPZE

JW: The Twitter wall's stopped working!
CT: Ahhh, no!
CW: Have we had tweets?
CT: Have we had loads of tweets?
JW: [reading tweet from phone] "or when the catcher catches someone they pick a square to be crossed off?"
CW: Maybe
CJ: That could be a good rule
JW: There are loads of tweets
Everyone: Ahh no!!
CT: That sucks
JW: Ok, so [starts reading out tweets from phone]
[…]
CT: I thought it was odd there were none, I was like 'really!'
[…]
CW: When was that tweet?
JW: 51 mins ago
Everyone: Ahhh!

After the realisation that we had missed ideas and suggestions, there was a new-found urgency in the work. We wanted to quickly apply the new rules provided by the tweets, which instantly refreshed the task. The realisation guests were watching and contributing led to the *between* as the ensemble welcomed and explored all of the guests' ideas. This was potentially an attempt to demonstrate that this technical glitch was not a representation of the ensemble's lack of interest or acknowledgement of the value of the guests' ideas. After this realisation, the ensemble seemed unable to forget or move past this frustration at the failure of the Twitter wall, something which previously they seemingly had no interest in. This was further evident as the discussion at the end of The Open Laboratory session returned to the failure of the Twitter wall, as the ensemble expressed more annoyance and disappointment; what is more, this discussion and frustration carried over to Wednesday morning.[50] This growing interest in the Twitter wall

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[50] To watch this conversation please follow this link: https://youtu.be/M3h7nK9P1Pk

demonstrated that the ensemble were experiencing a growing interest in the guests and recognising the value of the guests' ideas.

These technical glitches and the ensemble's response to them had an interesting effect on the ensemble and their conception of what was *open* and what was *closed* within the installation. This discussion on Wednesday morning draws attention to the fact there seemed to be some confusion among the ensemble as to what elements of the laboratory belonged to the replica environment and what belonged to the original or closed process. This is highlighted in the below transcript:

> JW: 'Cos Tracy tweeted
> CW: Did she?
> JW: Not an idea, but just tweeted like good work […] Just things that are nice to know people are watching, isn't it?
> CW: Yeah, 'cos we were like no one is watching […] there was a point where I was, like, is everyone gone and you were like, yeah, think so, so we knew everyone was gone from here [gestures around office]
> JW: You can just tell 'cos of the sound, can't you?
> CW & CT: Yeah
> JW: It's much quieter… but I've put a microphone on our side this time
> CT: [gasps] Yeah you have…
> JW: …so that if we get any… or anyone sees any tweets that are like questions, 'cos you know how people were like you're not answering our questions and that's because we don't have time, we cannot be logging on to Twitter to tweet cos it's too distracting.
> CW: Oh, do you think that's what it was… that we weren't answering on Twitter… but were answering in the space and they are watching…
> JW: …but maybe they're not hearing, so I thought… one of the questions last night was what are you making and you said it to me and I said 'you'll have to wait and see…'
> CT: …I did turn and said it to them… [Through the mirror]
> JW: …but maybe they didn't hear.
> CT: Yeah
> JW: Maybe they didn't hear and they felt unacknowledged…
> CW: …or they didn't know it was in relation to their comment
> JW: Exactly. So I am thinking, if you, see, like a question, just go there read out the question and give your own answer, don't check with anyone, just do it, 'cos I think that may… That might be a way of doing. 'Cos we can't be... if we tweet back it's too interruptive.
> CW: Yeah, we cannot do that

> CT: We wouldn't do that anyway
> JW: I know we wouldn't, but we do talk so…

This is a very interesting – and, on reflection, humorous – conversation, as there seemed to be some confusion about what we would *normally* do in the closed laboratory and what we are *doing* in The Open Laboratory. We forgot that, in the closed laboratory, we would not have any tweets, as we do not have a Twitter wall and nobody can see us. Ironically, the discussion focused on the fact that we would not *reply* to tweets. For example:

> […] JW: 'Cos we can't be… if we tweet back it's too interruptive.
> CW: Yeah, we cannot do that.
> CT: We wouldn't do that anyway.
> JW: I know we wouldn't but we do talk […]

This momentary confusion is, in hindsight, ludicrous and emphasises that we had become normalised in the new replica environment. The boundaries between the closed and the open have merged; we, ourselves, have become immersed or 'tricked' by the similarities we have created, unable to fully distinguish between the two environments. The only remaining distinction was the presence of the guests and the need to respond to them or include them. Moreover, it is interesting how important the tweets, input and observation from the guests had become after the two nights. The value we were placing on being able to communicate and engage with the guests, outside of the immediate space of the laboratory, had become highly evident through the ensemble's desire to facilitate and respond to the guests. We seemed to have forgotten that the concept of 'tweets' and 'being watched' was new; our overarching focus remained centred on 'the guests' and their contributions *within* the ensemble. This communication was clearly of equal importance to the guests, as was evident via the feedback, which indicated the guests felt frustrated when we could not, or did not, reply. They feared our request for participation was also,

like the environment, artificial, causing or resulting in a destabilising effect as they questioned their function within the laboratory. This suggests that, without the communication between guest and ensemble, the value of the *between* space in The Open Laboratory was diminished. Without the possibility of a two-way communication, the *between* space of the ensemble was restricted and decreased the potential for being-with or *becoming.*

The Paper Aeroplanes

The final method of communication was facilitated by paper aeroplanes. These were in the office space outside of the taped edge, framed so that guests could write a suggestion, idea or question and throw their paper aeroplane over the top of the mirrors and into the studio space for the ensemble to respond physically or vocally.[51] This was designed so the physical act of throwing the paper aeroplanes over the mirrors would expose the replica nature of the space by momentarily breaking the illusion of two separate spaces. Dellas Pollock's essay 'Performing Writing', in Phelan and Lane (1998) text, *The Ends Of Performance* speaks of the possibility for embodiment as performative writing, stating that the act of writing intertwines 'in intimate co-performance of language and experience' (Pollock in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p.81). Pollock also states that, within performance-writing, 'meanings are contextual' (Pollock in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p.79) and taken from the clues in the 'context-map in which it is located and which it simultaneously marks, determines, transforms' (Pollock in Phelan & Lane, 1998, p.79). This is of importance when considering the physical act of writing on the paper aeroplanes during The Open Laboratory, as the

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[51] Examples of the writing on a paper aeroplane:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_3919.jpg?w=374&h=664&crop=1
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/cejy_gfwaaad8s4.jpg?w=700&h=&crop=1

writing was borne out of the context of the replica environment. Furthermore, the impact

of this writing is instantaneously seen or witnessed in the space, as the ensemble

responded to the dialogue, resulting in a potential transformation of the process and the

environment.

Pollock's definition of performing writing covers six key themes or terms, five of which I

feel strongly resonate with Nancy's (2000) theories of 'I', 'we', *between* and being-with.

The terms coined by Pollock are:

> *evocative,* '[...]suggesting an in-between, "liminoid" field of possibility [...]';
> *metonymic,* '[...]self-consciously partial or incomplete rendering that takes its pulse
> from the *difference* rather the identity'; *subjective* '[...] Shifting from documenting
> "me" to reconstituting an operative, possible "we"[...]'; *nervous* '[....] constituting
> knowledge in an ongoing process of transmission and transferal [...]'; and
> *consequential* '[...] language generally as an operational means of action and
> effects [...] "to make things happen". (Pollock in Phelan & Lane, 1998, pp.80-95)

These themes or terms indicate that the value of physically writing had the potential to

allow the guests to enter a state of *possibility* between or among subjects, during which

they were no longer engaging as 'me' but rather as 'we'. This was because the context of

the writing on the paper aeroplanes remained non-linear and crossed temporal borders,

functioning to make things happen in The Open Laboratory as the guests disintegrated the

solidity of the dividing wall.

It was my intention that the transparency between the two spaces (divided by the two-way

mirrors, yet connected by communication, participation and observation) would result in

a lack of self-consciousness among the ensemble and guests. Facilitated by a full and

complete transparency of our normally closed process, it would in turn allow the guests to

be a part of the process of 'imitation' so they, too, would not become caught up in a

representational structure. The transparency attempted to expose the form and content of the closed process. It is this transparency that endeavoured to distance the guests from notions of completeness. The transparency and lack of completeness indicated by the environment revealed an immediate *need* for the guests and ensemble's presence in order for the replica or mock laboratory to take place. This made it possible to create an *opening* or *space* in the ensemble, to show, share, respond and develop the tasks, in an open setting that opposed the idea of 'product' or 'performance'. In order to explore this further this thesis will now focus on two moments from the second installation. To advance the investigation into how task-based methods of performance in an open environment might promote participatory performance.

12. The Endurance of Flow in The Second Installation

This thesis will now discuss the experience and subsequent observations of 'The Skipping Task', considering the impact of placing the closed laboratory into the open environment, as well as the impact on the formation of the ensemble and the relationship that occurred between the ensemble and the guests. 'The Skipping Task' was carried out on the third night of The Open Laboratory and the subsequent observations of the task reveal how acts of failure and exhaustion in the task function to expose *becoming* or being-with.

Throughout the process of the closed laboratory, we developed eight different ways of skipping. During The Open Laboratory, with the help of the guests, the ensemble developed these eight methods of skipping into a 'routine' that drew from a video of the Canadian skipping team in the '2006 Jump rope World Championships - Canada Group Routine' (2010), as discussed in Chapter 9.[52] The aim of our routine was to include complex and visually interesting movements that would allow us to focus on the moments of failure. It was important, as always, that these failures in our 'routine' were not performed and were a result of *doing* the task. As noted, in the first installation these moments of error or failure became *performed* as the participants had become skilled in the task of jumping. Therefore, we developed this task to increase the difficulty so that the moments of error could not be performed due to the extreme physical nature of the task. By developing a complex skipping routine, which played with exhaustion and duration for both the ensemble and the guests, we addressed, as discussed in Chapter 9, how to deal with or

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[52] To watch the video please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2014/11/06/skipping-idea/

acknowledge error in an open environment. The routine and rules created in The Open Laboratory can be found in section 4 of *The Rule Book*.

<u>The Ensemble</u>

The development of 'The Skipping Task' and sub-rules was an enjoyable process for the ensemble. This sense of enjoyment became an important notion, as there were tasks that the ensemble found less enjoyable, such as 'The Biscuit Task'. Despite the varying levels of enjoyment, all the tasks we had developed had been carried out multiple times, yet some tasks, such as skipping, were actively requested or subconsciously returned to. This sense of happiness and enjoyment, associated with 'The Skipping Task', was a result of the direct access to *flow*, as defined by Csíkszentmihályi (1988-1997) and discussed in Chapter 6. This sense of *flow* subsequently resulted in a sense of enjoyment when the ensemble reflected on the task. As such, the sense of enjoyment is predominantly felt and experienced after the task, which, in turn, drove the ensemble to return to the task and re-experience the state of *flow*. Csíkszentmihályi (1997) offers clarification surrounding the connection between *flow* and happiness:

> When we are in *flow* we are not happy, because to experience happiness we must focus on our inner states, and that would take away attention from the task at hand […] only after the task is completed do we have the leisure to look back on what has happened, and then we are flooded with gratitude for the excellence of the experience – then, in retrospect, we are happy […] The happiness that follows *flow* is of our own making, and it leads to increasing complexity and growth in consciousness. (Csíkszentmihályi, 1997, p.32)

The ensemble's individual voice memos recorded after 'The Skipping Task' demonstrate their feelings of happiness and enjoyment, evident in their response to the task on that

particular night.[53] There was a clear sense of enjoyment and happiness; however, it is important to note that this sense of enjoyment was coupled with an awareness of the physically exhausting nature of the task. Nevertheless, it would seem that, for the most part, this exhaustion was viewed as necessary, worthwhile and only acknowledged after the task.

The physical challenge of the skipping was experienced as within the capabilities of the ensemble, coupled with the sense that the post-task enjoyment or happiness would outweigh the physical challenges during the task. The task was freely entered into; the suffering was undertaken so the suffering could end:

> [F]inishing is itself enough […] From a Baudrillardian perspective, there is no meaning here; it is simply the meaningless task undertaken only for it to conclude. (Whelan, 2012, pp.118-119)

This sense of undertaking the task so it can finish was expressed here by one ensemble member: 'just to complete it, just to finish. I know if I just stick at it I'll get to the end, finish the task and move onto the next one' (Wood, 2016).

In Gregg Whelan's discussions surrounding endurance running, he states it is the 'end' that transforms the process:

> [Allowing for a] 'change' '[…] those of us who begin durational performance works simply to find the conclusion, will understand that the opportunity to stop running at the end of a marathon - to halt the considerable difficulty that running has generated – is the most humane of offerings, the opportunity to re-enter the non-running world, to begin the world again. (Whelan, 2012, p.112)

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[53] These voice memos can be heard by following this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/03/24/week-16-wednesday-voice-memos/

It is possible to speculate that 'The Skipping Task' was undertaken for completion; it started so it could end. During the task, the endurance was experienced to facilitate the end, knowing the end was always within sight, resulting in a belief that completion was possible.

Here, two of the participants reflect on 'The Skipping Task' as experienced in The Open Laboratory:[54]

> Love skipping, as always! I think we are masochists, but hey! Yes, it's really cool, I think. I love it. I love skipping so much and now it's just the most amazing routine I think we could ever come up with. Probably if we are going to come back to this in a week or two weeks' time we could come up with more interesting things. The only problem with skipping is it does get tiring and, until we realise what's wrong, umm, and how we can solve it, we get tired, but then again we're really building stamina. (Agratini, 2016)

> So today we did skipping and as usual that's all we did, for the whole time that we are here, because it takes such a long time and it just flies when you're doing it, you don't realise how much time it actually takes, but that's all good because we can do it [...] it was great [...] its really quite enjoyable, I kind of go into a trance mode where I just keep going and I don't even feel it anymore, umm, and it's really. It's quite nice and I quite enjoy it, umm, although it can go on for quite a long time, especially if we keep going wrong [...] it's enjoyable and I like it, it's good. (Joachim-Farrow, 2016)

It is possible to witness the ensemble experiencing a sense of *flow* during The Open Laboratory. It is also possible, within the same attempt at 'The Skipping Task', to witness moments when the ensemble members move away from a state of *flow*. Evidenced in the voice memos below, the experience of *not experiencing* a sense of *flow* resulted in a lack of enjoyment and a sense of confusion within the task. In The Open Laboratory, there were large periods of time where the physical act of skipping was being carried out by only one ensemble member, while the other ensemble members were waiting for a set duration of

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[54] You can listen to these voice memos by following this link:
https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/03/24/week-16-wednesday-voice-memos/

time to pass before they were required to take part in physically skipping. This meant some ensemble members were involved in the task without physically skipping. In these moments of waiting, it was possible to claim that these ensemble members were no longer in a state of *flow* as they were no longer engaged in the task and unable to concentrate due to a lack of physical activity:

> […] bit of a [mixed] bag tonight in terms of feelings, thoughts, reflections […] we skipped for the whole time […] I kind of… I keep changing my mind about skipping, like, I like but then I hate it, I like it, I hate it… it was really frustrating when we did the kind of new-fangled way of doing things, not doing but new kind of routine, I was a bit annoyed because I felt like […] I didn't know that we were failing […] I knew that like it was meant to be like getting harder, but I didn't know that failing was… I didn't know that we were supposed… I thought it was supposed to be looking good and slick […] but then I felt like the point was failing… so I got confused like […] I get making it harder that's fine… but then I don't know, like, I am not really a fan of failing […] as a participant it just wasn't interesting and it was frustrating 'cos I wasn't doing anything I was just stood there doing […] yeah, I don't know I am just a bit like, pfft... I don't know, maybe it's because I am just tired, umm, so yeah I don't know… I am not sure how I feel […] (Tansey, 2016)

In this reflection, the ensemble member's description of her own role in the task was fragmented and disjointed. She expresses a dislike of the task and a lack of enjoyment as she 'waited' whilst not under any sort of physical exhaustion. As a result, she was not being challenged by the task; as such, she was experiencing a reduced state of *flow*: '*flow* tends to occur when a person's skills are fully involved in overcoming a challenge that is just about manageable' (Csíkszentmihályi, 1997, p.30). Therefore, the ensemble member did not experience the 'reward' of enjoyment, which is clearly reflected in her confusion about the task and her own feelings surrounding the task. This lack of enjoyment was expressed as a sense of failing or failure in the task, as the act of 'doing nothing' was not, for this ensemble member in this moment, a manageable challenge.

