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BRINGING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES INTO DANCE-MAKING THROUGH THE SYNERGIES BETWEEN AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT AND PHENOMENOLOGY

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SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN CREATIVE PRACTICE DANCE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a processual Practice as Research (PaR) project in dance-making. Exploring personal experiences as a source of creativity, this research develops through three phases that involve solo and collaborative studio-based somatic movement explorations with professional dancers and dancers-in-training.

Drawing on Authentic Movement, as connected to Active Imagination, and phenomenological methodologies, this study recognises commonalities between these frameworks and adopts them as a foundational methodological approach. Throughout the development of the investigation, this approach evolves into the articulation of generalisable methodologies for dance-making.

This study focuses on personal experiences, exploring their tacit and unconscious aspects through somatic movement practice. Following work with personal memories, dreams, imaginative activity, and responses to external stimuli, this research utilises the deeply personal and the sedimented historicity of those exploring in the creation of artistic articulations. These include a short film, two devised dance performances, and several paintings. Presented in this thesis as insights into the creative process, these articulations are accompanied by the distillation of distinctive approaches to movement exploration and follow the integration of explorative and generative artistic activities into the development of the Collective Imagining Process—a model for dance-making, choreography, and somatic research.

This thesis takes the form of a multimodal document, presenting video materials, images, and questionnaire forms. It suggests that Authentic Movement combined with phenomenological methodology forms the foundation of a generalisable creative methodological approach applicable to artistic PaR, collaborative devising and performance-making processes, and suitable not only for dancers but also for creators in different artistic fields. It further addresses the potentially beneficial role of aspects of Authentic Movement and phenomenological methodology in the higher education of dancers and transdisciplinary artists.

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This thesis is accompanied by videos of the research, showcasing the artistic outcomes, workshops, and studio practice. These are indicated below and throughout the chapters where relevant.

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Video 2: Phase Two, Stage One Studio Practice
https://youtu.be/bTKdvT0ofzA

Video 3: The Collective Imagining Workshops
https://youtu.be/sWEoU3kJ0dA

Video 4: Inner Spaces *(2023) Performative Sharing*
https://youtu.be/RLuGlpj8JeQ

Video 5: Inner Spaces 1 *(2023) Short Film*
https://youtu.be/Bpw6YV1OHdA

Video 6: Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions *(2024) Physical Performance*
https://youtu.be/ynW5BoDScKs

DECLARATION

I, Hristo Ushev, declare that this thesis is my own work. This document contains no previously published written material, except where referenced sources are used. This thesis outlines my PhD research project, which was conducted in a collaborative manner. The contributions of all those involved are indicated throughout the text.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The PhD research project presented in these pages is a creative Practice as Research (PaR[1]) in dance-making. It follows a perpetually emerging practice comprising three principal phases of solo and collaborative studio-based somatic[2] movement explorations, undertaken in collaboration with professional dancers and dancers-in-training.

In this study, the deeply personal is appreciated as a source of creativity. The subject of investigation is personal experience, with particular attention given to accessing and recognising the not-yet-conscious processes that inform it. Through somatic movement explorations focused on working with current psychophysical conditions, imagination, memories, dreams, and responsiveness to external stimuli (such as textures, images, scents, sounds, and texts), this investigation examines the moment-by-moment experiences and the subjective, sedimented historicity of those exploring. By employing and developing specific reflective approaches, the explorations and experiences revealed are utilised in artistic acts of dance-making through devising, choreography, and diverse creative endeavours in writing, drawing, painting, and filmmaking.

The methodological approach employed is informed by the synergies between Authentic Movement,[3] as associated with Active Imagination,[4] and phenomenology.[5] By adopting Authentic Movement as a key method for somatic movement explorations, this study develops

[1] Practice as Research (PaR) is a model of academic investigation that places practice at the centre of knowledge generation. Conveyed by researcher Robin Nelson (2013), it will be further elucidated below.
[2] Somatics, as introduced by movement theorist and philosophy professor Tomas Hanna (1995) is a field that studies the soma—"the body as perceived from within by first-person perception" (1995, p. 341). Further presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.3. Authentic Movement, p. 38.
[3] Authentic Movement sources and practitioners that inform this research are: Joan Chodorow (1991, 1997, 1999), Janet Adler (1999, 2002, 2015, 2022), two volumes of collected works on Authentic Movement edited by Patrizia Pallaro (1999, 2007), Mary Starks Whitehouse (1999), Joan Davis (2001, 2007), Penny Collinson (2005), Andrea Olsen (2002, 2007, 2014, 2022), Emma Meehan (2013, 2015), Jane Bacon (2007, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2019), Paula Sager (2004, 2008, 2015), Linda Hartley (2002, 2004, 2014, 2024), Tina Stromsted (2025), Eila Goldhahn (2015), Christina Kapadocha (2017), Amy Voris (2019), and *A Moving Journal* ed. by Annie Geissinger, Paula Sager, and Joan Webb (https://amjpastissues.blogspot.com/2014/). Further contextualisation follows in Chapter 2, Section 2.3. Authentic Movement, p. 38.
[4] Active Imagination, as method for engaging with the unconscious mind developed by Carl Gustav Jung (1980, 1997, 2014) and as linked with Authentic Movement, will be presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1. Active Imagination and Eidetic Variation, p. 32.
[5] Drawing on the phenomenology of philosopher Edmund Husserl (2012) and the way it is developed and presented by Clark Moustakas (1994) and Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi (2012), the employed foundational methodological approach is further elucidated in Chapter 3, p. 58.

the already-recognised similarities between aspects of the Discipline of Authentic Movement[6] and phenomenological methodologies, incorporating them as a foundational framework that allows openness and flexibility. This framework evolves in the creation of generalisable artistic approaches that utilise elements of personal experiences.

This study is situated within a field of practitioners who utilise elements of Authentic Movement in therapeutic and dance-making practices. Engaging with somatic and choreographic research, this investigation is further positioned within a broader landscape of somatic and dance-making practitioners,[7] specifically drawing on and aligning with models for creative articulation.[8] By integrating explorative and generative artistic activities, it ultimately augments the knowledge on which it is founded by proposing generalisable and widely applicable approaches, as well as a model for somatic and choreographic research. Encompassing phases of work with dancers-in-training, this research also addresses principles of the employed methodological foundation as educational tools, beneficial not only for dancers but also for transdisciplinary artists.

1.1. Research Framework

This research follows a somatic studio practice, exploring how to maintain openness towards the periphery of awareness, experience, and consciousness. It encompasses two forms of movement exploration: one dedicated to the recognition of experience and its tacit, not-yet-conscious processes and one intended for artistic articulations. Following the integration of these dimensions of the practice, this research addresses how to *soften awareness* and how to resist ultimate framing. It explores *staying between and across* aspects of experience and

[6] The Discipline of Authentic Movement refers to the way Authentic Movement practice is developed by Janet Adler (1999, 2002, 2015, 2022). Adler expands the practice into a structured system that follows defined principles and stages, further presented in the next chapters of this thesis. The Discipline of Authentic Movement "is unique to Adler's work and should not be assumed for the whole field of [Authentic Movement]" (Bacon, 2015, p. 206). When *the Discipline of Authentic Movement* appears in this thesis, it refers specifically to Adler's structured model. When *Authentic Movement* is used, it refers to the broader applications of the practice, its connection to Active Imagination, its creative dimensions, and its lineage of development (including its application as a discipline).

[7] This study refers to the following practitioners: Simon Ellis (2019, 2023), Natalie Garrett Brown (2011), Anna Halprin (1995, 2000), Elaine Hendry Westwick (2021), Kate Hunter (2012, 2013), Naomi Lefebvre Sell (2013, 2016), Vida Midgelow (2011, 2014, 2019), Andrea Olsen (2002, 2007, 2014, 2022), Helen Poynor (2004, 2014, 2021), and Sandra Reeve (2011, 2014, 2021).

[8] This study draws on the Creative Articulations Process Model (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014) and Hincks's Five Facet Model (Hincks, 2014). It further refers to Lawrence Halprin's RSVP Cycles (L. Halprin, 2014).

recognises their interconnectedness, while inviting participants to remain attentive to that which is not-yet-recognised, that which is about to enter awareness.

In conducting this academic work, I draw on the paradigms of Authentic Movement (as related to Active Imagination and Carl Gustav Jung's (1980, 1997, 2014) Analytical Psychology) and phenomenology as distinctive approaches to human experience, recognising some of their commonalities and integrating them within a PaR framework. Identifying somatic explorations as the heart of this investigation that leads to diverse creative articulations, through this thesis I follow and reflect upon the gradual development of a perpetually emerging process, unfolding within a synergetic, collaborative context. This thesis provides accounts of multiple personal experiences that occur throughout somatic studio practice over a prolonged timeframe of three research phases that are both interconnected and distinct. These experiences, which within the practice are seen as phenomena and essences that are further investigated and guide the development of artistic articulations, ultimately represent a multi-voiced journey with personal and vulnerable dimensions.

In presenting the overall research framework, I begin by clarifying the focus and aims of this study. I then acknowledge the collaborative aspects of this investigation and situate it as a PaR project. Afterwards, I outline its theoretical influences, define the terminological framework of its presentation, and follow its development and phases of practice.

1.1.1. Focus of Research

The subject of investigation is subjective experience, understood as arising from interconnected psychological and physical processing. The focus falls upon the processes referred to within this practice as unconscious. These encompass not only not-yet recognised aspects of sensorial awareness but also sedimented, forgotten, or imaginative contents that inform experience in tacit ways.

1.1.2. Aims and Questions

My aims in conducting this research are to facilitate and execute an explorative process that suggests a descent into personal experiences.

Situating this investigation as a creative endeavour across PaR, Authentic Movement, and phenomenology, my aims determine the conduct of a cyclical process of studio practice and theoretical analysis, allowing the interrelationship between a perpetually emerging practice and theoretical investigation to inform critical reflections, directions, and contributions. Through solo and collaborative somatic movement explorations, I aim to find pathways towards the observation of personal experiences and the recognition of their unconscious dynamics, utilising these in dance-making processes, as well as other artistic activities (such as drawing, painting, and filmmaking). Ultimately, with this research I aim to develop and articulate methodologies and models of practice that support the utilisation of personal experiences in creative endeavours.

Two main questions lead this investigation through all its phases:

- How unconscious processes can be triggered, recognised, observed, and articulated through somatic movement explorations.
- How deeply personal experience and processes recognised as unconscious can be utilised in the creation of art (including dance-making, choreography, drawing, painting, writing, and filmmaking).

These research questions and aims determined a practical investigation that unfolded in unpredictable ways, allowing the material that emerged through solo and collaborative explorations to guide the process.

1.1.3. Collaboration

I conducted this research with the intention to facilitate creative practices that focus on the deeply personal but also happen in a synergetic manner. The explorative, creative, and generative phases of this investigation involved the participation of professional dancers and

dancers-in-training who were both participant-researchers and collaborators.[9] This collaborative framework[10] created the foundation for ideas, knowledge, and artistic work to emerge.

As the lead researcher and author of this PaR project, I initiated, participated in, led, documented,[11] analysed, and articulated the investigative journey. During the development of this research, my role shifted—at some stages I engaged in practical movement explorations as a facilitator, a mover, or a witness,[12] while in other stages I led collaborators as a choreographer and artistic director. In this thesis, I reflect on these shifting roles and on my experiences as a leader of a collective endeavour, addressing perspectives on choreography and performance-making processes situated within a collaborative framework.

1.1.4. PaR Design

Drawing on Authentic Movement and phenomenological methodologies as its methodological foundation, this research project adopts an attitude of *practice-doing-knowing*.

Professor of theatre Robin Nelson (2013), a key contributor to the development of and advocacy for various approaches to research through creative practice, notes that a rigorous approach towards the execution of a PaR places an "emphasis on enactive perception in the experience of 'doing-knowing'" that leads to the articulation of a specific kind of knowledge applied to the academic field (Nelson, 2013, p. 98). Nelson describes this knowledge by giving an example with the words of artist Marina Abramović, who talks about her own practice: "knowledge … comes from experience. I call this kind of experience 'liquid knowledge'. … It is something that runs through your system" (Abramović, as cited in Nelson, 2013, p. 52).

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[9] All participant-researchers, as collaborators, are presented in Chapter 3, Section 3.3. Collaboration, p. 69.

[10] Acknowledging collaborative approaches across diverse research-oriented (Barr, 2015; Blain & Minors (Eds.), 2020; Melrose, 2016), educational (Butterworth, 2009; Redding, Lefebvre Sell, & Curtis-Jones, 2016), and performance-making processes (Colin & Sachsenmaier (Eds.), 2016; McAlee, 2020), this research particularly resonates with the RSVP Cycles developed by landscape architect, designer, and teacher Lawrence Halprin (2014). In examining the collaborative dynamic throughout the phases of research, I adopt the Didactic–Democratic model designed by professor of dance Jo Butterworth (2009).

[11] The documentation of this research project (further examined in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3. Data Collection and Analysis, p. 67) is related to the video and audio recordings of movement explorations and verbal reflections, later transcribed and used for analysis through a versatile application of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

[12] The mover-witness dynamic, as present in the ground form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement, is presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.3. Authentic Movement, p. 38.

Situating this creative research project within the paradigm of PaR, this study is characterised by a focus on exploration that leads to artistic articulations, rather than on the generation of pre-designed artistic outcomes. Initiated without a clear perspective on how it would develop, this investigation evolved in unpredictable ways, led by the lived experiences that emerged throughout the somatic movement practice. Principles drawn from Authentic Movement and phenomenology (related to the recognition, reflection on, and analysis of personal experiences) determined an attentive approach towards the *practice-doing-knowing*, adopted by both my collaborators and me. This resulted in a process focused on the engagement with personal experiences and their development over a prolonged timeframe, further identifying this practice as *processual*.

Professor in dance and somatics, Authentic Movement practitioner, and Jungian analyst Jane Bacon (2007, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2019)[13] uses the notion of "processual approach" (2019). Discussing the application of somatics as a methodological basis in PaR, Bacon places the researcher and their individual approach and experiences to the forefront. Processual research, according to Bacon, is strongly engaged with the ability of the researcher to pay attention to the somatic and investigative processes. By paying attention to experience, and by "paying attention to attention" itself, research unfolds "with particular clarity and coherence". Following this, processual research is defined by her as "a study of process rather than discrete events" (2019). My approach when conducting this investigation, and that of everyone engaged in the movement explorations, followed a similar pathway of exploration, focusing on the development of personal experiences over a prolonged timeframe. The principles borrowed from Authentic Movement and phenomenology resonate with the significant role of paying attention and determined the way this investigation happened.

Focusing on the process of exploration rather than on the production of artistic outcomes as isolated events, this research developed as an always-in-flux process, resulting in creative endeavours beyond its engagement with dance-making and choreography. Researcher, choreographer, filmmaker, and somatic practitioner Simon Ellis (2019, 2023) acknowledges that in practice research "no practice is singular" (2023b). Through this research, I recognised my, as Ellis says, "desires, curiosities, [and] histories" in engaging with different art forms surfacing, resulting in creative endeavours in drawing, painting, and filmmaking. Resonating

[13] Citations include Bacon's individual publications (2007, 2012, 2015, 2019) and her co-authored publications with Midgelow (2011, 2014, 2019).

with Ellis's "principle of many practices", this investigation encompassed engagement with many "underlying" practices resulting in diverse, unpredictable artistic outcomes (2023b).

As an investigation focused on creative process and reflective practice (or praxis), PaR has many subcategories: *practice-led research*, *practice-based research, practice research, artistic research,* and others (Arlander et al., 2018). Ongoing discussions about the mapping of these types of PaR address the distinctions between their approaches as "elusive, nuanced, and context-specific" (Barton, 2018, p. 5). Resonating with the practice-based framework, as differentiated by writer and researcher Linda Candy (2006),[14] this PhD research project is accompanied by the production of diverse artistic works, the creation of which is described in these pages and supported by documented material.

However, this investigation recognises commonalities between the theoretical frameworks informing it and encompasses phases of practice that do not aim at the production of artistic work but rather generate insights into the methods adopted and developed throughout and within the process. In this context, while this investigation engages with the nuances of both practice-based and practice-led research models across different phases, I identify and frame this PhD project using the overarching notion of PaR as a reflective, practice-centred investigation.

1.1.5. Terminological Grounding

The practical and theoretical features of this research, continually aiding each other in both cyclical and simultaneous patterns, determine the way in which this PaR project was conducted. Before examining what and how was explored and discovered during its practical development, a brief discussion of the theoretical and terminological framing of this study follows.

[14] Candy differentiates practice-based and practice-led research in the context of PhD projects, describing practice-led research as focused on the generation of knowledge "about" or "within practice," resulting in fully written submissions. By contrast, practice-based research generates insights and "knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice", resulting in submissions that include both artistic works seen as an original contribution to the field, as well as written material supported by analysis of artefacts from the creative process (2006, p.3).

Ellis discusses the challenging nature and typologies of framing artistic processes as PaR. Highlighting the framing act as occurring pre-practice ("ab ovo"), post-practice ("post hoc"), or as a combination of both, Ellis observes a problematic tendency in PaR projects framed according to "arguments made by the authority of totemic theoreticians who exist beyond [the] communities of practice", resulting in artistic processes isolated from their PaR context (2023a, p. 150). Recognising the issue raised by Ellis, this study, framed "ab ovo" as a PaR, aims to gently engage in dialogue with both aspects of the theoretical paradigms that inform it and, as Ellis terms it, the "ecosystem" in which this academic work is situated—PaR, Authentic Movement, and somatic dance-making practices (2023a).

This study exists in the tension between two distinct theoretical frameworks, recognising their commonalities and integrating them into creative processes. Drawing on aspects of Jung's Analytical Psychology (as related to both Active Imagination and Authentic Movement) and phenomenology, I conducted this investigation with an interest in the different perspectives and tools these paradigms offer for examining and understanding human experience. This interest determined the utilisation of diverse notions and concepts from these frameworks, evident throughout the phases of this research, in the questionnaire forms completed by my collaborators, and in this thesis. These frameworks are an essential aspect of the identity of this investigation, characterising it as a PaR project that integrates theoretical perspectives and practical knowledge in order to recognise and explore subjective experiences as creative sources.

In presenting this study, I employ a terminological framework distilled from the practice and its analysis. As such, this framework integrates notions from the theoretical paradigms informing it. To coexist, these notions demand certain clarifications.

The term *unconscious*, consistently used throughout the research phases, is evident in questionnaire forms completed by my collaborators and within working titles of this study.[15] During studio practice, it was employed both in reference to the unconscious zones within

[15]At the commencing stages of this investigation, I used the working title *Encountering the Unconscious*. In some of the video materials and documents included in this thesis and in some of the questionnaire forms presented in the appendices, this working title appears.

Jungian concepts of the psyche[16] and as a term broadly addressing aspects of experience that are not accessible to awareness.

Acknowledging the conceptual differences between psychological and phenomenological perspectives on human experience, this thesis retains *unconscious* as part of the practice-based language, employing it as an *adjective* for diverse not-yet-recognised experiential processes. It is used to refer to aspects of experience related to sensorial awareness, feelings, movements, and kinaesthesia, as well as to imaginative and thought processes that inform moment-by-moment experience in tacit ways. It further addresses that which is forgotten yet still affects experience, illuminated by the adoption of phenomenological terminology.

As noted by philosopher Saulius Geniusas (2025), in mathematician and philosopher Edmund Husserl's (2012) phenomenological approach, the unconscious is not understood as representing a zone "cut off from consciousness" but as a dimension of it, where "sedimentations are to be found" (2025, p. 1025). By adopting the phenomenological notion of sedimentation (utilised during the post-practice analysis) in relation to unconscious processes, this thesis addresses personal (and collective) historicity that does not solely represent forgotten impressions or memories. As Geniusas notes, sedimentations are characterised as "historically-formed schematizations, which shape the contours of our experience, knowledge and understanding" (2025, p. 1028).[17]

Thus, except when specifically used in relation to Analytical Psychology, the term unconscious is employed to refer broadly to processes that are neither recognised nor directly accessible to awareness (encompassing that which in the field of phenomenology is conceptualised as pre-conscious or pre-reflective) and is further understood as related to that which is forgotten or sedimented. With this broader adoption of *unconscious* as an adjective for all not-yet-conscious aspects of moment-by-moment experiences and their temporal development, the term can

[16] Jungian perspectives on the psyche are presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1. Active Imagination and Eidetic Variation, p. 32.

[17] Geniusas argues that Husserl's concept of sedimentation has three categories: static (sedimentations as "modifications of retentions and necessary conditions of recollection"), genetic (sedimentations as "necessary for the formation of types, habits and moods, … shap[ing] present experiences"), and generative ("sedimentations as that which "consciousness inherits from the historical tradition") (2025, p. 1021). This research, following the manifestations of emerging and re-emerging phenomena in personal experiences over a prolonged timeframe, can be associated with these categories.

associatively refer to conceptualisations from both psychological and phenomenological paradigms.

In engaging with somatic movement explorations across all three phases of investigation, those exploring were invited to observe and follow their experiences while maintaining openness to unconscious processes. Looking at manifested experiences as phenomena, specific reflective approaches from the fields of phenomenology and Authentic Movement were employed. After a movement exploration, those exploring extracted psychophysical themes and patterns that had manifested, which were understood as *essences.*[18] The essences were recognised as being in constant flux, representing a potent creative chain of imagination, visions, thoughts, feelings, sensations, movements, and kinaesthetic and tactile imagery. As extracted phenomena, they were then utilised in further explorations and diverse creative endeavours.

As the practice developed, the intention to maintain openness to unconscious processes evolved into a distinct mode of exploration. In this mode, the dynamic interplay between interconnected imaginative processes within the mind's eye (including associative and abstract thinking) and the bodily processes (perception through the senses and somatic and kinaesthetic awareness) was examined. The exploration of the dynamic relationship between these processes became a central focus of this investigation. As such, these processes were not understood as parts of autonomous domains but as aspects of experience, shifts in attention, and modes of awareness, thereby *dissolving* the body-mind split by highlighting their interconnectedness.

Essentially, all terms indicated throughout this thesis as related to *psychological* or *physical* processes are perceived through a perspective of interconnected modes of awareness within a non-dualistic body-mind whole. Bacon notes that in Authentic Movement, the Cartesian duality of mind and body "is embraced but also dissolved", as the practice supports the recognition that an experience contains much more than what we can note or articulate (2012, p. 117).

Although beyond the scope of investigation, the theoretical framework of embodied cognition (Varela et al., 2016), as foundational for 4E (embodied, embedded, extended, and enactive)

[18] *Essence,* as used in this text and throughout Phases One and Two is an important term in phenomenology. It indicates "the essential and invariant characteristics of the things that we experience" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 30). Related to the very focus of the research, and as used here, *essences* could be manifested in a movement material and its qualities, the way it is experienced by the one moving, in mental imagery, in the analysis of the process, or in the very subjective interpretation of an experience through the point of view of the one exploring. Though, as we are dealing with psychophysical data, essences could hardly be fixed, as they are a part of experiences in perpetual change.

cognition (Gallagher, 2023), advocates for the unity of mind-body-environment and aligns with this study. It presents a perspective on cognitive (and psychological) processes as "depend[ing] upon the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities, [which] sensorimotor capacities are themselves embedded in a more encompassing biological, psychological, and cultural context" (Varela et al., 2016, p. 173).

In this research, different aspects of experience and their interconnectedness are examined as psychophysical phenomena. *Psychophysical*, retained as a practice-based term, is adopted in this thesis to refer to an understanding of experience where psychological and physical aspects are inseparable. It is used in phrases such as *current psychophysical condition*, indicating someone's present state of interconnected body-mind processes, and *psychophysical phenomenon*, referring to an aspect of someone's experience that, even though experienced as predominantly psychological or physical, is not isolated from the body-mind interconnectedness. Thus, when a process is indicated as distinct (psychological or physical), the implied 'split' is nothing but conditional—it is understood as an aspect of the non-dualistic body-mind.

Following phases of pure exploration focused on engagement with personal experiences through work with current psychophysical conditions, memories, dreams, and imaginative activity, this study culminated in the articulation of the Collective Imagining Process. The model, as a work-in-progress, is based on the foundational methodological approach and its development and provides designated phases of activities, representing a structured approach to the creative articulation of personal experiences. It integrates both explorative and generative performance-making processes and was applied within this study in a dance-making and choreographic endeavour.

Before examining the way in which the framework presented above developed throughout the three phases of practice, this research should be understood as a multifaceted endeavour guided by its own internal logics. In retrospect, I recognise themes that pierce through all phases of research, evident in both my collaborators' experiences and my own. These relate to the recognition of different modes of awareness and the ability to soften in order to stay between them, acknowledging their interconnectedness. Informed by the methodological approaches employed, this research required a refrain from ultimate framing and followed the emergence and re-emergence of experiences as phenomena guiding the explorative process. In establishing

pathways for working creatively with these emerging and re-emerging phenomena, as aspects of integrated explorative and generative processes, I developed the Collective Imagining Process and distilled and conceptualised two approaches—*softening awareness* and *staying between and across* aspects of experience.

1.1.6. Research Development

The development of this investigation followed three interconnected yet distinct phases that emerged through practice rather than being pre-designed.

Phase One (January and February 2022) of this research focused on the current psychophysical condition of those exploring. It was executed in collaboration with two dancers, who at that time were studying on the BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance programme at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance:[19] Weronika Orzelek and Moa Ryberg. By adopting the ground form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement (suggesting a mover-witness framework), I conducted multiple explorative practices with Orzelek and Ryberg, which we called *sessions*. This first phase was characterised by engagement with inner witnessing and utilising a pre-considered phenomenon as a starting point for a movement session (articulated as the incorporation of *intention,* with reference to phenomenological intentionality, within Authentic Movement explorations). With a focus on recognising experience and its unconscious aspects, we followed what was emerging in the sessions and practised returning to it, extracting essences as themes, movement patterns, mental imagery, etc. In Phase One, we set the foundation for two creative tasks—*exploring movement* and *utilising moments and pools from explorations*—which were utilised and developed in the next phases.

Phase Two (March 2022–December 2023) of this research focused on work with personal memories, dreams, and imagination. Undertaken with three dancers, who at that time were also studying on the BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance programme at Trinity Laban: Orzelek, Ryberg, and Lucie Pribyl, this phase continued employing the mover-witness framework. Phase Two was divided into two stages. In the first stage (with Orzelek and Ryberg), we explored specific pathways to work with remembering and imagination. Accompanied by my solo engagement with creative articulations through drawing and painting, the memory work was

[19] Further information at: https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk

followed by work with dreams (with Orzelek). In this stage, my collaborators and I engaged in movement explorations while remaining attentive to the different aspects of experience. The major principles of *softening awareness* and *staying between and across* are distilled from the explorations that were undertaken within this first stage of Phase Two. The second stage, which was the first performance-oriented stage of this research, was characterised by a continuous process of exploring (with Orzelek and Pribyl) creative approaches to memory work, culminating in the performative sharing of *Inner Spaces* (2023). Phase Two included the conduction of several workshops and the creation of the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023), all informed by the somatic exploration of memories, remembering, and imagination. The second stage of Phase Two followed a collaborative devising process and represented a turning point in this research. It highlighted the challenging transition from purely explorative phases to generative, performance-making activities. The integration of these two dimensions of the work determined the subsequent phase.

Phase Three (May 2024–December 2024) of this research was characterised by the conduction of several workshops and the development of a model (the Collective Imagining Process), which draws on principles of the methodological foundation and their development during the previous phases. In this phase, I introduced external stimuli (such as images, scents, sounds, and textures) within the practice. The model, following designated phases of activities (Arriving, Recognising, Interacting, Exploring Movement, Extracting, and Collective Dreaming), integrated both explorative and generative processes, leading to creative articulations in a collaborative, dance-making context. My role was that of a facilitator and a choreographer-director, and during Phase Three I worked with three professional dancers: Yun Cheng, Diana Snizhko, and Chi-Hsuan Lin. Our collaborative process culminated in the devising of *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024).

1.2. Structure of Thesis

This thesis is divided into two main sections. The first section (Chapters 1, 2, and 3) is devoted to the design of this study and its contextualisation within the fields that directly inform it. The second section (Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7) follows the research development in chronological order while situating it in relation to a broader somatic and choreographic field, concluding with the contributions that this study offers.

Chapter 2 provides a contextualisation of this study. It begins with theoretical perspectives on the imaginative activity, highlighting a link between Jung's Active Imagination and phenomenological eidetic variation, and continues with perspectives on embodied consciousness, clarifying imagination as embodied. The chapter then situates this study within a lineage of therapeutic and artistic Authentic Movement practitioners, presenting Authentic Movement as central to this research. It finishes with the positioning of this research as an investigation that utilises the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology, drawing on them as creative tools in the context of somatic dance-making and recognising their potential as beneficial educational tools in the higher education of dancers.

Chapter 3 reveals the foundational methodological approach. Highlighting Authentic Movement as a key method utilised in studio practice, it outlines the similarities between Authentic Movement and phenomenology, presenting their incorporation and development throughout the research phases. Information on how this research was documented, tracked, and analysed through a versatile application of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) also finds a place in this chapter, followed by the presentation of my collaborators.

Chapter 4, presenting Phase One of this research, reflects on the adoption of the ground, dyad form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement. It follows the way my collaborators and I approached and reflected on somatic movement explorations. This chapter addresses inner witnessing as a foundational aspect of Authentic Movement. It presents the incorporation of intention (with reference to phenomenological intentionality) within movement explorations, outlining our engagement with returning to extracted essences from explorations with the aim of exploring them further. The chapter then follows glimpses of our work and extracts two creative tasks: *exploring movement* and *extracting and utilising moments from explorations*. Chapter 4 concludes with a short discussion of the findings from Phase One.

Chapter 5 presents Phase Two of this research, in which explorations of imagination, memories, and dreams commence. It begins with clarifications regarding how imagination and remembering were integrated within somatic explorations. It then presents two tasks designed for work with memories, followed by examination of the experiences my collaborators and I encountered. The chapter addresses imaginative activity as an embodied process and outlines two principles distilled from Phase Two—*softening awareness* and *staying between and across*. Following the exploration of interrelated aspects of experience, the chapter continues with the presentation of some creative articulations in drawing and painting, followed by a section

devoted to work with dreams. After that, the chapter looks closely at the transition from purely explorative processes to a performance-oriented endeavour. It follows and examines the collaborative dynamic during the devising of *Inner Spaces* (2023) performative sharing. The final section of the chapter addresses my experience filming *Inner Spaces 1* (2023), followed by a short discussion of the findings from Phase Two.

Chapter 6 is devoted to the final phase of this research—the incorporation of external stimuli in the explorations and the articulation of the Collective Imagining Process. First, the phases of the model (Arriving, Recognising, Interacting, Exploring Movement, Extracting, and Collective Dreaming) are examined. The chapter then follows the collaborative devising of the final performative work, *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024), presenting the application of the model within a performance-making process. Accompanied by materials from the practice, it addresses aspects of the collaborative process and outlines my approaches, decisions, and experiences as a choreographer-director, while maintaining a multi-voiced perspective and incorporating the fundamental contributions of my collaborators within the devising process. The chapter recognises the challenges that I faced and presents my approaches to dealing with them, offering perspectives on leadership within collaborative contexts.

Chapter 7 discusses the contributions of this study. Outlining contributions to somatic, choreographic and dance-making processes, the chapter also addresses theoretical contributions, educational and transdisciplinary implications. The limitations of this study, intertwined with plans for its future development, are indicated throughout the chapter.

1.3. Background

The kernels of inspiration that evolved in my PhD can be found within the early stages of my artistic journey. After graduating from the BA in Drama Theatre Acting course[20] in 2012 at the National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA)[21] in Sofia, Bulgaria, I spent a couple of years practising as an actor and dancer in films and diverse conventional and experimental theatre and dance performances.

[20] Further information at: https://natfiz.bg/en/drama-theatre-acting-en/
[21] Further information at: https://natfiz.bg/en/

As an actor, I was interested in how my physicality and the way I felt and used my body affected my performance. Looking back, I consider that I used my body and the symbolic meaning of my gestures and movements as the main tools for expressing ideas on stage. My theatre training[22] appreciated the major role of physicality in acting—not only the visual expression of the body but the way it informs and is related to psychological processes.

Since that time, I have always been captivated by the moments when something unexpected, something completely new, an authentic impulse comes to the forefront of my psychophysical processes while performing—a thought or a sensation, some energetic force that guides me in a pre-reflective state, mobilising my whole being into action. I perceived those moments as essential outbursts or insights into *what* and *how* the character that I was performing was doing. It was a kind of understanding, of *knowing* that was coming from my own embodied experience of exploring a character, not from a logical analysis of it. To achieve a state of openness towards such moments I often experimented with my body—a change of position, a change in the tempo of moving, exhaustion of the body, ways of breathing, and more.

My interest in the body as a major pathway towards performing intensified with my engagements with contemporary dance. In 2017 I undertook a one-year intensive dance course at Derida Dance Centre (DDC),[23] Sofia, Bulgaria. In DDC I studied classical ballet and different contemporary dance techniques. Meanwhile, I practised as a performer, choreographer, and director, and I followed the MA Theatre Art[24] programme at NATFA, in which I researched body training techniques for actors. I did not wait to graduate from the programme, as after a year of studying I was accepted to Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London, and moved to the UK in 2018.

At Trinity Laban, I followed the MFA Creative Practice: Dance Professional pathway.[25] A big turning point for me was a particular module in the programme—the Embodied Practice module, which is facilitated at Siobhan Davies Studios[26] and offers five weeks of practical engagement with somatic movement practices. By that stage of my life, I had already started working with the Jungian method of Active Imagination and considered its application in

[22] My studies were led by Professor Snejina Tankovska and were influenced by the work of Bertolt Brecht (1964), Jerzy Grotowski (2002), Michael Chekhov (2004), and Konstantin Stanislavski (2013).
[23] Further information at: https://derida.eu/en/home-2/ and https://www.derida-dance.com/qs/en/contemporary-dance-company/productions/427-dance-port-derida
[24] Further information at: https://natfiz.bg/en/theatre-art/
[25] Further information at: https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/courses/ma-mfa-creative-practice-dance-professional/
[26] Further information at: https://www.siobhandavies.com/ma-creative-practice/

movement and dance-making. I did not have practical knowledge of Authentic Movement, and it was a significant point in my studies when, during the Embodied Practice module, my colleagues and I had a week of Authentic Movement practice led by contemporary dance-maker, facilitator, and somatic movement therapist Amy Voris[27] (2019). Active Imagination and Authentic Movement were implemented in my MFA research project and since then have accompanied my personal, creative, and academic journeys.

Seamlessly, I began being interested in and focused much more on the process of exploration and embodiment rather than on generating and producing artistic outcomes. The gaze shifted inwards, and my attention fell on the processes within—on what and how I perceive, feel, move, think, imagine, and dream. Following the concepts of Jung, I was interested in exploring the unconscious and its layers, and how they affect artmaking and manifest in and through art, while at the same time supporting a process of expanding self-knowledge. My MFA studies formed the foundation upon which my doctorate developed.

An essential influence on my investigation comes from the way Authentic Movement is taught at the Institute for Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy (IBMT),[28] UK. At the beginning of my PhD studies, before commencing the practical somatic explorations, I started following the Authentic Movement and Therapeutic Presence[29] module at IBMT. The institute, founded by Linda Hartley (2002, 2004, 2014, 2024), offers a diploma for movement therapists including modules on Authentic Movement and Therapeutic Presence, Infant Movement Development, Embodied Anatomy and Movement Repatterning, and Somatic Psychology. I followed the Authentic Movement and Therapeutic Presence module led by Jane Okondo,[30] Beverley Nolan,[31] and Paul Beaumont.[32] Within the module the practice is taught following the principles defined by Janet Adler.[33] Even though Authentic Movement was taught in relation to therapeutic applications, the time spent with the teachers and the other students at IBMT was a tremendous influence in the initial stages of my creative research.

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[27] The artistic work of Voris, as influenced by Authentic Movement, is presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3. Authentic Movement as a Dance-Making Practice, p. 50.
[28] Further information at: Institute for Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy (IBMT)
[29] Further information at: Study Authentic Movement and Therapeutic Presence (ibmt.co.uk)
[30] Further information at: https://somaflow.okwellbeing.com/about.html
[31] Further information at: https://www.beverleynolan.com/about
[32] Further information at: https://www.paulbeaumont.net/information/
[33] The way Janet Adler develops Authentic Movement as a discipline is presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. Authentic Movement as a Therapeutic Practice, p. 42.

The initiation, the explorative phases, and the final writing stage of my PaR was, and still is, accompanied by the feeling of leading and being in a process which is not an isolated creative endeavour—it is something that has its roots in the past and promises to continue in the future. It is also not an isolated academic investigation, as it is situated in a landscape of knowledge that surrounds and informs it. This will be discussed in the next chapter, before I analyse the methodological foundation of this investigation and follow its realisation.

2. RESEARCH CONTEXT

2.1. Introduction

The functions of the following chapter, divided into two main sections, are: first, to situate this research project as a practice engaged with interconnected imaginative and somatic processes; and secondly, to contextualise it within a field of relevant Authentic Movement practitioners, thereby introducing Authentic Movement to the reader.

This chapter commences with a presentation of Jung's (1980, 1997, 2014) method of Active Imagination, which is seen as linked with Edmund Husserl's (2012) phenomenological eidetic (or imaginative) variation.[34] After that, it follows a perspective on imagination as an activity linked with physicality (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 2012), extracting the major role of the body in experience and meaning-making, and thus highlighting body-mind interconnectedness.

The second section of this chapter delves into Authentic Movement as Active Imagination in movement.[35] First, the development of Authentic Movement and its implementation in therapeutic contexts is presented through the practices of five major figures: Joan Chodorow (1991, 1997, 1999), Janet Adler (1999, 2002, 2015, 2022), Linda Hartley (2002, 2004, 2014, 2024), Mary Starks Whitehouse (1999), and Tina Stromsted (2025). Subsequently, the already-recognised symbiosis between the Discipline of Authentic Movement and phenomenology, as articulated by Paula Sager (2004, 2008, 2015), is acknowledged. The text then examines a growing field of practitioners researching the relationship between dance-making and Authentic Movement: Joan Davis (2001, 2007), Penny Collinson (2005), Andrea Olsen (2002, 2007, 2014, 2022), Emma Meehan (2013, 2015), Bacon (2007, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2019), and Voris (2019). It is not possible to cover all practitioners of Authentic Movement; the following therefore serves as a baseline and does not attempt an in-depth analysis of the practice's lineage.[36]

[34] Different philosophers address this aspect of phenomenological methodology in different ways, describing the same principles. Husserl uses the term "eidetic" (2012, p. 138), which is also used by Gallagher and Zahavi (2012, p. 29), while Moustakas uses "Imaginative Variation" (1994, p. 97). In this thesis, I use the term eidetic variation.
[35] The structure of this section, which is divided into different segments, is loosely inspired by the organisational approach used by Voris (2019), whose PhD thesis discusses practitioners related to the same body of literature.
[36] Further contextualisation of this study within the broader landscape of somatic dance-making follows in the subsequent chapters.

In the concluding section of this chapter, this research project is situated amongst the growing field of artists whose dance-making involves Authentic Movement as an investigation that draws on the already-recognised similarities between the movement practice and phenomenology, suggesting the application of their synergies within a creative PaR methodology and acknowledging their potentially beneficial application within the higher education of dancers.

2.2. Embodied Imagination

2.2.1. Active Imagination and Eidetic Variation

Imagination will be examined as an activity engaging both psychological and physical processes. Starting with the application of imagination in the work of Jung, a relationship with Authentic Movement is acknowledged. As the reader will see in the second section of this chapter, Authentic Movement is perceived as Active Imagination in movement and is connected to Jung's concepts.

Jung conceptualises the psyche, which he describes as "one of the darkest and most mysterious regions in our experience", as a unified entity comprising distinct yet interconnected domains or zones (Jung, 1980a, p. 4). These zones include the conscious mind, or ego-consciousness, and the unconscious, which is further divided into the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious.[37]

The method of Active Imagination that Jung developed follows a process of observing "the stream of interior images" (Jung, 1997a, p. 154). Active Imagination is an activity that is understood, in psychological terms, as a conscious way of communicating with the

[37] Consciousness represents the psychological processes related to awareness and apperception. The notion of the ego overlaps with consciousness and is related to concepts of personal identity. In his lectures in Tavistock in 1935, Jung says that the ego is a "complex of psychic facts", which is constituted first by a "general awareness" of body and existence, and secondly by "memory data", "a long series of memories" related to the awareness "of having been" in the world (2014, p. 8). The conscious aspect of the psychic totality "floats upon the ocean of the dark things", where the domain of the unconscious is (2014, p. 15). The unconscious is described by Jung as "an autonomous psychic entity", which contains information that the ego-consciousness has no access to (1980b, p. 46). As the unconscious contains data which is not only related to repressed memories, such as infantile or forgotten personal experiences, but also to psychological activities that are "more objective than personal experience", related to the evolutionary development and the very basis of the human race, the unconscious is therefore separated into two zones—the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious (Samuels et al., 1986, p. 155).

unconscious. Based on the image-production functions of the psyche, it combines both conscious and unconscious elements, thus establishing a connection between them (Chodorow, 1997, p. 5). Jung developed the method in systematic work first with himself, engaging through imagination "with the impulses and the images of the unconscious", and after applied the method in analytic work with his patients (Chodorow, 1997, p. 1).