The ensemble member's desire to take part physically was overwhelming; by not physically taking part, she felt as if she was failing the task. It is probable her sense of confusion had been further exacerbated as previously, when completing the task, she had skipped continually, consequently, accessing a sense of *flow.* This resulted in a sense of enjoyment or happiness after the task and this sense of enjoyment had now become expected and presumed. The lack of enjoyment after completing the task, in The Open Laboratory, functioned to further increase her confusion and sense of failure with both the task and herself. The external factors of The Open Laboratory added to her confusion as she was possibly engaged in demonstrating rather than *doing;* as such, this lack of enjoyment or failure could be borne out of a desire to demonstrate her skills *for* the guests rather than working *with* the guests. The external factors of The Open Laboratory, such as the expectation of presenting *to* others, have altered the ensemble member's reflection of the task; she was beginning to consider and analyse the task, searching for interest rather than developing the *form* and nature of the task; '[…] as a participant it just wasn't interesting and it was frustrating 'cos I wasn't doing anything, I was just stood there […]' (Tansey, 2016). The ensemble member's desire for external interest had been heightened by her awareness of the outside eye. The task which was normally a closed or private activity had become an aesthetic experience due to the external factors in The Open Laboratory, disrupting her sense of *flow* and adding to her confusion in the moment of reflection.

The experience of a reduced state of *flow* is reinforced in this next voice memo. Again, this was recorded after the task in The Open Laboratory:

> […] skipping is always great; I had a great time at the start, just with general skipping and pair skipping and I really enjoy this new little section we've developed. Umm, I kind of felt useless at the start, and I know I was swinging the rope, but I wasn't actually doing any skipping for a long time and I know I've got the line coming up,

but if we never get there, I am never skipping and I kind of feel, not bad of everyone, but I am just sort of stood there waiting for my time to do something. Kind of wanting to skip for [the other ensemble members] but that's just my thing and that's fine because I know I'll get to the line and get to skip and get exhausted with everyone else, umm, and now I've got my double jumps so that's fine, but, umm, I feel like it went well. (Wood, 2016)

When this ensemble member was actively skipping, exerting energy and physically working on the task, she was able to reflect on that experience positively, as a good enjoyable experience and was experiencing *flow*. However, when her role in the task was less physical and she had less time *in* the action, the nature of her reflection changed and she became less positive as her experience of time in action or task altered. It is possible to look to Martin Wyllie's theory (2005), in *Lived Time and Psychopathology,* as he offers a useful distinction between changing conceptions of time. He states that there is a shift between *implicit or lived time* and *explicit or intersubjective time*, commenting that *implicit* or *lived time* is the experience of being: '*lived time* unfolds through the processes of bodily activity' (Wyllie, 2005, p. 174). In this moment, past and future do not stand out against a sense of 'becoming', which is achieved through absorption in the task at hand, reminiscent of Csíkszentmihályi's *flow*. However, Wyllie (2005) suggests a state of 'becoming' alters when the gap between need and satisfaction occurs, resulting in a fracture between lived time and intersubjective time:

> […] personal lived time and its reference to intersubjective time are naturally bound together in a dialectic relation of tripartite time, namely, past, present, and future […] it is in this sense that both personal lived time and intersubjective time are either in accord or in discord with each other. (Wyllie, 2005, p.177)

In this moment of the task, for this ensemble member, the future appeared as a 'not yet', experienced as the temporality of awaiting or longing for. Time was felt as passing by and it became conscious or *explicit*. As a result, her potential experience of *flow* was diminished and she experienced, in these moments of explicit time, a reduced sense of enjoyment. She was waiting and longing for time to pass.

Nevertheless, this ensemble member remains, in this reflection, able to foresee moments in which she will experience potential enjoyment and, subsequently, the possibility of re-entering the state of *flow*. This could be due to the fact that, as Wyllie (2005) asserts, personal time and intersubjective time normally unfold more or less together and the experience takes on a social dimension: 'past, present, and future can become restructured in certain experiences' (Wyllie, 2005, p.177). Therefore, her conception of the task, in her reflection, can be past and present. Her experience of *flow* was not fixed; it was intertwined with her experience of time.

In addition to reflecting on her experience of time and *flow*, in the above voice memo, it is poignant that *this* ensemble member expressed a sense of 'being' with everyone else. Critically, this 'being-with' was only accessed by being in the same state of exhaustion or being in the same state, '[…] I know I'll get to the line and get to skip and get exhausted *with everyone else* […]' (Wood, 2016). The nature of sameness or similarity resulting in a sense of *being-with*-the-other ensemble members is valuable as it indicates that 'being' together, like *flow*, is also not a fixed state throughout the task, reminiscent of Nancy's statement that:

> *Being-singular-plural* means the essence of Being is only as co-essence […] If Being is being-with, then it is, in its being-with, the 'with' that constitutes Being […] 'With': singulars singularity together, where the togetherness is neither the sum, not the incorporation […] the togetherness of singulars is singularity 'itself'. (Nancy, 2000, pp.30-32)

This suggests the co-essence of the Being, is *Being-singular-plural* and the act of being-with is essentially resting on the 'with'; as such; the togetherness of the singularity was brought about by the individuals themselves when linked by the 'with'. The singular ensemble member's desire to be *'with everyone else'* was functioning to provide a sense of togetherness; it was through this movement or moment of being-with that she was able to experience a sense of being both singular and plural.

12.1. Observations of The Spectator-Participants

I will now provide an extract from my notes commenting on my observations of the guests' physical and verbal responses to 'The Skipping Task' as it took place in The Open Laboratory. These observations were taken when watching the footage from the camera situated in the 'office' space and written after The Open Laboratory.

Observation of the guests (an extract)

As The Skipping Task begins to unfold, there are initially two guests in the 'office' space watching and exploring their environment. Guest two stands very close to the mirror; she is very still and not looking away. She watches intently for just over a minute before sitting and beginning to write on the whiteboard. Guest one is sitting down; he is watching the ensemble and Guest two's actions. When the timer goes off, Guest one instantly stands and exclaims 'oooo' and returns to watching the task through the mirror. The ensemble fails instantly and the task loops back to the beginning. The frustration is evident on his face.[55] He carries on watching before leaving the room for a short while, only to resume watching when he re-enters. Guest two is still writing, occasionally looking up to watch the ensemble. As the second timer goes off, Guest one stops what he is doing to watch intently through the mirrors. As the task progresses to a new point, he walks closer to the mirror and says 'I think they're going to do it'. Guest two is still writing and occasionally looks up to watch. However, now she is watching for slightly longer periods of time. When the inevitable third failure happens, Guest one walks away from the mirrors and leaves the room, re-enters the room and sits down, watching again through the mirrors. As the third timer sounds, Guest one stands up again and walks towards the mirrors, watching diligently. When they, the ensemble, fail for the fourth time, he looks in disbelief and puts his hands on his hips, points at the mirrors and walks away talking to Guest two.[56] When the fourth timer goes off, there is a less immediate reaction from Guest one (perhaps he is convinced of their failure). Nevertheless, he does then turn to face the mirrors and watches with his arms crossed. As the ensemble fails for the fifth time, he keeps watching until the skipping starts again,

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[55] To see this moment follow this link: https://youtu.be/gU-83_gpWoc
[56] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/NYAVvltm9HY

before turning to watch the task on the TV screens and then starts walking around the space. At the sound of the fifth timer, he stops moving and stands to watch. He looks very focused on the task, before moving off camera. When he re-enters the shot, he sits down again, still watching. At the sixth timer, both guests turn in their chairs to watch through the mirrors, not moving, watching intently as the ensemble fails for the seventh time. The guests start to talk to each other, yet both guests remain still and seem very engrossed in the task. When the ensemble decides to stop the task, Guest one smiles and visibly relaxes, and both guests remain watching intently.

As the ensemble practices the tricky point at which they have been continually failing, the guests are laughing and begin to move around the space (possibly as a release of tension). Guest one begins to watch the ensemble practice very intently, not moving for nearly two minutes. When he does move, he seems reluctant to let the skipping out of his line of sight. As the ensemble discusses the rules and adds checkpoints, the guests are both standing very close to the mirror watching. Guest one breaks away from the mirrors and goes on the digital scrapbook, where he loads up a video and watches us skipping in the closed laboratory (this is very interesting and potentially shows a high level of engagement). At this point, one of the ensemble members uses our microphone to address a tweet, which seems to signal Guest two and she uses the microphone on their side to directly address us, the ensemble, and says 'It was pretty painful to watch'.[57]

At this point, a third guest enters the space and all three guests talk:

> *Guest three: what are they up to now then?*
>
> *Guest two: just skipping*
>
> *Guest one: skipping*
>
> *Guest three: ah*
>
> *[…]*

The guests break away from talking to each other. Guests one and two are at the digital scrapbook, while Guest three is moving around exploring the space. As soon as the ensemble's discussion shifts back to the rules, Guest one returns his attention to the

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[57] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/I3nL6GI3D4o

ensemble, before re-joining Guests two and three exploring the space. The ensemble then addresses a tweet via the microphone:

> *JW: We are going to go with 'if the couple fails they have to stop' and await the next couple to finish; if they both fail, they have to start again.*

This use of the microphone draws all the guests' attention back to the task. As CJ starts skipping, Guest one again returns to face the mirror and watches as we start the task again. Guest three keeps talking to the other guests (possibly, he does not feel as connected with the task as he has only just entered the space). Guest three then comments: 'its hard work just watching'.[58]

Guests one and two are periodically talking while watching; they are facing the mirrors. The longer the task goes on, the less they watch consistently. When the first timer goes off, Guests one and two stand and faces the mirrors (possibly as they know what is next and its importance). Guest three is on the scrapbook. The ensemble fails for the first time and, almost instantly, CJ starts skipping again, after getting some water. Guests one and two are still watching, peering through the glass with their thumbs touching their faces and little fingers touching the mirror, using their hands as a shield to block out excess light for a better view.

Guest three plays the livestream of the event on the scrapbook and they all watch the ensemble through the scrapbook for a while (this is odd, as they could watch it live or on the TV screens in the room).[59] The sound of CJ skipping can be heard live and 'recorded'. The guests then realise what they are doing. Guest two breaks away, while Guests one and three stay at the screen. Then they start watching themselves via the livestream on the scrapbook, but seem to lose interest and return to the mirrors to watch the task.

As the ensemble fails for a second time and start the task again, the frustration among the guests is evident.[60] The guests keep watching through the mirrors. As the timer goes for the second time, the guests are all watching intently, although now they are sitting down. The ensemble fails for a third time, almost instantly, and restart the task. By this point, the

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[58] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/sCgaHkmvCsk
[59] To this please follow this link: https://youtu.be/8p1keYmS_ac
[60] Please follow this link to see this: https://youtu.be/VEmRAyIMt40

physical reactions displayed by the guests have reached a high: they have their hands on their faces and are glancing to each other.[61] The timer goes off for the third time. Guest one stands and moves even closer to the mirrors, watching intently. As the ensemble reaches a new unseen stage in the task, all the guests stand and move even closer to the mirror, watching diligently (almost willing them to succeed, or believing that their concentration will help the ensemble with the task). The guests are not making a sound, but remaining very still, slowly moving closer and closer to the mirrors. Then, suddenly, the ensemble fails for the fourth time and there is a chuckle from the guests and they move away from the mirrors. Guest two throws her hands on her head in disbelief.[62] Then, as the skipping starts yet again, the guests group together, watching. The timer goes off for the third time and the task carries on and the guests start to talk to each other (possibly as they know failure is inevitable). The ensemble fails for the fifth time, very quickly after restarting. The guests don't even seem to notice; it is only as the stakes get higher and the task progresses that the guests re-engage (or possibly they are less engaged, as they do not want to be a part of the pain or task, in effect, refuting responsibility).

As the timer goes off for the fifth time, the guests can be heard discussing the rules. Guest three asks 'do they fail a certain number of times before they start again?' Guest two replies, but I can't hear it. All the guests discuss this for some time. Guests one and two reflect on their experience of watching the task, before Guest three arrived, discussing how many times they have watched CJ skip. On this sixth attempt, the ensemble gets further than ever before and Guest two claps her hands together when they reach the checkpoint, although this is quickly followed by a look of horror as she realises that the checkpoint is not the end of the task.[63] All the guests then watch intently as the task continues; the task reaches its final stages and the ensemble fails for the sixth time. The ensemble end the task, however, none of the guests move for a moment, still watching intently, almost as if they cannot believe it is over. They slowly start to move around the room. As the tension eases, the guests start talking to each other again.

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[61] Please follow this link to see this: https://youtu.be/GtFVkAxGw3E
[62] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/GtFVkAxGw3E?t=99
[63] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/NZcBjz3I1AM

I will now reflect on these observations of the guests during 'The Skipping Task' to discuss the sense of *becoming* among the guests, considering how the guests, in the moment of 'The Skipping Task', *become* the ensemble and experience *with* and *for* the ensemble. I focus on the following elements: the guests' physical movement towards the mirrors, the nature of the guests' physical and vocal responses, as well as their interaction with each other and the ensemble.

During 'The Skipping Task', on the third night of The Open Laboratory, we experienced our first direct verbal conversation with the guests facilitated by the addition of the microphone to the dance two space, as discussed in Chapter 11. The direct verbal communication with the guests was initiated when we received our first paper aeroplane of the night. This paper aeroplane's instruction was 'please perform as an air band'. This light-hearted or comical instruction could be a result of the re-theatricalisation of TV and the guest's familiarity with performed 'liveness', thus expecting the laboratory to 'perform' for entertainment that is associated with 'performed liveness'. This conceivably highlights Phelan's assertion that 'performance is grounded in actuality, and that its presentness is a given' (Phelan, 1993, p.148) as well as Auslander's argument that 'the ubiquity of reproductions of performances of all kinds in our culture has led to a depreciation of live presence' (Auslander 1999, p.36). There were some aspects of The Open Laboratory that could have held, for a guest, unspoken connections with their experience of reality television prompting instantaneous, shallow or flippant instructions designed for audience entertainment. The ensemble's response to the instruction was confusion, as we did not

place or did not identify ourselves within the context of entertainment. This led to the following exchange via the microphone:[64]

> AA: Can we have clarity on air band?
> Guest one: Like an air guitar, air drum, that kind of thing
> JW: while skipping
> Guest two: Yes, oh I haven't got any sound... [The microphone wasn't working]
> JW: Has the battery gone in the microphone?
> Guest two: Umm, I don't know... yeah
> JW: [someone] will be round to replace it
> Guest two: Thank you
> [...]
> JW: How are we going to air guitar and skip?
> Guest two: Are you using the big rope?
> JW: Yeah
> Guest two: Well, the people in the middle can, can't they?
> JW: Oh right, ok, I see...
> [...]
> Guest two: Use the skip beat as your rhythm.

This communication with the guests was interesting as it, for the first time, allowed the guests to directly interact, as well as to direct, *with* and *for* the pre-existing ensemble. As a result, the guests could instantly see their ideas *in* action and momentarily be active in their role within the ensemble. This engagement was enhanced by the transparency and uncensored nature of the direct verbal communication, unlike the tweets and previous paper aeroplanes. This idea was opened out into a conversation; the ensemble did not re-represent it, or apply their own knowledge. Through the communication with the guest, the knowledge and understanding of the task became shared; the function of the paper aeroplane became transparent. This can be equated with Devisch's comment that 'Pure self-transparency exists only when nobody has to be *re*presented, when there is the possibility of immediate communication, in short, whenever community is present to itself' [original emphasis](Devisch, 2013, p.33). It is possible that, through this transparency of

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[64] To see this dialogue please follow this link: https://youtu.be/AYXkJH-4Fuw

communication, the ensemble are able to directly engage with the guests; shifting the boundaries of the ensemble through the transparency of the direct communication. Nancy comments that communication and community:

> […] are constitutive of individuality rather than the reverse, and individuality is perhaps, in the final analysis, only a boundary of community. […] For community does not consist of anything other than the communication of 'singular beings', which exist as such only through communication. Community is therefore neither an abstract or immaterial relationship, nor a common substance. It is not a common being; it is to be in common, or to be with each other, or to be together. (Nancy in Devisch, 2013, p.99)

The perpetual attempt 'to be with each other, or together' was further apparent in a guest's verbal reactions via the microphone, commenting 'it [the skipping] was pretty painful to watch'.[65] This moment of self-reflection suggests the guest was emotionally connected *to* and *with* the ensemble as well as the task; she wanted the ensemble to know that their effort had been witnessed and was not unnoticed or appreciated. The guest's response and acknowledgement of 'pain' could be a result of mirror neurons; some neuroscientists suggest we can experience vicariously what another person is doing or feeling. This is caused by mirror neurons in the brain that produce a representation of action and emotion that are not necessarily 'executed by their audience but are electrically experienced by them' (Hurley, 2010, p.31). Similarly, Vittorio Gallese, Christian Keysers and Giacomo Rizzolatti sate in *A Unifying View of the basis of Social Cognition* (2004) that 'direct simulation of the observed event [can result in] a direct experiential grasp of the mind of others (Gallese et al., 2004, p.396). Therefore, the guest's response to the physical

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[65] To see this comment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/I3nL6GI3D4o

movement and endurance was potentially a result of an experience that aligned the experience of the ensemble.