Active Imagination, at its core, is an invitation to focus on a "dream-image", a "spontaneous visual impression", a physical sensation, or a mood, following the changes taking place (Jung, 1997a, p. 154). While engaged in imaginative processes, there is a need for observation and alertness, carried out by the conscious mind.

Active Imagination is distinguished from *passive* fantasising. The *active* characteristic of the method, as elucidated by Chodorow, requires an "attitude of expectation", and "a state of readiness" to actively turn the attention towards the "raw material emerging from the unconscious" and to stay participating in the process consciously. A lack of participation results in a phantasy that "drifts around unnoticed" or in the identification with an image or mood (1997, p. 6). Below is advice that Jung gave to one of his patients:

> You must carefully avoid impatient jumping from one subject to another. Hold fast to the one image you have chosen and wait until it changes by itself. Note all these changes and eventually step into the picture yourself, and if it is a speaking figure at all then say what you have to say to that figure and listen to what he or she has to say. (Jung, 1997b, p. 164)

The required attitude for executing the method, which suggests an approach that is open and receptive but also focused, active, and interactive, informs the movement practice in this research project. We will see below how these principles are present in Authentic Movement, as Active Imagination in movement.

The Active Imagination process follows two distinctive stages of "letting the unconscious come up" and of "coming to terms with the unconscious"[38] (Chodorow, 1997, p. 10). At the first stage, in psychological terms, the unconscious leads while the ego-consciousness is in a quiet and witnessing mode, and at the second stage consciousness leads (Chodorow, 1997, p. 10). The entire process, which supports the transcendent function,[39] aims at the integration of the

[38] Those stages are further developed and modified by Jung's followers. However, their core principles stay the same (Chodorow, 1997, p. 11).
[39] In Analytica Psychology, the transcendent function, "expressing itself by the way of the symbol, … facilitates a transition from one psychological attitude or condition to another" through the tension and mediation of opposites:

unconscious and is supported by activities that give a form to it, extracting a meaning, an essence, as a *symbol*. In its basic form, Active Imagination, as a process that takes place predominantly in the mind, is materialised by artistic acts of drawing, painting, writing, dancing, etc., which are seen as a continuation of the practice and in which connection between the conscious and the unconscious is established. Jung advised his patients to utilise the Active Imagination experience within artistic endeavours, the products of which were seen as another symbolic manifestation of the conscious-unconscious dynamic.

Within this research project, the two distinctive stages of Active Imagination are present. The "letting the unconscious come up" stage is associated with the process of opening towards experience and its unconscious aspects, and the "coming to terms with the unconscious" stage is associated with different acts, undertaken as artistic endeavours with the recognised unconscious contents (Chodorow, 1997, p. 10). This aspect of the practice is present in this research project not only as dance and movement manifestations, but also, as the reader will follow in the next chapters, via the generation of drawings, writings, and a short film.

The way Active Imagination is executed, as mentioned above, requires a specific attitude. It invites readiness and openness to let the imaginative processes reveal themselves, while staying alert, observant of them, and sometimes ready to interact with them. That attitude of staying in an experience is further developed in Authentic Movement and forms a method that has much in common with the principles and the methodologies used in phenomenology.

According to phenomenology, the methods used for the analysis of a phenomenon propose several stages which represent an overall philosophical approach, which is applied in this research. Academics and philosophers Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi present four major steps in Husserl's phenomenological process: the *epoché*, the *phenomenological reduction*, the *eidetic variation*, and *intersubjective corroboration* (2012, p. 31). These are mentioned below in this chapter when indicating some of the similarities between phenomenology and Authentic Movement. However, their proper presentation finds place in the next chapter. The focus here is on eidetic variation and Active Imagination as processes that use imaginative activities to aim at the same goal: to extract an essence of a phenomenon in order to get closer to it and to understand it.

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it "represents a linkage between real and imaginary, or rational and irrational data, thus bridging the gulf between consciousness and the unconscious" (Samuels et al., 1986, p. 150).

The eidetic variation, presented by psychologist and phenomenologist Clark Moustakas (1994) as Imaginative Variation, is a stage in Husserl's phenomenological research that is identified with the utilisation of imagination in order to examine possible meanings of an investigated phenomenon. It is "a free play of fancy", which juggles different approaches towards the phenomenon, employing perspectives, a variety of references, and different positions—all to understand the experience of the phenomenon and to describe its essential structures (1994, pp. 97–98). In the eidetic variation process, "any perspective is a possibility and is permitted to enter into consciousness" (1994, p. 98). The investigated phenomenon can be anything. It can be an existing object, a motif from a dream, an image from memory, a sensation, a feeling, etc. The similarities with aspects of Active Imagination are present here, even though the two methods come from different fields of knowledge.

Professor of psychology Roger Brooke (2015) analyses the relationship between Analytical Psychology and phenomenology. He suggests a link between eidetic variation and Jung's method of amplification, arguing that "both [methods] use imaginal variations in an attempt to set rough outer limits to the phenomenon's essential meaning, to elucidate the context of the phenomenon's disclosure", and to get closer to the "meaning in the essential heart of the phenomenon itself" (2015, p. 41).

Jung's method of amplification is related to the extraction of meaning from a symbol[40] through the investigation of that symbol's associations with motifs in myth, history, and culture (Samuels et al., 1986, p. 16). In his Tavistock lectures, Jung describes the method of amplification, comparing it with the method of philologists:

> I adopt the method of the philologist, which is far from being free association, and apply a logical principle which is called amplification. It is simply that of seeking the parallels. For instance, in the case of a very rare word which you have never come across before, you try to find parallel text passages, parallel applications perhaps, where that word also occurs, and then you try to put the formula you have established from the knowledge of other texts into the new text. (Jung, 2014, pp. 68–69)

In the process of symbol analysis, the method of amplification suggests externalisation. The beginning of the amplification process may utilise imaginative and associative thinking, but it progresses beyond the examination of the subjective and predicts thoughtful investigations of wider contexts.

[40] A symbol extracted from a dream or an Active Imagination activity.

Acknowledging the links between eidetic variation and amplification as articulated by Brooke, I would like to suggest that amplification could also be related to intersubjective corroborations. In phenomenology, that final step is "concerned with replication and the degree to which the discovered structures are universal or at least shareable" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 31).

It is worth considering a stronger link between phenomenology and Analytical Psychology, evident in the similarities between eidetic variation and aspects of Active Imagination. If the phenomenon engaged with within an imaginative process could be anything (a pre-considered or intended imagery within the mind's eye or a current psychophysical process), the very act of active, conscious engagement with it via imaginative activity constitutes a pathway towards the extraction of its potential essences or symbolic manifestations. The interplay between what imaginative processes generate and how, consciously, they are observed, followed, and, in some cases, altered and communicated with, is a main characteristic of both eidetic variation and Active Imagination. There is an aspect of openness, and at the same time an intentional interaction with the imagined.

In this work, principles of Active Imagination and eidetic variation are employed in stages of exploring in which something that emerged in experience (type of movement, memory, sensation, image, or emotional state) is incorporated into playful, imaginative experiments with it.[41]

The approaches to imagination discussed up to this stage are predominantly concerned with mental imagery and cognitive processes. By introducing a perspective on the role of the body and perception in cognition, imagination is understood as embodied.

2.2.2. Embodied Consciousness

Drawing on ideas from the work of one of the most popular phenomenologists and philosophers of embodiment—Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1964, 2012), I would like to introduce the notion of le schéma corporel, or the body schema. Merleau-Ponty expands important aspects of phenomenology, addressing the role of the body in relation to consciousness and

[41] The employment of these principles is further examined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1. Exploring Movement, p. 84.

perception. According to him, the "body is no longer merely an object in the world" —it is "on the side of the subject", it is the very point of view and the relation of that subject in and to the world (1964, p. 5). Developing a concept of the body schema, Merleau-Ponty accentuates the dynamic relations between the perceptive body, as living and sensing, and space—the postural schema of the body and the way it inhabits the world and relates to objects:

> The theory of the body schema is implicitly a theory of perception. We have learned to again sense our bodies; we have discovered, beneath objective and detached knowledge of the body, this other knowledge that we have of it because it is always with us and because we are bodies. It will be necessary to similarly awaken the experience of the world such as it appears to us insofar as we are in the world through our bodies, and insofar as we perceive the world with our bodies. But by reestablishing contact with the body and with the world in this way, we will also rediscover ourselves, since, if one perceives with his body, then the body is a natural myself and, as it were, the body is the subject of perception. (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 213)

Following that, even in an imaginative act engaged with the appearance of something absent to the present, the role of the body is significant. Merleau-Ponty suggests that the way an imagined object is achieved happens through "the present data", the utilisation of elements in present perception:

> One may then investigate how the subject achieves … an absent visage in the present data of his perceptions. One will see that he must impress them with a physiognomy or a structure of some kind that he then projects actively by his motor-affective attitude. Such an eidetic analysis of the image will make possible experimental approaches which are no longer blind, because they will know something of what they are talking about and will understand the connection of the image with our motor-affective life. (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 60)

The body schema does not represent only the experience of the body, but also the experience of the body as situated in an environment, not isolated from cognitive processes but constantly informing them and being informed by them. Thus, the body is inextricably connected with meaning-making, abstract thinking, imagination, and metaphor.[42]

Throughout this research project, special attention is given to the dynamic relationship between the imaginative processes in the mind's eye and sensory awareness. Movement explorations with memories and dreams, which engage vivid imaginative activity, as well as explorations with external stimuli, evidence body-mind interconnectedness and demonstrate that these

[42] The idea of physical patterns as giving meaning and structure of experience is further examined by professor and philosopher Mark Johnson (1987), who introduces the concept of *image schemata*, framing embodied experiences as foundational to meaning-making and metaphor.

aspects of experience do not occur in isolation from one another, even when one is seemingly passive.

After these clarifications regarding the essential role of the body within imaginative experiences, I would like to invite the reader to the second section of this chapter which situates this research project amongst practitioners who implement the somatic movement practice of Authentic Movement.

2.3. Authentic Movement

2.3.1. Authentic Movement as a Therapeutic Practice

Movement theorist and professor of philosophy Thomas Hanna describes the field of somatics as one that "studies the soma: namely the body as perceived from within by first-person perception" (1995, p. 341). Somatic movement practices,[43] at their core, are concerned with *awareness of* and *attention towards* the body and sensations. Hanna describes awareness "like a lens that can be pointed and focused" (1995, p. 348). Through intentional work with that lens, somatic practices support an individual to isolate ""new" sensory-motor phenomena in order to learn to recognise and control them" (1995, p. 348). Thus, it is through the function of awareness that the "involuntary is made voluntary" and "the unknown is made known" (1995, p. 348). Hanna notes that

> *somatic learning begins by focusing awareness on the unknown*. This active focusing identifies traits of the unknown that can be associated with traits already known in one's conscious repertoire. Through this process the unknown becomes known by the voluntary consciousness. In a word, the *unlearned* becomes *learned*. (Hanna, 1995, pp. 348–349)

We can consider that all somatic movement practices are directed towards capturing not-yet-conscious processes—either through holistic approaches towards movement, touch, spontaneity, guided meditations, and/or the use of poetic imagery or music. Authentic

[43] Practices such as Body-Mind Centering (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993), Skinner Releasing Technique (http://www.skinnerreleasing.com), Alexander Technique (https://alexandertechnique.com), and Focusing (Gendlin, 2003) are widely applied both in therapeutic and somatically-informed dance-movement activities. Even though they do not inform this research directly, their unequivocal link to notions of awareness, experience, and the dynamic between conscious and not-conscious is acknowledged.

Movement, which also falls in the category of somatic movement practices and follows their characteristics, is connected to Active Imagination.

The practice of Authentic Movement was founded by Mary Starks Whitehouse (1999) in the middle of the last century and aims at a descent into the unconscious (as understood in Jung's concepts). It is distinct from other somatic movement practices with its focus on both physicality and visual imaginative processes coming from the personal experience of the mover themselves. The method evolved over time with modifications that dedicated practitioners of Authentic Movement applied to the practice. The contributions of Whitehouse and the followers of her legacy—Adler, Chodorow, Stromsted, Hartley, and Sager, inform this study, and aspects of their work is discussed below.

Whitehouse was a professional dancer who, early in her life, made a transition to a therapy practice and became a pioneering movement therapist (Whitehouse in Frantz, 1999, p. 17). In her youth, Whitehouse pursued a dancer's journey. She worked with choreographers such as Mary Wigman and Martha Graham, who influenced her attitude towards body and movement, and gave her an embodied perspective which affected the therapeutic form she would later develop. As she continued practising as a dance teacher, "a slow metamorphosis, a gradually changing focus of interest" happened (Frieder, 2007, p. 35). Whitehouse, while describing her transition to becoming a movement therapist, says:

> It was an important day when I discovered that I did not teach Dance, I taught People. … It indicated a possibility that my primary interest might have to do with process not results, that it might not be art I was after but another kind of human development. (Whitehouse, 1999d, p. 59)

Whitehouse started facilitating open sessions and classes, in which the focus was the "releasing of the natural impulse", the movement that is "authentic". She was interested in "what moves people", as movement therapist Susan Frieder says. Whitehouse was concerned with "the individual and the individual's psyche and with ways to allow people to connect with their own inner process and resources" (Frieder, 2007, p. 35).

Studying at the C.G. Jung Institute in Zurich, her engagement with Analytical Psychology marked her pathway to movement therapy practice. The Jungian notion of Active Imagination is strongly linked with the movement practice of Whitehouse, and she articulates significant parallels between what she was doing and the method of Jung. She herself says that Analytical Psychology supported her in understanding "the instinctive procedures" that she had always

"used without knowing what they were" (Whitehouse in Frantz, 1999, p. 18). In her days as a dance practitioner, she accentuates doing improvisation in a way that "nobody else did", insisting on dancers following their "impulses" even within the "strictest kind of dance form" (Whitehouse in Frantz, 1999, p. 18). She describes her practice, as Active Imagination in movement, as a process that follows "the inner sensation[s], allowing the impulse to take the form of a physical action … just as following the visual image is active imagination in fantasy" (Whitehouse, 1999c, p. 52).

Whitehouse's work is based on "the reality of the inner life" and how it "comes out in movement" (Whitehouse in Sherman, 1999, p. 30). That deep interest in the human being and its mystery, and how that mystery is reached and manifested through movement, became a legacy of Whitehouse's work and is present in the work of her successors. She introduced a movement practice that facilitates a descent into the human psyche, welcoming an approach that is not only physical and kinaesthetic, but also concerned with emotions and imagination—a practice that happens between an observer, therapist, or teacher and a mover. These aspects of her work are further developed by her followers.

There are a few significant characteristics of Whitehouse's practice that influence this investigation, which are also noted by Voris as relevant to her dance-making artistic research. The first one is related to the notions of "move" and "being moved". Regarding them, Whitehouse says that "to move" and "to be moved" are both acts in themselves, but they are different in nature:

> 'I move' is the clear knowledge that I, personally, am moving. I choose to move, I exert some demand (not effort) on my physical organism to produce movement. The opposite of this is the sudden and astonishing moment when 'I am moved'. (Whitehouse, 1999e, p. 82)

Dancers, as Whitehouse continues, are "terribly familiar" with "I move", as they are engaged in producing and repeating movement material. The "I am moved", on the other hand, happens in an astonishing way:

> It is a moment when the ego gives up control, stops choosing, stops exerting demands, allowing the self to take over moving the physical body as it will. It is a moment of unpremeditated surrender that cannot be explained, repeated exactly, sought for or tried out. (Whitehouse, 1999e, p. 82)

In relation to this creative practice in dance-making, the dynamic between "to move" and "to be moved" by a not-clearly-recognised sensation or power from within is something that my

collaborators and I examined. “To be moved” is clearly linked with an unconscious process. Chodorow, whose Authentic Movement practice is presented below, describes that in her early sessions with Whitehouse, Chodorow was advised not to rush and move, but to wait (Chodorow in Zenoff, 1999, p. 218). This notion of listening to the body and waiting for something to happen is essential for Whitehouse’s practice and it paved the pathway in which this practice happened. In the context of a creative approach to dance-making, the notions of “I move” and “I am being moved” are seen as intertwined. They insist on a specific attitude of moving, which leads to the next characteristic of Whitehouse’s work that is of importance here.

The second aspect is related to a specific way of attending to experience and working with the body. Whitehouse says that “there is necessarily an attitude of inner openness, a kind of capacity for listening to one’s self that [Whitehouse calls] honesty. It is made possible only by concentration and patience” (Whitehouse, 1999b, p. 49). The notion of “honesty” is essential in this research. My collaborators and I engaged with the movement practice in an honest way, with “an attitude of inner openness” (which is linked with the notion of epoché in phenomenological methodology, presented later in this chapter). In these terms, there is a readiness, a desire to confront the familiar patterns and to allow processes at the periphery of awareness to manifest, all supported by a sense of curiosity and a *lack of judgement*.

The third aspect of Whitehouse’s work is related to a phenomenon researched by Voris. She utilises aspects of Authentic Movement practice in a dance-making process from a dancer’s perspective. In her practice, she works with returning to movement or returning to reflections of a movement practice. Voris accentuates and questions a characteristic of Whitehouse’s approach. Whitehouse states that “spontaneous movement, [when] rehearsed and repeated, loses the very thing it shows: that inner processes take physical form and can be seen, their meaning apprehended, their value received by the person out of whose body the movement comes” (Whitehouse, 1999e, p. 85). Voris, in relation to her dance-making practice, suggests that movement which is repeated does not necessarily lose capacity to reveal “inner processes”:

> In order to maintain an energetic quality of emergence through repeated practice one has to embody a tension: of knowing and of not knowing at the same time. I propose that the open and holistic mode of enquiry into movement that characterises Authentic Movement offers a means by which this tension (of knowing and not knowing at the same time) can be more fully recognised and therefore more consciously re-incorporated into methods for dance-making. (Voris, 2019, p. 59)

The phenomenon of returning to movement is an essential part of structuring a choreographed piece, no matter if it is based on a strict choreography or on improvisation. That phenomenon is also present in this research, and Voris's formulation of embodying a tension "of knowing and of not knowing at the same time" is relevant to this work and is a pathway of bringing Authentic Movement within dance and choreographic practice.

Janet Adler (1999, 2002, 2015, 2022) was the founder of Authentic Movement as a *discipline*. After studying the practice with Whitehouse, she continued her investigation of the unconscious becoming conscious through movement and, through years of practising as a therapist, teacher, and academic, developed Authentic Movement the way it is widely known today.

Adler established The Mary Starks Whitehouse Institute in 1981, where she continuously worked with the practice, defining some of its main aspects. Her own study focused on "the relationship between moving and witnessing" (Adler in Haze & Stromsted, 1999, p. 116). The form of the practice is simple: "one person moves in the presence of another" (Adler, 1999b, p. 142). Throughout the investigations in the institute, Adler coined the term "witness" to describe the one who is observing the mover.

Within the framework of an Authentic Movement practice, a mover enters a space with their "eyes closed in order to expand [their] experience of listening to the deeper levels of [their] kinesthetic reality", and opens up towards responding to sensations, or to "an inner impulse", to "energy coming from the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious" (Adler, 1999b, p. 142). The mover learns to *track* with as little judgment as possible and to remember their experiences, while they are observed by a witness:

> The witness … carries a larger responsibility for consciousness as she sits to the side of the movement space. She is not looking at the person moving, she is witnessing, listening, bringing a specific quality of attention or presence to the experience of the mover. (Adler, 1999b, p. 142)

Adler says that it is "only when one does feel seen by another that one can see oneself" (2002, p. 6). The framework of mover and witness aims at the development of a quality of awareness within the mover, which Adler names the "inner witness":

> It is the development of the inner witness that creates the evolution of the mover's consciousness. With growing awareness, the mover learns to distinguish between merging with her movement, being in a dialogic relationship to it, and, in moments of

> grace, knowing a wholeness, feeling no separation between her moving self and her inner witness. (Adler, 2002, p. 6)

After the process of moving, an important stage of *reflecting* on the movement follows. In this stage, both mover and witness speak about the experience, trying to avoid projections and judgments. With the mover speaking first, the reflective process aims at "bringing formerly unconscious processes to consciousness" (Adler, 1999b, p. 142). As an essential component of the practice, the reflective stage is adopted in this research, drawing on the approaches of Adler, Stromsted, and Hartley (further presented below in this chapter). Establishing the foundation for the reflective process, Adler defines "certain protocols" by adopting principles of "percept language" (as developed by Human Potential Movement pioneer John Weir) and suggests the utilisation of the present tense and "language that is neither judgmental nor interpretative" (Stromsted, 2025, p. 162). This reflective process, challenging both mover and witness with the invitation to differentiate perceptions from projections, represents a major aspect of this research and is further examined throughout this thesis.

Through the practical investigations in the institute, Adler began articulating similarities between Authentic Movement and meditation, considering that both practices encourage "continuous effort to witness the conscious mind as it habitually interferes with the deep listening" (1999b, p. 149). This determined new perspectives on Authentic Movement, as it started to be understood as "a spiritual as well as a therapeutic" discipline (1999b, p. 149).

Adler's contribution to the fields of somatics, psychology, movement therapy, creativity, mysticism, and well-being is enormous. As the Discipline of Authentic Movement developed, three stages, or realms of practice were discerned: the realm of the study of the individual body, the realm of the collective body, and the realm of the conscious body (Adler, 2002, p. XVI). A pathway through the different realms represents a learning curve of the discipline and a pathway towards expanding consciousness. Starting from the ground form—the dyad of a mover and a witness, in which the mover learns to observe and track their experiences, cultivating an inner witness and then becoming a witness to another mover—the pathway leads to triads and bigger groups, circles of movers and witnesses, in which they "discover one's relationship to many without losing a conscious awareness of oneself", until reaching a level on which "the form itself becomes more transparent", "personality shifts toward experience of presence, empathy shifts toward compassion, and, in moments of grace, suffering becomes bearable"—"the body as a vessel is experienced as empty" (Adler, 2002, pp. XVII–XVIII).

According to Adler, Authentic Movement has the quality of "embodied mystical practice, which invites the possibility of transformation into new ways of knowing", facilitating the integration of "the light and the shadow of personality" (Adler, 2015, p. 218).

Some of the main principles of the ground form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement find their place as a foundational approach incorporated in the studio sessions throughout Phases One and Two of this research. Adler's framework, with its mover-witness dynamic and attention towards specific ways of being in, observing, and reflecting on experience, shaped the studio sessions within this investigation.[44] Even though the other stages or realms of her design were not directly incorporated in this research, phenomena relevant to their study were present during Phase Three, therefore further contextualisation will follow.

An aspect of Adler's earlier work finds a special place in this investigation. In *Integrity of Body and Psyche*, a paper published in 1972, Adler elaborates on different approaches in her therapeutic practice. Utilising Authentic Movement, she and her clients went through different stages of work. One of them is of particular interest in relation to my research. Describing the process with her clients, Adler states:

> The fourth stage begins the real work for my clients. In response to recognition of repetitive behaviour, they begin to experiment with ways to focus on a specific theme, to get to know more about it, to go with it, to exaggerate it, to confront it. In psychotherapy, it seems to me, the very same thing occurs: the client begins to explore, dissect and work with the recurring themes in his repertoire. (Adler, 1999a, pp. 123–124)

That moment of focusing on and staying with recognised psychophysical phenomena that are recurring, is to my observations, something essential for Authentic Movement as Active Imagination. The development of the practice through the years suggests its execution with an open and non-intentional (that is, non-goal-oriented) approach. Executed with directedness towards a specific psychophysical phenomenon, Authentic Movement enables access to personal processes and supports explorative practice over a prolonged timeframe. Phases One and Two of this research project adopt Authentic Movement in a similar manner, executing the practice with a pre-considered psychophysical process as an *intended* phenomenon. By suggesting a phenomenological perspective on *intentionality* within the practice, I invite movers to engage with a specific psychophysical process for an extended period while

[44] The adoption of Adler's framework is presented throughout Chapters 3 and 4.

remaining open to the periphery of awareness, where not-yet-conscious processes can be recognised.[45]

Chodorow (1991, 1997, 1999) is an Authentic Movement therapeutic practitioner who reflects on the movement practice as an Active Imagination process. Her transition from a dance teacher to a movement therapist was accompanied by her encounter with Whitehouse's work. Chodorow understands Authentic Movement as a practice that offers "the great gift … to work symbolically with the raw material of the unconscious" (Chodorow, 1999a, p. 207). In her work, she explores the interrelatedness between internal visual imagery and bodily sensations or movements through Authentic Movement as Active Imagination.

Chodorow looks at the mover as someone who generates movement based on sensation, image, or both, emphasising that "the richest movement experiences seem to involve both sensation and image, fluctuating back and forth or occurring simultaneously" (Chodorow, 1999b, p. 261). The relationship between the sensory and the imaginative realms, as aspects of experience, represents a central topic in this research project. In this work, the recognition of and the work with that relationship is something intentionally triggered and investigated through movement explorations with imagery, memory, dreams, and responses to external stimuli. Through the phases of the research, my collaborators and I carefully followed experiences, aiming at a state which I distil and conceptualise as *staying between and across* aspects of experience. These aspects of experience could become active or tacit at any given moment, and in this way might shift between the focal point of awareness and its periphery. Through *softening awareness*, this research project is concerned with bringing to light the diverse aspects of experience, noticing and following what is manifested, and utilising that which is revealed in dance-making processes.

Authentic Movement as Active Imagination is seen by Chodorow as a process that facilitates "deliberately opening to the unconscious yet not identifying with it [where] opening to the imagination doesn't mean merging with the images … [but] means being yourself with all your strengths and weaknesses and noticing what you are imagining" (Chodorow in Zenoff, 1999, p. 223). Such an approach of attending to the aspects of experience became fundamental in this work. Furthermore, such an approach to movement explorations, which aims at experiencing between the known and the not known, determined an approach towards performativity. I

[45] Further examined in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4. Introducing Intention, p. 81.

suggest that such an approach applied to dance and dance-making processes reveals gems in relation to the performer and the depth of their presence. It would accompany the performer towards self-knowledge, idea generation, and specific stage-presence, offering space for the development of awareness and a specific attitude towards moment-by-moment experience.

Developing the Soul's Body approach, Jungian analyst and somatic movement psychotherapist Tina Stromsted (2025) expands Authentic Movement (as connected with Active Imagination and Jung's depth psychology) and employs it in diverse activities such as dream work, embodied and creative imagination, community practice, and the cultivation of self-awareness.[46] Together with movement therapist Neala Haze, Stromsted founded the Authentic Movement Institute in 1993,[47] offering a "curriculum that combined experiential and theoretical learning, exploring the interplay of creative, psychological, and sacred dimensions through the unique body-based process of Authentic Movement" (2025, p. 158). Three aspects of her work directly resonate with this research.

First, Stromsted introduces the re-call practice to the reflective process after a movement session (a practice that is also adopted in the IBMT Authentic Movement and Therapeutic Prescence Module). The re-call approach invites the witness, after attending to the verbal reflections of the mover, to reflect "the mover's words" and describe "their own embodied resonance" (2025, p. 55). This approach was employed throughout Phases One and Two of this research project.

Secondly, Stromsted brings Authentic Movement closer to its Active Imagination roots by using *starting points*. Similarly to Jung, who used "moods, dream images, or life struggles" as starting points for the Active Imagination process, Stromsted, in her practice, sometimes invites participants to utilise "an issue or a theme they've shared, such as relationship tensions, current events, body discomfort, dream material, or important decisions" as a starting point for their movement session (2025, p. 179). Acknowledging that the practice might also begin with a kinaesthetic focus, "initiated by a specific body part", Stromsted applies this approach in both individual and group Authentic Movement practices (2025, p. 179). As an aspect of the training at the Authentic Movement Institute, starting points were utilised through the exploration of movement themes, preparing the body for practice: "once [movers] have had an opportunity to

[46] See www.authenticmovement-bodysoul.com
[47] Although not currently functioning (active 1993–2004), more information about the historical record of the institute can be found at www.authenticmovementinstitute.com

warm up and explore a starting point, [they] are invited to close their eyes and continue their investigations, releasing the movement theme when spontaneous movement begins to emerge in a natural way from within" (2025, p. 160). Although this approach seems to resonate with aspects of the earlier practice of Adler previously mentioned, a distinction should be noted (considering that each approach is in-flux and should not be framed): Adler utilised intentional work with recognised themes in order to stay with the theme longer, to explore and confront it, while the starting points in Stromsted's work seem to represent a threshold that supports the mover in beginning to differentiate movement that is done consciously and movement that arises from unconscious processes. Despite these differences, both of these approaches resonate with a major characteristic of this investigation: the exploration of Authentic Movement with a pre-considered phenomenon. Further elaboration follows within the examination of the research development.

Thirdly, by developing the DreamDancing process, Stromsted introduces an embodied approach to dream content, inviting participants to give "life and form" to "unconscious images", perceiving "the image … as the inner representation of a person's unconscious, and the body as its outward expression or manifestation" (2025, p. 224). By exploring both the realms of image and body awareness, DreamDancing suggests working with "embodying dream figures, exploring emotional states and qualities of energy, engaging in action sequences that promote new behaviours, and utilizing creative methods like movement, drawing, writing, or vocalization" (2025, p. 226). During Phase Two of this research project, my collaborators and I worked with dreams and, although not aiming to reach a therapeutic depth, explored the creative potential and the expansion of self-knowledge emerging from embodied work with dreams.

Linda Hartley (2002, 2004, 2014, 2024), a somatic movement therapist, teacher, writer, and body psychotherapist, founded the IBMT Institute in 1990 and was its director for thirty-three years.[48] Her somatic work, which is deeply informed by and integrates the teachings of Mary O'Donnell Fulkerson (Release Technique), Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen (Body-Mind Centering), and Janet Adler (Authentic Movement), explores "the mysterious realm of embodied Spirit", the "immanent spirituality" and looks for "pathways into greater connection with oneself, with other human beings, the more-than-human world and the Earth body" (2024, p. 21).

[48] More information on: https://ibmt.co.uk/practitioners/

Voris acknowledges that, in her teaching practice of Authentic Movement, Hartley introduces the distinction of "different models or 'channels' of perception (such as proprioception, sensation, emotion and image)", which are consciously examined and through which both mover and witness speak, exploring these channels or layers of experience (Voris, 2019, p. 63).[49] The pedagogical approach of Hartley informs the manner in which Authentic Movement was taught at IBMT during my studies there led by Okondo, Nolan, and Beaumont. As noted by Voris who studied Authentic Movement under the supervision of Hartley, this pedagogical approach places a "particular emphasis … on naming the proprioceptive dimensions of movement (that is, on kinaesthetic initiation, bodily organisation, spatial pathway and orientation) *in conjunction with* emotional and imaginative content" (2019, p. 64).

My embodied experiences at IBMT informed the way I conducted explorations during this research. Reflecting on our experiences, my collaborators and I first "ground[ed] the movement experience in the body by tracking the movements (behaviour), gestures and arising sensations" and "return[ed] to this ground as we [spoke] about our experience as mover or witness", including our mental imagery and thought processes (Hartley, 2024, p. 142). As Hartley notes, through "the tracking of movement, sensation, feeling and image, which both mover and witness practise, … Authentic Movement offers a path, a bridge back into the present moment and authentic embodied [and direct] experiencing" (2014, p. 25). This approach, as adopted in this study, guided the exploration of interconnected psychological and physical processes.

By presenting aspects of the work of Whitehouse, Adler, Chodorow, Stromsted, and Hartley, I indicate the influence they have on this investigation and situate this research project within the context of Authentic Movement. In the next section, I address the relationship between Authentic Movement and phenomenology, which is further elaborated on in Chapter 3.

[49] Hartley refers to the five stages (or skandhas) in the Buddhist tradition—form, sensation/feeling, recognition/perception, formation/intellect, and consciousness—as stages that appear not only throughout a person's development but also in every encounter with the present moment. Meditative practices, and practices such as Authentic Movement, invite direct experience, in which each of the skandhas is observed, experienced, and named without judgment and interpretation (Hartley, 2002). Similarly to Hartley, Sager also refers to different modes of awareness in the context of practising Authentic Movement (see p. 77).

2.3.2. Authentic Movement and Phenomenology

Paula Sager (2004, 2008, 2015)—dancer, educator, and Authentic Movement practitioner, introduces a link between aspects of Authentic Movement and phenomenology. She articulates the connection between the phenomenological stage of epoché and the qualities of witnessing and inner witnessing in the Discipline of Authentic Movement, both being processes which are concerned with the reduction of preconceived opinions and judgement:

> The practice of the phenomenological researcher is much like the practice of witness consciousness in the Discipline of Authentic Movement. Both require an open receptivity to not know what will happen and a commitment to track one's own inner experience in the presence of another person or an outer phenomenon. Both practices cultivate the capacity to think and perceive through movement, time, relationship and presence. The outer witness practice of attending to, containing, and not acting upon inner reactive impulses, judgments and associations is mirrored in the Epoche. (Sager, 2015, p. 370)

Sager executed an investigation focused on "something as subjective and immaterial as [the] developing inner witness", utilising a phenomenological approach into looking at the phenomenon of the inner witnessing itself (2015, p. 369).

With this research project, I augment the recognised relationship between Authentic Movement and phenomenology and apply it in a creative PaR. This act is supported by the recognition of similarities between the two methods in all of their stages—approach towards experience, reflection on experience, and extraction of essences or knowledge.[50] Through the practice of this research project, I explore the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology and reveal them as generalisable tools in artistic contexts, suggesting that their incorporation within the educational field would be beneficial for the professional and personal development of dancers-in-training.

The next section presents some of the creative aspects of Authentic Movement and how they are applied in dance-making processes.

[50] These aspects of the work are elaborated on in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.1. Authentic Movement and Phenomenology as a Methodological Foundation, p. 61.

2.3.3. Authentic Movement as a Dance-Making Practice

Voris (2019) conducts her PhD research utilising aspects of Authentic Movement within her solo dance-making process. Her academic investigation is unique with an approach towards PaR, or artistic research, in which she does not rely on "adopting the terminology of an extrinsic theoretical perspective", but rather extracts qualities of Authentic Movement which support her in designing an original dance-making method "articulated through language that belongs to dance and movement" (2019, p. 141).

Examining aspects of the gradual process of forming the practical work *perch* (2018–2019), Voris articulates links between Authentic Movement and dance-making. The distilled connections are: "witnessing, the attitude of openness, articulating the moving experience (following movement) and attending to the multi-layered nature of movement experience" (2019, p. 64). Emphasising inner witnessing and attentiveness in the making process, Voris extracts these as processual qualities: witnessing, opening, articulating, and layering (2019, p. 64).

The qualities extracted by Voris are coined as processual because they "nurture an attitude of ongoing enquiry" and because they suggest ways "to attend to that ongoing enquiry as it is taking place" (2019, p. 79). The making of *perch* as a prolonged experiment resulted in the formulation of a method:

> A making process begins by *opening to* (or improvising with) 'what is present' in a holistic sense and by incorporating those immediately present materials or conditions into resources for making the work. Phases of moving are followed by phases of *articulation* or *harvesting*. What resonates in the moment of moving (and through the process of harvesting) is what remains and what gets *returned* to. Out of this holistic and cyclical process of returning to movement material more material is generated (through further processes of opening and harvesting). Gradually, movement material begins to settle and with this settling a multi-layered quality of embodiment—or a *deepening* relationship with that material—begins to emerge. (Voris, 2019, p. 136)

A phase in that making process—"the returning to movement", is relevant to this research project. As mentioned above in the presentation of Whitehouse's work, Voris argues that rehearsed and repeated movement does not necessarily lose capacity to reveal inner processes. Regarding the process of returning, she says that there is an "opening in returning", she describes it as "labyrinthine, full of twists and turns, additions and subtractions" and as having

a “generative capacity” (2019, p. 106). According to Voris, “returning to movement material is a creative practice” (2019, p. 148).

In this research project, “returning” as a creative process was present not only as returning to movement, but also as returning to recognised themes as phenomena that emerged through explorations. Through the incorporation of phenomenological intentionality and within the eidetic variation stage of exploring, my collaborators and I were returning and staying for long periods of time with a recognised psychophysical phenomenon, investigating its nature and essence, while maintaining openness towards the different aspects of experience.

Performer, embodied practitioner, transdisciplinary educator, and writer Andrea Olsen (2002, 2007, 2014, 2022) grounds her work in Authentic Movement, experiential anatomy, and Body-Mind Centering, exploring somatic approaches to environmental embodiment, connectedness with the natural world, performance-making, choreography, and pedagogical practices. Outlining some of the benefits of Authentic Movement in performative and educational contexts, she observes that:

> Authentic Movement informs performance. Its practice gives us information about our own personal movement material that helps us decide whether to explore it for ourselves in the studio, extend it into therapeutic work, or bring it to the stage. One of my earliest discoveries with Authentic Movement was how much the body has to tell us. Simply by letting my body move me instead of trying to control it, fascinating movement and useful insights would emerge. I felt the expansiveness of my own vocabulary as a dancer, rather than wondering if I could come up with one more evocative or unusual movement in the studio. When I taught a group of students, the same richness was present in each person’s movement. (Olsen, 2014, pp. 187–188)

Using Authentic Movement in the context of performance-making and choreography, “we are developing a dialogue with our unconscious” (2007, p. 322). Olsen acknowledges that, through practising witnessing, the viewing of dance is altered, and the recognition of authentic states or projections becomes noticeable, supporting the identification of unconscious content in the process, allowing the emergence of a “unique movement language”. Authentic Movement provides images, movements, and “energetic states”, which are an extensive “resource for performance” (2014, p. 188).

Olsen touches on a topic of interest for this study, related to the role of the audience as a witness. She outlines that “the relationship between the mover and the witness parallels that of performer and audience” (2014, p. 187). This presents a perspective on the dynamic between the performer and the audience which elevates the performance to a ritualistic event:

> The multiplicity of the human experience lives in each of us, and the stage provides an opportunity to embody our inner selves by moving as performer, or by empathizing or projecting as witness. This transference of awareness between the audience and the performer enables transformation for both. At first, the collective mind of the audience supports the surrender of the performer to unconscious energies, but soon the audience surrenders its awareness of self and goes with the performer towards transformation as well. (Olsen, 2014, p. 187)

I resonate with this view on the relationship between performer and audience and recognise the potential of a performative act as a trigger of deep transformation. Olsen's approaches to somatics, environmental embodiment, and performance-making strongly resonate with this study, and further contextualisation follows as the research development is presented.

The work of somatic movement therapist, educator, and creator Joan Davis (2001, 2007) is rooted in Authentic Movement, engaging the therapeutic, spiritual, and ritualistic aspects of the discipline within performance-making. Probably performance is not the right term, as Davis herself claims to be "challenged" by finding "a vocabulary" for what she and the participants in her work were doing. She proposes notions such as "offering" or "presentation" and also replaces "stage" with "site" (2001, p. 7). Davis's work is based on Body-Mind Centering and Authentic Movement and is called *Theatre of the Unconscious*. "Offerings" such as *Maya Lila* (2002–2006) and *Through Fluid Eyes* (1999) created in Gorse Hill, Co. Wicklow, Ireland, were presented outdoors, in nature, with the audience traveling to the space and taking the role of witnesses. The creation of an "offering" was preceded by weeks of retreat in the Wicklow Mountains—these were explorations, called "Tribals" (2007, p. 2).

Describing her five-week research project for *Maya Lila*, Davis presents the utilisation of Authentic Movement within nature. She and the participants in her work practised moving and witnessing in the wild, creating art from natural sources—it was "authentic movement in an authentic environment with authentic objects" (2007, p. 2). Davis's work focused on moment-by-moment experience. A question that led her was: "how can I make art out of that which is immediate in this moment and as it arises in my body?" (2007, p. 60). Starting from subjective experience, Theatre of the Unconscious aims at a "creating that comes from some thing or place way beyond the physical or personal self" (2007, pp. 2–3).

There are two things I want to extract from Davis's work which are relevant to this research project. One is related to the role of the audience as a witness (also present in Olsen's work). According to Davis, the audience as witness is essential, and it contributes to the depth the offering can reach. Davis observed that "the depth to which the movement could go" was

related to the different witnesses as audiences (2007, p. 49). I resonate with Davis's attitude towards the audience, who were "encouraged to listen to their own internal experience in relation to what they are seeing" (2001, p. 3). The performative acts that happened throughout the execution of this research project were an invitation for the audience to witness a process in which they could follow their own responses and find meaning within their own experiences.

Another relevant aspect from Davis's work is related to her attitude towards improvisation. According to her, "improvisation is more about playing with the forms as they come up or deciding on a form and then playing with it". For Davis, improvisation is happening on an "ego level" and is "entertaining" and "exciting", as opposed to Authentic Movement which triggers movement "that arises out of emptiness, it is form coming from formlessness" (2007, p. 66).

Through this research, I find ways to bring the qualities of openness and listening that Authentic Movement suggests into a creative practice which intentionally works with specific movements, mental imagery, etc. I argue that "playing with the forms" is not necessarily related to the delivery of entertaining movement material but can be seen as another pathway to connect with the current moment and experience. If the approach to improvisation is not superficial, but continues a practice of movement in depth, it supports and facilitates the one exploring—by examining a specific movement, mental imagery, etc.—in communicating with their experience and with that occurring at the periphery of their awareness, that which is not-yet-recognised.

Researcher and somatic practitioner Emma Meehan (2013, 2015) and dancer and somatic educator Penny Collinson (2005) both worked with Davis. Their individual creative practices contribute to the articulation of Authentic Movement as a source and tool for dance-making and therefore resonates with the current endeavour.

In several of her writings, Meehan examines the work of Davis and her experiences of being involved in it. She also articulates the relationship between, and the integration of, movement and language in her PaR *Speak* (2015). Meehan claims that, following Adler's method of using language to reflect on a movement practice, Authentic Movement, at its core, facilitates the integration of movement and language. It represents processes of "perception and action", using "body-mind and body-language together" (2015, p. 314). Meehan's writing *Somatic Practice and Object Relation*s (2013) is particularly relevant to Phases Two and Three of this research project, in which my collaborators and I used imagination to trigger memories (Phase Two),

and incorporated external stimuli such as scents, images, sounds, and textures (Phase Three). Meehan discusses the autobiographical body in performance, as "negotiated between mover and environment" (2013, p. 37). Bringing the attention to the presence of physical objects in Davis's work (objects which can be natural, part of the environment, or others), Meehan describes her use of and interaction with them as a "stimuli for investigating [her own] relationship with self and space" (2013, p. 43). Drawing on object relations theory, Meehan extracts notions of an emerging autobiographical body, "crossing between" past and present, between patterns of moving and relating to other people, and between performer, audience, and environment (2013, p. 49). In this research project, it was evident how the introduction of an object as an external stimulus triggered an autobiographical body of memories. I suggest that a relation with the autobiographical body could be achieved also via imaginative activity, in which memories and patterns of behaviour are triggered by an imagined object or environment. This is further elaborated in Chapter 5, where work with memory and remembering is examined.

Collinson (2005) examines ways in which dancers can utilise principles of Authentic Movement within creative and performative contexts. In her MPhil thesis, she investigates qualities of awareness and sensitivity based on her work with Davis and her Authentic Movement workshops. Her practice seeks methods to support the dancer in becoming more sensitive as a performer: "'Sensitivity' in this context, is directly related to the phenomenon of presence, inasmuch as the performer's levels of self-awareness are fine tuned in response to their inner and outer experiences" (Collinson, 2005, p. 13).

Collinson writes about the link between improvisation and Authentic Movement, as practices that rely on the performer's "capacity to be open to the unknown, to be able to 'hold' the tension of not knowing what they will dance next" (2005, p. 8). Authentic Movement, as a discipline which supports someone in being more present, in being in conscious relationship with self and others, and in being able to be still, to listen—all lead to a specific kind of presence which supports the dancer while improvising. Throughout her own investigation and her work with Davis and Amanda Williamson, Collinson extracts the topic of attentiveness, which is a result of the growing perceptiveness of the dancer while working with Authentic Movement:

> During the research, in both arenas, the emphasis was placed on ways to become more perceptive as dancers in relation to ourselves, other dancers, the audience, the

> environment, as well as to the material arising. During the research, my questions concerned where our attention is as the movement arises, allowing movement to emerge, and, as performers, how our attention affects our ability to remain fresh and perceptive while reproducing learned material, or responding afresh to improvised movement structures. (Collinson, 2005, p. 45)

The question of where the attention and the focus go when the mover is within an experience and how this experience can be repeated and further worked with, while "remaining fresh and perceptive", is essential for this research project. Furthermore, Collinson extracts outcomes of the engagement with Authentic Movement which prove the benefits that the practice might have in an educational context.

Bacon explores Authentic Movement, Active Imagination, and Eugene Gendlin's (2003) Focusing model as complementary practices (2007, 2012). In collaboration with professor of dance Vida Midgelow (2011, 2014, 2019),[51] they develop the Creative Articulations Process (CAP). CAP is an example of a method which is based on fundamental practices but reveals a new approach. Utilising Authentic Movement principles, Eugene Gendlin's Focusing model, and the model of creative process developed by Focusing trainer Josiah Hincks (2014), Midgelow and Bacon's central concern is "to develop processes that enable us to work with a bodily felt sense of our creative process in order to bring it to consciousness" (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014, p. 14). The design of a CAP session follows different phases or activities, that are illuminated as "facets":

> CAP contains six phases, or better, facets—'Opening', 'Situating', 'Delving', 'Raising', 'Anatomizing' and 'Outwarding'—and each facet contains prompts to foreground lived experience and embodiment as the place from which there can be a revealing and articulating of creative practice. In naming each phase a facet we position this process in alignment to Hincks, and implicitly suggest that each phase might be thought of as illuminating a different face of the same thing, or a different side of the same issue, like a gem with many sides. (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014, p. 12)

The system of six interrelated facets "welcome[s] and embrace[s] the non-rational, the unconscious", aiming at its creative articulation (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014, p. 15). The facets within CAP are aligned with aspects of Hincks's Five Facets Model of Creative Process. His model "intends to support individuals stuck in their creative process", and many transdisciplinary artists "found that [his] model enabled a significant shift in their working practice and outcomes" (Hincks, 2014, p. 49). The facets of his model—"Delving", "Raising",

[51] Citations include Midgelow's individual publications (2011, 2019) and her co-authored publications with Bacon (2011, 2014, 2019).

"Assaying", "Articulating", and "Outwarding"—refer to aspects of the creative experience. Both CAP and Hincks's model unlock dimensions of exploration by naming and holding hints for different stages of creative articulation.

Being a part of two CAP sessions[52] led by Bacon and Midgelow in the beginning of 2024, my views on how important it is to have *a container* with articulated parameters, that holds space for the *unexpected* to occur and to manifest itself in a free manner, were challenged. Both CAP and Hincks's Five Facets Model invite structured creative exploration and articulation and inform this study—particularly in Phase Three, where the Collective Imagining Process was developed. In this way, this work aligns with a lineage of models aimed at facilitating the creative articulation of the implicit.[53]

2.4. Conclusion

The contextualisation provided above presents this research project as informed by perspectives on imagination and embodied consciousness and situates it within a field of Authentic Movement practitioners. Following this, the investigation addresses two main areas.

First, this research augments the recognised links between Authentic Movement (as connected to Active Imagination) and phenomenology. Through the execution of the practice and its elucidation in this thesis, this research extracts a distinctive way of applying the similar aspects of the two methods as synergies within a generalisable PaR methodological foundation. On that foundation, this research articulates approaches to somatic explorations and a model, applicable to diverse dance-making processes. The synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology as a somatic approach also reveal their potential application in other artistic fields, examined in this research through work with drawing and painting.

Secondly, this research project, executed in collaboration with professional dancers and dancers-in-training, addresses the creative aspects of Authentic Movement and their

[52] See: https://www.choreographiclab.co.uk/cap-at-independent-dance/

[53] I also refer to two more practitioners whose works do not directly inform this research but who have engaged with Authentic Movement. Artist, researcher, and practitioner Eila Goldhahn (2015) critically analyses the term *authentic* and suggests the alternative *MoverWitness* (or *Mover and Witness*), now widely used by practitioners, applying it in both somatic and artistic processes. Lecturer and somatic movement practitioner Christina Kapadocha (2017) develops the Somatic Acting Process, using principles of Authentic Movement and Body-Mind Centering to articulate a teaching and facilitation practice for actors, exemplifying the practice's potential as an educational tool.

contribution to the education of dancers. This study does not investigate educational approaches and acknowledges that Authentic Movement cannot be directly adopted in educational processes. However, aspects of this research proved beneficial for the dancers-in-training involved. By presenting and following the adoption of Authentic Movement (as Active Imagination) and its commonalities with established phenomenological approaches, this study suggests elements that may be transferable to the higher education of dancers. Furthermore, this research project identifies a distinctive curve of creative applications of Authentic Movement, suggesting a structured pattern that may serve as the groundwork for a future teaching case study.

Within the next chapter, the exact ways in which the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology were applied as a foundational methodological approach within this PaR are examined.

3. METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

3.1. Introduction

The following chapter is dedicated to the methodological design of this research. It expounds on the implementation and the intersection of Authentic Movement and phenomenological methodology within this creative PaR. This chapter also addresses the approaches employed in data collection and the implementation of aspects of IPA. With the presentation of the dancers who participated in the different phases of this practice, the collaborative aspect of this investigation is noted along with clarifications on the ethical considerations. As this is a PaR that follows an open and flexible approach, the alterations to the foundational methodological design that took place during the course of the research development are addressed.

3.2. Purpose and Design of the Methodology

In summary, through this research project I developed a creative dance-making PaR, proposing series of practical solo and collaborative somatic movement explorations. Those exploring (i.e. the dancers engaged and myself) were invited to open to personal experiences and to articulate them through movement. With a focus on recognising unconscious processes and on opening towards the periphery of awareness, those exploring attended to emerging sedimented historicity and began to recognise processes that inform their experience in tacit ways. As the investigation progressed, personal experiences were systematically and intentionally explored. This exploration, through reflection and careful observation, involved the extraction and articulation of specific themes, patterns, and topics that came from the practice. These extracted themes, patterns, and topics, as essences, could be imaginative or kinaesthetic and corporeal in nature. These essences, recognised as sources of artistic inspiration, became the foundation for dance-making, drawing, painting, and film making.

This research examined specific approaches to experience and movement explorations—articulated and conceptualised in this thesis as *softening awareness* and *staying between and across* different aspects of experience—and, while exploring how personal experiences can be accessed and utilised within artistic creation, culminated in the development of the Collective Imagining Process.

As a PaR in the field of the arts, this investigation is characterised by a flexible methodological approach applicable to a perpetually emerging practice. The methodological principles employed relate to the nature of the processual practice itself. As Midgelow states, choreographic PaR "involves thinking through doing, unpacking assumptions about the practice through the practice, such that the researcher enters into a dialogue with her emerging materials and the creative processes develop through internally derived, often non-linear, logics" (2019, p. 120).[54] Throughout the progression of this research, I "enter[ed] into a dialogue" and followed the amalgamation of diverse personal experiences. Noting that this research happened in a synergetic manner, the PaR methodology that I adopted includes trust in letting the collaborative process reveal its own way forward while retaining the cyclical, practical, and analytical sides of investigation. A synopsis of the PaR methodology used reveals its complex, adaptable, and interdisciplinary character: the methodology was embedded within, yet also guided by, the development of the investigation, aligned with the aims and progression of the research.

The purpose of the methodological framework adopted is to facilitate the encounter with, observation, and examination of personal experiences through the subjective perspectives of those engaging in the practice. Considering these intentions, principles from distinct theoretical and practical frameworks were recognised and employed. Despite the differences between the somatic movement practice of Authentic Movement (as connected with Active Imagination and Jungian Analytical Psychology) and phenomenology, these frameworks engage with a shared issue: the exploration and analysis of human experience. Together, these approaches shaped the methodological foundation of this study and their synergies were applied in relation to the attitude, execution, reflection, analysis, and documentation of this research.

Authentic Movement, employed as a key method in conducting this PaR project, follows the lineage of the Authentic Movement practitioners presented in the previous chapter. By drawing on aspects of these practitioners' approaches, this research adopts and resonates with the following: principles of tracking and reflecting on experience (Adler, Stromsted, and Hartley); engagement in solo and mover-witness practices, while recognising inner witnessing as fundamental aspect of Authentic Movement (Adler); engagement in movement explorations with pre-considered starting points (Adler and Stromsted); perspectives on Authentic

[54] In the context of choreographic PaR, Midgelow situates perspectives on materiality "beyond their visual arts emphasis (which retain the place of materials as external to, and as other than, the bodily)" and draws them closer by "refiguring embodiment and materiality alike" (2019, p. 121).

Movement as Active Imagination in movement (Chodorow, Stromsted, and Bacon); perspectives on Authentic Movement as resembling phenomenological methodologies (Sager); and its application within creative endeavours (Olsen, Voris, Bacon, Meehan, and Davis).

Throughout the following chapters, *Authentic Movement* is consistently used as an umbrella term referring to a broader lineage of knowledge. When the term *Discipline of Authentic Movement* is used, it refers to the adoption of the ground form of the practice, as designed by Adler. *Authentic Movement with intention* is also used, which, in the context of this study, represents a practice-based term and refers to a particular application of Authentic Movement in which a pre-considered psychophysical phenomenon is utilised as the starting point of the practice, resonating with Adler's approaches in her early practice, Stromsted's use of starting points, and phenomenological intentionality.

Phenomenology, first introduced by Husserl in the beginning of the last century, suggests a methodology of describing a phenomenon through the examination of the subjective consciousness and how it relates to, experiences, and makes sense of that phenomenon. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2015), a dancer, choreographer, and philosopher, articulates that phenomenology has to do with "descriptions of man and the world as man lives in-the-midst-of-the world, as he experiences himself and the world, keenly and acutely, before any kind of reflection whatsoever takes place", and she continues "instead of reflecting upon experience as the objective relationship of man to the world, the phenomenologist seeks the heart of the experience itself: the immediate and direct consciousness of man in the face of the world" (2015, p. 7).

Drawing on both Authentic Movement and Husserl's transcendental phenomenological methodologies, this research engages in a careful examination of experiences. Below, I discuss the stages of the transcendental phenomenological approach and their similarities with principles of Active Imagination and Authentic Movement.

3.2.1. Authentic Movement and Phenomenology as a Methodological Foundation

In the previous chapter it was indicated that the main stages of the phenomenological process are (in chronological order): the epoché, the phenomenological reduction, the eidetic variation, and intersubjective corroboration (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 31). I will introduce these stages one by one, indicating commonalities with the approaches in Authentic Movement and Active Imagination.

- The Epoché and the Inner Witness

The epoché is characterised by a relation to a phenomenon through a perspective which requires one "to suspend or neutralize a certain dogmatic attitude towards reality, thereby allowing [someone] to focus more narrowly and directly on reality just as it is given—how it makes its appearance [to that someone] in experience" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 25). In a sense, epoché represents a change of attitude towards reality, a shift in the normal way someone looks at things, a way deeply conditioned by pseudo-objective points of views and opinions. This approach overlaps with the attitude of engaging with Active Imagination in its first step—"letting the unconscious come up" (Chodorow, 1997, p. 10).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sager articulates the similarities between the epoché and the manner of witnessing in Authentic Movement (2015, p. 370). Both the mover and the witness, as participants in the dyad ground form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement, are challenged with being immersed within their experiences, witnessing, following, and tracking whatever is occurring.

The process of witnessing (outer or inner) is often "flooded with judgments, projections, and interpretations" (Adler, 2002, p. 66). The development of witness consciousness through practising Authentic Movement is related to the ability to contain, to know, and to not act upon dogmatic attitudes, judgments, pre-conceptions, etc. Resembling the phenomenological epoché, within the practice of Authentic Movement both the mover and the witness approach their experiences with an openness to the reality of those experiences as given, seeking to suspend any projections or judgements that would disrupt or confuse the process.

The epoché and the process of being in and tracking an experience in Authentic Movement (as inner and outer witnessing), as they are employed in this PaR, represent an invitation to those

exploring to open up to their current experiences and to whatever is emerging in them, to embrace those experiences, and to follow and track them without judgments, demands, and expectations.

- Phenomenological Reduction and Reflections in Authentic Movement

In the phenomenological reduction, as Moustakas states, "each experience is considered in its singularity, in and for itself". A phenomenon is "perceived and described in its totality, in a fresh and open way [and a] complete description is given of its essential constituents, variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colours, and shapes". The phenomenological reduction, through "textural description of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon, the constituents that comprise the experience in consciousness" leads back to the very meaning and essence of what has been experienced (1994, p. 34).

In the dyad, ground form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement, each movement session is followed by a verbal reflection between the mover and the witness. This process of reflecting, of revisiting the experience, is essential as it brings to consciousness what the mover has been through. Adler advises both mover and witness to use the present tense, and thus to "speak experience rather than speaking about it" (Adler, 2002, p. 13). The reflection on the movement practice, which happens with the mover speaking first, aims at marking the experience as it happened, extracting details and important aspects of it.

Resembling phenomenological reduction, in this research the verbal elucidation of an experience during Authentic Movement practice is done with awareness of what the one speaking is addressing—if they are talking about movements, sensations, feelings, or visual imagery. In IBMT (following Hartley's approach),[55] the tracking and reflection on experience engages different channels—movements, sensations, feelings, and images. Following these approaches to support higher awareness, the mover, as the one who speaks first, begins with the physical movements they can recall.

Elucidating their movements with no interpretation but staying with clarity and the factuality of how they happened, the mover articulates a structural map "which grounds all that the mover and witness share", as the movements of the mover were visible for the witness (Adler, 2002, p. 17). This map is an amalgamation of the stages of the mover's experience, which Adler names

[55] See Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. Authentic Movement as a Therapeutic Practice, p. 48.

pools. As the mover continues to talk about the different aspects of their experience, including what they have felt, thought, imagined, or sensed, they examine the different pools, extracting important characteristics of that experience. Afterwards, if the witness also decides to share their experience, they might contribute by bringing awareness of a specific movement or pool that the mover did not mention or does not recall happening.

In this research, phenomenological reduction takes place in the way in which the one exploring is invited to revisit their somatic movement exploration and to look at it in detail, extracting essences in the form of verbal articulation, trying to stay as close as possible to the *factuality* of what happened and being aware of what aspects of their experience they are talking about. In this way, an Authentic Movement exploration, followed by careful reflection from both mover and witness, gives material which a mover could utilise in the execution of a second movement exploration, delving deeper into more concrete parameters, working with the essences extracted.

- Eidetic Variation, Authentic Movement, and Active Imagination

The eidetic variation process uses imagination "to strip away the unessential properties of things" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 30). Through imaginative activity, aspects of the phenomenon are changed, added, or removed, testing "the core set of properties that resist change." In this way, eidetic variation becomes a pathway to "draw out the essential and invariant characteristics of the things that we experience" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 30).

In the previous chapter, the links between eidetic variation and aspects of Active Imagination have been addressed. Here, I would like to bring attention to an aspect of Adler's early work which I outlined in the preceding chapter. Adler, working with her clients in a therapeutic context, advised them to start experimenting with focusing on a repetitive physical behaviour, in order to get to know it better (Adler, 1999a, p. 123). They were, in a way, invited to play with it—to make it bigger or smaller, to communicate with it, and to confront it. The similarities with eidetic variation here are obvious, as both aim at dissecting and extracting essentials. I want to stress that for this comparison I am using an example of Adler's work which precedes her articulation of Authentic Movement as a discipline. In this example, Authentic Movement is executed with an intention to stay longer with a specific pattern of physical behaviour, in order to understand it better.

In this research, eidetic variation represents the incorporation of something that has been found as a theme or a pattern (type of movement, memory, sensation, image, or emotional state) into playful, embodied, and imaginative explorations of it. These explorations are perceived as a further and more focused way of executing Authentic Movement, in which the one exploring is invited to work with a specific aspect of that recognised as emerging in their experiences. The one exploring relates to the already-recognised in different ways: seeing how it changes and what stays the same; exploring what it triggers in the current moment and how; looking for and testing its essential qualities; and, most importantly, maintaining openness and alertness to that which is not-yet-recognised, that which enters experience in the current moment.

- Intersubjective Corroboration and Processual Practice in Authentic Movement

Intersubjective corroboration is concerned with "replication and the degree to which the discovered structures are universal or at least shareable" (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012, p. 31). In the context of a processual Authentic Movement practice, this stage represents an analytical aspect in which the revealed themes or essences are situated in a wider context—the timeline of the processual practice itself or the way those themes relate to archetypal patterns—symbolic manifestations in art, literature, myth, and everyday experiences.

The stages presented above elucidate the foundational methodological approach of this investigation. All of them find their place within the three phases of the research development. Following the above, I want to accentuate the compatibility between Authentic Movement and phenomenology and thus elevate the synergies between them as a valid and valuable methodology for a PaR. Utilising them as a foundation, I articulate creative approaches and a model based on the principles mentioned above. Below, I outline the application of the foundational methodological approach throughout the development of this research.

3.2.2. Methodological Development

This investigation was realised through three interconnected yet distinct phases, each suggesting different ways of triggering, recognising, and creatively utilising personal experiences.

Phase One focused on work with the current psychophysical condition of the one exploring. In this phase, my collaborators and I were engaging with the ground, dyad form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement (within a one-to-one mover-witness dynamic), as sharing similar features with all the phenomenological stages mentioned above. Somatic movement explorations were executed by employing principles of witnessing, inner witnessing, and epoché. Explorations were followed by a short time for writing or drawing and a verbal reflection, in which principles of phenomenological reduction and Authentic Movement reflective processes were adopted. This was followed by a second movement exploration, in which the mover focused on an extracted theme or pattern from the reflections on the previous exploration. Borrowing a phenomenological perspective on intentionality, these explorations (named Authentic Movement with intention) resembled aspects of the early work of Adler and Stromsted's use of starting points. Mirroring eidetic variation, the work with extracted themes or patterns was applied in creative tasks, which in this thesis are distilled as *exploring movement* and *utilising moments and pools from explorations*. All of these processes were followed by my general analysis of a session as situated within the processual investigation, utilising the gathered information within the sessions that followed. My role as the leader of the research was not only to observe and analyse, but also to participate as a mover. My collaborators and I were constantly changing roles as movers and witnesses.

Phase Two proposed triggering unconscious processes through intentional work with imagination, memories, and dreams. The model of working followed the pattern used in Phase One. Two key approaches to movement explorations were established, which are distilled and conceptualised in this thesis as *staying between and across* and *softening awareness*. These refer to a mode of exploration in which the one exploring gently 'softens' their awareness, allowing information occurring at the periphery of their awareness to be recognised and integrated, while simultaneously maintaining an inner focus that stays across and oscillates between the diverse aspects of experience, without identifying with any of them for a prolonged period of time. My role and the role of my collaborators was the same as in Phase One,

transitioning from mover to witness and vice versa. Phase Two culminated in the creation of the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023), the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023), and several paintings and drawings.

Phase Three evolved into the Collective Imagining Process—a model based on the foundational methodological framework of this research. The model, encompassing several phases of activities, was developed to integrate explorative and generative performance-making processes and followed systematic work with personal experiences and responsiveness to external stimuli (scents, images, sounds, texts, and textures). In this phase, my role shifted—I was facilitating and witnessing the processes of my collaborators, taking the role of a choreographer-director. The dancers, as those exploring, were invited to engage with the process in a manner that followed the principles of *softening awareness* and *staying between and across*, although these concepts had not yet been explicitly articulated. In Phase Three we did not follow the one-to-one mover-witness dynamic. Here, the dancers were following designated phases of activities, relying on their own inner-witnessing and reflections through writing. The phases were:

1. Arriving: A short meditation aiming to invite the dancers to open towards not-yet-recognised processes and to enter a state that mirrors epoché.
2. Recognising: Following an approach mirroring epoché, external stimuli (images, scents, sounds, and textures) were introduced to the dancers, giving them time to relate to them and to choose with which one to stay for the next phases of somatic exploration.
3. Interacting: In this phase the dancers were invited to delve into a somatic movement exploration, which was triggered by or was a communication with what the external stimuli was awakening within them. Following epoché and the principles of Authentic Movement and inner witnessing, the dancers opened towards and tracked their personal experiences with no judgment and with awareness of what was emerging in their experience. This phase was followed by reflection, mirroring the phenomenological reduction—the dancers were invited to put on paper their experience, extracting significant moments and placing them in separate sections (movements, memories, imagination, sensations, etc.).
4. Exploring Movement: This phase mirrored eidetic variation and was an invitation for Active Imagination in movement. The dancers chose themes, as

essences, from their reflections and further examined them through an intentional and playful somatic movement exploration. However, openness towards the new emerging in experiences was encouraged. This phase was also followed by written reflection, done by the dancers individually.

5. Extracting: This phase was a creative challenge in which the dancers could decide how to implement their experience and everything that they had discovered in a short, repeatable movement phrase or a structured movement score.
6. Collective Dreaming: The final phase was an invitation for a collective somatic exploration, based on the individual experiences of the dancers, as situated in a relational dynamic.

The evolution of the foundational methodological design was applied to the devising of the physical performance *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024). More information on how the foundational methodology altered follows in the presentation of the research development in the next chapters. In articulating the methodological foundation above, I augment the recognised links between Authentic Movement, Active Imagination, and phenomenology, and introduce a perspective on their synergies as a creative methodology within PaR.

3.2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The development of this research project, through all of its phases, was accompanied by careful and thorough documentation as an integral part of the process. Solo and collaborative practical sessions were video and audio recorded. The audio recordings of conversations, interviews, and reflections were then transcribed and stored on an external hard drive and cloud storage. The data was used to inform the perpetual development of this research, to clarify the next phases of it, and to refine the articulation of essences that my collaborators and I were utilising in dance-making.

During the progression of this investigation, the manner of data collection altered. Within Phases One and Two, the studio movement explorations were accompanied by verbal reflections on the personal experiences (also seen as interviews), which happened within the

explorative sessions themselves. Phase Three was accompanied by sheets of paper given to those exploring, which they used to write down reflections on their experiences, following designated categories. Throughout the investigation, several questionnaire forms[56] were sent to my collaborators, following each phase. These forms had a significant role in evaluating the effects of the practice and influenced the course of this research's development.

Tracking in Authentic Movement is a process of "naming", "mapping", or "scoring" personal experience. It supports the individual in becoming aware of their "experiencing body as well as [their] surroundings and the implication of all [they] are", much "like an anthropologist learning to be self-reflexive" (Bacon, 2012, p. 119). The process of tracking was evident in this research both in the individual tracking of personal experiences (during engagement in Authentic Movement practice) and in the overall tracking of generated data over time.

Adopting a versatile IPA, as a "research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences", my approach to the data generated was careful, systematic, and intuitive (Smith et al., 2009, p. 1). Hermeneutics is an essential aspect of IPA that, in this research, goes beyond its philosophical understanding as "interpretation of an increasingly wider range of texts"—the observed and analysed materials in this study were not only transcribed conversations or reflections, but also videos, questionnaire forms, and pieces of generated art (Smith et al., 2009, p. 21). I was constantly revisiting the diverse material generated, looking at it through the lens of what professors of psychology Jonathan Smith, Paul Flowers, and Michael Larkin (2009) describe as "sense-making", extracting emerging themes and motifs that informed the development and analysis of this investigation.

[56] Some of the data collected through the questionnaire forms is included in the main body of the thesis. The full forms can be found in Appendices E, p. 228; F, p. 234; and G, p. 244.

3.2.4. Ethical Considerations

This research has been granted ethical approval and is in line with Trinity Laban's ethical guidelines.[57]

The collaborative nature of this project fostered an environment of trust, accountability, and mutual respect between those involved. The participants, who are collaborators in this research, made a voluntary decision to take part in the exploration after being presented with its inquiries and aims. All collaborators have signed an information sheet and consent form.[58] The audio and video recording of the explorative sessions and the documentation was done with the full consent of the collaborators. Everything included in this thesis has been discussed with them beforehand and follows from their consent.

3.3. Collaboration

Conducting this research, my approach was guided by a motivation to facilitate explorations and generate artistic work in a collaborative context. My role as director and author of this study implied a hierarchical structure within the collaborative dynamic. Nonetheless, as this research investigates personal topics and invites vulnerability, I adopted a democratic approach, valuing my collaborators as a collective of distinct identities who, through their presence and contributions, shaped the endeavours presented in this thesis. As my collaborators and I engaged in diverse explorative and devising performance-making processes, the collaborative context evolved through different stages, which are discussed in the following chapters.

Below, I present my collaborators and the research phases in which they participated.

Throughout Phases One and Two, I collaborated with dancers-in-training. At the time of our work, they were following the BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance programme at Trinity Laban, London. I had the opportunity to observe some of the choreography classes on the programme led by choreographer and academic Naomi Lefebvre Sell (2013, 2016). I invited Weronika Orzelek and Moa Ryberg to participate in Phase One, and later I invited Lucie Pribyl to take

[57] Further information at: https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/research-and-knowledge-exchange/research-ethics/
[58] See Appendix A, p. 217.

part in Phase Two. Orzelek and Pribyl participated in creating the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023).[59]

Orzelek, a Polish dancer based in the UK, is a yoga teacher and a performer with a background in theatre, somatic movement practices, and contemporary dance. After her BA, she graduated from the MA Dance: Performance programme at the London Contemporary Dance School. She continuously participated in my research studio practice throughout Phases One and Two.[60]

Ryberg is a contemporary dancer and choreographer from Sweden. Currently based in the UK, Ryberg is developing her own work under her company Ryberg Dansteater. Ryberg's work focuses on German expressionism, audience participation, and site-specificity. She participated in Phase One and the first half of Phase Two.[61]

Pribyl is a UK-born and based dancer. She started dancing at the age of three, first studying ballet techniques and later contemporary dance, which became an immense interest of hers. Pribyl is now practising as a choreographer, dancer, and teacher, interested in exploring the vast possibilities of movement. She took part in the second half of Phase Two.[62]

During Phase Three, I collaborated with three professional dancers: Yun Cheng, Diana Snizhko, and Chi-Hsuan Lin. They each have an MA in Expanded Dance Practice from the London Contemporary Dance School. I invited them to take part in the investigation after their participation in some of the workshops I organised at the commencing stages of Phase Three. As professional dancers, they participated in creating and performing *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024).

Cheng is a dancer and choreographer from Taiwan, currently based in the UK. Cheng has worked as a dancer and choreographer internationally and has an interest in somatically informed movement practices. Her doctoral research engages with the Feldenkrais Method and the way it affects choreographic practices.[63]

Lin is a dance and theatre performer and choreographer from Taiwan who is currently exploring her creative path. Formerly a professional dancer with Dance Forum Taipei, she has

[59] The presentation of my collaborators has been agreed with them in advance and is based on their own words in our personal communication.
[60] Further information at: https://www.instagram.com/orzelekweronika/
[61] Further information at: https://www.instagram.com/moaryberglondonedition/; https://rybergdansteater.com/
[62] Further information at: https://www.instagram.com/luciepribyldance/
[63] Further information at: https://www.instagram.com/yunmoving/

collaborated with choreographers from Taiwan, Europe, and Asia. Her artistic practice spans contemporary dance, improvisation, somatic exploration, and an ongoing commitment to self-exploration.[64]

Snizhko is a Ukrainian dance performer and choreographer, currently based in the UK. With a background in physical theatre and contemporary dance, Snizhko is interested in the performative and therapeutic aspects of movement.[65]

Throughout my PaR, I also collaborated with three transdisciplinary artists: Lyubomir Ikonomov, Andras Viszmeg, and Kohei Nakatsu. Their contributions were invaluable in shaping the final artistic outcomes of this research.

Ikonomov is a Bulgarian visual artist and sound designer based in Bulgaria. He is a graduate of the National Academy of Arts, Sofia. Ikonomov explores and creates with multiple means of expression, including audio-visual, traditional, and digital art. He sees art as self-revelation, and a journey between possible worlds. Ikonomov's soundscapes are used in the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023).[66]

Viszmeg is a photographer and videographer, currently based in the UK. Originally from the Hungarian countryside, his personality and visual aesthetic are heavily influenced by nature and simplicity. Viszmeg filmed the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023) and the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023).[67]

Nakatsu is a dancer, movement researcher, and media artist from Japan. He graduated from the MFA Creative Practice programme at Trinity Laban, where he used a phenomenological approach to research the expansion of the body schema through interactive systems and improvisation. He is currently based in Madrid and is a core member of the Tejido Conectivo Dance Company. His work integrates somatic principles with technology and embodied expression. His interests influence his media practice, which spans video, installation, and music production. Nakatsu participated in Phase Three by providing and adapting his music for the soundscape of the physical performance *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions*

[64] Further information at: https://www.instagram.com/lchihsuan/
[65] Further information at: https://www.instagram.com/diana.snizhko/
[66] Further information at: https://youtube.com/@LyubomirIko?si=E1t-CkPxfChcnbt2; https://www.behance.net/Lyubomir_Iko
[67] Further information at: www.andras-viszmeg.com; https://www.instagram.com/andy.vis/

(2024).[68]

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter summarises the essential characteristics of the methodological design of this PaR. The foundational approach described, as a utilisation of the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology within creative research, represents an augmentation of the recognised similarities between those methodologies.

In the next chapters, I present the chronological development of this research project. The text is an amalgamation of my critical analysis and a careful elucidation of the practice. Diverse artistic works generated by my collaborators and myself, together with video materials of our explorations and performances, accompany the proceeding chapters. As an investigation done in a synergetic manner, the presentation of any texts or transcriptions associated with my collaborators are noted and credited.[69]

[68] Further information at: www.k-h-n-k.com; https://on.soundcloud.com/BR0cR5UOfjlIrYWINg; https://on.soundcloud.com/U9zc3aoHukxTBLjdAL; https://www.instagram.com/kohei_nkkh/; https://www.instagram.com/_nkkh_/

[69] All citations of transcribed audio files (reflections or interviews), indicated in footnotes, follow the format: transcript file name (date of recording), part number, line number(s), and page number(s). Due to the presence of sensitive personal information, full transcripts are not included in this thesis (except for one example presented in Chapter 5).

4. PHASE ONE: AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT

4.1. Introduction

The following chapter reflects on the adoption and incorporation of Authentic Movement into the first block of explorative sessions, as part of the one-to-one collaborative practice with Orzelek and Ryberg that took place during January and February 2022. The chapter articulates fundamental aspects of the work that emerged through exploration. It begins with an explanation of how the collaborative part of the research was conducted and reflected on, discussing inner witnessing as a major aspect of Authentic Movement and of the current study. This chapter reflects on how intention, with reference to phenomenological intentionality, was utilised in the movement explorations, followed by the presentation of two creative tasks: exploring movement and extracting and utilising moments and pools from sessions. Additionally, the reader will find a brief summary of significant moments from the first sessions with Orzelek and Ryberg. Following this, a link to accompanying video material of the studio practice is included. The chapter concludes with reflections on findings from Phase One.

4.2. Practising Authentic Movement

Authentic Movement suggests delving into the ocean of unpredictable sensations, emotions, movements, and thoughts. It invites a mover to become a part of the established mover-witness dynamic. The practice begins with the mover entering the space and making eye contact with the witness, the mover then closes their eyes and delves into the ocean of their experience. They swim freely while observing and following whatever emerges, with no expectations or judgements. Authentic Movement proposes a state of experiencing in which the mover is moved from within without influencing the process. They simply observe and are in it. They are the movement itself; they are the process.

Adopting Authentic Movement principles, in Phase One I conducted five individual one-to-one sessions with Ryberg and six with Orzelek, each session lasting approximately 2 hours. My solo practice was conducted in a variety of settings (studios, outside in nature, and at home),

following a solo engagement with Authentic Movement.[70] Video and audio was recorded in all the collaborative sessions. My solo practice followed this principle of documentation, although some sessions were not recorded due to unforeseen circumstances.[71]

The first meeting with each of my collaborators was dedicated to me introducing the practice of Authentic Movement as Active Imagination and the way it would be executed within the parameters of my research. I introduced the concepts of the mover, the witness, and the inner witness, and emphasised that we were gathering to do artistic explorations through movement, with no intention of crafting a finalised performance. Following that processual and explorative approach, I asked Orzelek and Ryberg to be responsive to their dreams and to start noting them by writing or voice recording immediately after they woke up. In the initial practical session, we experienced both moving and witnessing by swapping roles. As our meetings progressed, my role was mainly that of a witness, but occasionally I took on the role of a mover, inviting my collaborators to witness. Phase One of this research was situated under the arch of the development of the inner witness.

4.2.1. Developing the Inner Witness

The wide therapeutic and artistic applications of Authentic Movement [72] are grounded in the cultivation of non-judgmental awareness that is able to note and integrate material emerging in experience. This state of awareness is related to the development of the inner witness. As Bacon articulates:

> The 'inner witness' might be thought of as an increase in consciousness or a self-reflexive state. It is the ability to be present to oneself, to watch as well as do, to not only be merged or 'in' the material that arises but also to be 'with' the movement that we are doing. In this way we are simultaneously both subject and object to ourselves. (Bacon, 2015, p. 210)

Adler, who introduced the notion of the inner witness, looks at Authentic Movement as a mystical practice and articulates that its core is "grounded in the relationship between a mover and a witness" (2015, p. 217). According to her, an individual begins as a mover in the

[70] A movement exploration from my solo practice is included in Appendix C, p. 220.
[71] Sometimes I executed my solo practice in places outside the university. As in these situations my practice was not planned, it was not video recorded.
[72] See Chapter 2, Section 2.3. Authentic Movement, p. 38.

presence of an outer witness and gradually discovers "journeys through hidden recesses in personal time, personal space, becoming a more conscious witness of herself and then of others" (2015, p. 218). Authentic Movement suggests an expansion of awareness that the mover and the witness will get from the practice. A mover is gradually learning to "distinguish between merging with her movement, being in a dialogic relationship to it, and, in moments of grace, knowing a wholeness, feeling no separation between her moving self and her inner witness" (2002, p. 6). As mentioned in Chapter 2, according to Adler, it is the "development of the inner witness that creates the evolution of the mover's consciousness" itself (2002, p. 6).

The application of Authentic Movement in Phase One of the practical explorations suggested an intentional approach to states of inner witnessing, as opposed to habitual, judgmental states of mind. Resembling phenomenological epoché, these states supported the ability of the one exploring to track and reflect on their experiences, while expanding their awareness and consciously observing the processes that were revealed.

4.2.2. Reflecting on Movement Explorations

Our initial sessions focused on exploring the mover's current psychophysical condition, approaching Authentic Movement without a specific intention, which is, as Bacon states, "an intention in and of itself" (Bacon, 2015, p. 209). Some of our sessions began with a short meditation guided by me. Each movement practice was continued in drawing or writing (depending on the needs and desires of the mover), followed by a specific way of reflecting on the exploration.

Adler points out that Authentic Movement is "a call toward entering emptiness". She compares the practice with different ancient and contemporary traditions and rituals, which propose descriptions of mystical experiences, similar to an Authentic Movement session:

> With eyes closed and with focus inward, there is an intention toward staying present, toward practising the art of concentration. There is practice toward the rigor of impeccability in tracking inner experience. There is a longing for a language that could describe direct experience, that which is indescribable. (Adler, 2002, p. XIX)

Through the reflective processes, my collaborators and I were naming experiences. This articulation through language comes with a risk: one may fall into the trap of projections and slowly depart from the essence of direct experience. In order to reduce this risk, we followed a

few guiding principles in tracking and naming our experiences, drawn from the Authentic Movement lineage, which also resemble stages of phenomenological methodology: the epoché and the phenomenological reduction.

In the ground form of Authentic Movement, after an explorative session the mover speaks first, followed by the witness, both using present tense. This framework was adopted in this research. As Adler states, after moving, the mover is invited:

> toward a conscious transition from moving to speaking with her witness. Sitting with her witness, she learns to speak her movement, in present tense, rather than speaking about it. She learns to choose what to speak and what to contain. The witness listens and responds by choosing what to speak of her inner experience while witnessing and what to contain. In this way language bridges experience from body to consciousness. For both mover and witness, the intention toward the practice of thoughtful, impeccable speech, is central to the development of the discipline, to the development of consciousness. (Adler, 2015, p. 221)

In this practice, the mover was invited to reflect on and recall the *movements* that they did, staying with the *factuality* of what their body was doing, *reducing interpretations* of how their movements might have looked and reducing any associations that certain body structures might evoke—thus mirroring the phenomenological reduction as a reflection on an experience. The one moving was challenged to recall what they did, where in the studio, and in which part of the session (timewise) they did it. In this way, by naming only the physical movement, the mover articulated a map of their experience, which contained different phrases or "pools of movement" (Adler, 2002, p. 17).

Secondly, the witness spoke. In the ground form of the Discipline of Authentic Movement, the witness represents "a compassionate model for the aspect of the mover that is becoming conscious of her own experience" (Adler, 2002, p. 6). They observe the mover in space without being aware of what exactly is happening psychologically inside the mover—a witness can only be aware of their own experience. Being a witness is a state of following the movements and physical behaviour of the mover while being aware of one's own experience as a witness. It is the intention of the witness to be aware of all that is happening within them as they witness (Adler, 2002, p. 10). Respectively, the witness must also be aware of their own projections, and in the process of reflection after the session, they should intend to speak only about the facts of what they have observed. By doing this, they assist the mover in piecing together their experience. A witness may also name aspects of their own experience, but in doing so they should clearly articulate that these were aspects of their own process. Drawing on Stromsted's

re-call approach, the witness, as a listener, may also offer back some of the words or phrases spoken by the mover, followed by a sharing of "bodily felt sensations or feelings that were awakened in [them] as [they] listened" (Stromsted, 2025, p. 168).

As a witness, I gave feedback to Orzelek and Ryberg about what I had seen them doing during movement sessions. Often, when I named a movement or a movement pool, they remembered it and recalled what they were experiencing at that moment. My role as a witness acted like a trigger for these moments that had not been registered. These moments represented things that either happened unconsciously or were immediately forgotten.

After the first cycle of reflection finished, the mover was invited to recall and name their psychological experiences in terms of thoughts and imaginative processes.