The communication between the guests and the ensemble was also coupled with verbal communication between the guests. These small exclamations or comments on the action such as 'oooo' or 'I think they're going to do it', as detailed in the observation notes, provide insight into the guests' experiences. It suggests the guests were invested and wanted the ensemble to succeed, indicating they felt a part of the action taking place and a part of the ensemble. In addition to these moments of exclamation, the guests also talked to each other and asked each other questions. For example, one guest asked another 'do they fail a certain number of times before they start again?' [66] This attempt to understand the task suggests the guest was expressing a desire to move away from witnessing and towards participation *in* the action, as they tried to unpack and disclose the information within the task in an attempt to *become with* the ensemble. Gareth White has defined audience participation as 'the participation of an audience, or an audience member, *in* the action of performance' (White, 2013, p.4). This guest's direct attempt to understand or be *in* the action could be functioning to further distance the guest from the activity of 'playing the role of the audience' (White, 2013, p.4) and towards being-with or in the ensemble.

.The temptation to be *close to*, *in* or *with* the ensemble was again displayed through the guests' growing proximity to the dividing mirrors.[67] As the task progressed, the guests began to embody the frustration of the task by physically moving closer and closer to the mirrors, until they were standing as close as possible and peering through. The guests

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[66] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/gOnnvHd8QV0
[67] To see an example of this please follow this link: https://youtu.be/Tsm3VkxDnZw

appeared to be caught in a perpetual cycle of physical movement, moving towards and moving away from the mirrors. This movement towards the mirrors and, subsequently, the ensemble, primarily took place during the moments where the ensemble reached new points in the task or were in a highly exhausted state, and where the guests' desire for the ensemble to succeed was at a critical level. This need to be close to, or with, the ensemble to facilitate success was then revoked by the guests as they expressed their frustration at the failure by moving away from the mirrors. They were seemingly repeatedly drawn in and out of the ensemble, as the ensemble carried on with the task only to fail again. This continuous movement embodied a movement *in* and *out* of the ensemble, shifting between singular and plural. The guests' desire to be *with* the ensemble was in flux as the task drew the guests towards a state of *becoming*.

Throughout 'The Skipping Task', the guests physically expressed their frustration, excitement and anxiety by throwing their hands up, pointing and clapping. In these moments of physical response, it was possible that the guests' purpose shifted *towards* the ensemble. Although unseen to the ensemble, the guests entered the *between* space of the ensemble, as they actively engaged and responded to the task. In these moments, the guests were connected and invested in the action as it was taking place, generating a sense of ownership and responsibility for the action. Throughout the task, the guests remained autonomous in their physical responses, but appeared to become a part of the collective sense of creativity. This can be likened to Halprin's consideration of 'collective creativity and the autonomy of participants and the interaction between them, resulting in a sense of community and group ownership of the event' (Worth & Poynor, p.23). It has been noted that Halprin was intending to create a genuine interaction between two the communities, namely the audience and performer (Pierce, 1975). I was attempting to facilitate an

environment for genuine interaction, which removed the need to interact or respond *for* the ensemble but rather *with* the ensemble and vice versa. As such, I was able to witness the communication between singular beings as they transcended into the singular plural, activated by being-*with.*

A difference between Halprin's process and my process is that the audience members in The Open Laboratory were not in isolation; they were not separated from each other. Rather, it was the ensemble and the guests who were distanced; as such, the group ownership extended to between the guests as well as *between* the guests and ensemble.

The guests' (un)seen and (un)heard reactions created a sense of participation that was supported by the autonomous nature of the event; the guests were not explicitly being watched or observed. Both guest and ensemble felt a sense of ownership and being-with. The ensemble was not fixed, rather it was operating in the between space of *ours* and *yours* through the communication, both physical and verbal.

This thesis will now examine the impact/experience/importance of another task that took place in the second installation. This will give an insight into what happened to the tasks and rules when the laboratory environment was opened to guests, as well as the impact on the ensemble, when transferred into an open public environment. This was the creation of a 'new' task that was established and initiated by the guests over the course of the installation.

13. Creating between the ensemble(s): In The Second Installation.

The creation of the 'new' task took place during The Laboratory is Open and began on the first night. Its influence and impact could be seen throughout the four days; an explanation can be found in section 9 of *The Rule Book*. The task was initiated by the exploration of a guest's paper aeroplane with the instruction to 'play TIG or something'.[68] I will now discuss this process and my findings. This chapter is organised under the following themes: Game to Task, Freedom of the Unknown, Shifting Role(s), The Outside Eye and The Response to the Outside Eye. I will explore the process of The Open Laboratory in relation to The Closed Laboratory process and my overarching exploration of the movement between 'I' and 'We' in the ensemble.

<u>Game to Task</u>

On the second day of The Open Laboratory, an ensemble member and I reflected on the process of creating 'The New Task' using guests' suggestions. This conversation was centred on our own process and how we defined a task. This permitted a consideration of the shift or difference between games and tasks. The ensemble member commented that, at first, it was good to just get the act of participation in the space. This participation allowed us to become more involved in the process, in turn moving away from the act of *performing* and towards a sense of *doing*. The ensemble member then commented that this participation was a game (simply following the rules of the childhood game TIG) and

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[68] To play TIG, a group of players decide who is going to be 'it'. The player selected to be 'it' then chases the others, attempting to get close enough to 'tag' one of them, touching them with a hand, while the others try to escape. A tag makes the tagged player 'it'. In some variations, the previous 'it' is no longer 'it' and the game can continue indefinitely while, in others, both players remain 'it' and the game ends when all players have become 'it'. To play Stuck in the Mud, the group decide who is going to be 'it'. This player chases the others and touches them with their hand to tag them. This makes them 'stuck in the mud' and must stand still until they are 'unstuck' by another player crawling between their legs. The game ends when everyone is stuck in the mud.

not something we would normally engage with or do. The fact the task developed from seemingly nothing, or nothing that we would associate with tasks – or, indeed, our own practice – resulted in the process of development, seeming, as she stated, 'fresh'. We speculated that this made the process interesting for the guests to watch, as well as interesting to be a part of. Furthermore, this task provided us with a sense of success as the game developed from *nothing* into a task as we understood it. This process allowed us to adapt to suggestions from guests and apply our own method and process to the unknown impact of the guest on the installation.

The discussion of how a game might change into a task, within or throughout our laboratory process, offers greater insight into how I define 'task' within my practice. The instruction 'play TIG' given to us by the guest can be commonly understood as a childhood game. Through the process of The Open Laboratory, our method for creating task-based performance changed the childhood game into a task. This change and shift highlighted the difference between game and task within my methodology.

As the game of TIG began, it felt slightly out of control and there was little or no structure to the activity; we were all, including myself, absorbed in the game for the sake of the game.[69] At this point, we were not trying to create, solve, measure the time, challenge or structure; we were trying to win. This is a vital distinction between game and task. As the game of TIG took place, we were not engaging in, as Bryon states, 'thinking [...] viewed as a doing of the mind/body' (Bryon, 2014, p.51).

As the game continued, the need to add rules was self-evident due to the fact that our approach to the game was fast-paced and reckless. There was little or no stopping in the

[69] To see an example of this please follow this link: https://youtu.be/GjeBUumCiPI

game or action to provide time for reflection or development. This lack of reflection was a result of the game not being or feeling like 'ours', causing a reluctance to change the activity. Rather, we were waiting for the guests to tell us what to do, waiting for the next idea, suggestion or instruction to be given to us via Twitter or the paper aeroplanes.[70]

This highlights a difference in our making process. We would not normally, in the closed laboratory, start a new task with only one instruction. We would initially have multiple layers or elements to the task. For example, one task in the closed laboratory began with the following combination of instructions:

Aim:
  • Get the straws in the cup

Rules:
  • Do not move multiple straws
  • Do not get caught
  • Do not disrupt others, unless specified
  • Use the straw every 5 minutes
  • Make more straws
  • Collect the straws as fast as possible.

By adding multiple rules or instructions before we began the process, we were again distancing ourselves away from an original concept; away from games and shifting it towards a task. The singular instruction given to us by the guest took us back to the start of the closed process. During this time, we were more reliant on one clear instruction.

It is possible this reluctance to 'take over' or own the task could be an expression of the fluidly *between* the individual and the collective, as the ensemble attempted to make space or accommodate new members by refraining from the idea of *mine* in favour of exposing

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[70] To see an example of this please follow this link: https://youtu.be/WWJS1YwIyUw

and opening up our process. Here, Nancy comments on the process of opening a community:

> The opening does not open unless we let it open, as we only let it open if we let ourselves be exposed in existence. We are exposed to our freedom. There is therefore finally the generosity of being dispensed in the plural singularity of 'us': the freedom of the decision, which is always 'mine' in the sense that a property of essence vanishes and that the entire community of existence is involved. (Nancy, 1993b, p.147)

By exposing ourselves in The Open Laboratory, as well as opening up the process to the guests without interruption or applying our pre-established knowledge or training, we were able to experience a freedom, exposing the 'us' of the singular plural, by letting go of the concept of *mine* or *ours.* The ownership of the task shifted, opening up the ensemble *to* or *for* the guests.

The experience of a game distracted or metaphorically restricted our ability to access our own training and proceed with the task. Once we had received a few other paper aeroplanes with instructions, such as '20 seconds' or 'plus no touching the lines', we were reactivated. We were then able to access our training, escaping the confines of the game, as we (re)remembered the value of rules and began to add our own rules and layers. The more details that were added, the harder we were making the task for ourselves and the further we were moving the task away from the original game. The value placed on depth, provided by the time spent on the task, culminated in a task that was unrecognisable from the initial idea of playing TIG.

At the beginning of forming the 'new' task, the ensemble were in the midst of responding to the paper aeroplane and, as a result, the energy levels of the ensemble were high. This could be seen in the ensemble's behaviour, as they were loud, shouting and quickly moving around the space.[71] The unexpected nature and freedom of a new task resulted, as mentioned, in a sense of freedom. It is possible that this state originated from the freedom of the unknown, the engagement with the unknown outcome, or elements of the guest's instruction, which functioned to assist the ensemble to 'forget' or become less consciously aware of the open nature of the laboratory. This distanced the ensemble from the 'pressure' of the outside eye or performance setting and re-immersed the ensemble in the process, as they were fully absorbed in *doing* rather than *performing*. The ensemble were immersed in a sense of freedom provided by the unknown. The ensemble members exposed themselves, allowing themselves to be affected by the other and, as a result, opening the ensemble to the guest.

The freedom of the unknown also resulted in a sense of lack of understanding, or lack of control. The task did not feel like our own, as indicated in this extract:

> JW: So this is stuck in the mud?
> CW: Yeah.
> JW: How do we now switch, from stuck in the mud to tag?
> [Silence]
> CW: I guess CJ being the only one free 'cos she's it, once we're all stuck she can just be, like, you're it and start running and you start running, and then we all start running
> AA: …and then it's chaos, it's chaos.
> [Laughter]
> CT: It will end in chaos. I'll tell you that now.
> [More laughter]
> JW: We need more instructions really…

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[71] To see an example of this please follow this link: https://youtu.be/GjeBUumCiPI

The feeling of not being in control over the task echoed the sense that we did not feel that the task was 'ours' to change, as it was initiated by a guest and we only had the one instruction. We could not think of any instructions or rules; our discussion was centred on a lack of control or chaos. There was little for us to develop without taking full ownership, which we felt might risk excluding the guests. This lack of ownership was, again, seen in our refusal to consider the value of the task as anything other than a game of stuck in the mud:

> JW: We would do that and then what? There needs to be another layer… otherwise it's just stuck in the mud.
> AA: …but that's what it is.

The refusal to see the task as anything more than it currently was, was an ownership issue. The refusal or inability to add more rules and layers could be because we did not see this as 'our' task yet. The disparaging tone reflected our dissatisfaction with the given instruction and a sense of pride that the tasks 'we create' are 'better' than the preconceived or pre-existing game suggested by the guest. We refused to see the value in the guests' ideas. For example, we received a paper aeroplane that asked us to 'be an animal', which received a very negative initial response.[72] However, the guest did not seem to feel or sense any negativity and responded directly to our call for help, writing another instruction on a paper aeroplane stating 'everyone hops one square at a time', indicating that he still felt a part of the ensemble and the task.

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[72] To see this reaction please follow this link: https://youtu.be/yUgzroakatU

CT: [reading] 'everyone hops one square at a time'.

[Silence]

JW: That's quite good.

[LAUGHTER]

JW: Yeah, so rather than run you can only move one square a time [demonstrates]

AA: I like that.

CW: That's good… and you'd have both feet in the square, or is it like this [demonstrates by moving with both feet in the same square at once, then one foot in a square at a time].

This was a significant moment in the process. Our expectation of the guests had shifted the silence and laughter spoke volumes; we were not expecting the instruction to be anything we could work with or would like. The acknowledgement of a good or maybe 'trained' outside eye changed the value of the task, re-engaging us with our own training. This paper aeroplane stimulated our own ability to structure the task, our focus heightened and we began to reengage and take ownership.

A second example of our now increased trust of the guests can be seen with the paper aeroplane that stated 'Take turns to move. No diagonals. 5 squares each time. Catcher then prey'.[73] This paper aeroplane was instantly received with a positive reaction; this time, there was no hesitation. We immediately began to develop the task, applying the guest's instructions to our own process, which permitted the guest's ideas to fit within our process, rather than making our process fit with the guest's ideas. However, by sending four rules over at once, the task developed too quickly and created an underlying sense of chaos in the new-found freedom. There was not enough time for us to fully develop and learn each rule independently, which functioned to disrupt the creation of the task. This suggested a lack of full ownership among the ensemble and a resistance to take control over the task and break the instructions down, as evidenced in this fast-paced conversation:

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[73] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/rhGrfsoup5U

JW: [reads] How about… take turns to move. No diagonals. Five square each time. Catcher then prey.

CW: So we can't move at the same time?

JW: Yeah, take turns to move, yeah.

CT: This is getting all sorts crystal maze, this.

CW: Oh, so it is like chess, you've got to think about it?

[…]

CW: Could we do it so that, like, five squares can be like five movements, so I can move multiple squares, 'cos I jump a few, or does it have to be squares?

AA: Yeah 'cos she [quickly standing up]

CW: … [the guest] is saying five squares at a time, which would normally be [demonstrating, move each square consecutively] 1,2,3,4,5.

JW: Yeah

CW: Or could I do [demonstrates, jumping multiple squares at once, counting each jump] like 1,2,3,4,5.

AA: Because we can all have different kinds of movements.

JW: Yes, yeah, yeah, yeah.

[…]

JW: I've just had an idea!! The catcher could use the dice [from our box] to decide how far to move so you don't know how far they can go.

CW: So we'd always have five and [the catcher] can move whatever she wants […] how many dice.

JW: One for now because we've not got that many squares.

CW: But, we then still do five because the max [the catcher] can do is six.

JW: Oh yeah, let's do two dice.

CW: We could move less and [the catcher] have one dice.

CT: Yeah.

JW: But [the paper aeroplane] says five.

CW: Ok, we'll do five and [the catcher] has two dice.

The growing complexity of the rules extended the task through this initial freedom, of the unknown provided by the guests' suggestions, ideas and rules. We were able to find familiarity in the freedom and extend our ensemble to include and respect the guests in the process of creation. Throughout this task, the ensemble embraced the freedom provided by the unknown and began to share the possibilities of the task with *each other,* both guest and ensemble. This can be likened to Nancy's (1991) indication that it is through the sharing of the limits of possibilities with *each other* that the movement between 'I' and 'We' can be conceptualised unworked and embraced in the unknown. The unknown

elements of The Open Laboratory were truly exposed, both for the ensemble and the guests, with neither party knowing how the other would respond *in* or *to* the moment of creation. The focus on *each other* throughout the creation of 'The New Task' allowed the ensemble and the guests to operate in a new-found freedom facilitated by the unknown.

<u>Shifting Role(s)</u>

Another unknown or unexpected element during the initial stage of the task was that I also took part 'doing' the task, which is something I would not do in a closed setting. This demonstrated that The Open Laboratory caused my role(s) to shift once again in a new and unexpected way. Although I am used to my role(s) shifting and changing within the closed laboratory, another person making the initial suggestions made my primary function(s) redundant. In this moment, I exposed myself to my double: the guest. My multiple roles in the closed process were only carried out by myself and were my sole function. As a result, in The Open Laboratory I was exposed to a plural existence; I was existing *alongside* the guests. My role(s) moved away from being the primary task instigator, as this element of my role was now being fulfilled by the guests I had invited to join in with the action. I subconsciously rejected the idea of becoming redundant or superfluous; my role(s) always shift and, in this case, that shift included taking part in the task. During this time, I felt a sense of freedom in the act of 'doing' without actively feeling as if I needed to create rules or the function of the task. This resulted in a sense of strangeness as to my place in the ensemble; I did not recognise my, role as it was completely new and completely unexpected. However, I was still holding onto my role as being experienced and known in the closed laboratory, as I found it challenging to be inside the task, still feeling an overall sense of responsibility for the overall outcome.