Drawing on Hartley's channels approach[73] (as also taught in the IBMT), tracking the different channels of perception and then speaking from these channels in present tense aimed to bring awareness in terms of knowing what is being named, and also knowing whether it is being named from the perspective of a corporeal experience, movement, sensation, emotion, image, or associative thinking. In this research, the mover first reflected on their experience by naming physical behaviour (movements, kinaesthetic awareness, and sensations), thereby articulating a map of movement pools, followed by psychological processing (imagination, associative thinking, and ideas).

Our reflective process, which followed the description of different aspects of experience, did not aim to divide experience, but rather to raise awareness of its layers and to expand the ability to embrace these layers with honesty and without projections. In her approach, Sager highlights that witnessing consists of four modes of awareness: physical, sensation, emotion, and thought (2008, p. 17). She explains that:

> These four modes of awareness appear to be the principal means whereby subjective experience can be known, although in the actual moment of experience, awareness is generally integrated in a seamless fashion. In any given moment, an individual may be aware of one or more of these four modes or may be unaware of any of them. The fact that it is possible to be aware of each mode separately, through the process of attention, already demonstrates a capacity to self-witness. (Sager, 2008, p. 17)

As an Authentic Movement practice always evokes movements, sensations, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and images, the amalgamation of the data manifested in a session was enormous. I

[73] See Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. Authentic Movement as a Therapeutic Practice, p. 48.

recognised that in the beginning it was challenging for all three of us first to track and remember what had happened and secondly to articulate it without interpretations, using the present tense. I observed that when the mover managed to articulate the experience exactly, they shared that their whole exploration was under the intention of following and tracking what they were doing. In this way, they didn't trust a bodily impulse or a mental image that could lead and move them. Respectively, it appeared to be of an absolute importance for us to find a balance between observation and, at the same time, trust in the process itself, allowing it to lead us forward.

4.2.3. Preparatory Sheets

Through the careful tracking of everything that manifested—movements, sensations, thoughts, images, dreams, memories, etc.—we also aimed to continue each subsequent session with information, experiences, and awareness from the previous one. Our sessions always started with Orzelek and Ryberg recalling what had happened in the previous meetings, how and if it had affected them, and what stayed with them as present at that current moment. In order to support that process, I carefully prepared for every session by creating a sheet of paper that contained extracts from the transcribed audio file[74] of our reflections from the preceding session, indicating key manifestations as essences. In this way we managed to continue from the point where we had concluded the preceding session, following the practice itself and slowly narrowing the focus of the work, engaging with specific psychophysical phenomena.

Below is an example of a preparatory sheet reflecting on the session with Orzelek on 23.01.22, prepared for the following session on 26.01.22.[75]

[74] An example of the final version of the transcribed audio files can be seen in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1. Remembering, pp. 102–104.
[75] Dates throughout this thesis are presented in dd.mm.yy format.

- Preparatory Sheet

23.01.22 – Weronika

The session started with a short guided meditation. The first one to move was me, and Weronika witnessed.
After that Weronika did a movement experiment, in which she stated standing in the middle of the studio, slowly going backwords. She reached the corner, and the rest of her movement experienced was in relation with the wall.

Talk after the experiment.

Weronika:

- I see my body standing, trying to find my weight, /trying to find/where am I. And then going backwards. I knew there is a wall.
- I wanted to push myself from the wall, but decided to stay with the wall.
- I see myself going to the light, because if I go the other way there is no light (she is with her eyes closed).
- I see my fingertips following a line on the wall.
- My body wants to go the other way, but it is following the fingertips.
- Rising on my feet, in releve, want to take something from the ceiling, but I know I am too small, so I am only rising from my feet.
- The drawing is more into the intention... What I felt, what my body felt.
- It felt like I was trying to hear something from this wall. So it felt like someone is speaking something very quietly... I dot need to hear something very loud, I can hear it very quietly and it still has a big meaning... Screaming? Maybe they are supposed to scream... Someone is saying something to me and I want them to say it very loudly but then I am thinking – no – maybe they are supposed to say it quietly.

My response:

- I hear you saying *Trying to find my weight, where am I.*
- I hear you saying *I decided to stay with the wall.*
- I hear you saying *I see myself going into the light.*
- I hear you saying *My lower body is going the other way.*
- I hear you saying *I am too small, so I am rising on my feet.*
- I see you being with the wall, like becoming art of the wall, like sinking into the wall. It was a very strong image.

<u>What for you was the essence of this experience? Which moment you think was very strong for you?</u>

Weronika:

- I think this impossibility to hear what's behind the wall... Like an image of someone saying something very quietly.
- What am I taking from this quietness? Maybe I don't need to break the wall. I need to be very settled... This very silent voice that I was imagining... Maybe this voice can give me something. Maybe it has very big power that's very quiet. Maybe it needs to be quite. Maybe there is powerfulness in this quietness.

Figure 1: Preparatory Sheet 1.1

If you go back to your body, what do you remember? Kinaesthetically.

Weronika:

- This kind of feeling the wall, its structure. And it's kind of very quiet... I was a little imagining what we have done in the meditation. Like a kind of a place with water. And then rain dropping into the water... It leaves like very beautiful patterns into the water. So I imagined like my fingers are like those drops of rain into this wall... And it's very quiet, very settled rain.
- And being close to the wall, and kind of knowing that it's there as well, because I couldn't find my balance in the beginning, and I felt that I needed a support by someone, or a wall... Actually being close to the wall... it created this kind of sensation that I can be supported by something.

The second experiment was a continuation of the first one. I asked her to choose what exactly to continue with, as the experiment was very rich. She said that she wants to continue experimenting with *losing my sight. Going into senses... Losing my visual... I can talk, I can hear, I can feel... I can feel my body but I don't know how my body looks like.*

Talk after the experiment.

Weronika:

- Sensation of touch, that is completely different if my eyes are shut.
- I realised this – it's not someone's voice that's very quiet – it's my voice of perceiving things, and it's very quiet within me when I am lie experiencing without seeing. It's much stronger, I can hearing when I have my eyes closed, because I am taking away something that very often gives me such an obvious interpretation when I see something it's very obvious to... Like comment on something.
- I see myself touching my face a lot. Forget about how I see myself in the mirror... Like I have a different face? Like I didn't know how my face looks like...
- I went to the floor, because I felt something under my feet and I wanted to see what it is.
- Then I had this internal monologue... Like observing people and situations.

My response:

I explained that it was w very rich experience, in which Weronika discovered herself in a different way (with her eyes closed). And how the voice appeared... In the first experiment it was something else, beyond the wall, but in the second experiment she verbalised it like something within her.

The biggest challenge in front of us is how very slowly we will start to narrow and pick a thing that we want to stay with.

Key manifestations in the session: perceiving with eyes closed; quite voice, saying something that cannot be heard – the voice is first projected outside the personality, after that is seen as part of it, as an internal monologue; wall – support; looking for support; feeling small; fingers leading; following the light.

Figure 2: Preparatory Sheet 1.2

Everything my collaborators and I manifested, reflected on, and tracked formed an amalgamation of experiences and expressions, the source of which, different for the separate mover exploring, was interesting to us.

4.2.4. Introducing Intention

In order to find ways to observe a certain phenomenon for a longer period of time, an Authentic Movement session requires a *direction* to be given. However, this direction should not be understood as performing a particular, narrowed, or restrictive task. The appropriate notion here is *intention*. Considering the necessarily intention-less approach required to allow the experience of the mover to speak for itself, I propose a phenomenological perspective on intention and intentionality, which differs from intention understood in goal-oriented terms.

In phenomenology, intentionality has a fundamental place. It is understood as "the unique peculiarity of experience 'to be the consciousness of something'"—something is being perceived, observed, judged, wished, and so on—and the "directedness towards it (or indeed away from it, though with the glance upon it all the same), is not discoverable in every experience, whereas intentionality may always be concealed in it" (Husserl, 2012, p. 171). Consciousness is always conscious of (and directed towards) something in a reflective or pre-reflective manner: "the act of consciousness and the object of consciousness are intentionally related" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 28).

While examining different perspectives on the body, movement artist, teacher, and dance movement psychotherapist Sandra Reeve (2011, 2014, 2021) addresses a distinction between somatic and phenomenological approaches: "phenomenology approaches notions of 'mind and body as one being' from the view of mind, while somatic studies approach them from the view of body" (2011, p. 11). By bringing the phenomenological concept of intentionality into a somatic movement practice, I suggest that these approaches can simultaneously enhance each other, offering a perspective that analyses experience through the mind while recognising "the materiality of the body alive in movement" as holding its own "meaning" and evoking "sensed interpretations" (Reeve, 2011, p. 16).

Authentic Movement, when viewed from a phenomenological perspective, is closely related to the concept of intentionality. Even in its intention-less (not goal-oriented) form, the processes

of observing, being in an experience, or reflecting on it inevitably contain the phenomenological notion of intentionality and a (constantly changing) intended phenomenon, to which consciousness is directed in reflective or pre-reflective acts. The way I adopted the notion of intention in the manner my collaborators and I executed Authentic Movement suggested a synthesis between the mover's awareness in a moment-by-moment experience and their awareness of a pre-considered, intended phenomenon. This approach supported us in further exploring aspects of manifested processes in the mover's experience.

Considering the chronology of the development of this research, work with a pre-considered phenomenon began in Phase One and was foundational to the practice. However, its articulation as Authentic Movement with intention (as related to phenomenological intentionality) was distilled through my reflective and analytic processes after that phase. Entering Phase Two, my collaborators and I distinguished between engaging in *Authentic Movement with current psychophysical condition* (in its intention-less form, with no pre-considered phenomenon) and engaging in *Authentic Movement with intention,* adopting these terms as part of our practice-based language. In distilling principles of practice and presenting the process during Phases One and Two, I use these terms consistently.

In its essence, Authentic Movement with intention is an invitation for the mover to identify, prior to the practice, a specific movement, image, thought, sensation, or feeling as a phenomenon to observe and follow. After the mover slows down and, with curiosity and no judgment, tunes with their current psychophysical condition (considering *how they are* today, *how they feel, what they think, what they sense,* etc.), they gently open towards and attend to that specific preselected phenomenon. The intended phenomenon becomes a starting point that unfolds as an experience followed by the mover in a state of openness and curiosity. As the experience unfolds, the mover's intentionality shifts, no matter if that shift happens pre-reflectively or as a result of the mover's decision. Essentially, the mover is invited to be attentive to any information as it emerges: memories arising, bodily sensations, movements, associations, and more. These are the mover's idiosyncratic responses to the initially intended phenomenon at the beginning of the session, which stays like an 'island' for the mover. As they follow their experience, they can merge with what unfolds and let it guide them, or (at any moment) they can decide to return to their 'island' by bringing their awareness back to it, gently considering how or whether the initially intended phenomenon is altering.

Authentic Movement with intention resembles both Stromsted's utilisation of starting points in her practice—inviting participants to focus on a specific theme or body part at the beginning of a movement session—and Adler's earlier work, in which she advised clients to return to a recognised repetitive movement behaviour in order "to get to know more about it, to go with it, to exaggerate it, to confront it" (Adler, 1999a, p. 123). In relation to creative processes with Authentic Movement, it resonates with the returning to movement in Voris's method for dance-making through opening to, harvesting, returning to, and deepening movement (2019, p. 136). Working with a specific, pre-considered phenomenon also relates to aspects of Active Imagination. Jung says that, while practising Active Imagination, someone shall "avoid impatient jumping from one subject to another." He suggests that someone shall "hold to the one image" that has been chosen and "wait until it changes by itself". After that, someone can interact with that image by noting all the changes and eventually stepping into the picture, and acting on it (1997b, p. 164). Another obvious resemblance is with phenomenological eidetic variation. Once the intention of the movement session is introduced—as awareness towards specific psychophysical phenomenon—the mover might choose to stay longer and explore, to play with that phenomenon, approaching its articulation and essence.

In this research, the mover's intention could fall on a specific movement, a sensation, an image that appeared in a dream, a memory, or on a previous exploration, which is then used as a starting point for new explorations. The intended, as an investigated phenomenon, starts changing its qualities and 'facets', but also manifests unchangeable aspects of the mover's experience, which together bring the essence of the phenomenon closer. This manner of exploring determined the way this investigation developed in its next phases.

4.3. Creative Endeavours

Authentic Movement with intention supported the creative work in this research with the exploration of various themes and movement phrases. Proceeding towards the incorporation of Authentic Movement into artistic work, in Phase One I began developing simple experiments, which assisted my collaborators and me in utilising the discovered and experienced psychophysical phenomena into creative dance-making processes.

4.3.1. Exploring Movement

Once my collaborators and I started recognising inner witnessing, the direction forward revealed a realm of moving that required the mover to be able to shift between different states of perceiving and acting on what was occurring in our experiences. We began applying Authentic Movement with intention within movement explorations that aimed at creative engagement with movement material. As this approach developed throughout the next phases of research and informed the Exploring Movement phase within the Collective Imagining Process,[76] I term it and continuously refer to it as *exploring movement* or *creative movement exploration*. In its essence, exploring movement is a creative endeavour that spreads across principles of inner witnessing and movement improvisation.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, according to Davis, Authentic Movement, emerging "out of emptiness" and "coming from formlessness", stands in opposition to improvisation, which she characterises as "more about the playing with the forms as they come up or deciding on a form and then playing with it" and as being "entertaining, exciting, and stimulating" (2007, p. 66). Considering the validity of Davis's statement, particularly if improvisation is employed only to showcase the dancer's capabilities and mastery of their movement style, I would like to suggest that a playful approach to movement can emerge "out of emptiness". If improvisation is executed with the right attitude and depth, it does not inherently contradict the principles of Authentic Movement.[77]

Midgelow proposes an interesting way of talking about and discussing the process of improvising. By presenting a series of letters exchanged between *The Dancer* and her improvisation practice, named *The Practice*, she explores the nature of improvisation and the discourses surrounding it. In one of the letters, The Practice states: "Dear Dancer, I note the ways you track back and forth between the known and the unknown, existing in a place of 'unknown knowing'". (2011, p. 13). The Practice continues:

> The unknown incorporates the specifics of the movement (starting with no plan for what, when and where your dance will take you). The unknown might be the emergence of an

[76] See Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3. Phases of Practising, p. 155.

[77] Olsen notes that the development of an inner witness "supports both depth and clarity in the process of improvising" (2014, p. 68). In her reflection on her experience as a dancer introduced to Authentic Movement for the first time, she acknowledges that she has a "choice whether to access" an Authentic Movement state, recognising "what wants to move through the body" and thereby making "particular movement decisions" while improvising (2014, p. 70).

> unexpected trajectory—a new image, a new texture, a new vocabulary. The unknown might be the relationship to the audience—for this is negotiated anew at every performance. These unknowns are not unexpected but part of the process of improvising—they are what improvisers train themselves to be aware of and to be open to. (Midgelow, 2011, p. 13)

Midgelow presents a perspective on improvisation that is characterised by depth and requires openness to the unexpected and unknown. Being particularly curious about this unknown and the way it manifests in experience, I tried to incorporate aspects of Authentic Movement practice within creative, playful, and free explorative movement sessions. These brought my research into dance-making processes, providing movement material and challenging my collaborators and me, as we had to develop certain approaches and levels of awareness.

Shelley Tanenbaum (in Sager, 2004) is a clinical psychologist and the creator of the practice Intuitive Life Movement. In an interview conducted by Sager, parallels between Tanenbaum's work and the principles of Authentic Movement become evident. Tanenbaum teaches her students "to shift from ordinary consciousness into the internal witness—mindful awareness—which is open, receptive, and non-judgmental" (Tanenbaum in Sager, 2004, p. 15). Throughout her practice, she has articulated different types of movement associated with different states of consciousness: habitual, consciously directed, creative, free flow, and intuitive. Tanenbaum distinguishes Intuitive Life Movement from the others. According to her:

> While each has unique characteristics, what they share is the sense that "I am the doer," which is expressed as "I will," "I create," "I carry out my intention." In contrast, intuitive movements are experienced as subtle and precise kinaesthetic cues or currents of energy that anchor attention to the body's consciousness. When moving intuitively, the sense of "I" is not only the doer—but also the receiver and the internal witness, three interconnected aspects of embodied consciousness. (Tanenbaum in Sager, 2004, p. 14)

The three interconnected aspects of consciousness, as noted by Tanenbaum, are representative of the interplay between perception and action, passivity and activity, as observed by the non-judgmental inner witness. Her elucidation of the Intuitive Life Movement resonates with the manner in which my collaborators and I executed the creative explorations of movement and supports the understanding of such movement exploration as going beyond the level of stimulating and entertaining activity.

As dancers, my collaborators and I possess bodily awareness and can facilitate deliberate, abstract movements in space, are aware of our kinaesthetic sense, and are able to articulate ideas and execute techniques with precision, ensuring the delivery of movement as artistic

material. The challenge was to integrate principles of Authentic Movement in creative improvisatory movement explorations. These explorations involved transitioning between diverse modes of deliberately moving and engaging with moment-by-moment experience, of moving and being moved from within.

The movement explorations were accompanied by careful inner witnessing and focused on creative experimentation with specific movement, movement patterns, or actively embodied images within the mind's eye, as we played with them through layering embodied Active Imagination (or eidetic variation) and as we stayed open for the new and surprising. The mover consciously alternated between (or explored simultaneously) the delivery of movement material, the playful interaction with pre-considered and currently occurring movements, the following of intuition, and/or the utilisation of mechanisms already established in the body by movement or dance techniques, the challenging of those, and the taking of moments to be still, to tune with inner processing, to open to the unknown, to discover, and to allow to be moved from within. This is a creative manner of exploring movement that necessitates a particular type of approach and awareness: the cultivation of an inner witness and their employment in intentional acts. The result is the ability of the mover to *oscillate* (in an irregular manner) between aspects of experience and between passivity and activity.

The term "dance explorations" is used by performer and choreographer Anna Halprin (1995, 2000).[78] In her practice, she distinguishes improvisation from exploration, noting that the latter is a process "with a very specific focus" on "what are all the possibilities around working with" a specific idea—for instance, space, time, or force (A. Halprin, 1995, p. 191). A dance exploration requires "stay[ing] on [a] particular path, focused on dealing with a particular element, for a given length of time" (1995, p. 192). In alignment with the exploration of movement in this research, in which my collaborators and I explored particular elements as essences derived from our personal experiences, Halprin's dance explorations generated information (which she called "resources") that was used for the creation of scores for a performative act (Worth & Poynor, 2004, p. 66). Similarly, during the next phases of this

[78] Anna Halprin's lifelong work and her approaches to the integration of artistic practice and personal development align with the intentions of this research on multiple levels, particularly in relation to collaborative artistic creation (see RSVP Cycles in Chapter 6, Section 6.3.2. Leading a Collaborative Dance-Making Process, p. 182) and the use of holistic, somatic, and therapeutic approaches to movement and personal experience, appreciated as sources for creative work.

research project, the creative explorations of movement became the foundation for the generation of material utilised in dance-making processes.

It is important to emphasise that the creative exploration of movement differs from Authentic Movement with intention applied as a starting point. The former is characterised by a heightened level of engagement with movement, which is inherently *generative* in nature—it thus resembles Adler's earlier work as applied in a creative context and is comparable with eidetic variation. Once the intention for the creative exploration of movement is introduced—as awareness towards specific psychophysical phenomenon—the mover is invited to explore that phenomenon, approaching its articulation and essences. Here the mover becomes much more active and engaged in playing with, rediscovering, creating, and further exploring movement material, while maintaining openness towards the unknown and the new information emerging.

When we did creative explorations of movement, the mover was invited to decide when to move with eyes open or closed. The end of the exploration followed the already-known process of reflection on it and predicted not only the development of various artistic material in terms of movement, but also the generation of more information about the movement and the related psychological processes explored. This process led to the development of the mover's skills, artistic presence, and creative approach.

4.3.2. Extracting and Utilising Moments and Pools from Sessions

Our somatic explorations were incorporated into another creative endeavour. Orzelek and Ryberg were invited to extract moments, themes, movements or pools that they felt drawn to from their Authentic Movement sessions. These could be specific body shapes, pools or movement phrases, gestures, how they related to the space, aspects of their written reflections or image themes (as related to corresponding physical states). Once chosen, these were incorporated into a choreographic challenge. My collaborators were invited to use them as a score for a small piece, a miniature. They were asked to decide—whether consciously or intuitively—when, where, and how to engage with the chosen material while executing their miniature, and also to 'fill in the gaps' of and between the chosen elements.

This creative endeavour is free and gives direction only in the form of guiding points to support the creative process. Once the mover has carried out the experiment, they may find their own

way of relating to, reflecting on, and further structuring a more detailed score of their miniature. Orzelek, for example, felt the need to write down some thoughts on paper while building her miniature. These writings were not only descriptions of movements but also poetic and creative thoughts that deepened her practice and were another manifestation of her experience. In my own explorations, sometimes I had chosen movements and pools and after a while found myself working with only one of them, constantly returning to it and repeating it. In this sense, the creative endeavour itself is another stage of refining aspects of personal processing and indicative of the essences of the phenomenon being worked with.

From the above it is clear that the creative endeavours are a continuation of the movement in depth. As they are carried out the mover continues to observe their experience through inner witnessing and is open towards unconscious processes. The creative endeavours were further developed in the next phases of research, but their qualities, as articulated here, provide the distilled matrix. In Phase One, my collaborators and I focused mainly on practising Authentic Movement, following the recognition of inner witnessing, with limited input of creative tasks. We tried to awaken callings from within—to build a bridge between conscious processes and those of which the mover was not aware.

4.4. Pieces from the Practice

In the following section I present moments from the collaborative process during Phase One of this research. This phase was broad in terms of what my collaborators and I worked with—a mixture of personal imaginative processes, sensations, movements, feelings, memories, and dreams. The practice followed what manifested in the sessions and offered space for all engaged to first become familiar with the practice and then become familiar with aspects of their experiences. Orzelek and Ryberg's processes of exploration were different and the individual sessions with them revealed distinct qualities of this research.

Orzelek had particularly interesting third and fourth sessions,[79] which were strongly connected and demonstrated the potential of the practice. In our first two sessions,[80] Orzelek became fascinated by working with her eyes closed and began to explore the world, herself, and her movements from this different perspective. She mentioned how her experience had changed

[79] The third and the fourth sessions with Orzelek happened on 26.01.22 and 31.01.22.
[80] The first and the second sessions with Orzelek happened on 11.01.22 and 23.01.22.

completely just by closing her eyes. Since our first session, Orzelek became aware and interested in her heartbeat and the sensations around her heart. In the second session, as she was moving close to a wall, she recognised a voice—a quiet voice which, according to her, was trying to tell her something.[81]

On 26.01.22, when we met for our third session, I invited Orzelek to do Authentic Movement focusing on her heartbeat, her heart, and the area around her heart (Authentic Movement with intention). In the reflective stage after the movement session, her notes revolved around her emotions during the exploration. In her own words, she was going through a "spectrum of different emotions".[82] As a witness, I also noticed that her movements seemed to be driven by emotion, as I resonated with the mover on an emotional level. I asked Orzelek how she felt after the session, and she replied:

> I feel like I'm cleansed. Like … let[ting] something come out in a way, … I feel like I don't know how my movement looked like, but it felt very releasing at some point. … I let something be and it's not existing anymore. I feel like this. I think that something that was living in me for a few months, a few years, I don't know. Or maybe even a few days or a few hours, something that was living in me, now it disappeared.[83]

The movements that Orzelek had manifested were carefully followed by her reflections on some movements and pools that she remembered. There was one particular type of movement that she had done which had a significant visual and visceral impact on me as a witness, and which she did not mention in her reflections. It was a wavy movement that occurred in separate parts of her body and then involved her whole body. When I offered my reflections as a witness and mentioned it to her, Orzelek immediately remembered it and it seemed that it had been a powerful and important moment in her experience as well, but it slipped from her memory. She reflected on that movement as coming from "an emotion of feeling satisfied, and like being in a happy place".[84]

After that, I invited her to do a second exploration, focusing on and working with this wavy movement. It was a wonderful movement session to witness. In the end she recognised many images and emotions. She talked about "waves of ocean", a "river of thoughts", a "spectrum of flavours and colours",[85] "happiness", and "high vibration of your state", but also "tensing [of]

[81] See Preparatory Sheet, pp. 79–80.
[82] Transcript file: 26.01.22 part 2, lines 68–69, p. 3.
[83] Transcript file: 26.01.22 part 2, lines 149–161, p. 5.
[84] Transcript file: 26.01.22 part 2, lines 222–223, p. 7.
[85] Transcript file: 26.01.22 part 3, lines 37–46, p. 2.

shoulders", something "upsetting you", and "anger".[86] The awareness of the heart was still present and Orzelek said: "it was emotion not coming from my head or my belly or any other place. It was like emotion coming from my heart and I felt my heart beat a few times".[87]

At the beginning of our fourth session on 31.01.22, Orzelek shared a dream she had had after our previous meeting. The dream was related to the themes we were exploring in the studio and Orzelek described it as a visual, visceral, and emotional experience. The story of the dream, surreal and abstract, revolved around the image of the heart and themes of pain, pleasure, and rejection. It left Orzelek with a question of not being sure why the dream appeared and what it might have meant.

My initial plan for that fourth session was to continue working with the wavy movement and the heart as pre-considered phenomena. However, after Orzelek engaged in Authentic Movement with the wavy movement, she shared that her dream was present within her exploration. I decided to invite her to do another exploration, beginning by situating herself within the dream, and seeing where it would lead her.

After Orzelek's movement exploration and reflection on it, all our sessions up to that point seemed to be connected. The heart, the wavy movement, the dream, and the themes we were exploring as they emerged all led to the articulation of a thought that Orzelek wrote down in her reflections. This thought emerged, as she mentioned, because the voice she encountered in our second session came again, but this time it said something tangible to her. She wrote it down in her written reflections after the exploration and explained that it had to do with knowledge, the process of finding yourself as finding knowledge about yourself.

The sessions with Orzelek were significant because they revealed a process that developed and matured over time. It was obvious that the activities we were doing, based on the practice of Authentic Movement, were contributing to Orzelek's growing self-awareness and were also bringing to the surface much personal movement and imaginative material charged with creative potential. The creative tasks we did were also influenced by that maturing process and revealed depth and personal engagement.

[86] Transcript file: 26.01.22 part 3, lines 109–115, p. 4.
[87] Transcript file: 26.01.22 part 3, lines 126–128, p. 4.

From the first session Ryberg and I had we encountered the question of how to access a practice that does not follow a specific task but invites a free exploration of experience. What I noticed, as a witness and the leader of the process, was that I had to be attentive regarding what I reveal as explanation of the explorations' mechanisms. I found out that sometimes saying less is more and too much elucidation could lead to build up of unnecessary and confusing information. Taking that into account, I let the process lead us forward.

At our second session on 21.01.22, Ryberg did an emotional movement exploration and manifested a strong and deep engagement with the practice. As a witness, I noticed and felt fascinated by Ryberg's gestural movements, which continued to appear in the following sessions. Her minimalistic movements were accompanied by, as it appeared to me and as confirmed by her reflections on the explorations, extremely intense psychological processes.

On 28.01.22, our third session, she made an exploration in which she stood for a long time in the middle of the studio. I noticed that the only movement she did was to turn her whole body to one side, which happened towards the end of the practice. As Ryberg reflected on the exploration after it ended, it became obvious that her inner, psychological processes during the exploration were vivid. Recognising inner witnessing, Ryberg distinguished a judgmental voice, constantly commenting on her process. This judgmental voice was present in several of our sessions.

Our session on 01.02.22 was focused on creative experiments. I first invited Ryberg to utilise themes from a dream that she shared in a "playful … invention and creation",[88] following how these themes were manifesting through the body and playing with the movements emerging (exploring movement). We discussed that this is an approach that keeps Authentic Movement principles, differentiating it from solely improvising. After this experiment, I invited Ryberg to choose elements from her previous creative endeavour and to "create a sequence with these elements"[89] (utilising moments and pools from sessions). It was a free creative task, inviting an intuitive approach and her own decisions regarding how to situate the elements in space and time, how to connect them, and what to do between them.

On 08.02.22, our fifth session, there was a significant shift in the way the explorations happened. That day, we worked with one of Ryberg's dreams (Authentic Movement with

[88] Transcript file: 01.02.22 part 1, lines 41–42, p. 2.
[89] Transcript file: 01.02.22 part 3, line 62, p. 2.

intention), which brought a lot of memories, emotions, and feelings to her. For the first time, while reflecting on the movement exploration, she could not remember the chronological order and some of the movements she had done. Ryberg's tracking of her physical behaviour up to that point had been quite precise. I asked her if she had felt different during her exploration. She confirmed that she had felt "drawn to" the emerging material as memories and feelings, experiencing a strong "emotional response".[90] My feeling as a witness was that for the first time she was not controlling the process.

The theme of control and judgement in the performance of Authentic Movement was present in both my and my collaborators' movement explorations. A voice was present—in Orzelek's explorations it was a quiet, slightly recognisable voice at first, which then articulated an essential observation. In Ryberg's explorations the voice was explicitly commenting and judging.

Comparing this with my own experience of inner witnessing, I recognise that it takes time and practice for the inner witness to develop. Within myself and my collaborators I have observed a tension between established patterns of thinking and a different way of being present in the world. This is how Sager describes it:

> One is a more familiar inner presence, a voice that tends to be judgmental, chatty and often self-critical. The other is quieter, more benevolent, a 'warmer, more compassionate presence that notices, observes, and helps remember'. Many respondents observe that over time, the inner critic is becoming a more compassionate, accepting inner witness, becoming softer, wiser and steadier. (Sager, 2015, p. 371)

The end of the first block of sessions was accompanied by a short questionnaire form that I asked my collaborators to complete. Orzelek decided to send me a separate text, which contained her own reflections, rather than answering my questions directly. Ryberg sent me the answered questionnaire form. These can be found in Appendix E, p. 228.

In Appendix C, p. 220, the reader can find my reflections on a movement session I did during my solo practice.

Edited footage of some of the sessions that my collaborators and I had can be watched in *Video 1: Phase One Studio Practice* (https://youtu.be/i6v2tREY918).

[90] Transcript file: 08.02.22 part 2, lines 72–75, p. 3.

4.5. Findings and Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the development of Phase One of this research, in which my collaborators and I incorporated Authentic Movement into our studio practice. Essential aspects of our work covered in the text reflect the importance of developing inner witnessing (associated with the phenomenological epoché) and the process of reflecting on movement (related to phenomenological reduction). These aspects remained foundational throughout this research process, as my collaborators and I continued to engage with personal experiences and to bring them into our artistic endeavours.

By considering the concept of intentionality, I introduced a phenomenological perspective on engaging with Authentic Movement with a pre-considered phenomenon. The intended phenomenon triggers an experience without compromising the major principles of Authentic Movement practice—the openness toward the not-known and the awareness that the intended is constantly changing.

Another important aspect covered in this chapter relates to the articulation of two creative activities: exploring movement (related to eidetic variation) and extracting and utilising moments from a movement practice. These were fundamental in the dance-making processes in Phases Two and Three.

By presenting moments from my collaborative practices, I demonstrated their engaging nature, touched on their creative potential, and explored their impact on self-knowledge.

Reviewing Orzelek and Ryberg's responses to the questionnaire from, I recognise that our practice contributed to their self-awareness and introduced a different perspective on their daily activities and dance training. In her reflections on the practice, Orzelek states the following:

> Entering this non-judgmental state led me to internal transformation of the psyche, I see great value here, as soon as I began to understand what is happening to me, I was able to get to know the experienced emotion, let it be, flow through me, see its birth and its death.[91]

In one of her answers to the questionnaire, Ryberg reflects on her developing understanding of Authentic Movement and improvisation, how they differ and the purposes they can serve. With

[91] Quotes taken from Orzelek's and Ryberg's reflections, which can be found in Appendix E, p. 228.

that, I would like to emphasise the positive influence that adopting Authentic Movement and its synergies with phenomenology in educational programmes for dancers could have.

Following the initial research phase, which focused on tuning with the practice of Authentic Movement, during Phase Two the adopted approaches to movement exploration were further developed in work with imagination, memory, and dreams.

5. PHASE TWO: WORK WITH IMAGINATION, MEMORY, AND DREAMS

5.1. Introduction

The following chapter explores imagination, memory, and work with dreams. It presents Phase Two of this research (March 2022–December 2023), which was divided into two stages. The first stage, conducted between March 2022 and January 2023, involved five one-to-one sessions of working with memories with Orzelek and Ryberg (March 2022–May 2022) and five one-to-one sessions of working with dreams with Orzelek (November 2022–January 2023). The second stage, conducted between July and December 2023, involved a dance-making process based on memory work with Orzelek, Pribyl, and myself. This stage culminated in the creation of the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023) and the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023). Links to videos of these artistic outcomes can be found in this chapter.

The first section of this chapter, devoted to the first stage of Phase Two, begins by examining the close connection between the processes of imagining and remembering and how they aid one another. It then examines how imagination was incorporated into work with personal memories through examples of the studio work undertaken by my collaborators and me. While following the studio practice, the dynamic relationship between the cognitive processes of imagining and remembering and those of embodiment is emphasised. In this chapter, special attention is given to the manner of *staying between and across* the different aspects of experience and to the *softening awareness*—approaches distilled from the explorative process and conceptualised post-practice as essential principles. The presentation of my artistic endeavours in painting and drawing during Phase Two also finds a place in the next pages. After that, the work with dreams that Orzelek and I undertook is examined.

The second section of this chapter is devoted to the process behind the creation of the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023). It follows the transition from purely explorative to dance-making endeavours. By elucidating aspects of the collaboration with Orzelek and Pribyl, this section invites the reader to follow how personal experiences emerging from work with memories were utilised in the collaborative creation of a performative dance work. After, the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023) is presented. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the findings from Phase Two of this research.

5.2. Stage One: Exploration of Memory Through Imagination

In the beginning of Phase Two, my collaborators and I integrated imagination and remembering, exploring how personal historicity can be awakened. The progression of the work evoked a specific approach to the manner of exploration and attention to unconscious processes. Before proceeding to our studio practice, I would like to introduce some perspectives on imagination and remembering, clarifying how these activities were utilised in this research phase.

According to philosopher Julia Jansen (2016), in Husserl's phenomenology imagination is "a crucial key to answering fundamental questions concerning consciousness" (2016, p. 69). An essential aspect of the imaginative process, as articulated by Husserl, is that imagining is different from perception. The object of the imagination is not an object perceived from the material world, as it is "not experienced as real", and therefore the "activity of imagining is itself experienced as a simulation of a possible perception, or as a "quasi perception"" (2016, p. 70).

In Jungian psychology, Active Imagination supports the ego-consciousness to relate to the contents of the unconscious. Through imaginative activity, the ego enters psychic content. By working with these imaginative contents (through simple imagination, writing, drawing, dancing, etc.), the consciousness triggers a change in them. In these terms, "the ego's making experience conscious and thereby effecting changes in the psyche" (Raff, 2000, p. 6). As the Jungian analyst Jeffrey Raff (2000) says regarding Active Imagination:

> Imaginary events were seen as occurring in a world that, though different from the ordinary world, was just as valid and real. Imagination was seen as having a real effect on the psyche, and even on physical reality, as well as helping create direct experiences of the divine. (Raff, 2000, p. 40)

I would like to extract two things from the above: first, the distinction between imagining and perceiving from the material world. The way in which these activities affect each other was something my collaborators and I encountered and explored. Secondly, the perspective that even though an imagined object is "not experienced as real" (Jansen, 2016, p. 70), it can still be "as valid" and "ha[s] a real effect on the psyche", and, as we will see, on the body and the way it perceives (Raff, 2000, p. 40). The imaginative activity and its links with memory and remembering were fundamental to Phase Two of this research.

Theatre practitioner, scholar, and performance-maker Kate Hunter (2012, 2013), in her work making two performative pieces, draws on neuroscientific research and explores the role of memory, imagination, and their intersection. She articulates how neuroscience, in analysing memory, perception, the body, and the mind, could benefit performance-making with the enhancement of "quality and depth" of the process and generated material (2012, p. 8). One practitioner who heavily influenced her work is neuroscientist Antonio Damasio (1994). Although neuroscience is beyond the scope of the current study, it supports the idea that memory and imagination are linked activities.

Hunter analyses the formation of thought as based on Damasio's *body-minded brain,*[92] considering the balanced interaction between environment, body, mind, and brain. Hunter summarises some of Damasio's ideas:

> The brain forms images in response to immediate external stimuli but also recalls images from the past. An 'image' can be a feeling, a sound, a bodily experience, a recollection, a thought, a fragment of past experience, a touch. Images are perceptual (informed by senses or experiences in the present moment) or recalled (informed by previous recollections). Images are not located in or formed by the brain alone—the brain, the body and the environment are fully involved in the generation of an image. (Hunter, 2012, p. 4)

The interplay between perception and thought formation is understood as an amalgamation of fact and fiction. Using neuroscientific terminology, Hunter highlights the blurred line between imagination and remembering. Drawing on Damasio's research, Hunter emphasises the similarity of the neurological processes involved in remembering the past and projecting into the future. In Damasio's words:

> Images of something that has not yet happened and that may in fact never come to pass are no different in nature from the image you hold of something that already has happened. They constitute the memory of a possible future rather than of the past that was. (Damasio, 1994, p. 97)

Taking this into account, my attempt at the beginning of Phase Two was to bring together imagination and memory in the studio practice. By combining them, I tried to facilitate a process delving into personal historicity as unconscious material.

[92] Damasio's concept of the body-minded brain is based on the idea that "the body provides a ground reference for the mind" (1994, p. 223). According to him, despite body and brain often being "conceptualised as separate", it is "the entire organism rather than the body alone or the brain alone that interacts with the environment" (1994, p. 224).

It is essential to state that through the process of exploring memories, my collaborators and I were aware of memories as, in the words of Hunter, "fundamentally plastic, mutable, and ethereal" (2012, p. 6). We did not view memories as facts that had happened, but as sedimented historicity arising through imaginative activity. This activity utilises unconscious information as something forgotten, representing not past factuality but ways in which an individual has or might behave and interpret the world.

5.2.1. Remembering

The first block of five one-to-one sessions with Orzelek and five one-to one sessions with Ryberg took place between March and May 2022. In Phase Two, I decided to merge my solo and collaborative practices. Each session with my collaborators comprised three stages. In the first stage, I moved while my collaborator witnessed. In the second and third stages, my collaborator moved twice while I witnessed. The way in which the studio explorations were carried out continued the established pattern of work—tracking and reflection on movement exploration, continuation of the movement practice in drawing or writing, data collection, and analysis resembled those of the previous phase. My collaborators and I proceeded to utilise Authentic Movement with intention,[93] this time focusing on imagination and memories.

Before commencing our work with memory, I planned to follow an approach I had used before, relying on the utilisation of a specific personal memory, which would define the starting point of a movement exploration. However, I soon realised that this approach, which I had already tested, would not be appropriate—most of the imagery and experiences it would have triggered would not have come as a surprise and would not have revealed substantial unconscious, *forgotten* material. According to Merleau-Ponty:

> To remember is not to bring back before the gaze of consciousness a self-subsistent picture of the past, it is to plunge into the horizon of the past and gradually to unfold tightly packed perspectives until the experiences that it summarises are as if lived anew in their own temporal place. (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 23)

In order to delve into the horizon of the past, we had to engage with memory work in a different way. This involved blending the process of remembering with imagination.

[93] See Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4. Introducing Intention, p. 81.

I designed two main tasks for the research explorations.

- The first task was designed to prompt recall of past experiences by inviting the one exploring to imagine a specific place or environment they have inhabited. I invited my collaborators to create a timeline of all the significant places they had lived, studied, or entertained themselves—every place where their life had happened.[94] Once the timelines were complete, we began working with the indicated places and environments individually. The one exploring was invited to start the Authentic Movement session, to close their eyes and to focus on their current psychophysical condition, to connect with their body, and to tune into their current reality. Then, when they felt ready, they transitioned to Authentic Movement with intention. The intention for the practice was simple: the one exploring actively imagined a chosen place from their past, evoking in their mind's eye what the place looked like, its architecture, how it felt, and what objects and people were there. The one exploring tapped into the awakened imagery and physical sensations, welcoming and following memories that arose spontaneously as information linked to the environment and the constantly recalled objects, people, and situations related to it. By actively imagining familiar places and environments as containers of memories, the one exploring opened up to the horizon of their past and allowed every awakened image or body schema to reveal itself freely. Importantly, in this activity, imagining (as Active Imagination) was active in terms of remembering but not in terms of intentionally altering or stepping into a memory. The one exploring witnessed and followed their psychophysical processes, respecting what was revealed and how they related to it. The awakened memories and imagery from the horizon of the past can also be seen as revealing past and present behavioural patterns and unconscious processes.

- The second task was similar in nature but focused on working with important individuals from the past of the one exploring. I invited my collaborators to create a timeline of their lives, including everyone who had played a significant role in them.

[94] Although this task was not initially informed by the work of Olsen, strong parallels with some of her somatic approaches to memory and place were later recognised. In her practice, she invites work with places from the past by "draw[ing] a map of a familiar place," chosen amongst places in which someone "ha[s] lived or visited," places that "evoke strong feelings", and then improvising a dance in the "imagined environment" (2014, p. 230). In exploring somatic relationships with environments, Olsen suggests the practice of "writ[ing] history of place, using a chronological approach", considering "all the places [someone has] lived and visited", including "home, travels, dreams, and longings" (2002, p. 10).