This sense of strangeness in my own role(s) can be understood as a kind of strangeness brought about by the fact that I have only known or understood my role(s) as operating directly outside of and in relation to the task, never 'within' the task. Ultimately, this sense of strangeness within the process became self-evident. The guests at this stage were still untrained and the task needed the presence of a *trained* outside eye. This was felt not only by myself, but also by the other ensemble members. As a result, I stepped out of the task *in action* and resumed my known role(s) – in this case, instigator – and did not enter the task again.[74]

<u>The Outside Eye</u>

My shifting and changing role highlights a crucial element of the ensemble's process in the closed laboratory; there was always a *trained* eye outside the task, watching and observing from the side-lines. Although the guests were outside the process looking in and able to offer new ideas, rules and tasks, it was apparent that their lack of 'training' impacted the process of creating and developing tasks. The influence and presence of untrained bodies in the space changed or altered our own process. For example, the initial instruction 'play TIG or something' was carried out without being altered or developed for much longer than was needed, or was necessary, for a single rule, and the time in-between that involved adding each new layer or rule to the task was initially much longer than needed. The untrained nature of the guests was demonstrated by a paper aeroplane which stated 'STOP NOW I am exhausted watching', indicating that, due to the untrained nature of the guest, the value of exhaustion had not been fully understood. The ensemble's refusal to stop the task, even when receiving the instruction, was an embodiment of our training.

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[74] To see this moment please follow this link: https://youtu.be/ixbVGGdo8Ik

As The Open Laboratory progressed and the guests were exposed to our methods and process for an extended period of time, they were able to witness the detailed nature of the rules and the minute details that went into the construction of a task. As a result, the untrained body(ies) began to adsorb elements of our process as our training method began to affect the guests. This was evident through their developing ideas and suggestions; as they returned to The Open Laboratory, either physically, via the livestream or Twitter feed, this was reminiscent of Lev Vygotsky (1924-1934), who argued that learning is constructed through interaction with other learners and mediated by the social contexts in which it takes place. Furthermore, in *Difference and Repetition* (1968), Deleuze argues that learning takes place in encounters with otherness and in experience, stating that learning does not take place 'in the relation between a representation and an action (reproduction of the Same), but in the relation between a sign and a response (encounter with the Other)' (Deleuze, 1994, p.22). It is possible to relate this concept to the guests' learning experiences; their interaction was framed by the context in which the laboratory was taking place. This permitted the guests' responses to develop in relation to environment. This was evident as the importance of rules, time and structure became reflected in the instructions and ideas that entered the space via paper aeroplanes and Twitter. The initial instructions were very broad and extremely open to interpretation; for instance *Full name five times after 20 star jumps/The person has to be an animal/ Lip sync battle band.* However, as the process developed, the instructions, ideas and rules became more detailed and asked for specific developments. For example, the more detailed tweets and paper aeroplanes held ideas, such as:

- Or when the catcher catches someone, they can pick a square to be crossed off.
- What if the caught people become catchers, but they had to share the number of moves from the dice (1 roll per round)?

- Plus no touching the lines.

This increase in detail and specific nature of the requests was an indicator that the guests were beginning to slowly understand the intricate nature of the process and become trained. These 'trained' suggestions created small changes, whilst adding a layer of depth and complexity to the task.

The training of untrained body(ies) was still developing; there were still gaps in the guests' training, which continued to have an impact on the development of the task. This can be seen in the fast-paced way that ideas started to enter the space. As the guests began to feel confident in their suggestions and deliver their ideas, there was a flurry of ideas that all held potential. For example, the following four ideas came through on one single paper aeroplane '*How about take turns to move. No diagonals. 5 times each time. Catcher then prey*'.[75] The rapid delivery of ideas resulted in the process shifting once again, as the layering process became too quick and we struggled to learn all the rules and sub-rules and to keep up with the guests. The guests' ability to move from one idea to the next, so quickly, was probably because the guests were not required to actively learn and carry out the rules; they were solely focused on the process of creating the rules, and not yet aware of our training method and its need for duration and time.

The value of time is something we often take for granted within the closed laboratory; we will often work on a single task for an inordinately long period of time developing, learning and repeating the rules. This allowed us the time to fully embody the task and, as a result, the task became habitual; therefore, when working on the 'new' task on the second night

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[75] Please follow this link to see a picture of this paper aeroplane:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/img_3919.jpg?w=374&h=664&crop=1

of The Open Laboratory, we attempted to add a lot of processing time. The task was continually being interrupted; the change in speed was evident as we spent the duration of the time re-clarifying rules created on the first night and only added four rules in a two-three hour period.[76] When comparing these four rules directly to the 11 created on the first night in the same amount of time, it was clear that, during the first night, the untrained or partially trained nature of the guests' input had a marked effect on the quality of the creation of the 'new' task.[77]

<u>The Response to the Outside Eye</u>

The quality of the task and partially trained nature of the guests had a marked impact on the ensemble's response to the guests, as evidenced in a conversation that took place on the last night between two ensemble members and a guest. During this conversation, the

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[76] These were the four rules created on the second night:

1. The catcher will roll the dice. The number on the dice will be doubled and that number of squares will be marked off and out of use for the rest of the task. The dice will then be rolled a second time to signal the change of catcher.
2. If a marked-off square is in-between your legs when you are stuck, you are then unfreeable. If your foot has to go in a marked-off square, you are then out and must sit down in the marked-off square for the rest of the task.
3. If there is any tape in the squares needed to free you, you are unfreeable until the new catcher is chosen.
4. The queen will watch the jumping and call 'line' if anyone's foot does not land fully in the landing square.

[77] These were the eleven rules created on the first night:

1. Stuck 1: Legs open with one square between and to be 'saved' an unstuck person would plank for 20 seconds between your legs.
2. Stuck 2: Legs together and arms out and to be 'saved' another person would need to circle round the stuck person under their arms.
3. Stuck 3: Lying down on the floor and to be 'saved' a person would need to jump over you.
4. You can only move by putting two feet in a square.
5. The catcher's aim is to catch, not defend, catches.
6. The preys' aim is to not be caught and free others.
7. The catcher rolls the dice to decide how many squares to jump.
8. No diagonals.
9. You can only move five squares each time.
10. Do not touch the lines. If you land with your foot over the line, you have to go back one square in the direction you came. Unless you are at the edges of the board, then go left one square.
11. Once all the prey are caught, the catcher rolls the dice and the prey do 20 star jumps. They jump as quickly as possible to the dice. The first one there is now the catcher. Each time the catcher changes, the star jumps go down in increments of five and then restart.

ensemble members began by explaining to the guest that she could write and throw in any ideas that she liked during The Open Laboratory. However, they were quick to place some restrictions on this by drawing from Wednesday's Open Laboratory, explaining how the instruction 'perform as an air band' was inappropriate and did not fit with the current task or moment of exploration taking place in the laboratory. They then framed this with an example of an instruction they thought was *good* and how they believed this instruction may have been created by the guest:[78]

> Guest: So anyone can write anything, throw it in and you just do it?
> CW: Yeah
> Guest: What have you had?
> CT: Like, we've like… last night was annoying 'cos like basically we were doing a skipping task.
> Guest: Right.
> CT: …and we got like… the thing is you can say whatever you want but obviously if it doesn't relate to what we're doing then…
> CW: So the first one we got was good, can you skip blindfolded and we can [so we just did] this and skipped for a bit, then we got 'great work, we're going for our tea, see you in a bit', then they came back and we were still skipping and they just throw over saying 'form an air band'.
> CT: …and this is when we were sat down by this point discussing what we had just done, so I think they just sort of came back and were like 'Oh, they're not doing anything', but it was like, well we are here for four hours there's going to be points when we're reflecting or resting.
> CW: …and it was like perform as an air band...
> CT: So then we've got a microphone on that side, which we didn't have on the first night, so we can respond back to be like… what… can you clarify what you mean, 'cos we were like and Jenny was like clarify air band.
> Guest: …so air guitar?
> CT & CW: Yeah!
> Guest: Oh that's a bit weird.
> CW: So, on the first night [a guest] came in and he just threw a plane over, 'cos he came in at a point where we were just stood completely still. So we had done this task and the last person like 'the person that loses' has to stand or do something for the entire amount of time that the task took.
> Guest: Oh God.
> CW: So the task took eleven minutes, every single time we've done it the [last person] has always been stuck in this position [demonstrates], but for the first time I lost and I was stuck in this position for eleven minutes [demonstrates].

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[78] I have included the full transcript of the conversations as it highlights how the ensemble values 'training', as well as their expectations of the guests.

Guest: Oh my God, I bet you were shaking.

CW: I was so focused and so engaged I was just like [demonstrates].

CT: Jenny said like…

CW: She said this part of my t-shirt was shaking just 'cos everything was so engaged and I did it and I was so focused just doing it. But then these two and CJ were stood at the side like waiting for me to be done and like my pain was just reflected on their faces… they were allowed to move and I was like… for eleven minutes […]

CW: So he came in and we were doing that and we were stood like that for eleven minutes so he was like 'what's happening' right, so I am just going to tell them to do something and he threw over an aeroplane just saying 'play TIG or something'… so we were like OK, this doesn't really fit in with our work, but we'll try playing the game and then we were like describing the difference between TIG and stuck in the mud to Jenny… so we started playing stuck in the mud and then like we were trying to add rules, you do this… and make it something.

Guest: Yeah.

CW: …and it was getting somewhere, then we were only allowed to jump, then we were only like allowed to move square by square at a time and [the guest] was throwing over planes with like do this only just five squares at a time. Then it stopped… over the two hours… it stopped being a game of stuck in the mud and became this weird game of chess.

Guest: Ah right.

CW: With like the person catching their prey, so it like, if I was on those three would have five moves and I'd roll the dice and that would be my moves to get them and stick them.

Guest: Amazing.

CW: …and we made a really good piece just from someone saying play TIG.

Guest: …just from someone playing TIG, wow, that's so cool.

CT: …and we just did it on the night, we just made it.

This discussion emphasises that the ensemble members felt the task could not have been created without the guests, indicating the movement between 'I' and 'We' was taking place during the creation process of the 'new' task, as the ensemble were *with* the guest and the guest was *with* the ensemble members through the process of making 'meaning' of the task:

> The 'with' is the measure of an origin-of-the-world *as such,* or even of an origin of-meaning as such. To-be-with is to make sense mutually, and only mutually. Meaning is the fullest measure of the incommensurable 'with'. The 'with' is the fullest measure of (the) incommensurable meaning (of being). (Nancy, 2000, p.83)

The Open Laboratory promoted a sense of being-with by generating a freedom in the unknown; the layout of the environment refused the idea of returning to the closed process and, in fact, functioned to generate a replica that protected the authenticity of the closed. This promoted communication and participation with guests via an extension of the closed into the open, which was accessed physically and virtually. The transparency of the process evidenced an activation of the process, as guests communicated directly with the ensemble, demonstrating the shifting and moving *between*. Through the shared ownership of the tasks and objects, the ensemble and guests operated in the singular plural, which blurred the conception of *yours, ours* and *mine.* The sharing of tasks supported by the engagement with ritual, experience of *flow* and the repurposing of objects in this installation exposed the non-stable state of the ensemble and allowed for exploration of the movement between individual and collective.

This thesis will now discuss the third phase of open events, namely 'The Performance', where we presented a selection of predetermined tasks altered for a performance environment. This event allowed for further exploration of what happens to the ensemble when transferred into an open public environment, this time without direct dialogue with guest or audience. This facilitated a greater line of questioning: 'How can the transference of rules or tasks affect the formation of a group of untrained people (i.e. not performers)?'

14. Phase Three The Performance: Establishing 'The End'

As part of the Create Festival at Salford University, we created a 60-minute performance, during which we demonstrated a selection of our tasks for an audience in a performance

setting.[79] This event provided insightful reflections and proved to be an interesting experience for audience and ensemble. I will offer an account of the process of creating the performance, the adaptation process detailing how the focus on *doing* over *performing* allowed the tasks and ensemble to remain in the *between*.[80]

The performance took place in the same environment as both installations and, as in the second installation, the rectangular space of the studio was taped on the floor. However, this time the space was set up in traverse with two rows of chairs flanking the performance area, each chair having a numbered paper aeroplane. Odd seating numbers were located on one side of the performance space, with even seating numbers on the opposite side. The audience were given a corresponding number on arrival so, rather than sitting next to the person they may have arrived with they would instead sit opposite them, allowing for eye contact across the space, while attempting to bring the audience closer to the performance space. On each chair was a small programme with the ensemble members' names on and some rules for the audience. These read as follows:[81]

> There are five of us and we have worked together for two years. We like rules. We like tasks. We like instructions. We like time. We like you. We like each other. We like to talk. We like to move. We like to eat.
>
> <u>The rules for tonight:</u>
>
> 1. You, the audience, watch us.
> 2. We, the performers, will perform.
> 3. There is no break until the end.
> 4. You, the audience, must sit in your allocated chair.

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[79] To watch the full unedited video footage of the performance, please follow this link: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/05/24/the-performance-on-film-23052016/ The performance was followed by an open discussion with the audience members. To view the footage of this discussion, please follow this link: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/08/20/post-performance-qa/.

[80] To see all the photos of the performance please follow this link: https://movementstillness.wordpress.com/2016/05/25/the-performance-in-pictures/

[81] To see an image of this please follow this link: https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/img_0182.jpg?w=700&h=&crop=1

5. You, the audience, will turn your phones off.
6. We, the performers, will have time to rest.
7. We, the performers, will let you know when it is the end. You, the audience, will clap.
8. You, the audience, will save your questions until the end.
9. We, the performers, will do our best.

These instructions were designed to introduce the concepts of the performance whilst framing and shaping the audience's expectations. Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of rules, not only for the ensemble, but also for the audience.

The room was lit with a warm wash, which stayed the same throughout the duration of the performance. The lighting encompassed the performance area and the audience's chairs in an attempt to remove the supposed safety attached to the role of 'audience', juxtaposing connotations of 'theatre' where, as Bennett states, 'an audience admitted […] into an auditorium where the lights are subdued is reminded of its purpose in being at the theatre. The subdued lights encourage a subdued atmosphere in the auditorium' (Bennett, 1997, p.139). Therefore, by reducing the subdued atmosphere and placing the seating within the parameters of the 'stage' lighting, I was attempting to place the audience *in* or *with* the performance.

Along one of the longer edges of the taped-out space were all the objects we needed to carry out the tasks and performance, as well as a microphone and a stand.[82] These objects were randomly placed, yet organised and lined-up, in an attempt to highlight their singular and collective importance to the performance and the performance environment. Opposite these objects, on the other side of the performance, were five empty squares

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[82] To see a picture of this please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/fullsizerender.jpg?w=370&h=&crop=1

marked out with tape and each of these squares were different in size.[83] As the audience

arrived, the ensemble were in the performance space, talking, warming up, assisting and

greeting guests. During this time, there was music playing, the same music that had been

used in our warm-up. The continuation of the music was an attempt to let this element of

our training and process seep into the performance space.

Once all the audience members had arrived, I took my position behind the microphone and

signalled to the others that it was time to turn the music off and begin. During the

performance, we demonstrated tasks in the following order: Skipping, Card Line and Biscuit

Square. Each of these tasks can be found in *The Rule Book*. At the end of each task, all the

objects used in that task were placed in the corresponding taped-out square. Whilst the

ensemble carried out the tasks, my role, as it was outside of the physical action, functioned

as rule-keeper and timer. As part of this role, I used the microphone to notify the ensemble

and audience of any errors or time constraints.[84] Once all the tasks were completed, each

ensemble member, including myself, finished their bottle of water and placed it in the

fourth square. The final square was filled once I had moved the microphone across the

space. At the end of the performance, all the squares were filled.[85]

The process of presenting a performance was one that I had not expected to undertake;

yet, the process of adapting the work from the first installation to the second open

laboratory, and to this performance, reveals an inherently iterative and circular nature to

my process. The first installation took tasks as they 'were' and displayed them in their

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[83] To see a picture of this please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/img_0179.jpg?w=700&h=&crop=1
[84] Errors in this context refer to failing in the task due to exhaustion or physical mistakes, such as tripping or forgetting.
[85] To see a picture of this please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/e3q5762.jpg?w=1000&h=&crop=1

current state to guests, whilst also providing the guests with tasks to do or carry out alongside the ensemble. The second installation allowed greater interaction between ensemble and guests as we followed no set path, coming full circle to this performance, where we reverted back to a notion of demonstrating in which the tasks were presented as 'done', 'finished' or 'complete'. The performance did not allow for audience participation; we asked them only to watch.

I will now discuss how we adapted the tasks for performance, so that they would operate in a performance setting without altering the process or risk damaging the doing as established in the process. This process began with two acknowledgements. Firstly, the tasks would need an endpoint as we had only sixty minutes, not the excessive amount of time experienced in the installations. Secondly, we wanted to display a few of our tasks to build a sense of dramaturgy to the event, with each task functioning both individually, whilst also functioning within the framework of *each other.* This was realised b*y* returning our focus to the role of the objects in the tasks and highlighting this to the audience by the moving of objects from one side of the space to the other.

It was apparent the tasks could not continue without an endpoint, as one ensemble member commented 'before [in the process] it was less about the ending and more about the "middle", the journey we were going on, and now in performance it's about "reaching" that task and getting the next step' (Joachim-Farrow, 2016). To create an 'end', we decided to place a pause button on the tasks, creating a temporary endpoint in order to resist the temptation to keep developing the existing tasks. By focusing on a newly constructed 'endpoint' rather than needing to 'complete' or 'finish' the task for a 'performance', we were able to see the task as something still in development. As such, the authenticity of

the task was still intact. We did not try and alter the task for the event of performance; rather, we focused on creating a temporary endpoint. For The Skipping Task, this addition of the endpoint was in some ways very easy to establish; it would be the end of the 'routine' as detailed in section 4 of *The Rule Book*. However, physically, this endpoint created the biggest challenge. During the process, we had no fixed point to reach in order to stop; we could stop when the physical nature of the task was too great. By adding an endpoint to the task, it required more endurance from the ensemble as they were obligated to 'keep going' until the end of the routine, with all the rules surrounding failure still applying. During the Q&A, an audience member asked the following question: 'Was failure an option in The Skipping Task?' The ensemble replied:

> AA: Yeah.
> JW: Yes but you'd have to restart.
> CW: It was never a choice.
> CJ: You'd have to complete.
> Audience member: Did you have to reach the end?
> All: Yeah.
> Audience member: So we could still be here now?
> All: Yeah.

The acknowledgement of an endpoint of the task becomes key. It was not the pre-existing understanding of 'failure' or the function of the rules, as established in the process that had changed *for* the performance; rather, it was the acknowledgement that the routine *must* reach the endpoint. This was further recognised when we were asked the following question in the Q&A: 'Given that the outcome of the task has changed to a linear thing with a start, middle and end, rather than an endless repetitive cycle, has that changed the mind-set now you know there is an endpoint?' To this, an ensemble member offered the following response:

> [...] with skipping, because of all the different rules [...] it makes it more frustrating because we know where we need to be, we need to end at 'this' point, but when we fail we have to go back to the beginning. So it's like, we know where we need to be at [the end], we know we can finish it [reach the created endpoint], but it [the task] changes every single time we do it whether we fail or not. (Wood, 2016)

It is this sense of repetition and still functioning in the unknown, combined with the ensemble member's resistance to comment on an 'end' or ability to see the task as complete, that suggests the process of adding an 'end' has not affected her experience of the task. However, for an audience member, the possibility of the 'end' of the task seems just as unlikely due to the amount of permitted failure, in what is conceived as a performance environment. This answer from the ensemble member created confusion for the audience member as to why we would create an end for each task that we may not achieve within the timescale of the performance, in turn leading the audience member to question the value of the performance.

For the second task, 'Card Line' (see section 8 of *The Rule Book*), we did not have to change the endpoint as it was already built into the task. Once all the cards had been used, there could be no more movement. Instead, what was added and altered for the performance was a sense of duration as experienced in the closed laboratory. It was important within the 60 minutes that the audience experienced a 'replica' of the duration of the process and the repetitive nature of the laboratory environment. This allowed the audience to experience the performance as something that exists outside of the immediate framing of performance, hinting at a process that was ongoing, permitting the audience to be a part of the event rather than watching an event.

To do this, we capitalised on an issue discovered in the second installation; this was when three of the ensemble members had used all of their cards and were therefore 'out' of the

task. As a result, the remaining member repeatedly found herself 'stuck' on a card that required another ensemble member to complete it, which meant the task could not progress (see section 8 of *The Rule Book* for more clarity). Therefore, during the performance, the last card was used to emphasise the duration of our closed process. It was ultimately decided *something* or *nothing* should happen during this 'stuck' period and this should last for the time it took the ensemble to reach this 'stuck' point. There were two possible outcomes: either there would be a diamond card left, which required the participant to sit with their legs straight out in a 'V-shape', or a club card left, which required the participant to stand in a semi-squat.

As the club card required the most physical endurance, it was decided that we would 'rig' the cards so that this would be the last card.[86] As carrying out the semi-squat for an extended period of time functioned to exploit the sense of duration, there would be the expectation of a 'performed' amount of time due to the physical requirements and the performance framing. Our use of duration here challenged the audience's expectations of time and created a focus on both the endurance of the performance and the duration of the task, asking the audience to decipher the action in 'real time', much like Bermingham's comment, that a performance that does not aim to transform the reality of the performance by engaging with 'real' time over a 'fictional' time, will often use perceptive strategies to allow for the decoding of the reality or 'real time' (Féral & Bermingham, 1987, p.471). In this case the physical nature of the squat and the use of real time both functioned

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[86] To see an image of the order of the cards once rigged please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/img_0126.jpg?w=700

to place the performance outside of an illusionary framework allowing for a decoding of the 'reality' rather than a transformation.

By placing the semi-squat in 'real' time rather than 'performed' time, it extended the task beyond the singular performance and placed it within a non-illusory framework. This can be likened to Hixson's explanation of the company's use of exhaustion or physical exertion in performance, she states this derived from a fascination with 'that which was not illusionary, like the body getting tired or the involuntary breathing of a performer after running' (Hixson, 1990, p.19). Alternatively, I would suggest that my use of exhaustion can be read through Deleuze's theory of exhaustion, which allows the performer a way of being in time to define the temporal structure of the performance. Thus, action does not become about self-presence of a real body versus the representational illusion of 'acting', but rather about the difference of the body as revealed in the process of being-exhausted (Deleuze, 1995).

An audience member commented after the performance that the person next to her stated immediately after my announcement 'ten minutes' and setting the timer, 'Surely it's not really going to be ten minutes?' to which she replied 'I think it might be'. This recognition and acknowledgement of the duration of task creates a new or altered perception of duration as experienced by both performer and audience, challenging their expectations of performance. The audience is forced 'to re-evaluate the likely experience of impatience or boredom that the extension of the gesture might provoke' (Cull, 2013, p.201).

The third challenge was the limited time of 60 minutes for the performance. Our use of time is normally unlimited; we do not set a limit for the time of tasks. Although we are interested and remain aware of time, it is not something that we allow to restrict the tasks.

In this case, we had to be more aware of 'time' and how it was distributed among the tasks, and how the division of time might affect the audience's experience of the tasks. 'The Card Line Task' took approximately 22 minutes and 'The Skipping Task' took as long as it needed to complete the routine, changing drastically each time we carried it out, ranging from 20 to 45 minutes. This meant the remaining task, 'The Biscuit Square', had to be altered in the moment of performance, depending on the remaining time. In the closed laboratory, the task only ended when the ensemble had eaten all of the biscuits, again taking 20 to 25 minutes. To adapt for the performance, we adjusted the EAT rule; the EAT rule was originally me calling 'EAT', which signalled to the ensemble to crouch down and eat as many biscuits as possible for 30 seconds or until I shouted EAT again. This allowed us to rapidly clear the biscuits as none of the other rules applied in this moment (see Section 10 of *The Rule Book* for more clarity). We added an additional sub-rule for the performance, to be signalled by two sounds. The first was a 'dinging' sound to signal the crouching to eat as many biscuits as possible until the sound was played again. The second sound was a buzzer, which again instructed the ensemble to crouch. However, the ensemble were now allowed to throw biscuits away from the square, as well as eat them; this meant the square could be cleared of biscuits, rapidly ending the task.

As I was responsible for timing and playing the sounds, I was able to decide in the moment of the performance when to signal this change. The conscious decision to break our own rules was a vital part of the process; this affected the environment and created a sense of chaos in the structured 'performance' environment as it played with chance. Alexander Kelly, from Third Angel Theatre Company, comments that breaking your own rules within the performance can affect the interaction with the environment (Kelly in Radosavljević, 2013). The method of breaking or disintegrating your own rules also holds connotations

with the Japanese performance technique, the 'inflected Suzuki method' (1898-1998). This method is used by the performance company Not Yet It's Difficult (NYID), whose performance style, as one of the founding members Peter Eckersall explains, creates an environment where 'each NYID performance typically dissolves into a repetitious semiotic landscape' (Eckersall et al., 2004, p.58). NYID is heavily influenced by Tadashi Suzuki (1986), as introduced in Chapter 7. By adopting his method, they attempt to create, as David Pledger, another founding member of NYID, states, an 'intriguing way of disrupting the integrity of this system while enhancing the effects of its discipline, staging it with humour and intelligence' (Pledger in Eckersall et al., 2004, p.58). Therefore, in the performance, we were able to alter the speed of the task whilst adding an element of humour as the ensemble broke their own rules, while drawing attention to the supposed 'impossibility' of the task.

The process of reforming these tasks for performance is articulated here by one ensemble member: '[…] all the tasks have rules to it, so every time you have a new […] environment to perform that task, new rules apply to that environment […]' (Agratini, 2016). The ensemble member is highlighting that the rules have shifted for the performance environment, not the task, and that the rules would continue to shift for each new environment in which they may be presented. This shift from installation to performance reveals an interesting development in the tasks and their function in this new environment; the framing of the event created an environment in which we showed or demonstrated some of the tasks as they were currently, pausing the development process to create *something* that could be followed and accessed by audience members. Critically, we were not *risking* changing or developing the task in the moment of performance as we did in the installation, as the 'stakes were higher' as the audience were expecting 'something

entertaining' and we felt under pressure to comply. The change of environment and the connotations associated with 'performance' undoubtedly changed and altered our response to task, object or audience/guest, as one ensemble member comments:

> With a lot of our installations we do it for so long you're kind of… you're just yourself within the space, you forget you're there… when it was being streamed we had our own kind of private room and we were, we were just with here [in the space]. However, when we're doing a performance, it's a different kind of atmosphere and a slightly different mind-set and you cannot get the fact that it's a performance out of your head, so you always have that knowledge within. (Joachim-Farrow, 2016)

During the Q&A, we were asked 'Did you consider in the performance, for an audience, like the [installation] and the way you developed the tasks and everything [in the installation], that you could have audience involvement [in the performance]?' This curiosity about the forming and reforming the tasks indicated that even in a static 'performance' there was potential for the audience to 'have a go' and take part. The performance setting proposed new ways of operating in the *between.* We were repeatedly asked during the Q&A what did we think would happen if someone else had access to the rules, and one audience member stated 'Now you have an established framework for the tasks and set rules in place, if you were to repeat the performance with a completely different ensemble how do you think that would differ?' The unknown answer to these questions led to phase four of this investigation: How might this approach to forming an ensemble and use of objects and tasks be situated in a wider social context?

15. Phase Four The Workshop: The Same Rules and Objects, a Different Ensemble?

In response to the performance, I carried out a trial workshop with seven volunteers from a mixture of disciplines and backgrounds.[87] During this trial workshop, I presented the volunteers with four boxes; in each of these boxes were the base objects that would be found in our object box, as discussed in Chapter 5. In addition to these base objects, each box then had a personalised selection of objects needed for the corresponding task; for example, 'The Biscuit Square Box' had biscuits, tape, a tape measure and a timer, while 'The Hopscotch Box' had numbered pieces of paper, tape and coins. Each box also had 'Rules For The Room' which outlined some of the elements of our practice, expectations and offered reassurance. In addition, each box contained a set of rules for the corresponding objects. These were the same rules that had been created in the closed laboratory; however, some of the personalised elements were reduced or reworded along with some of the specific physical requirements attached to the rules. This was an attempt to make the task seem more accessible and less daunting to a non-performer. These rewritten rules can be found in section 11 of *The Rule Book*.

Before presenting the volunteers with the objects and boxes, I initially led them through a 'one-song warm-up' and outlined the workshop, in much the same way as when I had first started working with the ensemble. I informed the volunteers that, at the end of the workshop, they would receive a web-link to a video of the ensemble carrying out the tasks. This provided the volunteers with the option to watch the ensemble carry out the task and

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see how the interpretation of the rules might vary; if they wished, they could then explore the digital scrapbook.

As the group of volunteers approached the first box, they initially seemed nervous and hesitant; there was a reluctance to begin. Once they discovered the instructions or rules in the box, they spent a lot of time trying to understand and follow them. The group very quickly picked up on the concept of hopscotch and laid out the pieces of paper.[88] This seemed to build their confidence in their own ability, and they began to 'have a go' at the task. Their conception of the rules was similar to that of the ensemble, in that it was a 'hopscotch', but the volunteers interpreted the patterns of jumping differently. Rather than completing one full hopscotch with each rule, the volunteers interpreted the rules as meaning they needed to alter the method of jumping for each number on a singular hopscotch. They then began to cycle through the instructions with all the volunteers using a singular hopscotch, applying the rules to each number with another participant reading them out. During this process, I only intervened to tape the paper hopscotch down and suggest they pick the reading speed up, so that the task became less hesitant whilst also promoting an atmosphere of interdependence, thus creating mutual dependence between the reader and the mover. This was an attempt to progress the task and encourage the volunteers to explore and play with the rules.

As the group moved onto the second box, their confidence had clearly grown as they quickly began to empty out the box, this time looking at and focusing on the objects before the rules. The second box had slightly more rules, but the group did not seem to be put off

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[88] To see an image of their hopscotch please follow this link:
https://movementstillness.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/img_0739.jpg?w=700&h=&crop=1

by this and embraced the process, using the letters on the rule sheet 'A, B, C, D and E' to assign a singular movement pattern to each person (as opposed to the ensemble, who each had a combination of letters). The volunteers used the biscuits to build a large board on the floor that held within it smaller squares, with the corners of these smaller squares determined by biscuits (rather than one singular square).[89] Subsequently, all the participants lined up along one side of their board and began to enter the space, one at a time, and carried out their movement pattern within the smaller squares, whilst attempting not to knock or touch the biscuits. At this point, there seemed to be a lack of development in the task, which I think was borne out of a hesitance to use the remaining rule 'eat the biscuits'. Therefore, I intervened, ensuring that I remained conscious of not letting my own understanding of the pre-existing task influence my actions. This was not difficult, as the task had now become very different from the pre-existing task. In response to this hesitance and the new 'use' of the ensembles rules, I spontaneously created a new rule and I began to call out the volunteers' assigned 'letter', stating that this was their cue to 'move'. We then began to experiment with different people moving in different combinations, for example 'A, C, D, E, B' or 'C, D, E, E, D, A, B'. This allowed the movements to grow in complexity with different periods of stillness and movement, such as 'B, A, D, A, A, C, C, C, A, B, A, E, E' again to progress the task and promote more ways of viewing the rules.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, we did not have the opportunity to explore the remaining two boxes. Therefore, I closed the workshop with a discussion about the

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volunteers' experiences of the objects and rules.[90] The initial response from a volunteer

was 'What on earth were we doing?!' In reply to this, I briefly explained my research and

then opened the discussion with: 'How was it to follow those rules?'

> Volunteer 1: I personally found it actually quite relaxing. I switched off external thought and just started following, because I was so focused on trying to work out what the rule was. As it was, I just ended up focusing on the rule and on the actual performance, not on anything outside of it.

> Volunteer 2: I went from being very embarrassed outside [the room], to be willing to lunge on biscuits, very relaxed.

> Volunteer 3: I like the open endlessness of the second game, umm, and there seems to be a difference in there, we know what hopscotch is even if you've not played it, but this game is an open game, there's no winning or losing, but with hopscotch you can get it right or wrong effectively, umm. I like open things and free play, that's my thing. I, like you, was embarrassed [laughter] initially, errr, and then I almost immediately abandoned embarrassment… I think it was the biscuits really [laughter].

This element of the discussion highlights a component of my process *ritual*, as explored in

Chapter 7. The awareness of ritual was important in this workshop as it allowed for the

shift between 'I' and 'We' to begin. During this workshop, I only carried out a short warm-

up consisting of moving only for the duration of one song; yet, this was enough to begin or

signal a shift in daily associations. Thus, distancing the volunteers from the constraints of

their day, moving them towards an extra-daily state, as discussed in Chapter 7, where

normal conceptions of embarrassment shift and begin to fade away, suspending the daily

routine of the volunteers. The authoritative nature of the rules overrode the social rules

and conventions. I would develop this further by increasing the time given to 'warming up',

as this might function to further 'relax' the volunteers as they move through the phases of

ritual. By increasing the duration of the physical warm-up and using more than one song,

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[90] To listen to this discussion please follow this link: https://soundcloud.com/user-629763383/post-workshop-discussion

the associations surrounding time pressures might further decrease. However, it is important, when working with new volunteers, particularly those from non-performance backgrounds, not to scare them off by asking too much of them physically at the beginning of the process, which is why the duration of the physical warm-up was restricted to one song. The reduced sense of embarrassment might have been further diminished as I asked the volunteers to work bare foot, as discussed in Chapter 7, bringing them closer to the physical sensation and the environment of the workshop, again removing daily associations in place of the 'extra-daily'. The group were at this moment entering, as discussed in Chapter 7, Van Gennep's (1960) first stage of ritual, entering into a collective sense of agreement; 'separation' (1960), as the volunteers agreed to 'have a go', warm-up and take off their shoes and socks.

When discussing the reduced sense of embarrassment with the group, I was keen to discover what element of the practice they felt resulted in this. Therefore, I posed the following question: '[…] the idea of embarrassment fading away, what do you think led to that?'