> Then, we engaged in explorations by imagining a specific person (how they walk, talk, sound, smell, feel, etc.). We observed the processes triggered by their image, following the emerging memories, emotions, thoughts, and movements.

Orzelek, Ryberg, and I prepared timelines of our pasts, indicating significant places and environments we had inhabited. These three timelines were special to us, as they represented maps—containers of our memories. As Olsen states in her exploration of embodied relationship with the surrounding environment, "emotional memory is encoded since childhood, associated with specific terrain: the beach explored on family vacations, the tree climbed in moments of retreat, or the room where a child was born" (2002, p. 8). By recalling an environment through imaginative activity, my collaborators and I accessed diverse memories associated with the places we had inhabited. In each subsequent session, we worked with a different place and delved into the horizon of the past through both visual imagination and the body. Through a processual exploration of the interconnectedness between images in the mind's eye and the moving, perceptive body, the dynamic relationship between different modes of awareness (or aspects of experience) became a central theme of our work.

Reeve explores the relationship between an individual's embodied experiences and their environment. Through her Move into Life programme, she examines movement practice within the framework of non-stylised movement, environmental movement, and ecological movement (2014, p. 420). According to her, the embodied relationship with the surrounding environment is the foundation for our understanding of ourselves and the world. We might assume that the places we inhabit or have inhabited inform who we are:

> Our movement, the language we use, the metaphors we choose and our memories have all been created by our relationships to our respective environments and to each other and are all uniquely woven together and present in our living, moving bodies. (Reeve, 2021, p. 147)

I suggest that there are parallels between the embodiment of actual environments and that of imagined (as remembered) ones. Reeve observes that moving in an actual environment involves paying attention to the "structure, sensory input and the shaping of [the] body [moving] through space", accompanied by stimulated "metaphoric and associative" processes that awaken the "internal archive of memories and habitual concepts" (2021, p. 147). The same approach applies when moving in an imagined environment. However, in this situation, experience and the "archive of memories" are informed and triggered by "sensory input" and "metaphoric

processes" arising from the amalgamation of kinaesthesia grounded in the present environment and the kinaesthesia and imagery associated with the imaginative realm.

My first significant experience of imagining a place from my past happened on 14.03.22. It was an extremely visual experience. During a session with Ryberg, I was the first to move. I chose the house where I grew up as a child, associated with some of my earliest memories. My exploration was an extremely visual experience. I could easily imagine the place and its details in my mind's eye. I was in the space in my imagination and knew exactly what was there and where it was situated. In every direction I turned, I was surrounded by objects that triggered specific memories. When Ryberg told me that the time was up, it was as if I had been pulled out of a different dimension or awakened from a dream. Reflecting on the experience, I was able to recall in detail what I had seen in my mind's eye.

Below, I include a screenshot of the original transcript of our reflections after this exploration. I situate the transcript here both as a conduit to the experiences awakened during this session and as an example of the final version and design of all audio transcripts.

- Original transcript:

Moa Ryberg, 14.03.22, part 2

	ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT	NOTES
1	**USHEV:** I start sitting, I close my eyes and then I stay for a bit with my	Reflection after exploration with a place from the past.
2	eyes closed and then I lie down. Then I turn on one side and my left	Mover: Ushev; Witness: Ryberg.
3	hand is underneath my head. And then I turn on my right side and I sit.	
4	And then I do movement with my left hand for quite some time. I'm	Key manifestations:
5	stretching it out and then up and then down. And then I do movement	Feeling comfort, feeling good; feeling afraid
6	with my left hand, the wavy movement, which leads me back to my	
7	lower back. My right hand is on my lower back. Then at one point both	Movements:
8	of my hands are going up and very, very slowly going down. And then I	Ushev: Hands. Left hand. Left hand stretches out. Both
9	very slowly start to move my hands and I'm not sure exactly how I'm	hands slowly going up and down. Sitting, lying down (slow,
10	moving them, but at some point, they touch each other. And then my	minimal movements in video).
11	left hand is straightened up and then I hear you say that the ten minutes	Ryberg sees: Hands on stomach. Switching positions sitting.
12	are over. That's what I remember movement-wise.	Lowering the head, almost reaching the floor, followed by a
13	**RYBERG:** I see you closing your eyes and lying down. And as you're lying	quick movement leading to sitting.
14	down you take a big breath and you have your hands on your stomach	
15	and so I can see you breathe out and your belly is lowering. And I see as	Imagery:
16	you said the leg comes up and pushes you to the side. And I see you,	Bed, wall, poster, carpet, cassette, singer, song, big chamber,
17	everything that you mentioned, I also see you slowly switching positions	tall walls, cat's house, friend, joke, small figures, garden,
18	from sitting… both your knees down and sometimes sitting with one leg	cousin, mother (Ushev mentions being surprised by how
19	up. And then at some point you lower your head and then as you're	vivid imagery was).
20	about to hit the floor there's a quick movement where you sit back up	
21	again.	
22	**USHEV:** Yes, now I remember it. And I also remember that there was a	*Ryberg mentions that she got "flashes of childhood
23	movement like this.	memories" while witnessing.
24	**RYBERG:** Yes, and then it's the hand gestures. Oh yes, when your hands	
25	move to the side there's a moment where one of your hands is on top of	
26	your… in the air. So, it almost looks as if you're about to drop something.	
27	Like you're holding something over your head. So, your hand is over your	
28	head.	

1

Figure 3: Original Transcript 1.1

USHEV: Psychologically, imagery wise it's very intense. So, it's like there is not an empty space, all the time something is happening. First, I lay down and when I lay down, I see myself lying in the bed where I was lying for all these years... And, literally, I just turned to my left and immediately the wall appeared with… there was a door there. The bed was actually right in front of the door, so the door couldn't be open and there was a poster of a Toy Story there. And then I see the whole wall with all the shelves there and I see also there is a cassette, a Bulgarian singer. And then I see, a memory is coming in which I play this Bulgarian singer, and I really love the sound of it. As a child I really love this song, it gives me, as a child I imagined this like I'm in a big room, but very big like chamber, like very big with tall walls and because the sound is a bit, yeah. And then I see, and then I go down the bed and I see the carpet and I'm like, so vividly seeing the carpet the way it is. And I see the table, the chairs and I see also a house for the cat which I have made. And I see… And then I see, of course, the other room and everything… I'm surprised by how detailed everything is in my memory, in terms of where everything is, like nothing is missing in the architecture. There is not a place that I don't know what's happening there. And then I see my friend, a friend of mine, the best friend of mine, we are friends since we, since very, very young. And I see him on the couch laughing on a joke and this is where this movement is. I remember that this movement was there. And then I go outside, I see me playing with small figures that I'm making from paper. And I see outside, I saw when I am outside, I start doing this slow movement because I see, I feel comfort, I feel very good. And actually, I am very slowly, somehow, like this memory, reality of the memories unravelling in front of me, and that's why I am a bit… Like you pulled me out from something because I am in this moment, I am going up the garden and I'm literally just going up there, and knowing where everything is. Like I am there. And when you say that the minutes are over you just like you pulled me away from it. But the thing that I clearly remember is that the memory that came is my friend laughing in this moment. Oh yes, also this moment, oh this moment, this moment was a memory of my cousin. She came making this "Grrrrrr" thing and then at

Figure 4: Original Transcript 1.2

this moment is actually a memory comes when I am afraid, maybe for the first time really afraid because there is someone in the garden during the night and my mother has to go out and tell him to go away and I was scared, yes that's it. Yeah. But I am surprised how vivid it was. How do you feel as a witness in terms of observing?
RYBERG: I think I am a bit stuck in this, this is a vivid for me… So, I get like very many memories from my childhood.
USHEV: While you were watching?
RYBERG: Yeah.
USHEV: Okay.
RYBERG: Yeah so, I have flashes of childhood memories also.
USHEV: That's interesting if you would have these flashes if we didn't even talk about these things. I believe it is possible if someone is really sensitive and someone in front of him is just memorising. I think you can relate somehow to this process… Yeah. Interesting. Do you want to move?
RYBERG: Yeah.

Figure 5: Original Transcript 1.3

After this session, I acknowledged that, no matter how vivid the imagery in my mind's eye was, my awareness of and focus on my body's sensations and kinaesthesia—related both to the present environment and to the embodiment of the imagined—were minimal and, in some moments, absent. Reeve describes moving at the "shifting threshold" of attentiveness to the "moving, sensing/perceiving body" and the environmental context, incorporating the emerging sensory data, thoughts, feelings, and details of the surrounding environment into the movement process (2021, p. 144). The continuous awareness and embodiment of the data emerging in experience from both the imagery in the mind's eye and from actual perception, sensory data, and kinaesthetic imagery became the challenge that my collaborators and I took on.

5.2.2. Staying Between and Across

Following aspects of her work with Authentic Movement, movement practitioner, researcher, and educator Elaine Hendry Westwick (2021) discusses objective and subjective perspectives of body-based awareness. First, she describes components of awareness explored objectively: "attentional focus, attitude, attentional awareness and repetition" (2021, p. 122). She introduces a perspective on awareness as "a patch of light illuminating experience"—the size and the location of that "bright patch" are determined by "attentional focus" (2021, p. 122). Then, following her own experiences, Westwick differentiates between "awareness volume and awareness location" as qualities recognised through somatic awareness practices and "permeat[ing] into everyday life" (2021, p. 127). As our work in the studio continued, my collaborators and I began to work intentionally with awareness, recognising and engaging with both its location and volume. The distinctive feature of our practice was the integration of imaginative and sensory, body-based aspects of awareness (or experience). As the continuation of the work determined a specific attitude towards movement explorations, two major approaches began to emerge, which I distil and conceptualise in this and the following section.

Chodorow, writing about the sensational and imaginal realms of Authentic Movement, observes that "the richest movement experiences seem to involve both sensation and image, fluctuating back and forth or occurring simultaneously" (1999b, p. 261). By exploring the dynamic relationship between imagery in the mind's eye and the soma, I recognised that these aspects of experience can become active or tacit, depending on which falls at the focal point of awareness and which resides at its periphery.

For instance, if I start to imagine something in my mind's eye, that process is at the focal point of my awareness. After a while, if I intentionally connect with the periphery of my awareness—the aspects of experience that are not-yet-recognised—and start focusing on my senses and on what is happening around and within my body, my experience alters. If I continue to focus on my body, kinaesthetics, and sensations, I might start to lose connection with the image in my mind's eye, which now occupies the periphery of my awareness. I might then go back to it, probably compromising my physical sensations. These processes exist in a conjunction—experience is tacitly informed by their interconnectedness and totality at any given moment. However, I am not explicitly aware of all of them.

My collaborators and I explored the way these aspects of experience communicate with and complement each other. We tried to intentionally embrace and follow them. I invited my collaborators to observe, while engaged in explorations, the *relationship between* what they imagined or thought and what they perceived through their senses while moving, continuously *visiting* and *revisiting* these modes of awareness. I distil this approach as *staying between and across* the different aspects of experience.

Staying between and across determines an existence in a liminal space, in which a gentle attention moves across the diverse data emerging in experience, oscillating between the focal point of awareness and its periphery. It requires a soft approach towards different aspects of experience, following, observing, and gently navigating between and across them, without allowing any one of them to define the entire experience. *Staying between and across* resists identification with any single emerging process to the extent that others are completely excluded. This approach is both passive and active, as it does not interrupt the processes but intentionally navigates between and across them. It supports the openness towards, and the embracement of, the totality of experience with its explicit and implicit aspects.

While exploring and observing the different aspects of experience, it became clear that the body has its own ways of manifesting memories through the body schema. Olsen states that "it is through our interaction with specific landscapes and buildings that our movement patterns, perceptual habits, and attitudes have been formed", as "place is space known through direct experience in the body, involving sensation, thought, memory, and imagination" (2014, p. xvii). From the beginning of the explorations with imagining (remembering) environments from the past, memories emerged not only from visual imagery but also from bodily sensations and information stored in the body's memory.

On several occasions, Ryberg manifested memories triggered by her body's behaviour. On 07.03.22, after doing a movement exploration in which she imagined her grandmother's apartment, Ryberg reflected on her experience. She mentioned that "sometimes when [she is] in the movements, memories come to [her]. And then sometimes [she] think[s] about the memories and follow[s her] intuition."[95] She recalled a memory triggered by her position on the floor. This position was related to a memory of when she used to be in her grandmother's bathtub. Ryberg also identified movements resulting from a memory emerging in her mind's eye—movements that were her body's reaction to imaginary processes or the immersion in them. For instance, she described "quicker" and "flicking" movements of her hands, which she associated with "grey and cold".[96] The memory related to these movements was:

> I usually stayed over at my grandma's before going to ballet class on Sunday mornings, and it was always really cold and not fun going to that ballet class. And so, I remember my pink ballet bag and her driving me to ballet class on Sunday mornings and it was always freezing cold.[97]

We started reflecting, with extra care, on the imagination and remembering processes and the way they affect the body. Resembling the reflective process in Phase One, we reflected first on bodily movements and then on psychological experiences. After that, we identified moments when different aspects of experience communicated, recognising the ways they influenced each other.

Through the explorations it became apparent that the different aspects of experience bring together pieces of information, which are not independent. Both in my explorations and those of my collaborators, I observed that sometimes the very condition and behaviour of the body (tempo, position in relation to the ground, breathing, and body structures) became activated after an intense imaginative moment had passed. The imagery itself seemed to generate specific impulses that affected and moved the body in a certain way. The specificities of how the body reacted to certain imagery as a trigger and of how the body affected a change in the activities of the imagination are of interest in this research.

Through the process of inner witnessing and the intention to observe experience by expanding awareness towards the experiential aspects and the occurring at any given moment, the interconnectedness and 'oneness' of seemingly different processes became obvious. The

[95] Transcript file: 07.03.22, part 2, lines 78–80, p. 3.
[96] Transcript file 07.03.22, part 2, lines 54–58, p. 2.
[97] Transcript file: 07.03.22, part 2, lines 61–65, pp. 2-3.

challenge that my collaborators and I faced was that to *stay between and across* the different aspects of experience required intentional work with focus and awareness.

5.2.3. Softening Awareness

My collaborators and I noticed that it was difficult to be aware of more than one process at a time. I observed that we easily got fascinated by the active aspects of experience and forgot about the others (which continued to tacitly affect it). Or, in visiting the aspects of experience, we got "distracted"[98] (as Ryberg described it) by the information emerging, finding it difficult to remain in the flow of what was unfolding. To expand awareness, notice, and remain in the flow of the different aspects of experience, it was necessary to *soften*.

Ellis and dance practitioner Shaun McLeod reflect on their work with Authentic Movement and use the term "soft" to describe attention in the practice:

> Attention is certainly part of [Authentic Movement], but a particular understanding of attention. It isn't a precise, directed, piercing quality. Sometimes it is about releasing a strong grip on attention, and facilitating a softer, cradling of attention. It is about attending less in some instrumental way ('pay attention!'), than in the way you might tend to animals, plants or children that have developmental processes which need supporting over time. (Ellis & McLeod, 2019)

Without direct influence, the same term and a relevant attitude towards the practice—and towards attention as a component of awareness—emerged independently in this study. Authentic Movement seems to cultivate, as Westwick formulates it, "a compassionate rather than vigilant awareness" (2021, p. 126).

I began referring to the attitude required to stay between the different aspects of experience as *softening*, "soften[ing] the control", "soften[ing] … consciousness," or "soften[ing of] the way [the one exploring] consciously g[a]ve direction within the [explorations]"[99]. In this post-practice stage, I distil and articulate this approach as *softening awareness*.

[98] Transcript file: 21.03.22, part 5, line 10, p. 1.
[99] Transcript file: 03.04.22, part 3, lines 161–168, pp. 5–6.

Softening awareness is a way of blurring the edges of the focal point of awareness, opening towards its periphery. It is a gentle awareness that embraces what emerges in experience without interrupting its flow and, most importantly, without identifying with it. *Softening awareness* initiates what feels like a slowing of time, stretching it and ultimately dissolving it. It loosens the grip on that which is known and easily palpable, on the apparent solidity of things, opening spaces and new dimensions of experience. Through *softening awareness*, defences collapse and control is suspended. It is an invitation to *surrender* to an unfolding and expanding experience. Essentially, this is a state of openness and vulnerability that requires a safe space.

The intentions behind this approach, although not explicitly conceptualised and articulated as *softening awareness* during the practice, were fundamental for the explorative processes in Phases Two and Three.

Chodorow says that the practice of imagining "doesn't mean merging with images and off you go", it is a deliberate "opening towards the unconscious, yet not identifying with it" (Chodorow in Zenoff, 1999, p. 223). Through the softening of awareness, the one exploring becomes aware of the active and tacit aspects of their experience and tries to embrace them without letting one overshadow the others for prolonged periods of time. Consequently, at a certain moment, an active mode of awareness becomes dominant, but, by softening, a connection with the constantly changing periphery of awareness is kept present.

Anna Halprin's approach, integrated into "the cornerstone" of her practice, the Life/Art Process,[100] is characterised by working with and integrating three levels of awareness: "physical (the body, sensory awareness, sensations, movement), emotional (feelings/emotions) and mental (imagery, associations, conscious reflection and integration into daily life)" (Worth & Poynor, 2004, pp. 59–60). She describes these as "components" of experience "function[ing] continually in a mutual feedback process" (A. Halprin, 2000, p. 19). The conditional separation

[100] The Life/Art Process is integrated into the training approach at the Tamalpa Institute (established by Anna Halprin and her daughter Daria Halprin in 1978). Developed to "investigate the complex and potentially transformative relationship between artistic expression and life experience", the Life/Art Process encompasses workshops, training, and performance practices. It draws on the RSVP Cycles (see RSVP Cycles in Chapter 6, Section 6.3.2. Leading a Collaborative Dance-Making Process, p. 182) to make "elements of the creative process visible and accessible" in a collective work, as well as on the Five Stages of Healing (developed in collaboration with Daria Halprin as a method to support participants "to assimilate what they learned from performance back into daily life") (Worth & Poynor, 2021, p. 61). As Anna Halprin defines it, the Life/Art Process is "a method of working with dance [that] seeks to access the life story of each person, and then use this life story as the ground for creating art", following the principle that "as life experience deepens, personal art expression expands, and as art expression expands, life experiences deepen" (A. Halprin, 2000, p. 20).

of awareness in three levels "helps [the] cultivat[ion of] a larger range in each level", but they are ultimately integrated aspects (2000, p. 28). Intentionally paying attention to these processes through the principles behind *softening awareness* and *staying between and across* significantly transformed the quality of the explorations and brought new dimensions to the practice, revealing the relationship between the different aspects of experience.

Orzelek had a session in which she was moved by the images in her mind's eye. On 03.04.22 she was working with memories of her home from the time when she was a child. She imagined herself on the floor, arranging her toys. Then, with her body, she felt the presence of a big child standing behind her. Afterwards she moved forward, as if pushed by the presence of that child:

> I felt like there is like a spirit of this child that is much bigger than me. It's like—it's standing behind me, like its surrounding me, like it's pushing me, kind of. So, I felt this thing. The child was really big. So that's quite overwhelming that the spirit of a child can be like so big.[101]

I would like to include one final example from the practice here, related to an interesting phenomenon that my collaborators and I observed. Working with memories was accompanied by reminders—sometimes embodied—of who we were and how we felt at an earlier stage in our lives. As we became aware of how we had changed, we also observed manifestations of our personal past or present behaviours, which could be seen as unconscious patterns of behaviour revealed through the explorations.

On 14.03.22, Ryberg worked with a place from her childhood. Her exploration was an intense and deeply personal experience which I will not share in detail. In her reflections, she recalled all her movements and shared that she remembered a particular situation but was uncertain whether it had happened exactly the way she remembered it. This memory was related to an event that occurred when she was a young child. She was in a room when someone entered and provoked a situation, to which she reacted in a certain way. Her visceral reaction, manifested in the movements of her body, was particularly intense. As we reflected on her experience, I asked her if she had noticed whether the movements and sensations manifested in the session appeared in her everyday life. Ryberg confirmed that such reactions emerged in situations similar to the one in the memory.

[101] Transcript file: 03.04.22 part 3, lines 143–148, p. 5.

This example illustrates how this way of working with imagining places and environments from the past can reveal unconscious processes both in relation to sedimented historicity and behavioural patterns. Although the manifested information through explorations is not perceived as revealing the factuality of past events, it reflects, triggers, and represents, from a psychological perspective, unconscious patterns of behaviour. In Ryberg's exploration, it is clear how the image evoked an emotional situation that engaged her immediately.

As this research was conducted within an artistic context, we did not examine the manifested material from a psychological perspective. However, the developed approaches to memory work could be beneficial both for the field of performance (bringing awareness to specific behaviours which could be accessed and utilised within artistic work) and psychology (as explorations revealing unconscious patterns of behaviour of which the individual becomes aware).

The end of the explorative stage with Orzelek and Ryberg revealed the potential of the practice to delve deep within the personal. The approaches towards movement explorations developed during the first stage of Phase Two were also employed in my solo practice, which was realised through drawing and painting. My reflections on this process, together with the presentation of several drawings and paintings, can be found in the next section, followed by an examination of the final block of sessions during the first stage of Phase Two, devoted to work with dreams.

5.2.4. Artistic Endeavours in Painting and Drawing

By taking a moment to continue a movement exploration in drawing or writing before the verbal reflection started, I invited my collaborators to follow their own needs and express themselves through the medium they felt most connected to. Orzelek found writing particularly useful and consistently reflected on her explorations through expressive writing. Ryberg tended to make small drawings after her movement explorations. I incorporated my experiences into painting and drawing, activities to which I have always felt connected.

By becoming more aware of unconscious processes, sudden bursts of ideas, themes and sensations become noticeable. As psychologist Rollo May (1994) says:

> The breakthrough of ideas comes from some depth below the level of awareness. I shall call this realm "the unconscious" as a catchall for the subconscious, preconscious, and other dimensions below awareness. When I use the phrase "the unconscious," I, of course, mean it as a shorthand. There is no such thing as "the unconscious"; it is, rather, unconscious dimensions (or aspects or sources) of experience. I define this unconscious as the potentialities for awareness or action which the individual cannot or will not actualize. These potentialities are the source of what can be called "free creativity." The exploration of unconscious phenomena has a fascinating relationship to creativity. (May, 1994, pp. 55–56)

As my attitude towards the links between the different aspects of experience evolved, my approach to painting, which was based on ideas that emerged from the explorations and my imaginative activity, also altered. I found it interesting to apply the discovered approaches to experience to the painting process.

Throughout my painting experiments, I started to notice that I had always been fascinated by the image in my mind's eye while painting or drawing. In a sense, I had been depicting that constantly changing image. After my embodied experiences in Phase Two, I came to feel that drawing is the result of the dynamic between interconnected psychological and physical processes.[102]

Painting, which involves my body, started to feel different. Over time, I began to pay attention to how my imagination affected my body during the painting process, and vice versa. Rather than depicting the mental image, I started to portray the entire experience, including the way my body moved and how I felt. Consequently, the way I used paint changed as well. This was also dictated by my attempt to *soften* my awareness during the painting process. I tried to remove any judgement and follow the processes, moving between and across the different

[102] Anna Halprin's Life/Art Process engages with visual imagery and drawing. In her early practice, she incorporated drawing and dancing while working with children. Later, as her work developed, drawing became a pathway "of exploring the connection between the body and the mind" through work with visualisations and self-portraits (Worth & Poynor, 2004, pp. 63–64). She uses the term "visualisations" to describe the drawn images which emerge from the imagery in the mind's eye as a response to movements or feelings. She uses the term "Psychokinetic Visualisations" to refer to instances in which the drawn image is connected to feelings and emotions through dance (A. Halprin, 2000, p. 26). The process suggests a cyclical activity in which drawing and dancing mutually influence one another. My own work in painting and drawing did not include dancing at the moment of depicting the image on paper but was informed by certain movement explorations I did or witnessed in the studio, accompanied by my heightened somatic awareness in the present moment.

aspects of my experience. I followed the way the information that came with or remained behind the image in my mind's eye generated an energetic force that affected my body. I looked for ways to express that force, revealing, as May describes it, some personal "underlying psychological and spiritual condition" (May, 1994, p. 52).

In the next pages, I present several of my paintings created between April and May 2022, during and shortly after the time that my collaborators and I worked with imagination and memory. The reader is invited to view them as individual artistic creations. Information about the creation of each painting and my artistic intentions are included beneath it.



Figure 6: Painting[103]

[103] Acrylic paint on paper. This painting is based on a movement exploration I did on 03.04.22. During the exploration, I worked with a place from my childhood. For the painting, I used several body designs that I could recognise in the video recording of that session. I arranged these on the paper intuitively. Initially, I intended to portray my memory of the experiences I had within these body designs as felt during the movement exploration. However, while painting, my current psychophysical condition dominated. Consequently, the painting conveys a blend of my kinaesthetic memories of the exploration and my current psychophysical condition at the moment of painting.



Figure 7: Drawing[104]

[104] Black ink on paper. This drawing is a continuation of the previous one. I took images and structures from the colourful painting and utilised them in Active Imagination work. This drawing appears to be moving away from its initial inspiration: the movement exploration. The drawing has its own life and development. It is more depictive in nature—I illustrated the images in my mind's eye, which constantly evolved and changed as the drawing process proceeded. Kinaesthetic awareness and sensations are not directly expressed through the embodied act of drawing but are included in the way the image is depicted on the paper. Unintentionally, the evolution of my creative endeavour from doing the previous painting to creating this more articulated symbolisation of the process aligned with some of the facets in Hincks's model. I began by playing with what was given (Delving), exploring what emerged and noting what interested me (Raising); I then explored the themes that arose (Assaying); and finally expressed the work in a "specific finalised form" and aesthetic (Articulating) (Hincks, 2014, p. 52).



Figure 8: Painting[105]

[105] Coloured ink and acrylic paint on paper. This painting is inspired by a dream I had on 19.04.22. I used aspects of the dream in Active Imagination to create visual imagery with a symbolic character.



Figure 9: Painting[106]

[106] Coloured ink and acrylic paint on paper. This painting is inspired by my movement exploration done on 14.03.22 (see Original Transcript, pp. 102–104). During the exploration, I worked with the home I had as a child. For the painting itself, I utilised the visual images from the memory work, specifically those where I was walking in the garden. Rather than depicting the visual image literally, I aimed to incorporate it into Active Imagination, seeking out its symbolic aspects and allowing it to dictate the style of depiction.



Figure 10: Painting[107]

[107] Acrylic paint on paper. This painting is inspired by Orzelek's exploration on 06.04.22. I used some body designs from her work, which I found significant and expressive in relation to my own experience as a witness.



Figure 11: Painting[108]

[108] Watercolour on paper. This painting is inspired by Orzelek's exploration on 06.04.22. I used a body design that she manifested. In this case, my intention was not to depict the body design literally. Instead, I intended to portray how the body design affected me, in combination with my current psychophysical condition while painting. In this case, as I was using watercolours, the painting process relied heavily on chance and the unpredictable behaviour of the paint. Respectively, my conscious interaction and manipulation during the painting process was minimal compared to the paintings presented above.



Figure 12: Painting[109]

[109] Watercolour on paper. This painting is inspired by Orzelek's exploration on 09.05.22. This painting was executed in the same manner as Figure 11.



Figure 13: Painting[110]

[110] Oil paint on canvas. This painting is inspired by an image in my mind's eye. I followed how it affected the way I applied the paint to the canvas. I was not trying to depict the image literally, but rather to allow it to appear on the canvas in a way dictated by my psychophysical condition at that moment.

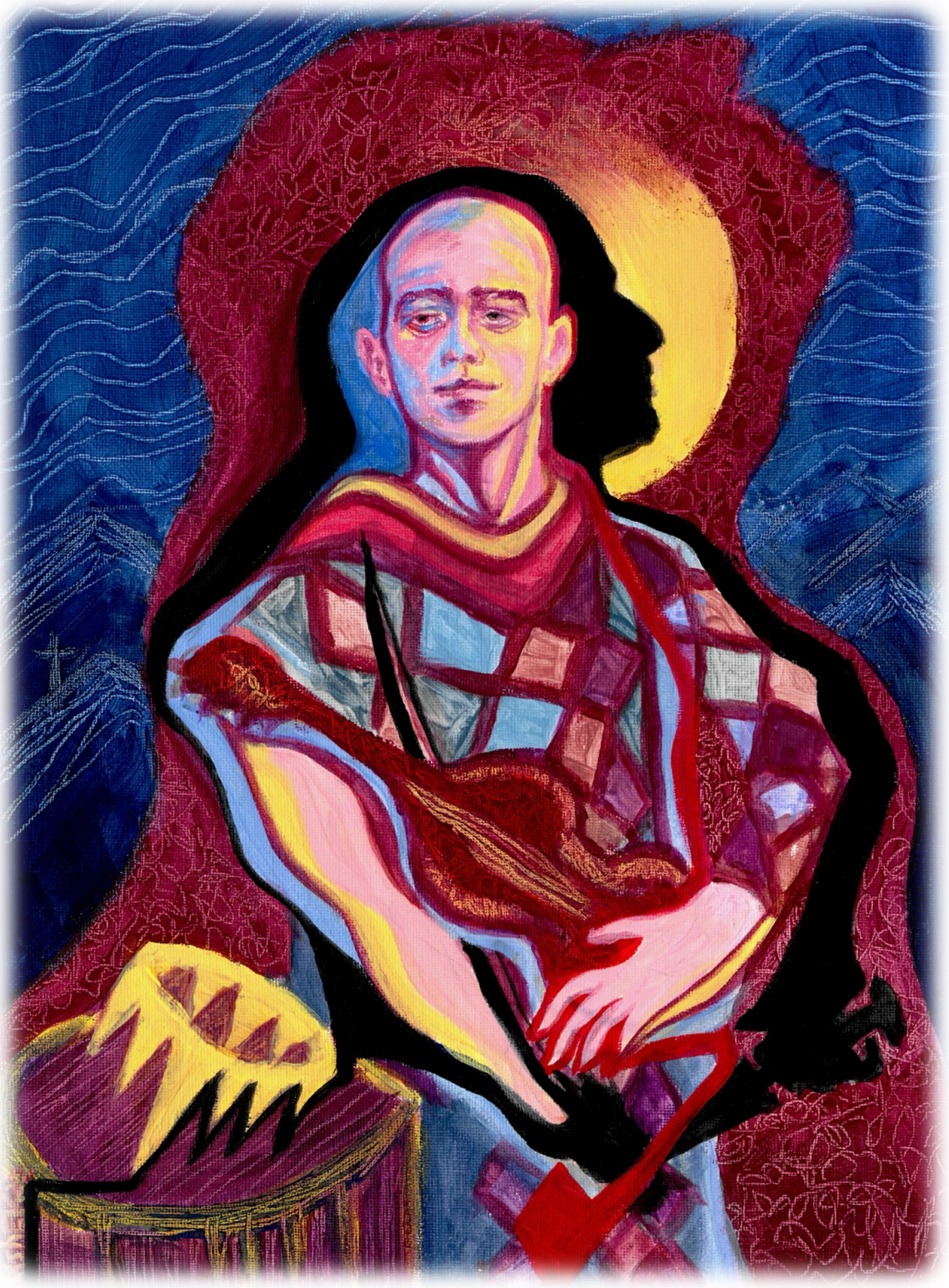


Figure 14: Painting[111]

[111] Acrylic paint on canvas. This painting is inspired by a movement exploration and Active Imagination with remembering a person from my past.



Figure 15: Painting[112]

[112] Acrylic paint on paper. This painting followed an Active Imagination activity. The painting process itself reflected the way I felt at the time I created the painting, incorporating my feelings into the portrayal of the image represented in my mind's eye.



Figure 16: Painting[113]

[113] Acrylic paint on paper. This painting did not follow any pre-composed mental, visual, or kinaesthetic imagery. Instead, I tried to perceive the paper as a representation of imagination itself. With this in mind, I began placing paint on the paper and gradually followed how the paint strokes came together to form an image. Of course, during the painting process, I began to see shapes and forms, which I followed as I softened my awareness. While painting this work, I noticed moments when I felt as if the painting itself was observing me. It felt as if the painting had its own life and process, which I could influence, but which also influenced me back. I found it quite interesting to observe this process and myself in it, as the final, materialised image emerged.

5.2.5. Dream Work

My inclination to work with memories through imaginative activity was motivated by the assumption that remembering and imagining would simultaneously stimulate and enhance each other, enabling those exploring both to connect with their imagination while visualising something familiar and to awaken forgotten memories through imaginative activity. This assumption proved to be true, as both my collaborators and I managed to delve into our memories via imagination. In order to respect the personal, "mutable, and ethereal" nature of memories, we engaged in movement explorations by adopting a passive approach and resisted actively transforming or confronting the emerging psychophysical data (Hunter, 2012, p. 6). In these explorations, we were guided by careful observation, navigation between and across aspects of experience, and a readiness to follow the unfolding process.

My long-term intention, however, was to delve into a more active engagement with the imaginative realm. After our work with memories, in which we had continuously engaged in maintaining openness towards both imagery in the mind's eye and the somatic aspects of experience, recognising their links and the ways in which they inform each other, we delved into work with dreams.

I conducted five sessions with Orzelek between November 2022 and January 2023, during which we engaged with personal dreams via imaginative work. As we had already established the habit of recording and reflecting on our dreams (we had worked with one of Orzelek's dreams in Phase One),[114] we already had a dozen dreams to engage with. After agreeing to be attentive to any new dreams that emerged within the timeframe of our sessions, we reviewed both the dreams we had already recorded and some dreams from before the beginning of this research, selecting themes that we found interesting.

We followed the established way of working—I moved while Orzelek witnessed, and then Orzelek moved twice while I witnessed her. The mover, commencing by closing their eyes and recognising and attuning to their current psychophysical condition, then transitioned to Authentic Movement with intention, utilising a specific theme from a dream, such as imagery, environments, narratives, or recurring figures.

[114] See Chapter 4, Section 4.4. Pieces from the Practice, p. 90.

One fundamental intention differentiated our dreamwork from the previous memory sessions. In working with dreams, we did not aim merely to follow the imaginative narrative as it appeared but to actively engage with it by altering it, testing its limits, and exploring what might emerge from it, therefore descending into vivid imaginative and embodied daydreaming. Similarly to Stromsted's DreamDancing, we utilised an element from a dream as a starting point (which, in DreamDancing, may involve the embodiment of dream figures, behaviours, emotional states, or a movement phrase of "shapes, gestures, and actions" from a particular dream scene), aiming to engage in Active Imagination that would allow us to "dream the dream onward" (2025, p. 226).

On 11.12.22, Orzelek and I worked with specific figures from our dreams, followed by the first exploration in which we both moved and witnessed simultaneously. The intention for the first part of the session was simple:

> the intention is to summon [the figure from your dreams] in your imagination. To summon it, to imagine it next to you or above you, whatever, somewhere. And then to let this figure lead you somewhere, to see what this figure wants to tell you, or if this figure is just standing, let it stand, or if you want to ask this figure something, ask them.[115]

I worked with a female figure that continuously appeared in my dreams, while Orzelek worked with a male figure. My exploration evoked a vivid, visceral experience in me:

> I start standing and then my left hand starts moving. And then, so basically, I start imagining this feminine figure and it's next to me. And then my left hand moves slowly as if it's moved by this feminine figure. And then, another one appeared which moved my right hand. And then I was as if moving in water, so all my movements were, how can I describe them? Flow, yeah. … And then I was underwater and I see myself doing a lot of flow movements. I can see my right hand leading me a lot and then there was rain. The last part there was rain. So, it was raining for a very long time and I was moving under the rain and that was a very strong image for me. It was very strong. At some point the feminine figure was missing but it felt like she was still present because of the rain. It was like the feminine feel was the water or the rain and I felt good while the rain was falling. … I see myself being moved by the rain. … I'm imagining it's raining on me … I was the water itself.[116]

After Orzelek did her exploration, she reflected on imagining herself being within the layers of earth: "everything was black and I needed to move through mud, like a black sand. And

[115] Transcript file: 11.12.22 part 1, lines 49–53, p. 2.
[116] Transcript file: 11.12.22 part 2, lines 2–26, p. 1.

everything was very dark, but it was also warm. So, it wasn't cold. I felt like it's some kind of like energy, warm feeling. And so, I call this like Father Earth".[117] She also recalled that "there was like a voice, but the voice was like not clear enough and it was kind of like, not singing, but kind of like… like telling me something but in this kind of melody way. But I think it was quite similar to what I've actually experienced once in our … second session".[118] It was interesting to see the theme with the voice *re-emerging* again.

We both experienced a sense of freedom and the ability to interact with the imagined in an embodied way. Afterwards, we undertook an exploration in which we moved together—I took the image of the rain, and Orzelek took Father Earth. Our collective experience resulted in vivid individual and shared imagery, requiring different levels of awareness and the ability to integrate internal and external phenomena as they emerged. Overall, the work with dreams had a distinct quality: the environment or landscape we moved within was not merely imagined but rather *imaginal*, pointing towards "a symbolic and possibly unknowable landscape that exists personally and transpersonally" (Bacon, 2012, p. 121).

Reflecting on this entire investigation, I recognise themes and motives as re-emerging phenomena and outline them as an implicit yet essential aspect of the foundational methodology adopted, particularly when applied within a processual context. Revisiting the investigation, I acknowledge an interesting, even synchronistic, relationship between the session described above and the evolution of Phase Three. Exactly two years after the session with Orzelek, on 11.12.24, the premiere of *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024) took place. As the reader will see in the next chapter, the performance was based on work with the liquid element of water and included a scene inspired by explorations with the sound of rain. Furthermore, collective movement explorations, as a collective imagining endeavour, were a fundamental aspect of the performance-making process. All these elements can be seen as themes that had sublimated in that single session with Orzelek. Any influence they might have had on me, however, was entirely implicit—once we moved on to the next stage of Phase Two, my collaborators and I continued working with memories.[119]

[117] Transcript file: 11.12.22 part 3, lines 34–37, p. 2.
[118] Transcript file: 11.12.22 part 3, lines 20–24, p. 1.
[119] Before commencing the second stage of Phase Two, Orzelek and I had a session on 20.01.23, in which we continued exploring moving and imagining together. In this session, we did not use dreams or memories as a starting point; rather, we began the practice by considering our current psychophysical condition. Principles of collective moving based on Authentic Movement began to emerge—we discussed approaches towards the presence of the other, honesty, relational dynamics, decision-making, etc. These were neither intentionally nor

By looking at the processual development of this research, I recognise that, regardless of my intention while practising to consciously follow the continuity of the process and to implement what was discovered within the subsequent phases of research, there were themes and phenomena, perhaps easily categorised as unconscious, which re-emerged in tacit ways, not immediately recognised by either myself or my collaborators. This re-emergence was probably not coincidental but represented something that sought to be expressed, and was expressed, through the process. I assume this speaks about the nature of processual research and the adopted methodological approaches. In order to facilitate the explicit and implicit emergence and re-emergence of phenomena, these approaches require time and resist ultimate framings. I elaborate on this later in this thesis.

Returning to the second stage of Phase Two, the utilisation of work with imagination and memories evolved in the process of creating the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023) and the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023), presented in the next section.

Edited footage from some of the sessions during the first stage of Phase Two can be seen in *Video 2: Phase Two, Stage One Studio Practice* (https://youtu.be/bTKdvT0ofzA).

5.3. Stage Two: Inner Spaces

In what follows, I present the transition from predominantly explorative sessions to a collaborative practice intended for performance-making.

The collaboration with Orzelek and Pribyl took place from July to December 2023 and culminated in the presentation of *Inner Spaces* (2023). After conducting several workshops with professional dancers and dancers-in-training,[120] in which I shared the work with memories developed through Phase Two, I invited Orzelek and Pribyl to delve into a longer process of working with personal memories. We met several times in July and, after a break in August, continued to meet weekly until the piece's premiere. At the beginning, I conducted a few collective sessions. After that I met with each of them individually for 2–3 hours each week. Throughout the weeks before the premiere we explored together as a group.

directly transferred to the process in Phase Three. However, they are retrospectively recognised as tacitly affecting the development of the Collective Imagining Process within and beyond the parameters of this PhD.

[120] The workshops conducted during the different phases of research are presented in Appendix D, p. 225.

5.3.1. Mapping the Experience

In our first session, as my intention was to continue working with imagining (remembering) environments from the past, I invited my collaborators to first explore embodying the current environment and then to walk around the Laban building, choose a space they felt drawn to, then observe and notice its environmental qualities and whatever was happening there. Once they were back in the studio, I invited them to revisit their experience by engaging in Authentic Movement with intention, imagining the environment they had visited, and observing and embodying the information emerging as a process within their mind's eye, kinaesthesia, and soma.

Afterwards, we began working with important places from our pasts. We were all moving, witnessing, tracking, and reflecting on our experiences. Then, over a prolonged period of time, each one of us focused on a specific place and undertook explorations with that place or with aspects of reflections on explorations with it. Vast amounts of memories, themes, and movements emerged. We later worked with the principles behind exploring movement and utilising moments and pools from sessions in order to extract movements, gestures, body structures, imagery, and themes.

Throughout our explorations, we began to "extract the essential points"[121] or to *map* our experiences in various ways, noting significant movement pools and associated themes or imagery. The generated reflections, as *maps of experience*, were seen as scores and were essential for the development and choreographing of *Inner Spaces* (2023). Below, I include several examples of these maps.