> Volunteer 2: Yeah, I think it's the focus of having the rules, and all of us trying to understand it and doing it together, I think.
>
> Volunteer 1: I'd say yeah, adding to that is the thing that strikes me is the fact that you're fairly certain that you're all on the same level coming into it [sounds of multiple agreement], then as a skill you might go I've got an edge on this… to [suddenly]… I've got no idea what I'm doing and I am fairly sure no one else does… so there's an…
>
> Volunteer 3: …and I think that's the other thing about the second game, isn't it, that nobody has played this one before…

Volunteer 1: No… even more than the first one… you're going ahhh, there's a game… where this is more a case of going we're all just doing a thing… I don't really know why we're doing it, but for me at least there is a sense of, I cannot think of the right word, community is too strong, but unity [murmurs of agreement]. You know you're on a level… you kind of go 'I don't know what I am doing, but I am pretty sure no else does', so that's ok!

Again, this offered some interesting insights into the process of training the untrained. It seemed the focus point of the rules allowed for a sense of certainty in an unknown environment; by following the rules, the participants were able to 'agree' on 'something' and accept that it was unknown by all and, in this moment, *become-with-each-other*. By embarking on training and following the rules, there was a sense of unity of *being-with-others*. The distance from the daily expectations and the volunteers' partial embodiment of the ritualised warm-up and *beginning* process meant they were able to gain some possession over the unknown elements of the workshop and their actions became determined by the environment. This can be likened to Van Gennep (1960) and his second phase of ritual, 'Limen', where the body is lost to, or in, the ritual and the body of the subject becomes ambiguous; in this case, it is articulated by the volunteers as a sense of being unified with each other. It is possible, in this moment, that the volunteers were creeping towards the third state of ritual, as discussed in Chapter 7, Turner's 'reincorporation' (1969), which is a movement towards each other from an internal sense of immersion, in this case with the task or object, and each other.

I argue that the volunteers' reactions to the tasks suggested that they began to enter a state of *flow*, as discussed in Chapters 6 and 12. This was especially apparent with the second box, where the volunteers seemed to find more challenges and they felt able to display more creativity; this was particularly noticeable in these comments:

Volunteer 3: I think also this last task is not quite achievable [laughter and agreement] […] and you know there's sort of a cognitive distance between certain instructions, like you know, you say, in my particular task I've got to walk for fifteen seconds and then do the task for five seconds and then what happens when you say just do that for five seconds, do I interrupt that process or do I assume it's just the five seconds? You know, so you have to be responsive, in quite a responsive way. I don't know think that means, I think that means you're free in a way.

Volunteer 1: The turning point is when you decide you're not going to find a definitive rule. With the hopscotch, there is a sense you're going to find a definitive rule and you're trying to figure out what it is, whereas with this [box 2] certainly for me there is a turning point where I go 'I'm not going to find a definite rule, so I'm just going to do this' and that's the tipping point.

Volunteer 4: It's also a task [box 1] where, umm, despite how you interpret it, you know when that's done or you know when somebody has done 'it' [murmurs of agreement] […]

In these statements, the participants were beginning to access the liminal space, as discussed in Chapter 8. They were, as Broadhurst (1999a) suggests, working 'on the edge of what is possible', displacing the 'original' task to depend on an original substitution. This notion of maintaining all the possibilities of the task, looking for multiple options or possibilities, is further highlighted in the statement below:

Volunteer 2: There's nothing [to change in the first box], maybe you could mix up how you read the rules out or something, but they are solid rules for how you must jump in a pattern on a certain amount of numbers when throwing a penny first. Whereas, with this [box 2], we could all do a different letter each time and it would be a different experience every time, I think. […] I think with that one [points at box 2] we could come back each week and do things a bit differently with that one, with the biscuit one.

At first, this volunteer saw no possibility for change, but then almost instantly she changed her mind. This allowed me to experience a shift from closed conceptions of *the* ensemble, *the* tasks, or *the* objects to *our* ensemble, *our* task and *our* objects. The group's interaction with the process was different from 'the original' but, through the volunteer's interaction

with the boxes and rules, additional possibilities of the task were discovered, manifested from the 'original substitution'. This note of substitution is reminiscent of Derrida's notion of undecidables, such as 'mark', '*difference*' and 'iterability' (Derrida, 1978, 1981) as discussed in Chapter 8. These are useful terms in this context as they demonstrate the formation and deformation processes of origin. The original task formed and reformed through the deformation of task as carried out by the volunteers.

The volunteers expressed notions of shared ownership and the formation of a collective language, which was borne out of the unknown elements of the tasks, objects and boxes. This is highlighted in the following extracts: '[…]and all of us trying to understand it and doing it together'; 'unity [murmurs of agreement] you know you're on a level… you kind of go "I don't know what I am doing but I am pretty sure no else does", so that's ok!'; '[…] there is a turning point where I go "I'm not going to find a definite rule so I'm just going to do this" or '[…] I suspect there might be a pattern that comes out of it within a group, I don't know, that's a guess'. Through the group's acceptance that the task was unknown, they were able to begin to form a shared language. The 'original substitution' of the task became *ours* in the most collective sense, as it allowed me, as the facilitator and original ensemble member, to (re)imagine the tasks and objects as they deformed and reformed.

In the moment of the task, there was a movement *between* the ensemble and the guest/audience/volunteer. I believe these categories began to disintegrate as the bodies in the space moved towards *becoming* and began operating in the singular plural state. As the guest/audience/volunteer became more 'trained', the ensemble were further distanced from *my* conception of *my* task or *my* object, moving towards *our* task and *our* objects evidencing the *between* of the 'I' and 'We'.

It was my intention, by working with volunteers who were 'untrained' alongside 'trained' ensemble members that it would be possible to use *The Rule Book* and object boxes to apply my process in a social context. This permitted further consideration of the *between* space of 'I' and 'We' in emerging performance ensembles, creating an environment that valued the individual *within* the collective as a state of 'being-along-side'. This enabled the transferring of my principles of 'training', which allowed for a greater focus on *each other*, as ensemble/guest/audience/volunteers began to work in a singular plural environment.

16. Conclusion

This investigation set out to consider the relationship *between* the subjectivities 'I' and 'We' in emerging performance ensembles, to address a largely unexplored area of ensemble practice, asserting that this transition is continually taking place. A conversation with Jean-Luc Nancy's theories (2000) surrounding community and being-plural-singular has allowed for a consideration of how we might think of the ensemble as being in a continuous state of fluidity between the individual and collective states of being. This fluidity has been discovered as emerging through the application of task, accessed when those involved in that task engage in ritual and enter the liminal space, as discussed.

Throughout this project, I have worked in a laboratory environment with an ensemble exploring task-based contemporary performance techniques, generating, documenting and reflecting on fragments of task-based performance, which provided me with an active environment to analyse the formation of the ensemble and the role of the individual *within* the ensemble. I have focused on developing an ensemble and sharing my knowledge with that ensemble, to generate tasks and rules founded in the unknown. I have drawn from theories and concepts of ritual and exhaustion to analyse the subjective interrelation between the ensemble members. I have subsequently reconfigured that ensemble and the closed laboratory environment in which it began into open events and to work with 'others'. Thus, I have promoted participation and interaction with the ensemble, via tasks and process. This has permitted me to witness and contemplate the value of the laboratory and training when considering the formation of the ensemble as a non-fixed entity.

This investigation has been facilitated by four phases of practice: two separate installations, a performance and a public workshop. Each of these phases functioned to

explore the participation of 'others' outside of the closed laboratory. In this thesis, these 'others' have been identified in three distinct ways. Firstly, as guests who were actively engaged in the creation and outcome of tasks; secondly, as audience members described as 'static' in their participation; and, finally, volunteers distinguished due to their embodiment and adaptation of pre-established tasks. Each of these methods of identification were intended to explore the function of task-based practice when facilitating participation in an open laboratory.

Within this thesis, I have outlined my methodology as Practice as Research (PaR), which has permitted the findings and discoveries to be ascertained from research-practice grounded in active doing, meaning that the research took place as practice. As such, the research is founded in and from the practice to address the central focus and drive of the investigation. I have constructed the PaR methodology to include documentation as part of the practice, as well as this complementary writing.

The thesis has been constructed to offer contextualising concepts, practices and theories combined with the laboratory practice to provide insight and to offer new knowledge. I believe that this has been demonstrated by presenting concepts and theories of the liminal and ritual, which can be understood to highlight these moments of transition between states of subjectivity in ensemble practice. The attempt to articulate concepts and theories of the liminal and ritual has principally provided a framework for my analysis and understanding of my specific use of task. The concept of liminality has helped me observe the task and comment on how task-based performance can function to facilitate a transition as the individual enters the liminal space, or becomes liminoid. The concept of ritual initially appears to contradict theories of liminality, because it establishes patterns

of repetition and habitus; however, these repetitions permit further exploration of the ensemble's transition into the extra-daily.

I have argued that my specific use of ritual, the liminal and task in the laboratory environment were vital to permit a state of singular plural as the ensemble operates in a state of fluidity, working in response to task and object. This discovery was further supported by a reading of discourses of *being-with, becoming,* and *between,* as explored in the writing of Jean-Luc Nancy.

The insights provided through this thesis offer distinct strands of knowledge that I believe contribute to the field of performance on a range of levels, such as digital performance, archival documentation, applied theatre practice, laboratory practice and contemporary task-based theatre. These insights are held together by the multi-mode inquiry and a vocabulary of 'doing-thinking' (Nelson, 2013, p.44). This allows me to identify three elements of the findings, which I will now discuss. Firstly, I have suggested that my understanding of my role within the ensemble has been fuelled by an awareness of the physical sensation of multiple bodies in the space, challenging the function of the director and my relationship with the other ensemble members. Secondly, the experience of flow, as discussed, permitted the ensemble to enter an extra-daily state, where the function of the exhausted body transcends into the liminal, permitting the task to remain in unknown possibilities. Thirdly, when the focus in the laboratory was on *doing* not *performing*, it generated a responsive atmosphere that saw the ensemble respond functionally to the task. As a result, there was an openness in the response that was not grounded in a singular understanding of the task. Finally, the possibility of the unknown in the liminal

environment, when accessed by means of ritual, as discussed in relation to 'The Warm Up', facilitated a shift into a new embodied state.

It is important to note that the wider cultural context in which this investigation is located carries with it great implications when considering the forming and reforming of ensembles or communities. The activation of participation within an ensemble or community is something that holds implicitly within it the value of 'connections', 'relationships' and 'communication'. However, this investigation has been conducted within the framework of the laboratory and ensemble, as established and developed throughout the duration of the PhD. This has allowed me to situate my findings within a context that has been shaped and formed: that is, by the immediate environment in which it was created. As such, it can be understood to resist concepts of the wider social cultural context in which this investigation could be located. Consequently there has been a conscious choice not to claim an interventionist political motivation for this work. By placing the laboratory in an open environment that is both physically and digitally accessible it is possible to re-frame participation as a form of activation, calling into question the nature of the relationship between ensemble member and audience members, experts and non-experts, tasks and rules within a community. As such, the findings and applications within this investigation claim cultural significance into the way in which a sharing of knowledge, expressed through participation, can affect the communication between 'communities', 'trained and untrained', 'physical and digital' when situated in a rule or task driven environment.

Furthermore, my 'insider', or observer-participant, understandings of the formation of the performance ensemble have allowed me to position this practice in relation to broader concepts of task-based practices within ensemble practice. This has been facilitated by my

active involvement in the laboratory, which, when combined with my knowledge of the contextual considerations, unintentionally or subconsciously placed me as expert-participant in the laboratory. This tacit knowledge was then situated in and next to the 'action' taking place in the laboratory, in a way that the other ensemble members may not be able to relate to as they were not engaged in the same contextual considerations of the project. This permitted greater consideration of the role of 'the director' in ensemble practice. To facilitate this, I have discussed other existing methods and dialogues surrounding 'the director' in contemporary practice. Moreover, I have specifically looked at my role as director of the project and the implications this had on the laboratory environment as well my relationship with the ensemble members. This revealed a changing role and relationship reformed in relation to the environment and task.

I have discussed the laboratory 'event' and its reiteration and documentation across different forms, both closed and open, realised through installations, performance and workshop. This permitted a discussion of the impact on communication and participation when the 'trained' interacted with the 'untrained' to realise a manifestation of collective interaction with the task between these two *becoming* ensemble. In other words, the communication and participation between the trained and untrained facilitated a 'new' ensemble that was founded on the individuals in that movement. This developed layers of complex interaction as the individuals moved alongside each other generating indefinite moments of *becoming an ensemble*.

In addition to these elements, the reconfiguration of the laboratory seen in the four phases of open events suggests that participation was not facilitated by offering a return to the closed environment, but by transferring the closed environment to a temporary location

in which the laboratory was reconstructed but not replicated. This permitted the ensemble to operate with 'others' outside of the closed process. This, in turn, allowed me to witness the 'training' of the 'untrained' in the established approach to task and object. The reconfiguration and exposing of the closed laboratory with 'others' outside of the process generated potential new insights into the function of training and the possibility of communicating training with those outside of the discipline.

This thesis presents a detailed consideration of how to adapt closed practice for an open context. This includes ideas of how to facilitate participation in an open laboratory whilst retaining the focus on *doing* and resisting *performing*. I have attempted to evidence this through a distinct 'activation' of my practice and training methods. These of methods of documentation, practice and reflection have allowed me to evidence how my practice can situate itself in a social context outside of the closed performance laboratory. This was realised by reconfiguring tasks that had been developed in the closed laboratory, by the 'trained' and handing them over to 'non-trained others' outside of the immediate practice to generate an access point for interaction and participation.

In response to the ongoing nature of the practice, phase four of this thesis proposes an ongoing research interest surrounding the *activation* and participation in an open laboratory environment. It considers how my specific mode of working can be applied to work in a public space of encounter. As this project developed and progressed, it became more interactive, focusing on participation and working in open environments with 'others' outside of the closed laboratory. This allowed for greater consideration of how the wider public may be active within contemporary task-based performance events and the possibilities of extending my specific training approach to non-experts. I would like to

develop this further by working with wider communities to explore how my distinct training and approach might promote greater participation and interaction with ensemble practice. I would hope to initiate encounters with my practice and methodology to explore how they can operate outside of the closed laboratory, to further facilitate an exploration of how to 'share' closed rehearsal and expose it, without losing the qualities of closed-ness. It is my intention that this dissemination will take the form of an on-going 'fluid guide book', which much like the digital scrapbook transcends process past and present whilst existing within the context of tasks, rules, ensembles and the laboratory.

In her book *Participation* (2006) Claire Bishop states these three concerns 'activation; authorship; community' (Bishop, 2006, p.12) as the initial principles for almost all artistic endeavours to encourage participation. Although it is not possible to unpack these pivotal terms within the context of participation in this particular investigation, these three areas do translate into the emerging outcome of my investigation. The structure of participation in the open events, as discussed, has been a form of collaborative creativity in which the audience-participant *becomes*-with-the-ensemble. This investigation has suggested that there is a shift between individual and collective agency when engaged in participation, as Bishop states 'an aesthetic of participation therefore derives legitimacy from a (desired) causal relationship between the experience of a work of art and individual/collective agency' (Bishop, 2006, p.12). It has been suggested that through the participation with the tasks, objects and pre-existing ensemble the audience-participant has been able to extend their role beyond that of spectator and beyond singular ownership. The individual participants' relationship with the elements, task, object and ensemble, need to be understood as embodied within the particular participant, as a result of the location and

their perception of the action. It is through this temporal presence of the participant that, as Gareth White (2013) states, it becomes possible for a form of participation to emerge: 'there is at least the possibility that audience participants can 'lose themselves' in the course of an event, and thus potentially lose some sense of social role and of otherwise apparent residual identifications with the role of audience' (White, 2013, p.160). The possibility of activating participation via the process of ritual and entering the liminal space, as experienced in my practice, permitted the audience-spectator to give themselves over to or 'lose themselves' in the task. These notions of participation, audience-spectator and 'trained' or 'untrained' participants continue to be questioned and hold much potential for development. By facilitating more participatory events that attempt to resist notions of narrative or illusory immersion it is my intention to revitalise agency through task-based participation. By engaging with, as discussed, 'activation; authorship [and] community' (Bishop, 2006, p.12) it would be possible to further contribute to the field of performance by questioning the nature of privacy and participation, shared ownership and the formation of relationships between participants within the context of community. The emerging interests and direction of this thesis continue to explore how the closed laboratory environment and practice may be reconfigured between the individuals and the collective creation in a wider social setting.

In summary, this thesis endeavours to demonstrate how my project drew from: making, documenting, activating, demonstrating and reflecting. By interweaving these elements through the practice, it permitted an exploration of how the formation of an ensemble may be witnessed. It is my intention that such an approach can suggest a commitment to activity, process and action as central to the process. This combined with the open nature

of the reflections, documentation and laboratory allowed me to generate and offer insight into the forming and reforming of the ensemble.

I have brought together varying contextualising discourses in an attempt to provide greater understanding of the specific nature of my practice. Furthermore, when considered through the lens of ritual, exhaustion and flow, it has been possible to witness the ensemble existing in a continuous state of fluidity. Likewise, it has been suggested that the others co-appear in the laboratory environment and, as such, operate *for* and *with* each other as they exist in the singular plural.

The activation of the practice in an interactive environment(s) allowed for the process to be situated in a temporal location which, in turn, permitted the project to resist notions of finality as it was continually reformed and reshaped in response to the practice and environment. This permitted a consideration of how the reforming of the laboratory environment might promote greater participation and activation. Furthermore, the unknown or unfinished nature of the open laboratory functioned to retain the task driven atmosphere of the closed laboratory, whilst resting notions of *mine, ours* or *yours*.

The findings stem from my personal response to the practice and the process of creating this practice; as such, they are emergent and located within this particular mode of practice. However, these findings do have applications beyond this context: the development of this practice presents a model of how to form an ensemble and transfer and reconfigure the laboratory environment to include 'others' outside of the training. As discussed this has generated emerging outcomes that perceives the practice moving towards participation exploring the becoming of ensembles in wider social contexts. This investigation clearly draws from task-based techniques to generate states of flow and

exhaustion to promote physiological states of being together. It is my intention, as evidenced through this thesis, that my practice holds the potential to facilitate a new framework for emerging performance ensemble experienced in open and closed laboratory environments, operating in the continuous state of between individual and collective states.

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Appendix 1 - The Rule Book

These rules are the written outcomes of the tasks created in these particular laboratory sessions. We have created them throughout the process. They were not the starting point for creating the tasks, but rather offer an emerging outcome of the process.

1. Hopscotch

Objects needed

- Paper with number 1-10 on each, ideally large A3 size
- 4 pennies
- 4 small pieces of paper
- 4 pens or pencils

Each participant's hopscotch runs from one to ten and each participant has four coins. For each coin, the participants must successfully throw the coin onto the number, starting with one. Then, they jump over the numbers towards ten, then jump back towards one, collecting their coin as they go, repeating this process for all the consecutive numbers. When the first coin reaches ten, it remains there and the process begins again for the second, third and fourth coin. The process is finished when all four coins are on the number ten and the participant has drawn a mini version of their hopscotch onto a small piece of paper and placed all the coins on top.

These instructions are broken down into the rules below.

The rules

1. Each hopscotch runs from one to ten.
2. Everyone has four two-pence coins.
3. You must successfully throw each coin onto the hopscotch numbers, starting with one and working up to ten.
4. You must only use one coin at a time.
5. You need to jump over the numbers towards ten.
6. Then, you jump back towards number one, collecting your coin you go.
7. When the first coin reaches ten, it remains there and the process begins again for the second, third and fourth coin.
8. When all four coins are on the number ten, you need to draw a mini version of your hopscotch onto a small piece of paper and place all the coins on top.

The Jumping patterns

<u>1</u>

Coin 1: Normal

Coin 2: Right leg 5

Coin 3: Backwards *Normal**

Coin 4: Left leg 8

<u>2</u>

Coin 1: Normal

Coin 2: Right leg 8

Coin 3: Both legs 5

Coin 4: Backwards *Normal**

<u>3</u>

Coin 1: Normal

Coin 2: Both legs *Normal**

Coin 3: Backwards -2

Coin 4: Right leg 8

<u>4</u>

Coin 1: Normal

Coin 2: Left leg 5

Coin 3: Backwards *Normal**

Coin 4: Both legs

* Normal here indicates the individual participant's preferred speed used to carry out the hopscotch, and is therefore different for each person.

The number equals the speed, -2 being as slow as possible and 8 as fast as possible. The word specifies the method for completing the hopscotch, e.g. the leg to lead the movement or direction of the movement.

2. Paper Aeroplanes

Objects needed

- Coloured Card (to make paper aeroplanes)
- String

Task summary

Each of the participants need to throw six paper aeroplanes into three sections marked on the floor. All six paper aeroplanes need to land in the first section before the second round of throwing into the second section marked on the floor can begin. Once all the individual participants' paper aeroplanes have landed in the final section, each participant is required to tie their six paper aeroplanes onto a piece of string, dangling from the ceiling, to signal that they had finished the task.

This basic task is then further layered with rules and sub-rules as detailed below:

1. Section one must be completed three times, in succession.
2. Section two must be completed twice, in succession.
3. Section three must be completed once.
4. You can throw all six paper aeroplanes with one large collective throw (rather than individually throwing them) in sections one and two. However, this method of throwing can only be used once for either section.
5. All six paper aeroplanes must land in the designated section before the next section can be aimed for.
6. If a paper aeroplane misses the section, you must continue to throw the remaining paper aeroplanes before collecting all the paper aeroplanes and starting again (for clarity, see rule seven).
7. At all times, each paper aeroplane must land entirely in the right section. If not, that section must be redone in full with all six paper aeroplanes, apart from the third section where you need only re-throw the paper aeroplanes that missed.
8. All paper aeroplanes must be thrown from the same spot, regardless of the section you are aiming for.
9. Each time your paper aeroplane lands in the wrong section, you are unable to use a certain limb in the following order:
   a. Balancing on right leg, down to kneeling on left knee, right arm behind back, right knee down (kneeling on both knees), left arm behind back.
   b. At this point, you must recollect all of your paper aeroplanes, regardless of your success or position within the task, before you regain use of these limbs in reverse, each time your paper aeroplane lands in the wrong section.
   c. Left arm back in use, raise to right knee (kneeling on left knee), right arm back in use, balancing on right leg, regain all limbs.
   d. Repeat rule nine throughout the task.

10. The task is only finished when all three participants have tied their six paper aeroplanes to the string dangling from the ceiling.
11. The last person throwing their paper aeroplanes can move straight to the third section, once the other two participants have each attached their six paper aeroplanes to the dangling string, unless the said person is already in the third section.

3. Skipping: Part One

Objects needed

- One large skipping rope (home-made or shop-bought).

The rules

1. Two members of the ensemble turned the rope while the other two jumped over the rope, for four jumps, then eight, and finally 12, alternating between the roles of turning the rope and jumping over the rope.

The routine

2. The participants faced each other for three jumps, and then both participants turned 180 degrees mid-jump and faced away from each other for three jumps.
3. The right-hand participant then turned back mid-jump, while the left-hand participant stayed facing the same direction. They then both jumped for three in that position and exited the rope, stopping skipping and switched to turning the rope.
4. The two participants that had been turning the rope then started skipping, following the above pattern. The switching between pairs was then continually repeated.

The three methods of jumping:

1. Penguin, jumping and opening legs to the side forming a triangle shape.
2. Knees up, jumping and lifting the knees towards the chest as high as possible.
3. Hands on face, jumping with your hand covering your face, only when facing the other jumping participant.

The Movement score (an example)

Four jumps no routine, six jumps no routine, eight jumps no routine, normal for one (normal jumping but with one repetition of the routine), normal for one (normal jumping, but with one repetition of the routine), knees up for one (with one repetition of the routine), hands on face for two (two repetitions of the routine), penguin for one (with one repetition of the routine), knees up for one (with one repetition of the routine), four jumps no routine, six jumps no routine.

*Each of these individual combinations and methods of jumping would be alternated with the other pair carrying out their own different score of movement. When the participants were not jumping, they would be turning the rope until the individual movements were completed.

*Should there be an error or mistake during your jumping, you must start that section of the movement score again from the beginning.

4. Skipping: Part Two

Objects needed

- One large skipping rope (home-made or shop-bought)
- Four individual skipping ropes (shop-bought is preferred).

Methods of jumping

1. Single person 'show' skipping; swinging the rope across the front of the body, still skipping without jumping over the rope.
2. Single person skipping forward; traditional skipping moving the rope in a forward motion.
3. Single person skipping backwards; traditional skipping, but moving the rope backwards.
4. Single person double-skipping jumps; fast-paced skipping jumping twice before the rope passes under the participant's feet.
5. Pair jumping: start standing in front of each other, the participant at the back holds the rope and both participants jump over the same rope. The front participant then jumps round to face the back participant while still skipping in time. The front participant then takes one handle of the skipping rope; at this point, both skippers are holding the rope, facing each other. Instantly, they jump and turn to face different directions, still skipping. After five jumps, the back participant moves out of the rope and is now turning the rope for the first person, who is still holding a handle and skipping. The front person then jumps and turns to take the remaining handle from the other participant.
6. Group skipping: with a large skipping rope, two people in the centre of the rope are jumping in time, while the other two turn the rope. Following this routine, both participants face each other for three jumps; both participants turn out and face out for three jumps. Both participants turn back to face each other for three jumps. Then one participant turns to face out and they both jump for three (the other person stays facing the same direction, looking at the other person's back). At this point, they both exit the rope.
7. There are three different ways of jumping when carrying out group skipping:
   a. Knees up: lifting knees high when jumping
   b. 'Penguin': legs out to the side when jumping
   c. Hands on face: cover your eyes with your hand when facing each other.
8. Line skipping: three of the participants stand in a line with a single space in-between them. The fourth participant starts skipping when she is standing behind one of the other three participants and they skip for two jumps (using one skipping rope). The fourth participant then moves into the empty space between the two participants and

carries out one jump on her own; she carries on down the line in the same way. The three participants keep the line moving across the space. Once the line reaches the end of the space, they repeat the process moving back across the space, in the opposite direction. This time, the person at the back will jump three times with the person in front (using one skipping rope) and still only carry out one jump in-between each participant.

The routine

Person 1 will solo skip for five minutes; she can use any of the single person methods for skipping apart from number one (2,3,4). After five minutes, a timer will sound signalling person 2 and 3 to bring the large rope forward towards person 1. At this point, person 1 will continue skipping, but now jumping over the large rope; she will continue without stopping, as she changes between her single rope and the large rope, while folding up her single rope. At this point, person 4 will enter the space and join person 1 skipping, using the large rope. Person 1 and 4 will then complete the group skipping (6) using the hands on face method (7:C). Once they complete the routine, person 1 will exit the rope leaving person 4 skipping on her own with the large rope, still being turned by person 2 and 3. Person 4 will then unfold her single rope, while continuing to skip with the large rope. Person 2 and 3 will then remove the large rope, leaving person 4 skipping with her single rope. Person 4 will then use her rope to solo skip using any of the single person methods, apart from number one (2,3,4). After two minutes, person 3 will join her and they will solo skip together, using the single person method, apart from number one (2,3,4) for an additional one minute. At this point, person 2 and 1 will re-enter the space. This signals the start of the pair jumping (5); each couple must then complete their routine (5). The couple that finishes first will then solo skip using any of the single person methods, apart from number one (2,3,4), until the other pair has completed their pair routine (5). Then, all members will skip to the front of the space and form a line, leaving one space in-between them. Person 1, 3 and 4 will then place their skipping ropes down, in front of them, signalling person 2 to start the line skipping (8). Once they have completed the line skipping, person 1, 3 and 4 will return to the original starting positions. Person 2 will then carry out as many double jumps as possible (4) when she fails this is the end.

In addition to this, we also had the following rules, which functioned to build exhaustion, failure and a sense of repetition within the routine:

The rules for the task:

- If any member of the ensemble fails at the routine (trips, falls or goes wrong,) they have to go back to the very beginning. Person 1 will then need to skip again for another set amount of time. A timer will be set to determine how long person 1 has to skip for.
- This duration will be halved each time: five minutes, two and half minutes, one minute and twenty-five seconds, forty-two seconds, twenty-one seconds, ten seconds and five seconds, four seconds, three seconds, two seconds, one second.
- If the ensemble reaches the pair routine, both couples need to successfully complete this element in order to progress. If either of the pairs fails before the other pair has completed this element, the task will start again. However, once one of the couples completes the routine without failing, they will have reached a check point and the task does not have to start again.
- If the ensemble fails after the check point and during the line skipping, they must return to their starting positions for the line skipping and carry out 20 solo forward skips in synchronisation. This number will decrease by five each time they fail and loop back to 20 if necessary.

5. Dunk and Dip

Objects needed

- Four fishing rods with string on the end (home-made using light wood and tap)
- A timer
- Crayons
- A till-roll
- A shower head
- Pieces of paper with a word on them (we use Italian fish names, printed out. The paper was approximately a third of a piece of A4. You will need 50-60 pieces of paper)
- A bin
- A bucket
- Blue food die
- Water
- A mop and bucket
- A towel (optional)
- Plastic sheeting (optional, to protect the floor if needed).

Task outline

Each participant will have a rod with one item attached to the end with string. These objects are a stopwatch, pieces of paper, a crayon and a showerhead. These will be attached to the participants' heads. The participants will arrange themselves in the space, with the bucket filled with blue water in the middle and the till-roll with 'me' rolled out at the front of the space. The bin will be at the back of the room. The participant with the showerhead will stand next to the bucket, the participant with the crayon will stand next to the till-roll, the stopwatch can stand anywhere, and the participant with the piece of paper will stand by the bin. The stopwatch dictates how long the participants have at each station. Once the time is up, all the participants move to the centre of the space, facing each other; they will swap rods and move to their new station and the process repeats. At 50% of the way through the task, the participants must move faster, and then at 75% the speed must increase again. The task ends when the bucket of water is empty or the till-roll has been used up, at which point the participants must tidy up.

- Stopwatch, nod head while timing each round
- Crayon, write on the till-roll moving from one end to the other
- Paper, read the words out loud, then rip the paper and put it in the bin
- Showerhead, nod your head to get showerhead in the bucket to remove the water.

Rules

Stopwatch

- Nod your head to move the stopwatch.
- Keep hand outstretched and flat, trying to catch stopwatch
- Stopwatch starts the action.
- Last 25% of the task knock three seconds off the time, but still say the correct time; just stop the timer three seconds before the end.

Paper

- Bend at the knees.
- Rip the paper of the rod then read the word.
- Put in the bin, pick up if you miss.
- When you run out of words, use bend to get paper out the bin to read; towards the end of the task, don't remove the paper from the bin, read it while bent over the bin.

Writing

- Hop to last wring place.
- Write what you hear.
- Write fast and with speed.
- At 75% of the task run, squat, write.

Dunking

- Bend with knees and nod your head.
- Try to get water out of the bucket.
- Building in speed.
- At the end of task, tip the water out.

6. Swing String

String cut into varying sizes
A tape measure

Aim

Place the string in a shape of a swing by entering and leaving the space, one person at a time.

Rules

Phase One

1. All the participants line up on one side of the room, the tap measure is out on the other side of the room with the string. When it is your turn, you must sprint to the other side, quickly measure the string and enter the space. On exiting the space, you must jump out and re-join the group, ready to run again. The cue to run is when the second person jumps out of the space. See rules A-D for more clarity.

   A. Person 1 measures a randomly selected piece of string and places it randomly, yet decisively, in the space. They then begin to do some sort of repetitive movement.

   B. Person 2 enters in the same way and joins in with person 1's movement. Person 1 leaves after three beats.

   C. Person 2 evolves the movement into one of their own making.

   D. Repeat this process until all the string is in the space. There can be as many participants as you like.

Phase Two

1. Entering and exiting in the same way as before.
2. Instead of measuring the string, you now measure an empty space between your thumb and index finger and find a piece of string that corresponds with this as you enter the space.
3. You must then straighten and 'sort' this string out to form the picture.
4. Repeat the movement process from phase 1, but now there must always be two people moving in the space.
5. Once all the string is straight and touching (the picture is complete), see rules A-F.

   a. Person 4 enters without touching any string. This is the signal that the picture is complete and they copy person 3's movement.
   b. Person 3 leaves. Person 4 evolves the movement.

c. Person 1 enters the space and copies the movement.
d. Person 2 enters the space and copies the movement.
e. Person 3 enters the space and copies the movement.
f. Person 4 leaves, three beats, person 1 evolves the movement, everyone copies, person 1 leaves, three beats, person 2 evolves the movement, everyone copies, three beats, person 2 leaves, person 3 evolves the movement, three beats and leaves.

6. This is the end of the task. The picture is completed.

7. Candles

Objects needed

- Nine birthday cake candles
- Four cupcakes
- A lighter or matches

The rules and routine

- Two cupcakes with two unlit candles in each need to be placed at either end of the room.
- The participants need to form a line next to one of the cupcakes, lining up so that they are facing the other cupcake.
- There needs to be one lit candle without a cupcake, which is given to one of the participants as they form a line of four. They are now the 'stationary lit candle holder'.
  - i. Any of the four participants throughout the task can be the 'stationary lit candle holder'.
- The remaining three participants will break the line (not the 'stationary lit candle holder') and complete a series of physical movements, before returning to the 'stationary candle holder' and restoring the line, moving the line towards the cupcakes at the opposite side of the room.
- The participants' roles switch over, so that all participants complete different actions throughout the task.
- During this task, there are three movements: running, jumping jacks, bend and stretch. The time taken to complete the running determines how long everyone else moves before re-joining the line. The running distance is two and half laps of the room. The person holding the candle determines who carries out what movements in the order below:

  - I. When Person 1 has the candle: P2 - jumping jacks; P3 - bend and stretch; P4 - running.
  - II. When Person 2 has the candle: P1 - jumping jacks; P4- bend and stretch; P3 - running.
  - III. When Person 3 has the candle: P4 - jumping jacks; P2 - bend and stretch; P1 - running.
  - IV. When Person 4 has the candle: P3 - jumping jacks; P1 - bend and stretch; P2 – running.