[121] Transcribed from the video recording of the session on 15.09.23 (File: PXL_20230915_102813913.TS.mp4).

- Maps of Experience



Figure 17: Pribyl's Map of Experience 1.1[122]

[122] Pribyl's Map of Experience 1.1 and 1.2 represent her reflection, through drawing and writing, on her exploration of imagining the home where she lived as a child.

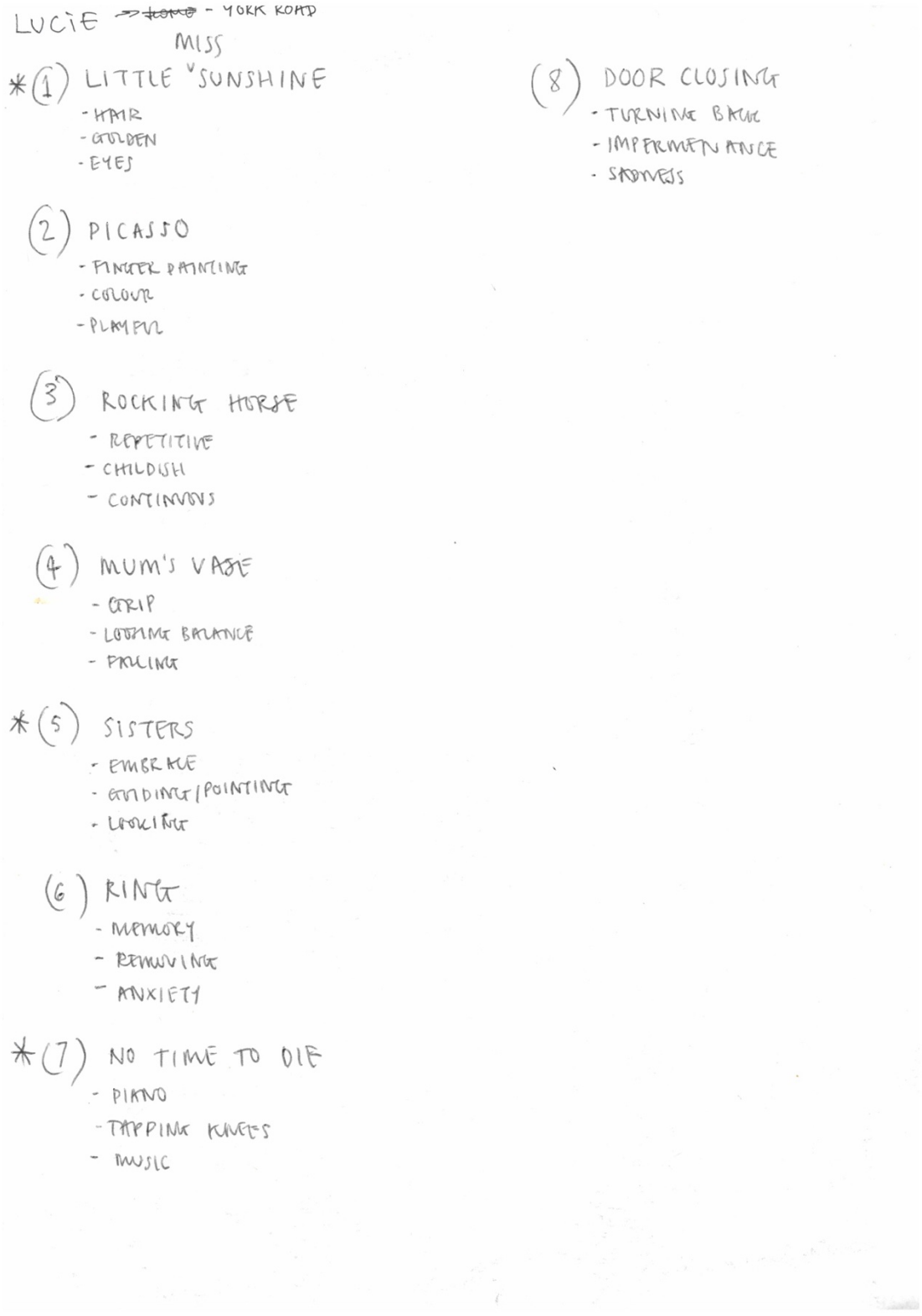


Figure 18: Pribyl's Map of Experience 1.2[123]

[123] Some of the moments that Pribyl indicated were utilised in further explorations, leading to the development of new reflections used as movement scores.

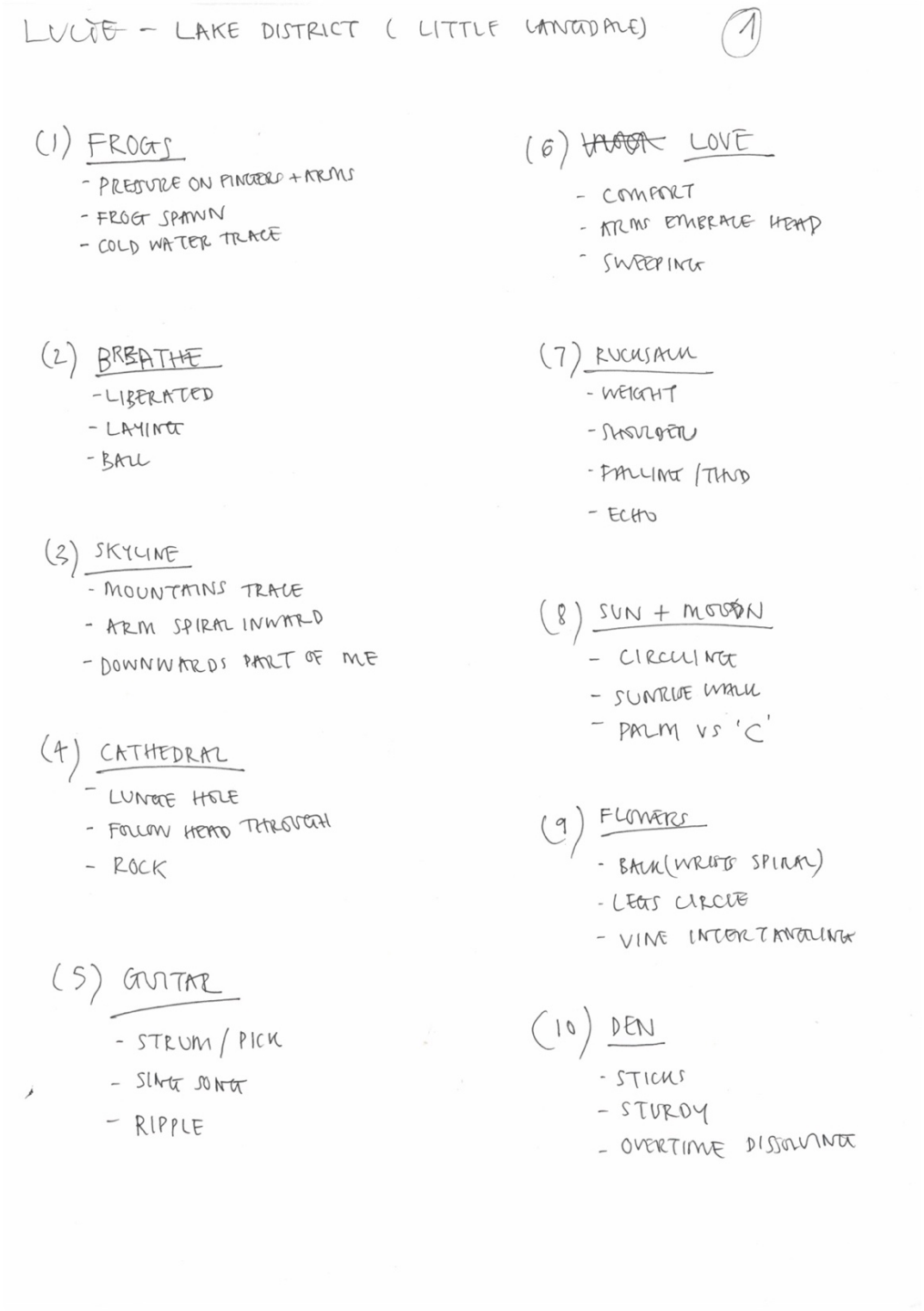


Figure 19: Pribyl's Map of Experience 2[124]

[124] Pribyl's exploration of imagining the Lake District became the foundation for her solo in the performance. Throughout the course of work with the Lake District, I invited Pribyl to extract movements, gestures, and phrases from her explorations, situating them in space and time and exploring different ways of transitioning between them.

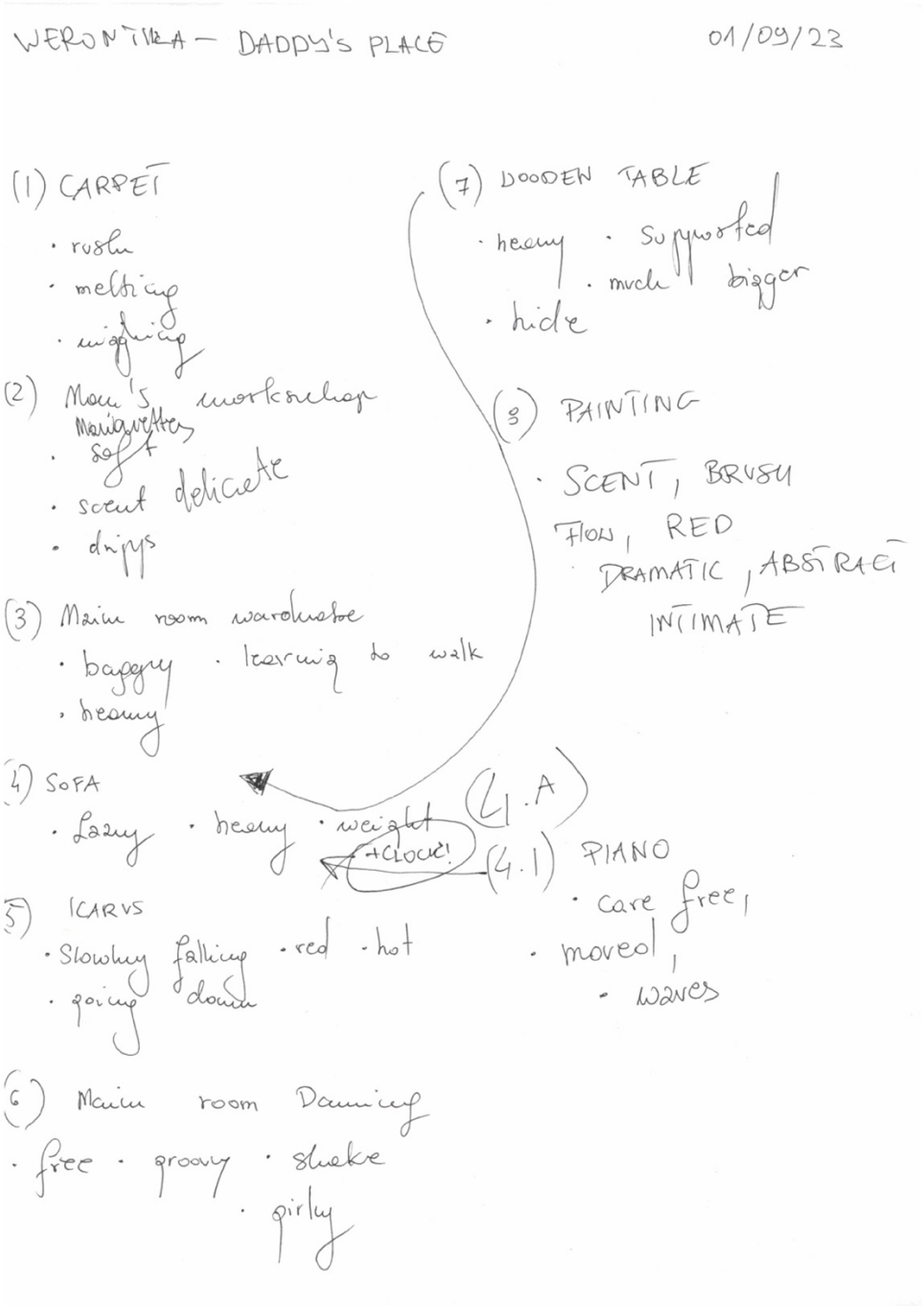


Figure 20: Orzelek's Map of Experience[125]

[125] Orzelek's exploration of imagining her father's home ("daddy's place") became the foundation for her solo in the performance. The maps of experience were employed in different tasks: for instance, we explored working with separate elements from the extracted material, utilising them in Authentic Movement with intention sessions. In this way, further detail and data from the horizon of the past emerged. During these explorations, we applied the principles behind *softening awareness* and *staying between and across* aspects of experience (even though these were not yet conceptualised). However, in this dance-making process, emphasis was placed on our approach towards experience from the perspective of *dancers.* I invited my collaborators to stay between the aspects of experience and to allow themselves, through their bodies and artistic nature, to become direct mediators of the unfolding experience: to observe how the processes within their mind's eye affected their movements and vice versa; to intend to embody, in a non-illustrative manner, everything that occurred in their mind's eye; to become mediators of their imagination.

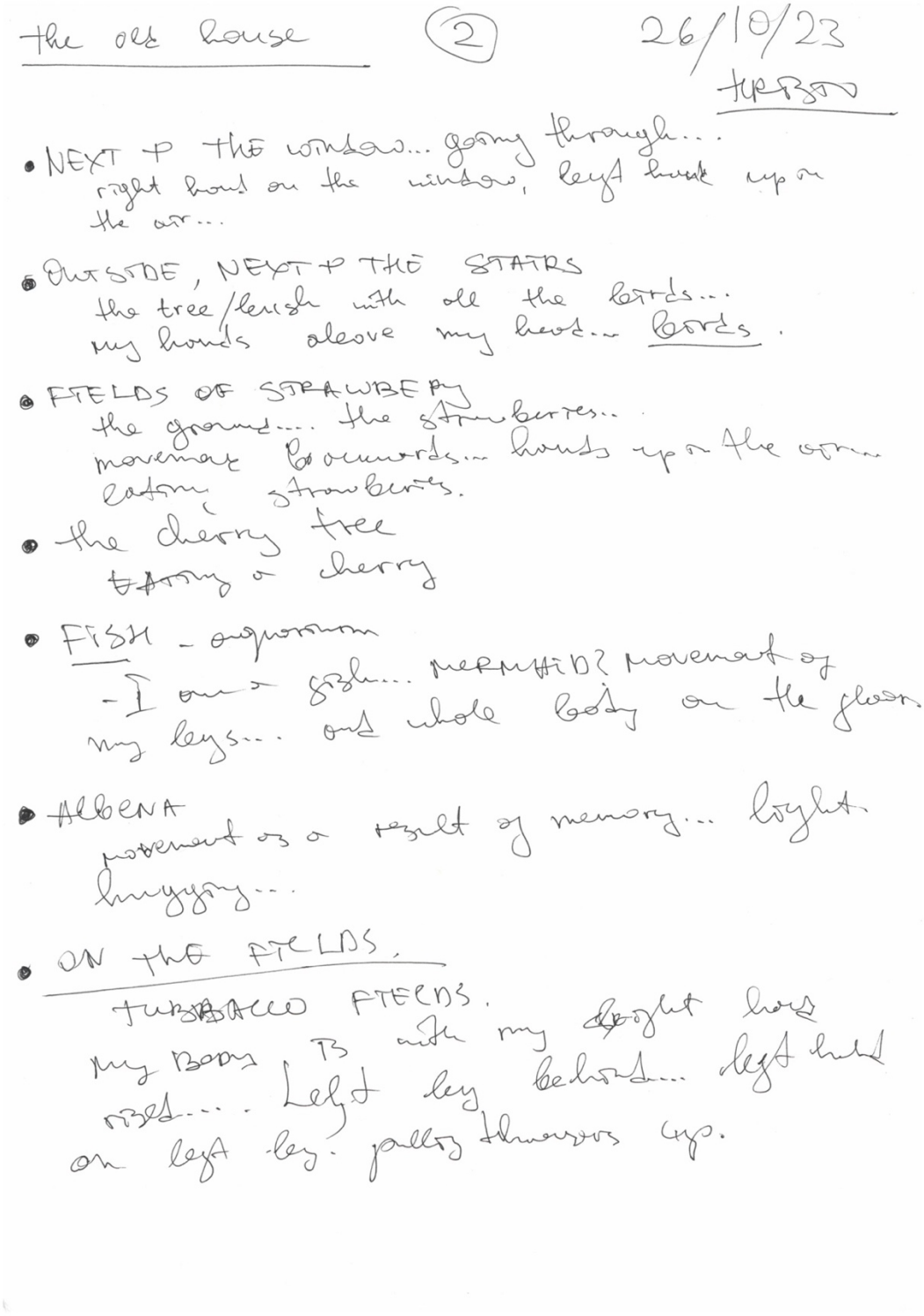


Figure 21: Ushev's Map of Experience 1.1[126]

[126] Ushev's Map of Experience 1.1 and 1.2 represent my explorations of imagining my childhood home, which became the foundation for my solo in the performance.

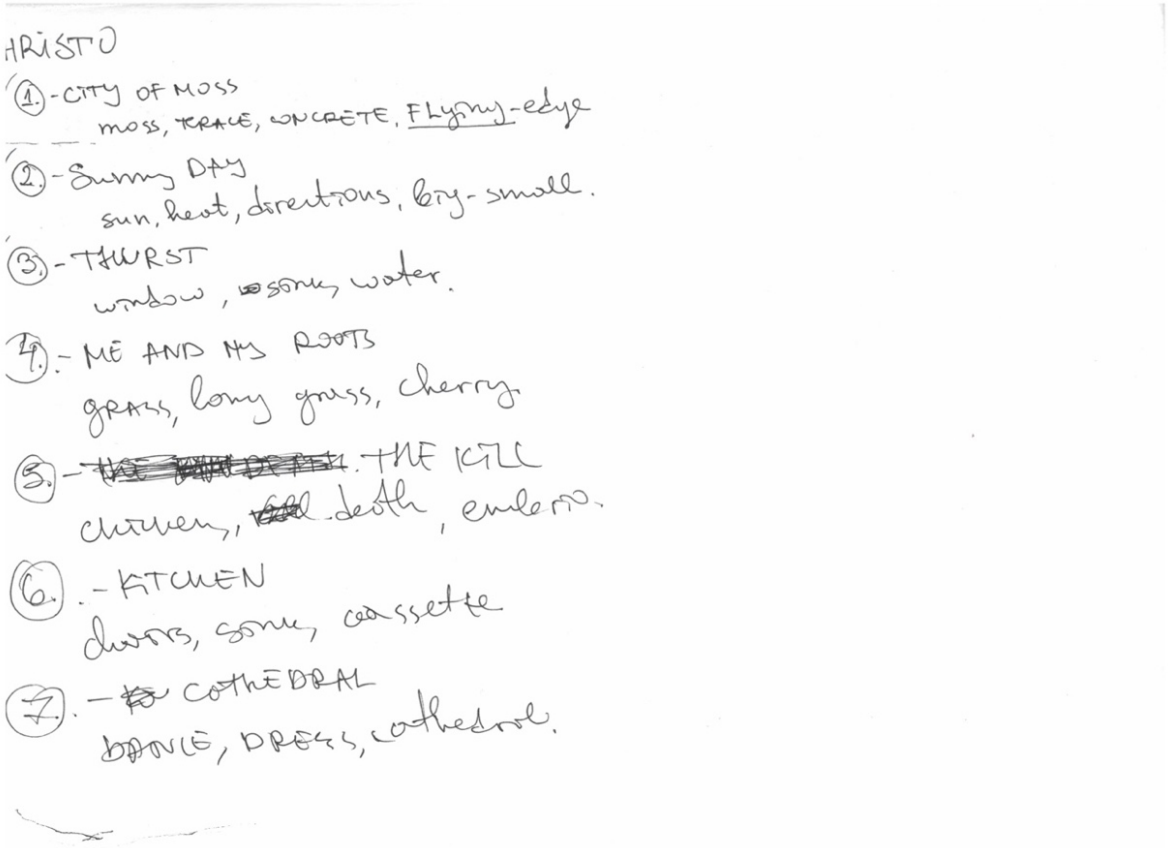


Figure 22: Ushev's Map of Experience 1.2

5.3.2. Ultimate Framing Arrested

The main challenge I faced throughout the creative process was the transition between the explorative aspects of the research and the performance-making endeavours. As a choreographer and leader of the investigation, the performance-making work in Phases Two and Three was a significant personal journey for me, suggesting insights into artistic articulation and framing, particularly in relation to the explorative approaches adopted.

Throughout the process in Phase Two, my collaborators and I progressed through various stages of incorporating our personal experiences into dance-making. During the initial stages of the work, my role was that of a facilitator, mover, and witness. Within the Didactic–Democratic model, designed by professor of dance Jo Butterworth (2009),[127] my role aligned with a strictly democratic approach, as I continuously witnessed the open, somatic, and creative processes of those practising, while also engaging in movement explorations as a mover. After weeks of exploration, my collaborators and I began employing the maps of experience as scores within the tasks and choreographic challenges that I proposed. Thus, my role shifted to that of a "pilot", giving tasks and directions for the creative experiments (Butterworth, 2009, p. 178). These tasks involved the restructuring of the extracted maps, the utilisation of elements of them into further exploration through exploring movement, and the introduction of different challenges addressing tempo, quality of movement, and the positioning of the body in space and time. As our work developed, my role further evolved and I began introducing my own inspirations, themes, and interpretations of the emerging material. In these stages of the work, I framed movement scores and movement phrases and, by adopting a more didactic approach, invited my collaborators to engage with them.

I observed that, although my collaborators executed the choreographed movement material perfectly, something essential was missing: we were departing from the deeply personal presence of a mover engaged in a moment-by-moment encounter with the unknown. I

[127] The Didactic–Democratic model represents a framework for devising dance through five distinctive approaches, which follow specific collaborative dynamics. These approaches serve as an umbrella encompassing the different roles that a choreographer can take in relation to the dancers in a dance-making process. They are "organised in such a way as to demonstrate the value of approaching some aspects of choreography from a directed, 'teaching by showing' approach, termed 'didactic'; and dialogically, [from] a shared, cooperative, collaborative approach, termed 'democratic'" (Butterworth, 2009, p. 177). The Didactic–Democratic framework suggests that in a collaborative process there is a "slippage" between the different approaches, as "dance making in the studio may utilise several of these processes in the course of making a single choreography" (Butterworth, 2009, p. 177).

experienced a feeling of resistance, both from myself and my collaborators. This was not the result of their inability to generate, learn, or execute choreographed movements, but was rather related to a gut feeling that the didactic choreographic approach did not suit or serve the open, vulnerable, and deeply personal process we had experienced up to this stage. I felt that the established approaches towards the explorative practice had to extend to the performance itself, and that the strict, didactic choreographic pathway was blocking this from happening.

Looking back at the creative process and considering the research development in Phase Three, I recognise my artistic inclination to translate material emerging within the explorative process into a performance. This process of translating and framing, as approached in some stages of work during Phase Two, was not integrated with the principles adopted and developed during the explorative practice. Such framing, following the introduction of my own interpretations, concepts, precise movement phrases, and projections, conflicted with the established explorative and collaborative dynamic, and furthermore was in contradiction with non-judgmental inner witnessing. I refer to this final, closed framing as *ultimate framing*.

At this point in the process, I felt that my collaborators and I needed a performance-making framework that would facilitate exploration and creative articulation, one that would draw on certain elements from the adopted approaches and employ them within an artistic context, supporting both choreographer and performers. These factors determined the process in Phase Three, further examined in the next chapter.

Returning to the final stages of preparing for the performance in Phase Two, I removed all the strict choreographic phrases I had created. I decided to shape the performance around the core of the practice, presenting our raw explorative sessions and the way they evolved into the devising of three separate solos, emerging from our work with embodied imagination and memories. The solos resulted from a democratic collaboration, with me suggesting directions and variants of presentation, then consulting my collaborators on whether and how these resonated with them.

The solos were heavily influenced by our Authentic Movement with intention explorations, our explorative movement endeavours, and our extraction and utilisation of moments from explorations. Using the extracted maps as scores, we played with elements of our experiences, finding ways to bring them together and consider what would work best for us as dancers and performers—but, most importantly, as individuals sharing something deeply

personal. As a choreographer, I suggested a possible structure: an order of the extracted elements and their placement in space and time. The solos did not represent solely my choreographic vision but were the result of a collaborative creative process between myself and the dancer performing the solo, a process that shaped a movement aesthetic emerging from the dancer's own movement vocabulary.

Once the solos were fixed, I invited my collaborators to go through them with openness and curiosity towards the unknown. In this way, we attempted to incorporate the most significant elements of the explorations into the performance itself. Even though the solos were fixed, they were synchronised with the dancer's current experience, allowing them to evolve and adapt with each performance.

To support the incorporation of principles from our explorations into the performance of the solos, I designed a game that my collaborators and I played, which was also a part of the performative sharing. This will be presented in the next section.

5.3.3. Inner Spaces Performative Sharing

The performative sharing *Inner Spaces* was an approximately 1-hour-long act separated into three main parts.[128] Designed to share the progress of my PhD research, the audience was provided with pieces of paper presenting the investigation. Then, the audience was invited to enter the Studio Theatre at Trinity Laban and follow prints scattered on the floor, which represented the drawings, maps, and reflections that my collaborators and I created during our explorations (including some of the drawings and paintings I did during the first stage of Phase Two). The audience members were invited to sit on chairs arranged in a large circle. Within that circle we engaged with our movement practice. On each chair I had placed a piece of paper containing information about our work and the principles of the research, Authentic Movement, and the roles of movers and witnesses. The audience was invited to be a witness to our practice. Below, I include screenshots of the information sheets.

[128] *Inner Spaces* was performed on 09.11.23 at the Studio Theatre, Trinity Laban.

- Performance Sheets

INNER SPACES

Fragments of a Practice

by Hristo Ushev

Dear guest,

Thank you for devoting some of your time to this sharing.

Once you enter the Studio Theatre, feel free to walk around and look at the scattered prints on the floor (please, do not touch them and do not take photos of them). They represent an investigative process revealing dear and personal aspects of myself and my collaborators in this journey – Weronika Orzelek and Lucie Pribyl. Following the aims of the investigation and its studio-based movement experimentations, the prints portray a creative work with memories, dreams and imagination. When you finish exploring the small exhibition, feel welcome to sit on one of the chairs.

We invite you to *witness* a movement practice. It is the very basis of this investigation. You can find some information about it on the paper placed on your chair. We - the *movers* - will enter the space and will start moving. Each of us will charge their movement practice by imagining a specific place from their past - a place which contains bits of their life and their story. And we will let ourselves be moved by what's emerging within our psychophysical systems. After we finish with the movement practice, the reflection on it and a playful game we do, we will introduce three solos to you. We created the solos inspired by our work with these places from our past.

In a way, these places are the very containers of our memories, of moments of our life. In a way, they composed spaces within our mental and physical beings - spaces that are clusters of thoughts, feelings, sensations... Spaces that are flexible, imaginative, elusive... but also palpable, fascinating, vivid and genuine.

Existing somewhere within us, they are waiting to be entered and to awaken and trigger implicit aspects of ourselves.

movers: Weronika Orzelek, Lucie Pribyl and Hristo Ushev

idea and concept: Hristo Ushev

This work-in-progress aims to share aspects of the practical artistic development of the PhD investigation ***Encountering the Unconscious – a Practical Research across the Fields of Psychology, Phenomenology and Creative Practices*** *directed by Hristo Ushev. Informed and inspired by concepts and methodologies from the fields of psychology, phenomenology and somatic movement practices, the research is building a bridge between these fields, extracting a meaning of the term 'unconscious' as all the psychophysical processes that are not-conscious, or not-yet-conscious. Respectively, the focus of the research is the very phenomenon of what is not-conscious, as experienced by the subjective personality (or the subjective consciousness) of the one engaged in the research's practical movement experimentations. The work, while following studio-based practice, is trying to find ways to trigger and to manifest unconscious contents, proposing different ways for the achievement of that, while engaging the triggered contents into* ***transdisciplinary artistic creative acts****. Up to this point, the research proposed work with* ***current psychophysical condition****, with* ***personal memories, personal dreams*** *and free* ***imaginative activity****.*

Figure 23: Inner Spaces Information Sheet 1.1

THE MOVEMENT PRACTICE

We invite you to be a *witness* to a movement practice.

It is a part from a series of movement experiments, dedicated to work with memories.

We will enter the space; we will make an eye contact with you; we will close our eyes....

We will take the time needed to arrive in our bodies, to connect with our current psychophysical condition...

And then – we will imagine...

Each one of us will imagine a specific place from their past. We have been working with these places for quite some time now, and this performative act is a tribute to them and to what they contain. There are so many stories hiding in these places...

And we will allow ourselves to be moved by what's emerging in our imagination and in our bodies...

This movement practice is an invitation for someone to move and for someone to witness. The ***mover*** *enters the space and closes their eyes, considering what's happening within their psychophysical system. The mover will start moving when they feel to do that, following their own rhythm. They are invited to move in the way that they want, to vocalise, to open or close their eyes, to stay still or to dance. The* ***witness*** *stays calmly on the side of the space. They will support the mover by carefully following and tracking what the mover is manifesting. At the same time, they will be aware of their own processes and how the moving person affects them. Both mover and witness observe and follow without judgement. After that they reflect on the experience. The mover talks first about* ***what happened with their body****, and after that – about* ***what happened in their imagination.***

In its core, the practice is a movement experiment that invites the not-conscious psychophysical processes of the one moving to manifest. Strongly influenced by the principles of ***Authentic Movement*** *(AM), the movement experimentations in this research are getting closer to AM's roots in* ***Active Imagination****. The relationship between the visual imagery and the physical sensations of the one moving is an essential aspect and a characteristic of the practice. The mover starts with considering their current psychophysical condition, but after that they intentionally direct their imagination towards certain contents of their perceptions (or history of perceptions). The mover waits, manifests, follows and responds to the dynamics between their visual imagery and physical sensations/movements, staying truthful to the processes, trusting them and observing them with no judgement.*

Figure 24: Inner Spaces Information Sheet 1.2

The first part of the performative sharing was an invitation for the audience to witness our Authentic Movement practice. Orzelek, Pribyl, and I entered the space, made eye contact with members of the audience, closed our eyes, and began our exploration. First, we executed Authentic Movement with our current psychophysical condition, becoming aware of our bodies and noting what was happening in our inner worlds. Then, each of us transitioned to Authentic Movement with intention, imagining a place from our past (places we had worked with for a long time). We did a 10-minute-long exploration, which ended with the sound of a bell. We opened our eyes and began reflecting on our movement session, focusing on the movement pools we could remember.

The next part was a game that we began playing as a part of the explorative process. I edited three tracks containing a mix of our reflections. With earbuds in our ears, each of us listened to an individual track, not knowing exactly what the recording would contain. The tracks contained random extracts of our reflections in which we discussed our movements during the explorations. The task was to react to what we heard in an authentic manner and to interpret it in a way we felt appropriate. The idea was not to execute the movements we heard as commands but to consider how they related to our current psychophysical condition and our situatedness in space and amongst others. This game relied heavily on chance, as I also did not know what the tracks would contain. It was seen as a transition from being entirely focused inwards to *accepting external stimuli*, such as recorded voices and other moving bodies, *without losing connection with what was happening within*. In this way, a transition towards the next part of the sharing, the execution of fixed solos, happened. Even though the solos were performed by revisiting or repeating a movement phrase or score, they did not compromise inner awareness and authentic impulse—they were an invitation to move and to allow to be moved from within. They were performed between and across the aspects of experience, welcoming surprising moments while we maintained openness towards the unknown and the periphery of awareness.

In the next part of the performative sharing we shared our solos. These solos contained movement material resulting from the explorations and the different stages of interaction with what was discovered—Authentic Movement with intention, exploration of movement, and mapping and utilising moments from experiences. Although the solos had been decided on, there was space for further exploration and the inclusion of movements occurring in the moment.

After the three solos had been performed, complete darkness was initiated, and the audience was invited to listen to an edited audio track of recordings of our memories of the places we worked with. Our voices were extracted from recordings of our reflections after movement explorations throughout the performance-making process.

An edited footage of the performance can be seen in *Video 4:* Inner Spaces *(2023) Performative Sharing* (https://youtu.be/RLuGlpj8JeQ). The video material was captured by photographer Andras Viszmeg on the day of the performative sharing.

5.3.4. Inner Spaces 1 Short Film

Inner Spaces 1 (2023) is a short neo-noir moving image. Captured by Andras Viszmeg, it was filmed on the grounds of the King William Court in Greenwich, London. The short film is the result of my work with Active Imagination and embodied experiences and aims to convey ideas about the visible and the invisible, the encounter between the imaginative and the real.

In retrospect, I acknowledge my film-making endeavour as an intention to translate and frame material from studio practice into artistic articulation with specific aesthetics. I envisioned the shots, the abstract narrative, the black and white aesthetic, and the way my movements would appear in that environment. However, my embodied experiences while filming brought unexpected layers of meaning. I present some of them below.

My presence in the film is based on a particular movement exploration, undertaken while working with Orzelek and Pribyl. The moving image depicts me, situated in the middle of King William Court, going through selected movements and themes from that particular exploration, which was based on imaginative work with an environment from my past—the house where I lived as a child. The selected themes formed a score which followed memories accompanied by kinaesthetic imagery, specific movement phrases, and vivid mental imagery.

Movement teacher, therapist, performer, and director Helen Poynor (2004, 2014, 2021) explores non-stylised movement approaches and environmental movement practice (2014, p. 213). Her work follows the "kinesthetic encounter with the natural environment" and how "the moving human being is engaged with it in a responsive exchange" (2014, p. 213). The environment in which I situated my work was not natural, but it evoked entirely different perceptions during my embodied encounter with my imaginative realm, the selected themes

from my exploration, and the qualities of the environment. As Poynor states, the environment became a "teacher" and "elicit[ed] different experiences of [my] body and different movement qualities" (2014, p. 213).

As the film was captured from several camera perspectives sequentially, I went through the selected movements and themes multiple times, situating myself both in my imaginative realm and simultaneously in the reality of the environment itself. I experienced a variety of subtle and explicit shifts in the way I perceived my experience, observing the dynamic relationship between the imagery in my mind's eye and the environment.

Dance practitioner, researcher, and lecturer Natalie Garrett Brown (2011), while examining the collaborative process *Enter & Inhabit* (2008–present),[129] theorises embodied encounters with environments in the context of western theatre dance. She outlines that moving in an environment evokes an "expansive range of embodied, sensory information" and that while "attending to the sensory perceptual feedback loop of the nervous system, [the] dance emanates from a play between staying with and shifting between inner and outer attention and stimuli" (2011, p. 64).

My senses were conditioned by the surrounding materiality, the weather, the temperature, and the architecture of the place. I noted moments when either my imaginative realm or my actual perceptions drifted towards the periphery of my awareness, only to return to its focal point again, forming an idiosyncratic feedback loop. Moments of contradiction stay with me—I see myself placing my hands on the ground, imagining the long grass in the garden of my old house, feeling it brush through my fingers, only to become aware that my hands are touching the stone pavement of King William Court, feeling its texture, dryness, and coolness. These contradictions determined the idiosyncratic feedback loop and required "the capacity to maintain inner awareness while attending to the outer world", while "the outer environment becomes part of the inner environment" and "the inner environment releases to the outer environment" (Olsen, 2002, p. 4). While Olsen writes about this dynamic as an exchange between "the inner environment of the body" and the "outer environment", in my practice the "inner environment" encompassed both my somatic awareness and the imagined (or remembered) environment (Olsen, 2002, p. 4). These aspects of my experience resonate with

[129] Utilising the RSVP Cycles, *Enter & Inhabit* (2008–present) is created in collaboration between Garrett Brown, Voris, and later on with photographer Christian Kipp, dancer Niki Pollard, and Emma Meehan. More information on: https://www.enterinhabit.com

the concept of the film, which plays with the interplay between the real and the imaginative and portrays how something new emerges through their encounter.

As I reflect on this process, I acknowledge that my engagement with film-making and work within different environments was limited. However, I recognise the utilisation of video capturing as a possible form of artistic engagement with explorative work underpinned by principles of Authentic Movement and phenomenology, allowing the aesthetic enveloping of a process that facilitates surrender to the unfolding and resists ultimate framing. I highlight this observation as an intention for future investigation, acknowledging that my engagement with film-making did not focus on capturing the explorative process itself, but rather on framing extracted material that, during its execution, suggested unexpected experiential dimensions.

Furthermore, I recognise potential for further investigation in different environmental contexts. Taking movement explorations out of the studio and into different environments reveals perspectives and experiences that contribute both to the personal somatic exploration of the mover and to the aesthetic aspects of an artistic work. As Reeve says: "new environments can stimulate entirely new ways of moving. New ways of moving can call forth entirely new relationships with the environment. Either can afford new perceptions of a changing self" (Reeve, 2014, p. 422). In relation to future perspectives on working with memories, imagination, and environments from the past, undertaking movement explorations not in isolation in the studio but within a different environment (or the actual environment being remembered) would trigger somatic explorations of a different quality.

In its totality, *Inner Spaces 1* (2023) translates through film a dreamlike realm and invites free interpretations. Accompanied by a soundscape created by the visual artist and musician Lyubomir Ikonomov, the short film represents one of the artistic outcomes of this investigation.

The film can be seen in *Video 5:* Inner Spaces 1 *(2023) Short Film* (https://youtu.be/Bpw6YV1OHdA).

5.4. Findings and Conclusion

As presented in this chapter, the explorations of imagination, memories, and dreams through specifically designed tasks revealed the interconnectedness between the different aspects of experience. A few principles of exploration were distilled and conceptualised:

- *Staying between and across* different aspects of experience without identifying with them, while recognising the active and tacit ways in which they affect the overall experience.
- The way awareness is softened and its borders are blurred (*softening awareness*), making *staying between and across* possible. This allows different aspects of experience to emerge and be followed, acknowledging that they are part of multi-layered and interconnected processes.

The progression of the practice, resulting in diverse artistic endeavours such as dance-making, choreography, painting and drawing, and filmmaking, demonstrates the potential of utilising personal experiences as creative sources. It reveals that the adopted and discovered principles of work could be applied in different artistic fields, proving the generalisability of the model of working.

By acknowledging the reflective conversations throughout the explorations and the questionnaire forms[130] filled in by my collaborators, I would like to extract a few perspectives which reveal how the adopted way of working with imagination and remembering awakes sedimented personal historicity. They also reveal some benefits of incorporating the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenological methodologies into the education of dancers.

Ryberg, in our reflective conversation on the session on 07.03.22, said that "it's very interesting how far down you can get to memories. Memories feel so real that when you come out of it, it's like you're almost shocked that you're not there".[131] Both Orzelek and Pribyl share that the practice enabled them to access memories and past experiences in detail, which was a result of both mental imagery and physical sensations. Orzelek says that:

[130] The full questionnaire forms can be found in Appendix F, p. 234. The quotations of my collaborators in the text below are taken from these forms.
[131] Transcript file: 07.03.22 part 2, lines 120–122, p. 4.

> I found that working with memory heightened my senses—particularly my sense of smell and visual perception. Through authentic movement, I was able to recall more details, which often surprised me. Simply closing my eyes and focusing on details to my memory allowed me to access memories I hadn't thought about in a long time. … I discovered that focusing on sensations allowed me to access memories and dreams from different perspectives—ones I might not have reached otherwise. Authentic movement helped me in uncovering emotions and meaning that I had previously neglected or suppressed.

Pribyl reflects that:

> I discovered memories that I initially only remembered as a glimpse. A photographic format perhaps. But was surprised to find, once moving, there was such more to the memory that I had buried somewhere. I was interested in how much detail my brain had deeply stored away. The memories became a film. Movement brought these memories close to me again. They weren't lost. Just waiting to be found.

It is essential to note that both of my collaborators indicate how remembering or experiencing the emerging sedimented data was heightened by bodily sensations or movements. This highlights the role of physicality in cognition and how different aspects experience interact and reinforce one another.

Both Orzelek and Pribyl note the reflective stages of our explorations as a significant aspect of the work that influenced their endeavours beyond this research. Orzelek articulates:

> One of the most significant moments was the reflection after movement practice. It felt like waking up from a dream—having a moment to process everything without judgment or restriction. I also found that free writing became a powerful tool for me, allowing me to express thoughts and emotions that I might not have otherwise articulated.

Pribyl reflects that:

> Transcribing the movement, I have experienced into a two-dimensional format. Whether this be written or drawn. I remember working with particular childhood memories that evoked so much use of colour when drawing afterwards. However, when I worked with more recent memories, the colour seemed lost. Perhaps this was connected to my outlook on my life and growing up.

The reflection on experience, as the phenomenological reduction aspect of our work, plays a significant role and is one of the approaches adopted that contributes to the personal and artistic development of the ones exploring. That manner of reflection, incorporating an approach that respects the factuality of events while allowing them to evolve into artistic expressions, is an aspect of the work that would benefit dancers-in-training.

Other testimonies of the benefits include the way in which Orzelek and Pribyl approached dance outside the parameters of this research, which altered as a result of this practice. Orzelek mentions:

> My movement is always influenced by my past experiences, and these sessions reinforced that connection. During improvisation, I now pay more attention to sensations, imagery, and memories as sources of movement. It has deepened my approach to creating and performing. … I now try to be more mindful of the source of my movement—whether I am moving from habit or from an internal image or emotion. This process has encouraged me to question my creative choices and explore movement beyond technique and aesthetics.

Pribyl reflects that:

> [The sessions] affected my dance studies and performative work to focus on working in the moment. Taking personal experiences and using those to shape my movements. Knowing that an experience of movement can never be the same. Enjoying the differences. … I learned how to move from the inside. How to move for me.

These reflections reveal that engaging with the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology could enrich a dancer's journey and would support a deep, personal, and reflective approach to movement, benefitting engagement with diverse dance activities.

The end of Phase Two was followed by a period of reflection. As I moved towards the final research phase, I became interested in the transition between the explorative stages of the research and the dance-making and choreographic processes. This transition, occurring throughout Phase Two, manifested as a sudden change in the dynamic of practising, affecting everyone engaged. The relationship between the explorative and the performance-making stages called for refinement, for an overall approach that would incorporate aspects of the two stages into an integrated process, so that they overlap and complement each other, offering possibility for effortless and recurring transitions between them. This guided Phase Three, which evolved into the development of the Collective Imagining Process, presented in the next chapter.

6. PHASE THREE: COLLECTIVE IMAGINING

6.1. Introduction

The following chapter, dedicated to Phase Three (May 2024–December 2024) of this research project, articulates the Collective Imagining Process—a dance-making model developed from the foundational methodological approach and its application throughout the preceding explorative phases. The model is the culmination of this investigation, offering a framework that integrates explorative and choreographic practices. It builds on a lineage of models for creative articulation (Hincks's Five Facets Model and CAP) and suggests a generalisable pathway for collaborative dance-making through devising.

The content that follows reveals the ways in which the model and its phases were developed and applied in a process intended to generate an artistic product. During Phase Three, I collaborated with three professional dancers: Yun Cheng, Diana Snizhko, and Chi-Hsuan Lin. Together, we worked on the physical performance *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024). Our work took place between September and December 2024 and this chapter presents aspects of the collaborative endeavour.

6.2. The Collective Imagining Process

After *Inner Spaces* (2023) was presented and marked the completion of Phase Two, I felt that both my investigation and I stood at a threshold. I recognised the depth my collaborators and I had reached through the explorations. However, I also felt the need to make essential refinements in order to bring to the fore the purely artistic, dance-making, and generative aspects of this investigation. As the main challenge faced in Phase Two was the transition from the explorative aspects of the work to the performance-making process, the final phase of this research project demanded greater clarity regarding how the creative aspects of the investigation would be approached and realised.

At the beginning of 2024, I took part in two sessions led by Bacon and Midgelow, during which they presented the principles of the Creative Articulations Process (CAP).[132] They

[132] See Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3. Authentic Movement as a Dance-Making Practice, pp. 55–56.

identify CAP as a practice within the context of artistic research, as "a model with accompanying strategies" and "an approach to mentoring and guiding artists/practitioners/scholars in a deeper exploration of [their] creative process" (2014, p. 10). My embodied experience as an active participant in the sessions led by Bacon and Midgelow led me to appreciate CAP, with its facets, as a distinctive method that does not limit or determine specific artistic results, but provides a framework that supports and guides the free creative process. My practice, as a processual research resonating with CAP's aim to encourage creative expression and to invite the unconscious to come to consciousness and artistic manifestation, had reached a stage requiring a *structure* that would allow knowledge, as an experience or as a manifested artistic expression, to emerge, to be captured, and to be articulated.

Transitioning to Phase Three, I began integrating what my collaborators and I had explored into the development of a model that would bring together the elements of this processual PaR project. Throughout the preceding phases of investigation, the following approaches were employed and developed: Authentic Movement (with and without intention), inner witnessing (resembling phenomenological epoché), tracking and reflecting on experience (resembling epoché and phenomenological reduction), exploring movement (resembling Active Imagination and eidetic variation), utilising movements or themes from explorations, and mapping of experience. Furthermore, specific attitudes towards movement explorations were examined and, in this post-practice stage, distilled and conceptualised as *softening awareness* and *staying between and across*. All the aforementioned approaches form the foundation of the model and are embedded within the activities it proposes. While they were not explicitly employed as terminology or concepts during the work with the model, they nonetheless informed and shaped its activities.

The model, which, in this post-practice stage, I term and consistently refer to as the Collective Imagining Process, draws inspiration from and aligns with Bacon and Midgelow's CAP (2014) and Hincks's Five Facets Model of Creative Process (2014). As such, it is situated within the lineage of these methods, which support individual creative processes by assisting the articulation of the implicit while providing a framework that facilitates observation, reflection, playfulness, and stages of artistic expression. The Collective Imagining Process further proposes a pathway for collaborative, synergetic creation, aligning

with aspects of landscape architect Lawrence Halprin's (2014) RSVP Cycles.[133] In this way, the model integrates activities related to both solo and collective artistic articulation.

Presenting the model in this thesis as a work-in-progress, I acknowledge that, during Phase Three, it first developed through the workshops[134] that I organised prior to the performance-making process and then through the employment of its phases within the collaborative, dance-making endeavour that followed. It was initiated and evolved as a framework with strict yet flexible parameters, inviting my collaborators to delve freely into personal explorations while articulating them through artistic dance-making work.

The pages below introduce the Collective Imagining Process. Divided into distinct phases, the model aligns with some of the facets of CAP and Hincks's frameworks. Before presenting these phases to the reader and describing how they were applied, it is important to acknowledge an essential aspect of Phase Three: the introduction of work with an external stimulus.

6.2.1. Introducing External Stimulus

Throughout the previous phases of this investigation, my collaborators and I explored imaginative functions as revealing particles of sedimented historicity and as always connected with physicality and the body schema. The dynamic relationship between the occurrences in the mind's eye and the body became a major area of interest for us, leading to the development of specific approaches to exploration. These approaches informed the initial stages of explorations situated at the threshold between the external and the internal. Throughout the creation of *Inner Spaces* (2023), my collaborators and I began to explore how we related to one another and to the surrounding space via the game that functioned as a transition between the explorative phase and the solos.[135] While filming *Inner Spaces 1* (2023), I was captivated by the ways in which my solo evolved in response to a different environment.[136]

[133] The commonalities between the RSVP Cycles and the Collective Imagining Process are addressed within the reflective notes on the performance-making process in the second section of this chapter.
[134] See Appendix D: Workshops, p. 225.
[135] See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.3. Inner Spaces Performative Sharing, p. 141.
[136] See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.4. Inner Spaces 1 Short Film, p. 142.

Following this movement towards externalisation, in Phase Three I introduced an external stimulus in the form of an object, aimed at establishing an intention (with reference to phenomenological intentionality) for movement explorations. This intention differed depending on how the one exploring perceived the external stimulus. The encounter with the stimulus, as an encounter with the external world, is also an encounter with the internal world, awakening the horizon of possible ways in which the one exploring relates to, or has related to, the present and awakened psychophysical data. Sedimented historicity of previous experiences and subjective characteristics are triggered, forming a process that reveals autobiographical aspects of the individual exploring.

Drawing on object relations theory, Meehan addresses the autobiographical body in performance and performance-making and examines relations between subjective perceptions and external events (2013, p. 37). Reflecting on her work with Davis, Meehan suggests a link between object relations theory and Davis's use of physical objects. Although object relations theory refers particularly to the exchange between an individual and an "object", where the object is other people, Davis suggests that "everything is an object", as we have relationships "not only with other people, but with everything we encounter" (2013, p. 44). Based on Melanie Klein's object relations theory, Meehan articulates that a person "projects aspects of the self onto an object, at the same time as maintaining a relationship with the object in order to control or make sense of it" (2013, p. 45). Discussing her experiences of working with Davis, Meehan emphasises the importance of recognising patterns of behaviour and movement habits that occur in response to interaction with objects or other people (2013, p. 43). She sees contact with external objects as a stimulus for investigating patterns in her relationships with "self and space" (2013, p. 43).

Recognising the importance of the dynamic between "self and space", the inner and the outer, I introduced external stimuli into my practice, which formed the starting point for movement explorations. The external stimulus was introduced as a phenomenon that the one exploring perceived through their sense of sight, touch, smell, or hearing. Olsen looks at perception as "culture-bound, shaped by education, religious and political systems, language, and arts" (2022, p. 21). She observes that "perception is also personally selective, affected by genes, family values, previous experience, and the current state of alertness" and that "no two people perceive the same reality." The subjective interpretation of the input that comes through the response of our senses "to particular landscapes, smells, tactile stimulation, gestures, and sounds" constitutes our experience (2022, p. 21).

The external stimuli I introduced into the practice each took the form of a particular *image, sound, texture, or scent*. This phenomenon was presented to those exploring, setting the ground for a subjective conscious or pre-reflective intention for the practice. This intention differed depending on what the one exploring was imagining or sensing, influenced by the interaction with the external stimulus and the processes thereby awakened.

6.2.2. The Model

At its core, the model provides, given an encounter with an external stimulus, a structured pathway for careful observation, reflection, and playful and creative interaction with personal experiences. By employing the core principles of this research (witness consciousness, tracking and reflecting on experience, exploring movement, the utilisation of manifested material in choreographic challenges, and the principles behind *staying between and across* aspects of experience and *softening awareness*), the model represents a gradually evolving process that transitions from a meditative and somatic approach to an actively creative culmination. During Phase Three, this process took approximately 4 hours for an explorative session.

An explorative session in this model is divided into two main stages. The first stage involves discovering how the separate individual exploring responds to the stimulus they work with. The stimuli are spread across the studio, defining separate zones. Those exploring are invited to go to the zone and stimulus they would work with, and to follow the phases: Arriving, Recognising, Interacting, Exploring Movement, Extracting, and Collective Dreaming. The phases suggest individual meditative and playful interactions with the stimulus and with what it awakes, culminating in a collective exploration. At each zone, there is a Participant's Sheet[137] that outlines and describes the phases, and provides space for those exploring to reflect on their experiences.

The first stage facilitates somatic exploration, allows designated time for written reflections, and gradually evolves into active creative exploration through movement. By the end of the first four phases, those exploring, via written reflection, have extracted themes, idiosyncratic movement phrases, gestures, and ways of moving. These are all a result of their responses to

[137] Examples of Participants' Sheets are presented below in this chapter.

what was awakened through their individual interaction with the external stimulus. The final part of the first stage includes the Collective Dreaming phase, which is creative and collaborative in nature. This phase of the model invites everyone to explore together, expressing their individual journeys while interacting with others, and thus initiating a collective imagining process. The first stage concludes with a collective conversation, reflections on the experience, and a short break.

The second stage is creative and collaborative in nature. It involves diverse choreographic games and tasks, utilising individual and collective experiences from the previous phases. Those exploring are invited to engage with their movement phrases, gestures, or improvised movements in different constellations and relationships with one another. Essentially, everyone maintains an explorative approach, acknowledging principles of observing and relating to the different aspects of their experience. At the end, there is time for reflections and a collective conversation.

6.2.3. Phases of Practising

The phases of the model, with the approximate timings of their application during Phase Three, are presented below.

Arriving (10 min): A session starts with a guided meditation. The aim of the meditation is, while working with attention, to support the processes of arriving into the here and now and of focusing inward. The invitation for those exploring is to close their eyes, connect with their breath, recognise and observe the processes within their bodies and minds, and consider how they feel. As they work with their attention, those exploring begin to engage with aspects of inner witnessing, allowing their awareness to expand and blur, as they open to their tacit psychophysical processes.

The Arriving phase supports the transition of those exploring from everyday life into a deep somatic exploration. The meditation is a pathway towards the next phases of the practice—it is a 'tuning tool', a threshold, which supports that transition.[138] Meditation and mindful moving are also a trigger for creative processes and dance movement material, as deeply

[138] In the work with my collaborators during Phase Three, I designed various meditations that were utilised in the sessions.

explored by choreographer and academic Naomi Lefebvre Sell (2013, 2016). Using meditation as a major aspect of her creative PhD research, she notes that:

> Meditation training uses two separate but complementary disciplines; first, mindfulness meditation, which develops the ability to let go of the surface level mind chatter; and secondly the practice of deep relaxation which permits the free flow of ideas and images from the unconscious mind. (2013, p. 50)

These aspects of the meditative act are present in the way the Arriving phase is designed. Inviting inner witnessing and a reduction of the "surface level mind chatter", the Arriving phase works with attention, mobilising it in intentional observation while at the same time allowing awareness to soften. As a guided process, it is up to those exploring to decide to what extent to follow what they hear.

Once finished with the Arriving phase, those exploring are invited to go to the zone they will work with, where they will find a Participant's Sheet and their external stimuli. They individually read about and engage with the next phases. They have similar tasks which are framed differently, depending on the zone they are working in.

Recognising (5–10 min): Through the Recognising phase, those exploring are invited to enter their zone and to encounter the stimuli they are working with. They are invited to observe how the stimuli affect their perceptions, carefully following their personal responses to what is proposed (mirroring principles of epoché and non-judgmental inner witnessing). By the end of the Recognising phase, those exploring are invited to choose, consciously or intuitively, a specific stimulus from those presented (to choose one fragrance from all the ones presented, or one image from the dozens of images spread in the zone, etc.).

Interacting + Reflection (10 min + 10 min for reflection): At its core, this phase invites a somatic, meditative approach of interacting with the chosen stimulus and with what it awakes. Drawing on Authentic Movement principles and epoché, those exploring are invited to close their eyes and focus inwardly, allowing themselves to be moved from within while carefully observing and following, with honesty and reduced judgment, the phenomena emerging within their experience.

The chosen stimulus at the end of the Recognising phase suggests the conscious or pre-reflective intention for the practice. Those exploring stay with the chosen stimulus and carefully follow how it affects them—how their bodies and thought processes respond to the sound, image, texture, or fragrance, and what they see within their mind's eye. Following the

emerging processes, those exploring can, at any time they feel the need, open or close their eyes and return to their stimulus, while exploring how they continuously communicate with it, following the awakened sensations, movements, memories, imagery, and thoughts.

Reflection: The reflective aspects of the model are essential, drawing on principles of phenomenological reduction and reflective processes applied in the previous phases, and aligning with CAP's principles emphasising continuous embodied reflection via languaging (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014). Aiming to support the naming and tracking of experience with an awareness of what is being named and from which perspective, those exploring are invited to return to their Participant's Sheets and to reflect on their personal experience by noting down, in words or sentences, what they have been through. They can use simple words in an abstract or descriptive manner of writing, depending on what they are describing. To bring awareness to what is being reflected on, so that the essences of the experience are approached with more clarity, I suggest the following categories in the Participant's Sheets: *Movements, Sensations, Feelings, Images, Memories,* and *Thoughts/Associations/Ideas*.[139]

Exploring Movement + Reflection (20 min + 10 min for reflection): In this phase, those exploring are invited to continue the practice with an intentional movement exploration, drawing on the creative experiments developed throughout Phases One and Two.[140] They are invited to move, dance, and improvise freely, responding to or continuing what has happened so far in their journey. This phase has a playful, improvisational, and creative character, maintaining the established principles of practising as influenced by Authentic Movement and phenomenology (non-judgmental inner witnessing and epoché, the following of the inner impulse, the tracking of experience, and the utilisation of starting points and intention), and represents the adoption of Active Imagination and eidetic variation into further engagement with current and already-generated material.

Those exploring may choose a movement that occurred in the previous phases, or a theme, image, or a word from their reflections, playing with it and further exploring what it awakes in them. They may also return to the stimulus and seek new inspiration. If no movement is arising, they are invited to walk in the space, recognising arising movements, impulses, ideas, etc. They may choose to oscillate between returning to the initial stimulus and to their

[139] I note that using present tense during reflections in Phase Three was not mandatory. Further refinements on the reflective process continue beyond the parameters of this research.
[140] See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1. Exploring Movement, p. 84.

reflections. It is up to those exploring how to direct their movement exploration, depending on what they are drawn to.

The model facilitates a dynamic curve of activities, following phases with a designated start and end. The commencing phases (Arriving, Recognising, and Interacting) are deeply meditative and somatic, while the Exploring Movement and the Extracting phases are actively creative. Despite being linked and structured in a way that creates a whole experience, these phases are challenging, offering invitations for different modes of encountering experience. In the Exploring Movement phase (and later in the Extracting phase) those exploring intentionally and creatively interact with what has been manifested, testing its potentials and allowing themselves to be surprised by where it leads, while maintaining the principles of the preceding meditative phases. They are invited to be present with their experience, to observe, to follow it, and to stay open to the periphery of awareness and what occurs there.

Reflection: Time is given for reflecting on the movement exploration. Those exploring are invited to put in words what they have found, what moved them, how they moved, and what they imagined.

Extracting + Reflection (10 min + 10 min for reflection): The Extracting phase is the final creative solo activity—it invites those exploring, by looking at their reflections and by considering how they feel, to find ways of extracting and fixing movement phrases, scores, gestures, or moments of stillness, while mapping[141] material from their experiences. The way they do this continues an explorative and creative process, in which they can continue working on what they have found so far, play with it, and choose (intuitively or logically) in what way they want to frame it. Thus, by the end of the Extracting phase, each one of those exploring has a map of movement scores or a vocabulary, an offering of their own, which they will work with in the next stages of exploration.

Two of the facets within CAP are Anatomizing and Outwarding. Throughout the Anatomizing facet, those exploring are invited to "expand and clarify through multiplicity the many possibilities" of what has manifested throughout the process. Anatomizing suggests "ways in which [those participating] can practice drawing out, discovering and elaborating without worrying about holding what is generated as fixed or complete", following what

[141] See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1. Mapping the Experience, p. 129.

"interests [them] right now in order to … make versions, iterations and potentialities", using the reflected material in order to "recall the experience." (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014, p. 25). The Outwarding facet is an invitation for those exploring to find a way of bringing their findings "to fruition" and to establish ways "to share them with others"—"this is both a moment of naming and labelling as well as a moment of offering into a more public arena" (Bacon & Midgelow, 2014, p. 13). Both the Exploring Movement and the Extracting phases of the Collective Imagining Process resonate with these facets, representing a processual and active creative articulation.[142]

The Extracting phase, as the culmination in which artistic expression is formed, is first and foremost an invitation for an honest and idiosyncratic artistic manifestation of personal experiences. In these terms, there are no 'requirements' regarding what should be extracted—it depends on the feelings and the individual artistic approaches of those exploring.

Reflection: Those exploring are invited to spend some time reflecting on the Extracting phase and noting down the outcomes, elucidating the map of their creative endeavours.

Collective Dreaming + Reflection (15–20 min + 10 min for reflection):[143] After the solo process, those exploring are invited to enter a phase in which they explore collectively. Each person, charged by the individual experience that they have had, is invited to enter the space and offer what they have found while moving, observing, interacting, and exploring within the collective context.

Adler's Discipline of Authentic Movement recognises three stages or realms: the realm of the individual body (utilised within Phases One and Two of this research), the realm of the collective body, and the realm of the conscious body (2002, p. XVI). The Collective Dreaming phase is an invitation to a collective experience that resonates with aspects of Adler's realm of the collective body. During Collective Dreaming, those exploring are invited to "discover one's relationship to many without losing a conscious awareness of oneself" (Adler, 2002, p. XVII). In this phase, the approach to exploration suggests incorporating information that enters experience due to the presence of others moving. The awareness of

[142] The last two facets of Hincks's model are Articulating and Outwarding, which are concerned with the final articulation, framing, and presentation of the artistic work (2014).
[143] Considering the chronological development of Phase Three, the Collective Dreaming phase was introduced as a part of the model during the initial stages of the performance-making endeavour. Although it was not part of the pre-performance-making work with the model, collective explorations were essential in the workshops I conducted. They manifested in collective experimentations with solos distilled from the Extracting phase.

those exploring continually shifts between the internal and the external, and between their personal dream and the dreams offered by others.

This final phase of the model builds on the principles and approaches employed in the preceding phases, situating them within a collaborative context. By inviting those exploring to slow down and focus inwardly, or move, improvise, and interact with others, Collective Dreaming becomes an unpredictable event of synergetic, embodied imagining in which each one exploring may offer their experience to the others, accept someone else's offering and incorporate it into their own journey, or construct a completely new dream together.[144]

Reflection: After the Collective Dreaming phase, those exploring are invited to reflect on their experiences in their Participants' Sheets.

After a short break, the practice continues with the second stage of the model. This stage is creative and explorative, utilising what has been discovered in movement and choreographic tasks.

The model elucidated over the previous pages was the very foundation of, and evolved through, the work during Phase Three. My collaborators and I followed the model and the approximate length of each phase. However, the length of phases was conditional and sometimes altered depending on the circumstances and focus of a particular session. The systematic work with the model led to the creation of the physical performance *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024).

6.3. Performance-Making Process

At the beginning of September 2024, after participating in several of the workshops[145] I organised, Cheng, Lin, and Snizhko joined me in an explorative process aimed at devising a performance. I invited the dancers, as participant-researchers and collaborators, to embark on a journey with no predetermined outcomes, to delve into their personal experiences as we extracted essences in the form of themes and movement patterns, utilising these within a dance-making context. The creative work involved the application of diverse variations of the

[144] Work with collective imagination in a performance-making context is explored by choreographer and interdisciplinary artist Pepa Ubera (https://pepaubera.com) in her work *The Machine of Horizontal Dreams* (2025).
[145] See Appendix D, p. 225.

Collective Imagining Process across approximately 20 sessions, spanning nearly three and a half months. In the next pages, I follow the development of our work and elaborate on the nature of the process. Documented materials from the sessions and indications of some of the challenges the dancers and I encountered are included.

Resonating with the performance-making process of *Inner Spaces* (2023), in Phase Three I employed a collaborative approach to devising, adopting the role of choreographer-director. Anna Halprin (in conversation with movement teacher Emilie Conrad), discussing her collaborative work, distinguishes between the "choreographer" as someone with pre-conceived ideas or prepared dance sequences that performers follow, and the "artistic director" as someone who "makes choices" within a collective, non-hierarchical creative endeavour, in which everyone suggests "their own ideas" and scores as a deeply personal contribution (A. Halprin in Continuum Movement, n.d.). In the context of my work, I use the term choreographer-director, signifying that I embodied the roles of facilitator, research leader, and decision-maker within a devising process, as well as that of a choreographer—not as someone with pre-conceived ideas, but as someone who introduced and shaped ideas and dance sequences that emerged through the process, inviting the dancers to engage with and develop them within a collaborative context. Working collaboratively with the dancers, I valued movement aesthetics shaped by their movement vocabularies, personal engagement, reflections, and artistic input. My role, encompassing leadership, facilitation, and active artistic engagement, presented certain challenges, which are examined below in this chapter.

I chose water, in its liquid form, as the main theme of the Collective Imagining Process. As I analyse the entirety of this research, I recognise kernels of my intention to work with water planted both in a painting I created during Phase Two[146] and in an explorative dream session with Orzelek.[147] I understand this subtle, previously not-recognised re-emergence of the theme of water during Phase Three as non-coincidental. As repeated manifestations of phenomena were also present within the work of my collaborators, I refer to these as re-emerging phenomena, outlining them as an essential consequence of the methodological foundation when applied over a prolonged, processual timeframe.

Water is constantly transforming, elusive, and resists definition. It is a phenomenon related to imagination and symbol, understood as "the universal imagery of the unconscious" (Olsen,

[146] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.4. Artistic Endeavours in Painting and Drawing, Figure 8, p. 116.
[147] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.5. Dream Work, p. 125.

2002, p. 184). Water can be still, quiet, and calming, but it can also be deep, dangerous, and destructive. Initiating the process during Phase Three, I was curious about what water awakens as a substance, a force of nature, and a symbol in the personal myth of the dancer exploring. What does it bring to the surface through all the vast connotations that the archetype of water suggests? Reflecting on water and embodied processes, Olsen writes, "I know myself to be one with water" (2002, p. 16).

The external stimuli we used were selected and categorised by me. I selected a dozen paintings related to water and done in different styles, printed them on sheets of paper, and provided them to the dancers. I edited three audio tracks representing different soundscapes of rain, waves, and underwater sounds, which I uploaded on devices with earbuds. I selected a couple of fresh, aquatic fragrances and brought them to the explorative sessions. We also used a large bucket of water as a separate stimulus. All of these,[148] relating to tactile, olfactory, visual, and auditory perception, defined separate zones in which the dancers explored individually, following the phases of the model.

Our explorative sessions happened in a quiet studio, which was divided into the following zones: *Images, Scents, Sounds,* and *Textures.* In these zones, I placed the designated stimuli prior to the beginning of a session. Throughout the pre-performance-making workshop sessions, following a principle of *chance*, each dancer had to choose a piece of paper with different text, indicating the zone they would work with. When we began the performance-making endeavour, the dancers had the opportunity to work with different zones, as for most of the sessions I decided in advance which zone each dancer would work with. After a short, guided meditation led by myself (the Arriving phase), the dancers were invited to go into their zone. There, they could find their external stimuli, accompanied by a Participant's Sheet with indicated invitations and phases of activities. The written guidance for each phase was slightly different, depending on the type of stimulus.

Throughout the explorative sessions, my role as a facilitator was to witness and hold space for the others, indicating the time for transition between the phases. The dancers exploring were invited to enter the practice with honesty, following it as a deeply personal, meditative, and creative process. Transitioning between the different phases, the dancers were aware of

[148] The selected images, sounds, and scents as external stimuli were the same throughout the whole of Phase Three. They are not incorporated in this thesis, as what was important was not the stimuli themselves, but what they awakened in those exploring while interacting with them.

the spine of the whole practice: how the phases would evolve and the timeframes in which the activities were situated.

It is important to accentuate that in Phase Three the mover-witness dynamic present in the previous phases shifted. In Phase Three, the dancers relied on inner witnessing and personal reflection through writing. It was essential that the autonomous nature of their presence, decision-making, and experiences was encouraged and relied on. The dancers were invited to follow the model while being aware of their own self-agency. The phases of the model did not aim to suggest prescriptions to be strictly followed, but to invite the dancers to find ways to follow *their own* experiences with readiness and *honesty*, deciding to what extent they wanted to stay with what they heard or read in the Participant's Sheet.

The dancers and I passed through different phases of exploration. During the first half of the process, we met once per week for 4 hours of studio practice. During the second half, we met twice per week for the same length of time. Most of the time, we worked together as a group, however, in some sessions I worked individually with one or two of the dancers. Starting with sessions in which the dancers explored working with the stimuli individually, we utilised the model without the collective phase. Afterwards, as I introduced the Collective Dreaming phase, we moved on to sessions that included all the phases of the model, modified according to the intention of each session. Some sessions focused on a particular kind of stimulus, such as the sound of rain, waves, or underwater sounds, explored by all the dancers simultaneously. I also conducted a few sessions in which I utilised the model in work with imagining and remembering specific places or environments, or a person from the dancers' pasts.[149] These processual explorations resulted in personal journeys and discoveries, as well as in the articulation of a vast amount of movement material, themes, and scores.

Our process was constantly oscillating between somatic explorations and creative articulations, as embedded in the Collective Imagining Process. The first couple of sessions had a predominantly explorative nature, intended to open towards, generate, and gather personal material. Gradually, as our work developed, I started introducing more dance-making and choreographic tasks. As we got closer to the premiere of the performance, the sessions took on the character of rehearsals, without losing their explorative nature.

[149] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1. Remembering, p. 98.

6.3.1. Participants' Sheets

The continuous documentation of the practice, as evident in the previous phases, remained a major aspect of my approach. Each session was video recorded. Along with these recordings, the Participants' Sheets are considered essential evidence and a source of data from the practice. I looked at the Participants' Sheets in a manner consistent with the previous phases. I applied a versatile IPA and constantly examined them, tracking the dancers' reflections and extracting keywords, movement patterns, themes, and scores. Both video materials and Participants' Sheets guided further explorations. They assisted me in making artistic choices and contained data that both the dancers and I revisited.

In this section, I incorporate scans of three Participants' Sheets (A, B, and C), all of which present the sheets after they were completed by the dancers. I place them here as representative of the various designs of the sheets and of the voices of the three dancers, indicating material that emerged from the practice itself. They represent reflective writing that communicates the progress of embodied experiences and their articulation, revealing a small portion of the data gathered. Alongside the presentation of the sheets, I highlight how some of the revealed material was employed within the development of the work. As the model remains a work-in-progress, the indicated directions for the phases in the sheets are provisional and incomplete. In some of the scans, the word 'workshop' appears, copied from the pre-performance-making workshop sessions, which, in the context of our work, should be understood as 'session'.

Below, I include scans of Participants' Sheets A and B:

Participant's Sheet A (pp. 163–168) is related to the *Scents* zone and was completed by Snizhko on our session on 26.09.24. It starts with the Recognising phase (after the Arriving meditation) and does not contain the Collective Dreaming phase.

Participant's Sheet B (pp. 169–174), designed for a session later in the process (25.10.24), represents work with the sound of rain and was completed by Cheng. It begins with the Interacting phase (after the Arriving meditation), as the sound of rain was pre-determined as a stimulus for all of the dancers (which they listened to via earbuds connected to three separate devices), and incorporates the Collective Dreaming phase, which I designed specifically for that session.

- Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko

SCENTS
Diana ~~20.09.24~~ 26.09.24

- **RECOGNISING** (5 – 10 min.)

The zone you are working with is *scents*. After you read this short text, I invite you to smell the samples around you. There are a few bottles filled with different scented liquids, waiting for you to get familiar with them. Next to each bottle, there is a piece of paper with a 'dried out' note. It's a paper that has already been sprayed on and it reveals the scent as it dries out. You can also spray the scents on the pieces of paper provided, in order to feel the fresh scent. There is also a jar with coffee beans – you might wish to smell them if you feel overwhelmed by the fragrances and want to reset your olfaction sensitivity. Take some time with the scents, observing how they affect you, recognising how they change you. Carefully observe what your attention is drawn to – it might be to a specific scent, or to an image that it awakes in your mind's eye, or to the way you kinaesthetically react to the stimulus. At the end of the Recognising phase, choose the scent that you feel attracted to, no matter if it is an intuitive attraction or a conscious choice...

- **INTERACTING** (10 min. + 10 min. for reflection)

Separate the sample you have chosen from the others – that will be the scent you will be working with. If you want to, you might decide to spray the fragrance on your wrists, so you could feel how it smells on you, or you might continue working with the papers. In the next Interacting phase, I invite you to spend some time with the chosen fragrance and to allow yourself to be moved by the interaction with it (it's up to you to decide how often to smell it etc.). Relax and open your perceptions towards what it awakes in you – psychologically and physically. In a way, the invitation for you is to honestly communicate with the fragrance and with what it means to you, personally. Without judgment, follow your own way of responding to it... Feel free to close your eyes in order to focus inwardly. See what is truly happening and arising within you, observing the *narrative* of your psychophysical process:

- follow what thoughts, associations or memories are emerging...
- what is it that you are imagining with your mind's eye?
- observe the way your body is responding to the image and to your own imagination – if there are specific sensations, feelings or movements taking place... Give them a chance to be expressed - *you are invited to move in whatever way you want or need to.*

The special thing about this phase is the invitation for you to respond to the selected scent with openness and curiosity... Let your imagination and your physical sensations guide you. In its core, this phase welcomes you to explore your psychophysical process via somatic movement interaction with the stimulus and with what it awakes in you... This is a moment for you to focus inwardly, to close your eyes, and to move freely as you follow every recognisable feeling or sensation in your body, or image that you see with your mind's eye... After this phase is over, I will give a sign for you to come back to this paper and to follow the reflection stage.

Figure 25: Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko, 1.1

Reflection (10 min.) – take some time to revisit and reflect on what you have experienced. There are a few categories below. I invite you to put on paper and articulate what you have experienced by writing in each section (you could indicate your processes either with a word, with descriptive or abstract sentences).

Bodily Sensations, Kinaesthetic Imagery –

Waves coming threw my body with changing color,
I'm finding which one is the right now, and allow it to lead throw my body

Feelings –

Close smell – strong scare feeling, your waiting for smth to happen

Further smell – sweet and calm, hugs and warmth

Movements –

Stand ground movements, wants to use more fingers on the foot; Chest and arm aching, leading by the finger... you following the main line throw wave which leads the movement.

Figure 26: Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko, 1.2

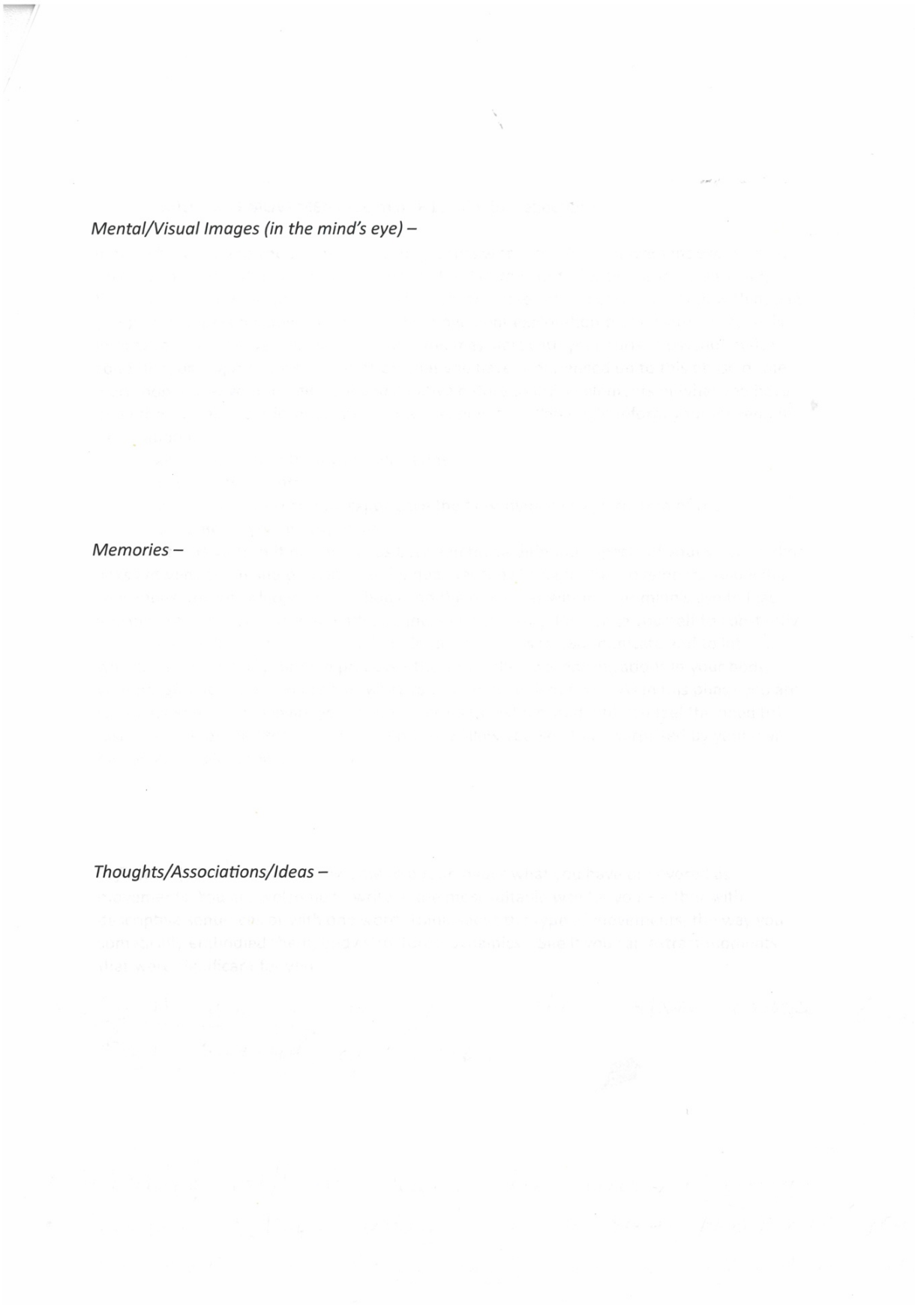


Figure 27: Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko, 1.3

- **EXPLORING MOVEMENT** (20 min. + 10 min. for reflection)

In this phase, I invite you to continue your process with intentional movement exploration. Take into account what you have experienced so far. You started with the selected scent, then you encountered your own psychophysical processes as you communicated with it, and you placed your reflections on paper... The movement exploration that I invite you to do is improvisatory, creative and free in nature. You may start with your current psychophysical condition, or might choose elements of what you have experienced up to this phase of the workshop. Allow your imaginative and creative nature to utilise elements of what you have been through and to inform your movement exploration. You might inform your movement exploration by:

- words/sentences from your reflections;
- by the initial scent;
- by the way you currently experience the flow, dynamics and rhythm of the movements you are exploring.

You might play with shifting your focus between those different aspects of your work, finding links between them and playing with the qualities they bring to the movements. Allow the sensations, the knowledge of your body and the processes within your mind's eye to lead you in a free and creative way, with openness and curiosity. Challenge yourself to constantly move – even if it is just walking. Look for interesting ways to communicate and to interact with the elements of your own process – the scent, the awaken sensations in your body, your imagination, your reflections, what you experience right now... As in this phase you are with your eyes open, I invite you to move across the whole studio (if you feel the need to), just be aware of the other movers around you. Allow yourself to be surprised by your own movement exploration...

Reflection (10 min.) – take some time to put on paper what you have discovered as movements. You are welcome to write in the most suitable way for you – either with descriptive sentences or with one word. Think about the type of movements, the way you somatically embodied them, body structures, dynamics... See if you can extract moments that were significant for you.

- smth that holds you in the space where I've been controlled by someone.

- Washing with the really slow waves of warmth
- Comfort feelings where is the safe place and you can travel in a deeper level with curiosity and no rush.

Figure 28: Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko, 1.4

- **EXTRACTING** (10 min.)

Take the next ten minutes to look at your notes on your movement exploration. Extract from them and from your memory of the movement improvisation the following:

- a short repeatable movement phrase (the length of it depends on you);
- three significant movement/gestures (they might be continuous, linked or small snippets of movements/gestures);

(Your approach might not be to strictly repeat the things that you remember, but to utilise your experience and the gathered information into a next level of creative endeavour as you design, develop and fix your movements)

Reflection (10 min.) – take the time to put on paper the way you have designed your fixed movement phrase. Go through and describe the stages and mini phrases of your extracted miniature (give names to the different stages, note down what you are exploring/expressing with your movements)

Grounding - using my feet to explore the space + give myself pathways to explore.

Controlling - is where I've been led by someone/ smth (hands). Holds me tight.

Washing - loosing my all sences, focusing on one thing which giving me warmth and safe place to move an explore.