- As the line of four move across the room, it functions to move the lit candle closer to the unlit candles in the cupcakes. Once the group of four reaches the unlit candles at the other end of the room, they light only one of the two candles in the cupcakes.

- Once the candle is lit, the group then reverse the process, moving the line (and original lit candle) back across the room towards the remaining still unlit candles at the other end, again only lighting one candle when they reach them.

*This is repeated back and forth across the room, until all four candles are lit, thus lighting a candle for each participant. The focus and distinctive element of this task is to light all four candles in the cupcakes before the candle without a cupcake burns out, while the ensemble undertake a convoluted and time consuming physical movement score, thus adding to the time pressures engulfing the task.

8. Card Line

- A deck of cards
- A timer

The objective

Begin by distributing a pack of cards into four piles evenly and randomly, each person taking a pile of cards. Place the cards along one side of the space and line up at the other side. You must then race to pick up cards, following the card rules (below), until all the cards are completed and you have none left in your pile. The first person to complete the task will start to place all the completed cards in suit order and take their final position, as will the second and third person, finishing their pile of cards. The final person will normally get stuck on a card that requires another member to help them with, but they will be unable to help as they are now 'out'. This final person will have to freeze in the position of that card for the entire amount of time that the task has taken so far. The person that finishes third will place a timer in front of them. After the allotted time, an ensemble member will help them complete their task. The final card will be placed in the right order and the timer will go back in the box. The fourth member will join the other three members in the finished position, crouched down on one knee. The task will finish when all ensemble members are crouched.

Card rules

<u>Heart</u>
Crouch/pump/finger touching - number of times as indicated by number of card.
Take one jump back from the cards before starting.

<u>Spade</u>
Squat digging – arms down, straight between legs and up overhead.
Repeat for the number on the card.

<u>Diamonds</u>
Sit back straight NO ARMS, legs out and wait for someone to join you to start.
If no one sits with you, you are on pause.
Time is the number of the card in seconds.
Leave card with unused pile.

<u>Clubs</u>
Piggybacks, jump on, run, figure of eight, switch, and run back.
If there are two clubs at the same time, repeat the figure of eight, switch partners and repeat.
The number on the card indicates speed of the runner.
When you finishes the piggyback return to your deck of cards and continue.
If you see someone with the card, finish your movement, return card to completed cards before joining the task. UNLESS YOU HAVE A DIAMOND ON A PAUSE then you break your movement and join the piggybacks.

<u>Joker</u>
When the Joker is drawn, you have to line up in the corner of the room and carry out your designated forward roll for each edge of the room. Complete this once.

Methods for rolling

1. Claire – standing up roll/backwards/repeat.
2. Ciara – sausage roll.
3. Ada – backwards/crouch roll/repeat.
4. Charlie – turtle roll/continuous roll/repeat.

Rules

- Once you're back at the start, return to your cards and carry on; do not wait for the others to finish.
- Joker trumps club.
- Do not finish your movement; you must join the line as soon as you see it forming.
- If you need a break, others must wait for you to resume before they can carry on; no overtaking.

Overall rules

- Number on the card states the amount of time or the duration you have to carry that card out for.
- When you finish, start placing the used cards in order of suit.
- If there are no more cards to sort, squat like a tennis ball collector.
- If you are left stuck on a diamond, you will be given an egg timer set to the overall duration the task has taken. You must stay in that position until the timer goes off.

9. The 'New' Task

Objects Needed

- A tiled floor (or mark out tiles using tape)
- Tape
- Two large dice

At the start, there will be one queen; she will occupy one square and the remaining four ensemble members will start in the middle of the space with the dice, on the floor in the middle of the group. These four will begin the task by playing a game of rock, paper, and scissors to decide who will be the catcher and who will be the prey. The catcher picks up the dice and the prey jump five squares, starting at the same time, but moving as quickly as possible away from the catcher. The catcher then rolls the dice; the number equals the number of squares the catcher can jump in that turn. The catcher's aim is to catch the prey and the preys' aim is not to be caught and to free the other prey should they get caught.

If the prey get caught, there are three different methods for standing, representing the number of times you have been caught. If it is the first time you have been caught, you must stand with your legs open with one square between them and, to be 'saved', an unstuck person must plank for 20 seconds in-between your open legs. If it is the second time you have been caught, you must stand with your legs together and arms out and, to be 'saved', another person must circle under your outstretched arms. If it is the third time you have been caught, you must lie down on the floor and, to be 'saved', a person would need to jump over you. Each time the catcher changes, you go back to the first method and the process begins again.

The prey can always jump five squares; the jumps are counted by how many times the prey's feet touch the floor. If they jump and their feet touch one of the lines marking the square, they must move back one square in the direction they came from; unless they are at one of the edges of the board, then they must go left one square. You will know if you have touched a line as the queen will call 'line' at the end of your move.

The catcher will always roll the dice at the start of their turn and always move the number of squares shown on the dice. Neither the prey nor the catcher can move in diagonals. Once everyone is caught, the catcher will roll the dice and the queen will double the number shown and then tape off the corresponding number of squares. These squares are now out of use and neither prey nor catcher can place their feet on them. Once these squares are taped off, the catcher will roll the dice for a second time; the prey must then do 20 star jumps and jump as quickly as possible to the dice, following the above rules. The first person there is now the catcher. Each time the catch changes the prey, repeat this process with the number of star jumps reducing by five each time, and then restarting at 20.

The consequences of the marked-off square are as follows; if a marked-off square is in-between your legs, when stuck, you are then un-freeable until the change of catcher. If your

foot has to go in a marked-off square to carry out your method of standing once caught, you are then out for the rest of the task and must sit down in the marked-off square. Similarly, if you jump and land in a marked off square, you must sit down in the marked-off square for the rest of the task. You are then out.

This process continues until there are no free squares left to land on, and everyone is caught or out.

The Rules for the task:

1. The catcher rolls the dice to decide how many squares to jump.
2. The prey can only move five squares each time.
3. No diagonals.
4. There is to be no sharing of squares.
5. Stuck 1: Legs open with one square between and, to be 'saved', an unstuck person would plank for 20 seconds between the open legs.
6. Stuck 2: Legs together and arms out and, to be 'saved', another person would need to circle round the stuck person under their arms.
7. Stuck 3: Lying down on the floor and, to be 'saved', a person would need to jump over you.
8. The rules when stuck repeat, once you reach three return to one.
9. Do not touch the lines; if you land with your foot over the line, you have to go back one square in the direction you came. Unless you're at one of the edges of the board, then go left one square. The queen will watch the jumping and call 'line' if any one's foot does not land fully in the landing square.
10. You can only move by putting two feet in a square.
11. The catcher's aim is to catch, not defend, catches.
12. The prey's aim is to not be caught and free others.
13. The catcher will roll the dice, then the number on the dice will be doubled and that number of squares will be marked off and out of use for the rest of the task. The dice will then be rolled a second time to signal the change of catcher.
14. If a marked-off square space is in-between your legs when stuck, you are then un-freeable. If your foot has to go in a marked-off square, you are then out for the rest of the task and must sit down in the marked-off square for the rest of the task.
15. If the squares needed to free you (see rules 5 to 7) is marked off (see rule 13) you are un-freeable until the new catcher is chosen.
16. Once all the prey is caught, the catcher will roll the dice, signalling to the prey to carry out 20 star jumps, then jump as quickly as possible to the dice. The first prey there is now the catcher.
17. Each time the catcher changes, the star jumps go down in increments of five and then restart.
18. The task ends when everyone is out or stuck.

10. The Biscuit Task

Objects

- Biscuits (plenty)
- Tape
- A tape measure (Tape out a square on the floor by 136x136cm)

Aim: To eat your way out of the square

Method:

Tape out a square on the floor and line the edge of the square with biscuits. Each person selects a movement grid. Each member has to stand within the square and complete their movement grid. The letters on the grid refer to the movement pattern to be carried out and the order. The numbers correspond with the speed, duration and repetition. You must do all three elements, namely speed, duration and repetition, for each movement pattern before you move on, without hitting the biscuits or stepping out of the square. Each person must select one set of personal rules. All participants must be in the square at all times. You must follow the EAT rule whenever you hear the digital sound. You cannot leave the square until all the biscuits are gone.

Group rules:

- If you step outside of the square, without knocking a biscuit, you still have to eat one biscuit as a penalty.
- Every time you finish one cycle of your movement score you need to eat the closest biscuit to you, even if you have not knocked it.
- Carry out your movement without knocking the biscuits.
- If you knock a biscuit, you have to put it in your mouth as quickly as possible then carry on with your movement score.
- You cannot stop the movement until all the biscuits have been eaten.

The EAT rule

When you hear the dinging sound this signals the EAT rule. This means everyone will crouch down and eat as many biscuits as possible, until the sound is played again.

When the sound changes from a dinging sound to a buzzer sound, this means that, if the participants' mouths are full of biscuits, rather than eating more biscuits, they will start to break the biscuits up and throw them away from the square, removing them from the task.

Individual rules:

Person 1

- If you knock an unwrapped biscuit, you pick it up until you have two and then feed those two biscuits to another person.
- If you knock a wrapped biscuit, you eat it.
- If someone else knocks a wrapped biscuit, they feed it to you.

Person 2

- Always eat one more biscuit than you knock.
- Eat one biscuit after movement at speed three.

Person 3

- Eat two biscuits after person 1's movement.

Person 4

- Eat alternate biscuits.
- Every third completion of rule one, eat twice as many biscuits.

The movement grids

A

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Movement	CT	AA	CJ	CW	KS	CW	AA	CT
Speed	9	5	1/10	5	3	3/8	3	7/5
Duration	2	6/7	60	6/7	12	20	7	5
Repetition	2	4	2	2	6	10	8	6

B

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Movement	CJ	AA	CW	CT	KS	KS	AA	CT
Speed	1/8	3	6	6	8	3	5	9
Duration	30	7	20	5	4	16	7	2
Repetition	4	5	3	5	12	2	10	3

C

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Movement	KS	CJ	AA	CT	CW	KS	CW	AA
Speed	7	1/10	5	7/5	8/3	3	6	3
Duration	6.5	29	7	5	20	14	20	7
Repetition	9	3	12	1	10	18	6	4

D

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Movement	CT	AA	KS	CW	CJ	CW	AA	KS
Speed	5	2	8	6	2/9	8/3	5	3
Duration	7	20	2	20	24	20	7	2
Repetition	9	4	14	5	2	7	3	8

E

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Movement	AA	CT	KS	CJ	CW	CW	KS	CJ
Speed	2	9	8	2/9	3/8	8/3	7	1/10
Duration	20	2	4	24	20	20	6.5	60
Repetition	4	3	12	2	10	7	9	2

The movement patterns

CJ:
Movement: Spin with arms in air like a ballerina. Stop abruptly after 360 degrees.
Rule: Every other spin, spin as fast as possible.

AA:
Movement: Lunge forward on your right leg.
Rule: Keep your hands raised above your head for the duration of the lunge.

CT:
Movement: Roll (however you want)/crouch on all fours/extend one leg/rock back onto it and stand.
Rule: You can only ever move on diagonals.

CW:
Movement: You must sway your hands and arms for 5 seconds every 20 seconds; while kicking out your legs, you must walk for the remaining 15 seconds.
Rule: You can only move when your eyes are covered.

KS:
Movement: Raise you right arm above your head, keeping it straight.
Rule: You can only move when the person on your left stops moving.

11. Objects in a Box

The room rules:

- You will take your shoes and socks off.
- Don't worry. You cannot do this wrong.
- You will leave your bag and extra belongings by the door.
- You must follow the rules.
- There are four different tasks in the room, you will be allocated one.
- When the buzzer goes, you must present your task to the group.
- You can call us by our names: Ciara, Claire and Jenny.
- You have 15 minutes.
- You don't have to work on your own.
- We will help you.
- You will be okay.
- Everything you need is in the box.
- At the end, you will be asked to tell the guide about your experience. Your guide will explain this to you.
- At the end, you will be given a web link to watch us carrying out the rules and completing your task.
- Each task has a helper; they will help you, but they will not tell you what to do.

The Box Rules

Box One

Objects needed

- Pieces of paper with a number from 1 to 10 on each, ideally large A3 size
- 4 pennies
- 4 small pieces of paper
- 4 pens or pencils.

The rules

- The penny must land on a piece of paper with a number.
- Start on right leg.
- If you throw the penny and miss the piece of paper with the number, you must go back to the beginning.
- The number that the penny lands on must be missed out.
- You must use all the numbers, spin round on 10 and go back.
- Pick up penny on square before landing on it; you can now use this square.
- You must jump all the way through for each number.
- Repeat for all numbers.

Methods of jumping

- Using left leg only
- Using both feet
- Right leg only
- Left leg only facing forward
- Right leg only facing backwards
- Both legs facing backwards

Box Two

Objects needed

- Biscuits (plenty)
- Tape

The rules

- If you step outside of the square, without knocking a biscuit, you still have to eat one biscuit as a penalty.

- Every time you finish one cycle of your movement score, you need to eat the closest biscuit to you even if you have not knocked it.

Pick a movement pattern from a-e:

A. Movement: Spin with arms in air like a ballerina. Stop abruptly after 360 degrees.
   Rule: Every other spin, spin as fast as possible.

B. Movement: Lunge forward on your right leg.
   Rule: Keep your hands raised above your head for the duration of the lunge.

C. Movement: Roll (however you want)/crouch on all fours/extend one leg, rock back onto it and stand.
   Rule: You can only ever move on diagonals.

D. Movement: You must sway your hands and arms for 5 seconds every 20 seconds; while kicking out your legs, you must walk for the remaining 15 seconds.
   Rule: You can only move when your eyes are covered.

E. Movement: Raise you right arm above your head, keeping it straight.
   Rule: You can only move when the person on your left stops moving.

Box Three

Objects needed

- A deck of cards
- A timer

The rules

- Hearts
    - Crouch, pump, finger touching - number of times as specified by number of card.
    - Take one jump back from the cards before starting.

- Spade
    - Squat digging – arms down straight between legs and up overhead.
    - Repeat for the number on the card.

- Diamonds
    - Sit back straight, NO ARMS, legs out and wait for someone to join you to start.
    - If no one sits with you, you are on pause.
    - Time is the number of the card in seconds.

- Clubs
    - Piggybacks, jump on, run, and run back.
    - The number on the card indicates speed of the runner.

- If you see someone with the club, finish yours and then help them.
- Number on the card states the amount of time or the duration you have to carry that card out for.
- When you finish, start placing the used cards in order of suit.
- If there are no more cards to sort, squat like a tennis ball collector.
- If you are left stuck on a diamond, you will be given a set timer. You must stay in that position until the timer goes off.

Box Four

Objects needed

- Pre-made paper aeroplanes (using different coloured card)
- String

The rules

1. Section one must be completed three times, in succession.
2. Section two must be completed twice, in succession.
3. Section three must be completed once.
4. You can throw all six paper aeroplanes with one large collective throw (rather than individually throwing them) in section one and two. However, this method of throwing can only be used once for either section.
5. All six paper aeroplanes must land in the designated section before the next section can be aimed for.
6. If a paper aeroplane misses the section, you must continue to throw the remaining paper aeroplanes before collecting all the paper aeroplanes and starting again (for clarity, see rule seven).
7. At all times, each paper aeroplane must land entirely in the right section; if not, that section must be redone in full with all six paper aeroplanes, apart from the third section where you need only re-throw the paper aeroplanes that missed.
8. All paper aeroplanes must be thrown from the same spot, regardless of the section you are aiming for.
9. Each time your paper aeroplane lands in the wrong section, you are unable to use a certain limb in the following order:
   i) Balancing on right leg, down to kneeling on left knee, right arm behind back, right knee down (kneeling on both knees), left arm behind back.
   ii) At which point you must recollect all of your paper aeroplanes, regardless of your success or position within the task, before you regain use of these limbs in reverse, each time your paper aeroplane lands in the wrong section.
   iii) Left arm back in use, raise to right knee (kneeling on left knee), right arm back in use, balancing on right leg, regain all limbs.
   iv) Repeat rule nine throughout the task.
10. The fragment is only finished when all three participants have tied their six paper aeroplanes to the string dangling from the ceiling.
11. The last person throwing their paper aeroplanes can move straight to the third section once the other two participants have each attached their six paper aeroplanes to the dangling string, unless the said person is already in the third section.

Appendix 2 - USB Memory Stick

This contains edited videos to provide the reader with the option to watch an overview of the development of the tasks, ensemble and laboratory environment, both open and closed. Should the reader not have internet access, the USB offers a visual and auditory impression of the process. Unlike the URLs, these video clips are not directly connected with specific moments of discussion in the thesis; however, the structure of the video files echoes the structure and sequence of the argumentation of the thesis. The USB supplements the written component of the submission, whilst also working in conjunction with the URLs.

File structure:

Part 1: The Closed Laboratory

1. The Warm Up
2. The Hopscotch Task
3. The Paper Aeroplane Task
4. The Skipping Task
5. The Biscuit Square

Part 2: The First Installation

Part 3: The Second Installation

Part 4: The Performance

Part 5: The Workshop