Figure 29: Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko, 1.5

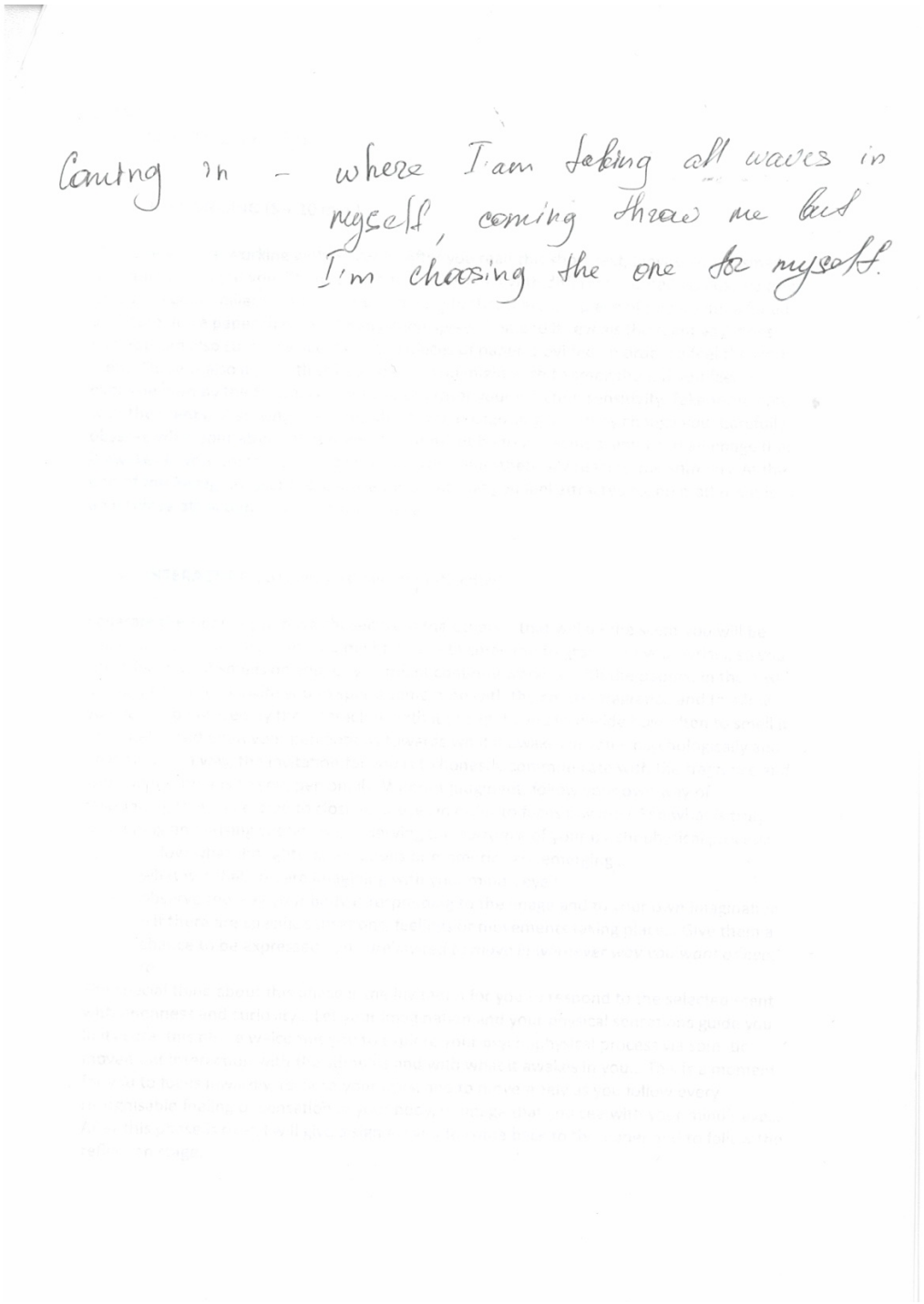
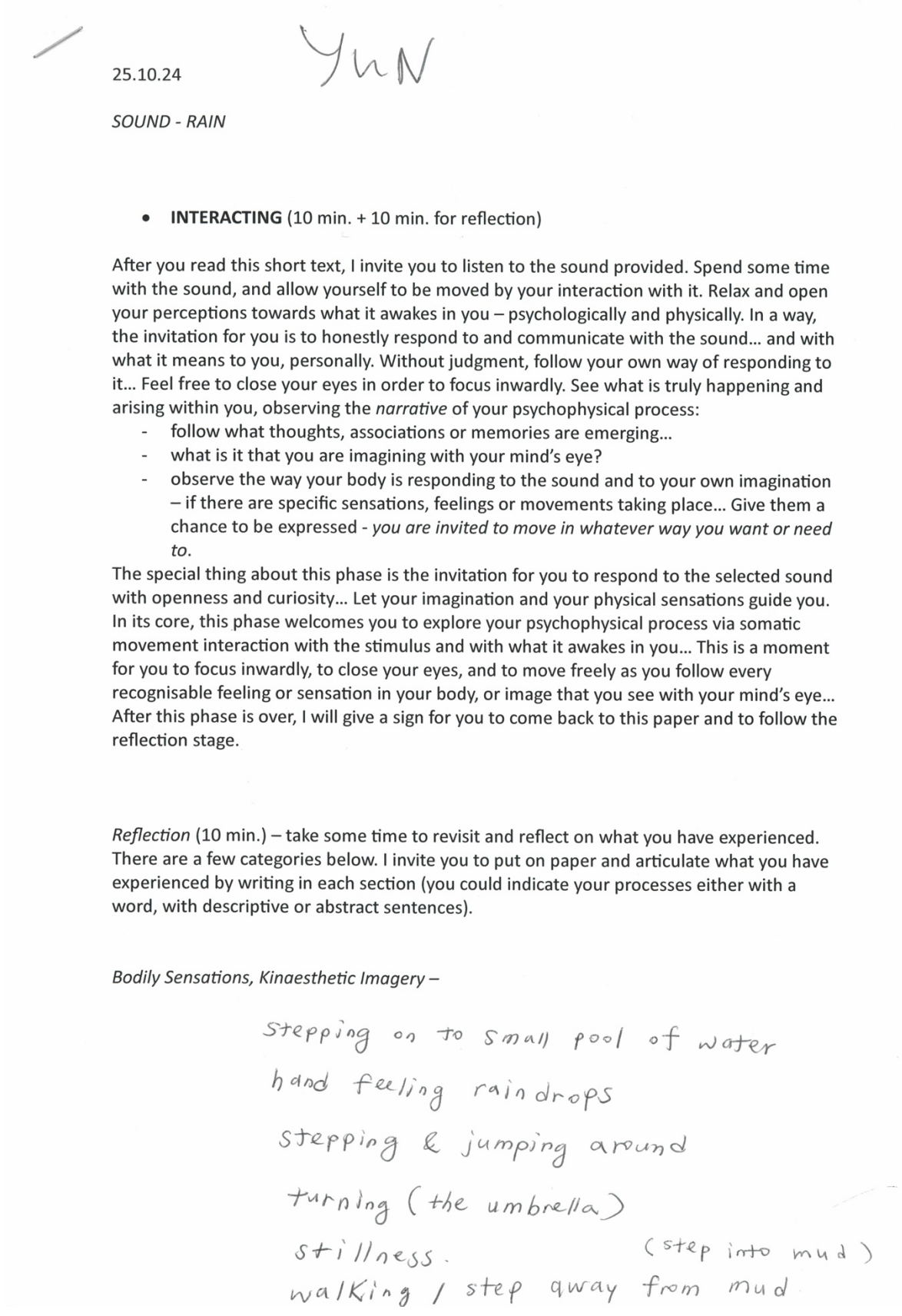


Figure 30: Participant's Sheet A, Snizhko, 1.6[150]

[150] After the explorative stage of the session, Snizhko extracted "been controlled", "washing warmth", and "safe place" from her exploration. We then continued working with these themes, alongside the score derived from the Extracting phase and the movements that had manifested, experimenting with their temporal and spatial development, the directions in which they led, and testing chorographic tasks and phrases that I suggested. "Washing warmth" was subsequently incorporated into Snizhko's movement score in one of the scenes of the final piece.

- Participant's Sheet B, Cheng



25.10.24 YuN

SOUND - RAIN

- **INTERACTING** (10 min. + 10 min. for reflection)

After you read this short text, I invite you to listen to the sound provided. Spend some time with the sound, and allow yourself to be moved by your interaction with it. Relax and open your perceptions towards what it awakes in you – psychologically and physically. In a way, the invitation for you is to honestly respond to and communicate with the sound... and with what it means to you, personally. Without judgment, follow your own way of responding to it... Feel free to close your eyes in order to focus inwardly. See what is truly happening and arising within you, observing the *narrative* of your psychophysical process:

- follow what thoughts, associations or memories are emerging...
- what is it that you are imagining with your mind's eye?
- observe the way your body is responding to the sound and to your own imagination – if there are specific sensations, feelings or movements taking place... Give them a chance to be expressed - *you are invited to move in whatever way you want or need to*.

The special thing about this phase is the invitation for you to respond to the selected sound with openness and curiosity... Let your imagination and your physical sensations guide you. In its core, this phase welcomes you to explore your psychophysical process via somatic movement interaction with the stimulus and with what it awakes in you... This is a moment for you to focus inwardly, to close your eyes, and to move freely as you follow every recognisable feeling or sensation in your body, or image that you see with your mind's eye... After this phase is over, I will give a sign for you to come back to this paper and to follow the reflection stage.

Reflection (10 min.) – take some time to revisit and reflect on what you have experienced. There are a few categories below. I invite you to put on paper and articulate what you have experienced by writing in each section (you could indicate your processes either with a word, with descriptive or abstract sentences).

Bodily Sensations, Kinaesthetic Imagery –

stepping on to small pool of water
hand feeling raindrops
stepping & jumping around
turning (the umbrella)
stillness. (step into mud)
walking / step away from mud

Figure 31: Participant's Sheet B, Cheng, 1.1

Feelings – humidity, playfulness, attention directed to my feet to avoid stepping into waterpool, muddy roads. quietness in the house; Soothing.

Movements – walk, step, hand elongating (for rain) avoiding (from the rain), scooping (after the rain, in the muddy water pool to find the baby of frogs), jumping around.

Mental/Visual Images (in the mind's eye) –

me taking my dog to walking in the rain. his paws very wet.

walking under roofs and rain drops around.



little streams everywhere

me wearing rainboots, & umbrella

our house, we watch Tv & read. sotthing afternoon

memories →

Figure 32: Participant's Sheet B, Cheng, 1.2

Memories –



childhood fun time in rain.

Thoughts/Associations/Ideas –

rhythm coming from the step into from mud/
away water)

Figure 33: Participant's Sheet B, Cheng, 1.3

- **EXPLORING MOVEMENT** (15 min. + 10 min. for reflection)

In this phase, I invite you to continue your process with intentional movement exploration through improvisation. Take into account what you have experienced so far. You started with the selected sound, then you encountered your own psychophysical processes as you communicated with it, and you placed your reflections on paper... The movement exploration that I invite you to do is improvisatory, creative and free in nature. You may start with your current psychophysical condition, or might choose elements of what you have experienced up to this phase of the workshop. Allow your imaginative and creative nature to utilise elements of what you have been through and to inform your movement exploration. You might inform your movement exploration by:

- words/sentences from your reflections;
- by the sound you are working with;
- by the way you currently experience the flow, dynamics and rhythm of the movements you are exploring.

You might play with shifting your focus between those different aspects of your work, finding links between them and playing with the qualities they bring to the movements. Allow the sensations, the knowledge of your body and the processes within your mind's eye to lead you in a free and creative way, with openness and curiosity. Challenge yourself to constantly move – even if it is just walking. Look for interesting ways to communicate and to interact with the elements of your own process – the scent, the awaken sensations in your body, your imagination, your reflections, what you experience right now... As in this phase you are with your eyes open, I invite you to move across the whole studio (if you feel the need to), just be aware of the other movers around you. Allow yourself to be surprised by your own movement exploration...

Reflection (10 min.) – take some time to put on paper what you have discovered as movements. You are welcome to write in the most suitable way for you – either with descriptive sentences or with one word. Think about the type of movements, the way you somatically embodied them, body structures, dynamics... See if you can extract moments that were significant for you.

A sense of what my body felt as a child (5 yrs) – a smaller body. how that ↘ o feel very different from the big body I have now.

1. hands reaching out to feel the rain it gathers in the palms & slip away through the gaps of the fingers soft texture, gentle & delicate

2. wearing rainboots & stepping into pools of water. Knees are slightly bent & the step are heavy.

Figure 34: Participant's Sheet B, Cheng, 1.4

3. crawling, observing-
fingers moving in the
pools of water trying
to touch frog babies.

- **EXTRACTING** (10 min.)

Take the next ten minutes to look at your notes on your movement exploration. Extract from them and from your memory of the movement improvisation the following:

- a short repeatable movement phrase (1,5 to 2 minutes long, maximum);
- three significant movement/gestures (they might be continuous, linked or small snippets of movements/gestures);

(Your approach might not be to strictly repeat the things that you remember, but to utilise your experience and the gathered information into a next level of creative endeavour as you design, develop and fix your movements)

Reflection (5 min.) – take the time to put on paper the way you have designed your fixed movement phrase. Go through and describe the stages and mini phrases of your extracted miniature (give names to the different stages, note down what you are exploring/expressing with your movements)

1. walking backwards. one hand reach for
(adult wood me) fowards. the other " rain
two hands feeling the rain
creating a twist) spiral in
reach the sky and falling down the hands.

2. (childhood me) crawling to the small pond.
observing & playing with
fingers in the water

3. (childhood me) jumping and moving around
step into / away from pools of water & mud

Figure 35: Participant's Sheet B, Cheng, 1.5

- Collective Dreaming – exploring (20 min.)

Come together in the space, taking your experience up to this stage and your memory of the sound. Stay together, in the middle of the studio, standing and connected with each other by touch. Spend some time in that togetherness, being relaxed and listening to it. Feel the others and observe what happens. Gently and slowly... Follow your collective rhythm... You are invited to stay in that togetherness and to explore how you can travel through space, inspired by your interaction with the sound and the presence of the others... You are an individual who is a part of an ensemble – you can explore the togetherness both with and without touching the others. What is it that connects and unites you? You might initiate or respond to movements, rhythms or motives that the others are suggesting. You are invited to play with rhythm, in whatever way you understand it – your own rhythm, the rhythm of rain and thunders or the rhythm, the pulsation of the group. You might leave the 'togetherness' if you feel you want to, but make sure to come back to it... You might incorporate the solo you extracted, or elements of it – while you are in the togetherness, or when you separate from it... You might respond to the movements of the others... Feel free to play with mirroring, shadowing, synchronicity, communication through movement, ensemble dynamics.

Reflections

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

steps on foot
touch. contact of head
hands
delicacy

Mental imagery:

Figure 36: Participant's Sheet B, Cheng, 1.6[151]

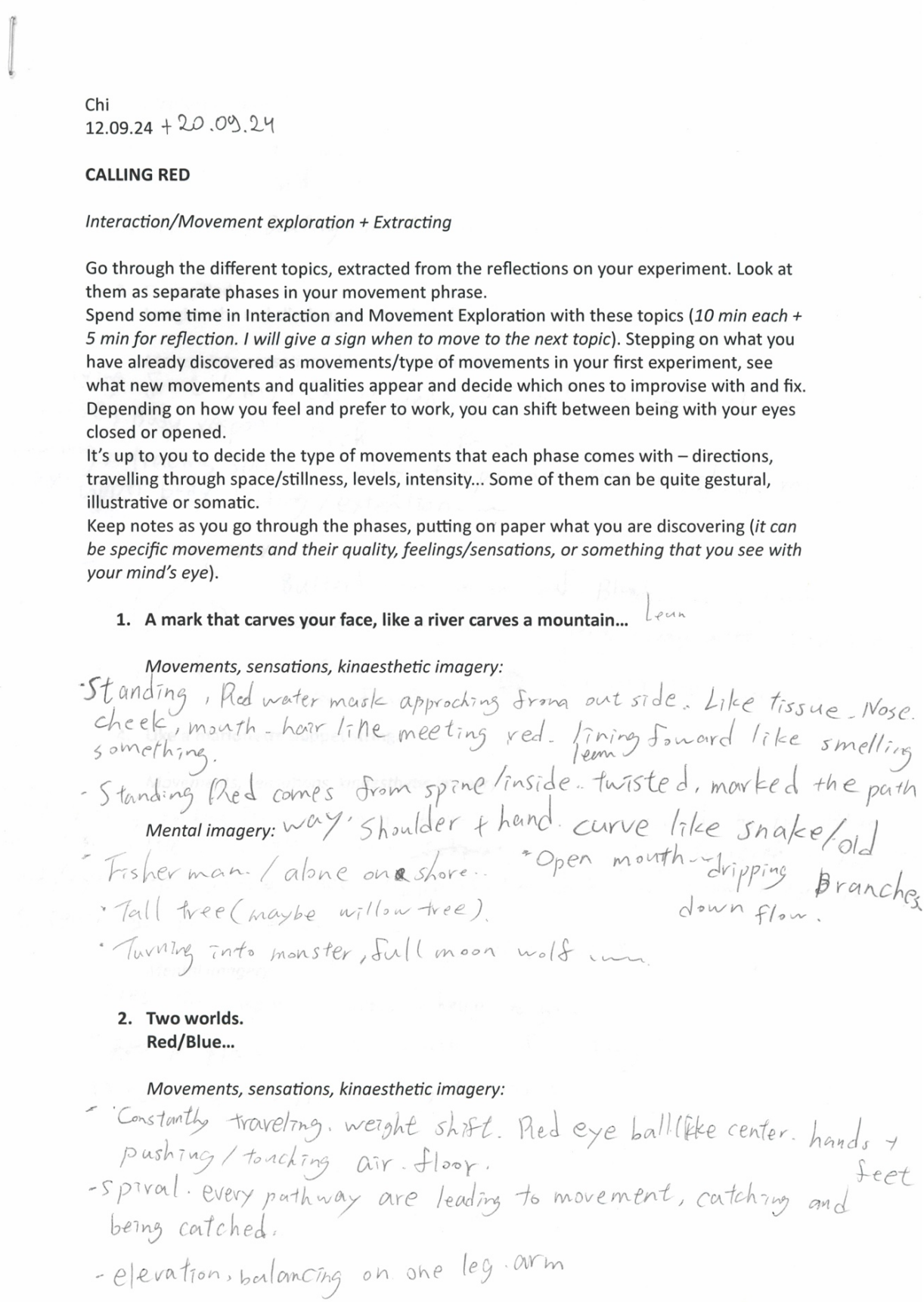
[151] During this session, all three of the dancers worked with the sound of rain. The explorations led to the creation of the *Rain* scene in the final piece (see Choreographer's Sheet C, p. 186), a scene that went through several transformations. In its final version, this scene amalgamates complex movement material derived from the dancers' explorations, their further movement experimentations with the diverse creative invitations I suggested, and the choreographic phrases I designed for them.

The role of the Participants' Sheets was essential as a source that supported the creative returning to what had been discovered as movements and themes. Acknowledging that the model facilitates such returning within a single session, for two of our sessions I altered the activities by designing different versions of the Participants' Sheets, intended to deepen the somatic and creative work with selected reflections on mental imagery, physical sensations, memories, or thoughts. I selected extracts from the reflective writings of the dancers, following my embodied experiences as a witness and the implicit ways in which the dancers' movement explorations and reflections affected me.[152] This approach allowed us to practise creative returning to movements and themes already reflected upon and to continue exploring the potential of the sublimated psychophysical contents.

Below, I include a scan of Participants' Sheet C (pp. 176–181), which was specifically designed for Lin. It is based on her exploration in our session on 04.09.24, when she worked with the *Images* zone. In creating Participant's Sheet C, I extracted some of her written reflections from that session. Employing principles from the Interacting, Exploring Movement, and Extracting phases, I invited Lin to engage in creative returning to her reflections in two of our sessions (12.09.24 and 20.09.24).[153] The image included below represents the sheet as designed for and completed by Lin during these two sessions.

[152] Once, within the material extracted for Cheng's further explorations, I also included a theme (as a mental imagery) that emerged in my mind's eye as I witnessed her work. This approach is to be further developed.
[153] During the session on 20.09.24, as it was Snizhko's first engagement with the performance-making endeavour after the workshops, she worked with a Participant's Sheet containing extracted elements from Lin's reflections. Although we did not continue the practice of working with someone else's reflections, I address it here as an intention for the future development of the Collective Imagining Process, representing the incorporation of stimuli in the form of another's reflective material.

- Participant's Sheet C, Lin



Chi
12.09.24 + 20.09.24

CALLING RED

Interaction/Movement exploration + Extracting

Go through the different topics, extracted from the reflections on your experiment. Look at them as separate phases in your movement phrase.
Spend some time in Interaction and Movement Exploration with these topics (*10 min each + 5 min for reflection. I will give a sign when to move to the next topic*). Stepping on what you have already discovered as movements/type of movements in your first experiment, see what new movements and qualities appear and decide which ones to improvise with and fix.
Depending on how you feel and prefer to work, you can shift between being with your eyes closed or opened.
It's up to you to decide the type of movements that each phase comes with – directions, travelling through space/stillness, levels, intensity... Some of them can be quite gestural, illustrative or somatic.
Keep notes as you go through the phases, putting on paper what you are discovering (*it can be specific movements and their quality, feelings/sensations, or something that you see with your mind's eye*).

1. **A mark that carves your face, like a river carves a mountain...** Leun

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

- Standing, Red water mask approching from out side. Like tissue. Nose. cheek, mouth - hair line meeting red. lining foward like smelling something.
- Standing Red comes from spine/inside. twisted, marked the path way, shoulder + hand. curve like snake/old

Mental imagery:

- Fisher man / alone on shore..
- Tall tree (maybe willow tree).
- Turning into monster, full moon wolf
- Open mouth - dripping branches down flow.

2. **Two worlds.**
   Red/Blue...

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

- Constantly traveling. weight shift. Red eye ball like center. hands + feet pushing / touching air. floor.
- spiral. every pathway are leading to movement, catching and being catched.
- elevation, balancing on one leg. arm

Figure 37: Participant's Sheet C, Lin, 1.1

· Blue, are become thiner. little movement feels loud.

Mental imagery:

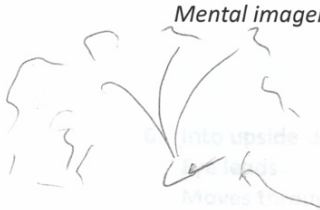
· Running in an open field.
- Reds comes like wind.
- Blue holds you. Boating me to an unknown destination.

3. **Calling Red.**
   Imagine the red climb up to my whole head/neck...

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

· Side lying - Front lying - Calling and waiting for echo/call. Sudden impulse, Body respond. Back and forth - ~
- kneeling, tracing spain, leading to openess, arm reached. moving side way. upper body folding / extention - ~

Mental imagery:



Butterfly resting on leaf. Blending with leaf. rain drop awake them. Flying away ~~with~~. vibration.. Cave ~ water fountion. praying for rain ... ..!

4. **Like a marionette puppet string...**

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

kneeling, strings holding fingers. waist. knee. neck. Supported by the Blue repitition, little by little to move. ~~Take~~ turn and swing to reach or hope water. head/eye keep scanning space, Opposite direction from body. reach? sense of freshness.

Mental imagery: - Disconstracte the joint..

Does the puppet know where to go?
A ~~puppet~~ puppet on the ocean - ~ Flowting...
Discovering through learning to move.

Figure 38: Participant's Sheet C, Lin, 1.2

5. **Expanded head inner space...**
   Eyeball like balloon...
   Eyeball leads... Body weight shifts... Limbs are allowed to stretch... Giving them agency to move, express...

   Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

- Toward wall. ~~side~~ edge of the room. Expand and rolling through space. head ~~is carrying~~ or is bigger than actuall scull. heavy. Hand and feet carry out some expression. Balloon could stuck, swing jumping through space.
- sense of joy, short stopping feels needed, temporary home.

   Mental imagery: - Balancing, play with head / feet relation.
- On the flight. seeing landscape from up. ...
- space become sponge.

Spounge?

6. **Into upside-down world.**
   Eye leads...
   Moves through space...

   Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

Eevery lifting and landing from hands + feets are making / creating trace mark in the space. Weight shifting ~~from~~ lead from eye to pelvis to rest of the body.

   Mental imagery:

A machine / spider who have 3 brain. Each brain have different opinion on how / where to travel / move.

Vel (masle) → my hair. Black. ... my hand. feet is red

Body.

Figure 39: Participant's Sheet C, Lin, 1.3

7. **Here is a passenger blessing by the power of red...**
Strength encounter bitterness...

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

Pushed, floated by the read ocean, catch your head before it go away. Want to run but there are slow keep you around. Actually you like the repitition-
Brush skin. Chin brushes arm. cheek brushes hand. ~~ret~~repetead movement.
..... A sense of praying. To pray is to repeat? refine it?

Mental imagery:

Staircase. Platform = Deck.

8. **Upper world.**
Blue...
Touching blue/empty space...
Attentiveness, hands, speed...

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

Hands touching empty space, there is no up down left right
Hands flip and flow like weightless. Bouncing in space.
There is ~~only~~ only gravity ~~towards~~ gravitised towards yourself.
You feel the heat when hand are close.

Mental imagery:

Blue, delicate, seamless (?), vast...
Swim with two ~~direction~~ direction. R / L hand different movement.

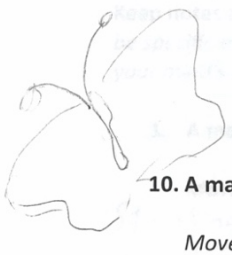
Figure 40: Participant's Sheet C, Lin, 1.4

9. **Two worlds.**
Shadow/Light...
Being able to travel in-between two worlds...
Upside down with one blink...

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

Lying, sense the shadow / light in the room. Changing with the light. speed up towards the end of each movement like blinking eye. ~~loose~~ lost yourself for a short time.
Arm cut through space helps travel in-between two worlds.

Mental imagery:



Insect. when they stop like they are dead, but they move suddenly without preparation. But sometimes the let the eviroment led them. For ex: wind blow

10. **A mark that carves your face, like a river carves a mountain...**

Movements, sensations, kinaesthetic imagery:

Mental imagery:

Figure 41: Participant's Sheet C, Lin, 1.5

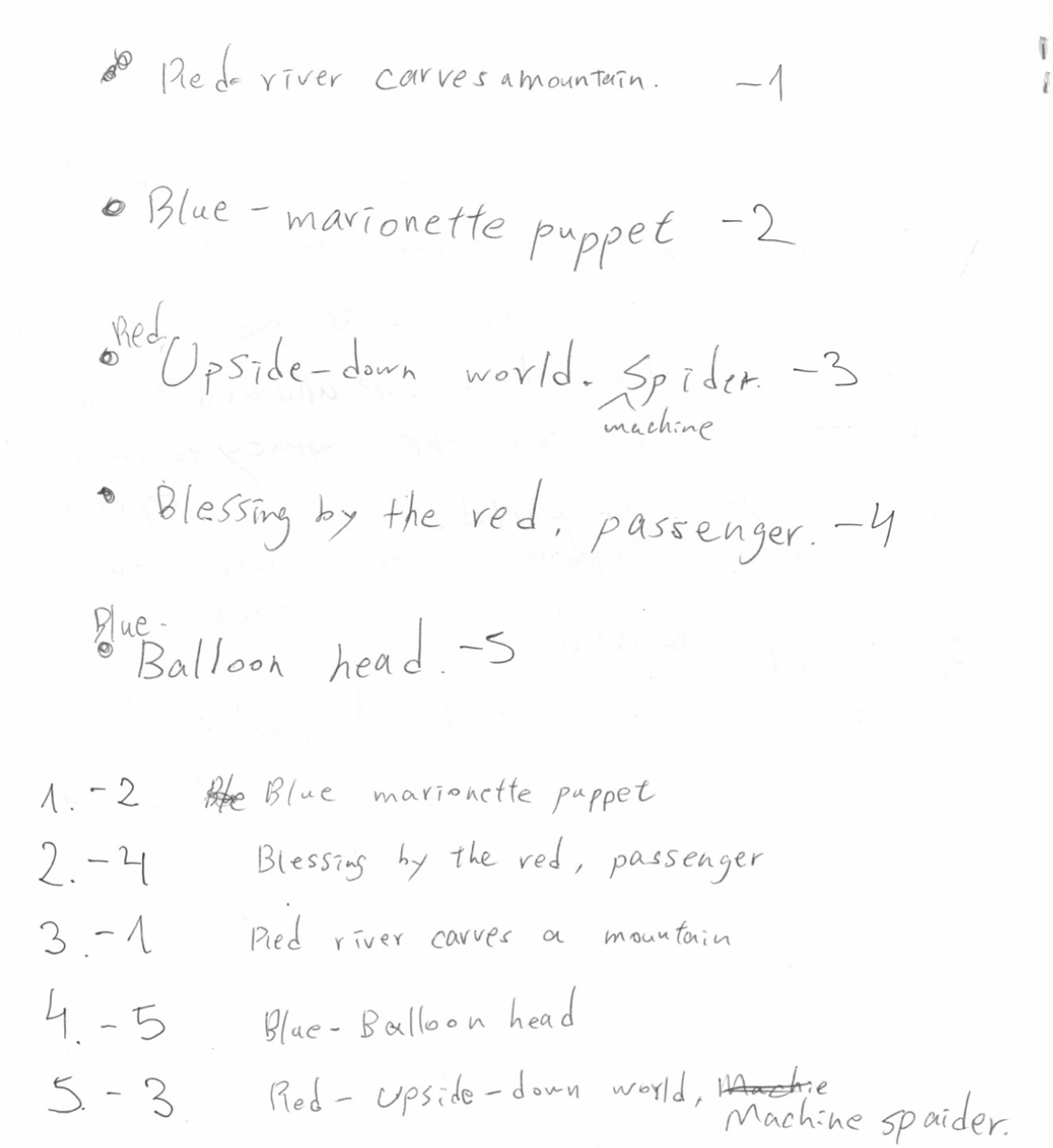


Figure 42: Participant's Sheet C, Lin, 1.6[154]

[154] This last page represents the score extracted at the end of the two sessions. I suggested experimentation with a different order of the elements (indicated by the numbers in Figure 42). Elements from the extracted score, together with their explorative background, were foundational to Lin's movement scores in two scenes of the final piece.

6.3.2. Leading a Collaborative Dance-Making Process

My approach as facilitator and leader of the artistic endeavour was intuitive and, as was evident in the preceding phases of this research, guided by what the practice revealed. For each session, I carefully prepared and planned the activities in advance, drawing on the generated and documented material. For most sessions, I brought a printed sheet of paper to support me during the time with the dancers. These sheets, which I refer to here, post-practice, as Choreographer's Sheets, contained different intentions: they either represented a simple structure of a session or gave directions for specific creative and choreographic tasks. These were then employed by the dancers in ways that continued to surprise me, and that unpredictability became one of the most beautiful and potent aspects of the collaborative process.

Ultimately, both Participants' Sheets (containing the dancers' maps of their experience)[155] and Choreographer's Sheets are idiosyncratic 'scores' that were essential to the devising process and that document and communicate the work. A related framework for structuring creative processes is the RSVP Cycles developed by landscape architect, designer, and teacher Lawrence Halprin (2014) in collaboration with his wife Anna Halprin. RSVP stands for:

> R Resources, which art what you have to work with. These include human and physical resources and their motivation and aims.
>
> S Scores, which describe the process leading to the performance.
>
> V Valuaction, which analyses the results of action and possible selectivity and decisions. The term 'valuaction' is one coined to suggest the action-oriented as well as the decision-oriented aspects of V in the cycle.
>
> P Performance, which is the resultant of scores and is the 'style' of the process.
> (L. Halprin, 2014, p. 42)

Although the RSVP Cycles approach was not directly adopted in this process, commonalities with its aims and processual dimensions are acknowledged. The RSVP Cycles system invites visibility within a creative, non-hierarchical and democratic endeavour, and aids communication in collaborative contexts, offering ways for a better understanding of the process (2014, p. 39). The Participants' and Choreographer's Sheets, as scores that are

[155] See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1. Mapping the Experience, p. 129.

"symbolisations of process that extends over time" (2014, p. 40), similarly reflect the different stages of the RSVP Cycles at both individual and collaborative levels (2014, p. 42). These scores direct the processual devising of the work, "establish[ing] 'lines of action' to which each person contributes and from which a final performance then emerges" (2014, p. 46).

Below, I include scans of three Choreographer's Sheets (A, B, and C):

Choreographer's Sheet A (p. 184) was used in our very first meeting and contained a plan for the explorative session, as well as directions for creative tasks.

Choreographer's Sheet B (p. 185) was created for a session in which I worked with Snizhko and Cheng. In this session, we started working on two solos that evolved into a duo. I extracted themes from both dancers' reflections on their explorations with images. The dancers were invited to select from and work with the themes as flexible scores, incorporating them into a separate task, drawing on principles from Phase Two's work with memories and environments.[156]

Choreographer's Sheet C (p. 186) was created for a session later in the artistic, generative process. In this session, we started structuring a scene based on explorations with the sound of rain (the *Rain* scene). Experimenting with different approaches to that scene, I decided to situate it under the theme of "push and pull", which I recognised in the movement behaviours of some of the dancers. However, this theme emerged from my own interpretations and personal dream, and I wanted to explore it further. Thus, I introduced "push and pull" as both individual and collective movement tasks across several sessions. Choreographer's Sheet C contains directions related to "pulling", as well as indications of material extracted from the dancers' reflections in the Participants' Sheets (from their explorations with the sound of rain). As the dancers explored moving through space with the given directions, I invited them to find ways to incorporate the extracted elements from their previous explorations.

[156] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1. Remembering, p. 98.

- Choreographer's Sheet A

Plan for session 04.09.24

Introduction (30 min.)

1. ***Exploration stage (90 min.)***

- Arriving (10 min.)
- Recognising (5-10 min.)
- Interacting (10 min. + 10 min.)
  - *Reflection* (10 min.)
- Exploring Movement (20 min. + 10 min.)
  - *Reflection* (10 min.)
- Extracting (10 min.)
  - *Reflection (10 min.)*

Break (10 min.)

2. **Creative stage (60 min.)**

- Solos Presentation + Verbal Reflection (20 min.)
- Two Solos Simultaneously
- Duo – Encounter of Dreams + Dreaming Together
- Chance Game

Solo
Two (Three) Solos Simultaneously
Encounter of Dreams
Dreaming Together

Tasks for the ones performing solos:

1. Responding to the movements, the energy of the other solos. Playing with distance and levels.
2. Shadowing. Leading, following, mirroring.
3. Contact, togetherness.
4. Distance. Moments of stillness, freeze in motion. Pauses.
5. Tempo. Repetition.

Figure 43: Choreographer's Sheet A

- Choreographer's Sheet B

30.10.24
First Solos + First Duo

Plan for Session

1. Solos

- Warm Up
- Task Space + Gesture/Spatial Change (alone)

YUN:

- Stay with the qualities discovered during the explorations:

Flows of energy, tension in / waves, curves in the body / moving both horizontally and vertically / relaxed, enjoyment / tense, fear / I am in the sea... The waves are continuous and strong... there is a strong force of the earth that is constantly in motion / waves in the whole body / being moved by waves / shift of direction

- Think of your room – the one that you are living now, or if you have a memory of your room as a child. Design several gestures, or body structures, that represent specific objects in your room – corner, carpet, wardrobe – whatever is there. Simple and short.

DIANA:

- Think about the gestures/movement structures that you discovered. Go through them.

Slide legs as an exploration / Jump as new answer occurs / When I was staying in the window, I was imagining the picture of the ocean... where I can have calmness and rest / Why am I in the house and not in the sea? Which and how many responsibilities do I have? Can I get out from this place and go further? / Why am I in this room and not going out (gesture – body in line) / I somehow think all these moments were a monologue with myself.

- Move in your own kinesphere.

BOTH:

- Situate yourselves in your kinesphere, as in your room. Move free in it, and include your gestures as accents and a spatial change. Situate the gestures in different directions.

- Task Counts (alone)
- Task Together
- Watching Videos (if necessary)

2. Duo

- Watching Videos
- Indicating Moments
- Tasks – Together
- Togetherness, touch, working with elements from solos – doing them together

Figure 44: Choreographer's Sheet B

- Choreographer's Sheet C

06.11.24

Plan for Rehearsal RAIN

1. Scene meaning
   - In performance
   - What are we working with
   - What is it expressing
   - Plan for what is happening chorographically
2. Tasks
   - A part of the body is being pulled. Impulse in a part of the body. It leads in a certain direction. The rest of the body follows freely. You improvise with what the rest of the body is doing. It can be anything.
   - Work with how the impulse in that part of the body is being projected ///
     - Close in the kinesphere
     - far in space
     - on the floor
   - Including elements from exploration:
     - CHI – smell of rain, palms up, little small bouncing of hands, skin touching fabric, small shake, sliding inside skin bag, raindrop wiggle, becoming rain drop, FRICTION, INNER/OUTER FRICTION. WIPING.
     - YUN – hand feeling raindrop, stillness, attention directed to my feet to avoid stepping into water pools, walking-stepping away from mud, jumping around, HANDS REACHING OUT TO FEEL THE RAIN IT GATHERS IN THE PALMS AND SLIPS AWAY THROUGH THE GAPS OF THE FINGERS. Soft texture. Gentle and delicate, WALKING BACKWARDS, ONE HAND REACHES FOR RAIN, CREATING A TWIST SPIRAL IN HANDS, JUMPING AND MOVING AROUND, STEPPING INTO-AWAY FROM PODS.
     - DIANA - Floor lying, face down rested on hands, LEFT HAND, SHOULDER, MASSAGE, HANDS ON CHEST, BALL TO THE FRONT OF THE BODY, THAT SHAPE LEADING THE BODY, tapping on face, body... Down in yogi position... HANDS PROTECTING THE FACE, Hands in circle, Palms tapping on body and on invisible surface.
   - Glitches of movement - - - small solos
   - Trying it all with music. Working on movements around. Structuring directions, phrases.
3. Together
   - Movement phrase on music. How it evolves?
   - What happens with the upper body
     - Including movements – feeling rain, hands opening, hands melting, hands on face, hands hiding the face.
4. Rain Collective Dreaming.
5. Evolving of scene

Figure 45: Choreographer's Sheet C

Through the application and development of the RSVP Cycles in her choreographic work, Anna Halprin located "open" and "closed" scores on a scale from 1 to 10: "open score contains a minimum of instructions leaving the participant free to explore, while a closed score consists of detailed, precise directions predetermining much of the action and severely limiting the freedom of the participant" (Worth & Poynor, 2004, p. 74). In a similar manner, the Choreographer's Sheets contained extracts from the Participants' Sheets, which were offered to the dancers as suggestions for flexible scores to explore. Our work can be seen as encompassing both exploration through flexible scores (evident in the reflections following the Interacting and Exploring Movement phases, as well as in the extracts included in some of the Choreographer's Sheets) and more fixed structures (emerging in reflections following the Extracting phase, or present in choreographed phrases).

Ideas about the structure and concept of the performance emerged in my mind while I observed the devising process. Writing on my laptop and creating my Choreographer's Sheets, I sometimes included my visions and projections—my personal dream for different scenes—which I shared with the dancers.

Below, I include an extract of my ideas for a specific scene (Choreographer's Sheet D), which I envisioned while observing the dancers' explorations. This idea developed differently while working with the dancers, but at its core, the scene communicates the intentions I had while writing about it.

- Choreographer's Sheet D

1. **Prima Materia**
   This is where everything starts. It's an act of birth. We are in one realm and will enter another. As the baby does coming out from the mother's womb…

   Bodies, dressed in black, forming a breathing mess in the middle of the studio. That mess starts to move, to take more and more space. There is a hidden logic within that mess. Some pulsations and inner rhythm can be seen… The bodies that are forming the mess have moments of union, of doing things in a perfect synchronicity… Before they fall within the seemingly chaotic way of their existence… They mould their bodies and express secret language of movements and gestures… For a moment it almost looks like they are telling a story… Before they fall within the chaos again… They intensify their movements… At the end, after moments of perfect unions, they come together and shape their bodies in a strange way – a strange creature with three heads appears. One of the heads whispers something to the other. And suddenly, between the legs of one of the bodies, a body in an embryo position makes its way and starts rolling towards the side of the stage… The other ‹bodies also transition to the same embryo position and roll in the same direction as the other…

Figure 46: Choreographer's Sheet D

The transition from predominantly explorative sessions to the structuring and rehearsing of the performative act came with challenges for all of us. The Collective Imagining Process encompasses both explorative and artistically generative processes, which supported the transition to rehearsals. However, each of us had to find our own way to bring the foundational principles of this research into every stage of the performance-making process. Reflecting on her experience of that transition, Lin notes:

> The empowerment of active imagination became even more pronounced in the transition from exploration to rehearsals. For me, structuring is the process of translating mysterious things into known language, imagery, or any communicable human tools. Inevitably, I felt a sense of compression. At first, I encountered some internal resistance, but when this translated active imagination was placed in space and received or recognised by others, it transformed into a different state. I cannot say that its state was always the same—it felt like it had a certain life of its own. Yet, this life carried a new mystery that I did not have full interpretive authority over, and at that moment, the sense of compression disappeared. I would say that both the exploration and structuring phases went through a cycle of moving from a mysterious realm of freedom to a feeling of compression. However, this process was cyclical—it started from self-exploration, then moved to interactions with space and others, and then cycled back again.[157]

Lin reflects on feelings of "compression" and "internal resistance" situated within a processual framework, which also encompasses "freedom", "self-exploration", and "mysterious realms". The "cyclical" movement between these experiences indicates an evolution of the explorative nature of our work, as it was gradually employed in the shaping of an artistic product.

Working towards performative articulations, I suggested diverse challenges for the dancers: I invited them to develop movement material and scores based on themes that emerged from within the explorations, to embody ideas that came from my imagination, or to learn movement phrases that I choreographed, inspired by the process. In shaping the final work, I was challenged with finding the right balance between providing input (framing, choreographing, and fixing movements and scores) and creating space for the dancers to continue exploring within each individual structural element and throughout their totality, led by their own intuition. That process required our constant attention, inner witnessing, and collective efforts.

[157] Taken from Lin's questionnaire form, Appendix G.1, p. 244.

At certain stages of the performance making process, I invited the dancers to experiment with movement material and tasks that embodied ideas, creative elaborations, and interpretations of their explorations, inspired by my own experiences and imagination. The dancers tested and revisited these ideas whole-heartedly, clarifying what would work and what would not. However, this process differed from the preceding explorative sessions. As Lin reflected on her experience:

> I think revisiting can be divided into two situations, both connected to past fragments. If this serves as a preliminary step leading to action, the first situation occurs when I initiate the process myself—whether through words or movement. This takes some time but is usually not too difficult to transition into action. The second situation arises when my original material is selected and interpreted by the choreographer. Whether transformed through language or imagery, this part can sometimes be challenging. It feels like encountering something both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time. In these cases, I need to find a compromise or an "entry point" into action—such as maintaining a low level of movement in space or focusing my awareness on a specific body part. However, I feel that I still have a considerable degree of freedom in establishing these "entry points".[158]

Lin mentions "compromise", indicating an important aspect of the collaborative dynamic. Compromise is inevitably present within a synergetic performance-making experience, representing an encounter with the input of others (Melrose, 2016). In this process, "compromise" is not framed as a negative concept; rather, it suggests an inevitable process involving refinement, adaptation, decision-making, and letting go—it is a "valuaction" process (L. Halprin, 2014).

For me, the transition from the explorative sessions to rehearsals brought to the fore two dimensions of my role as choreographer-director: facilitation and active artistic engagement. As a facilitator, I continuously opened towards the dancers exploring, recognising what they brought to the practice. I allowed the sublimated material to become one of my central preoccupations, embracing both its implicit and explicit messages. This dimension of my role corresponded with that of a witness and required me to be fully present for the others—to support and to follow whatever emerged. My role as an actively engaged artist involved a shift in focus, incorporating my direction, artistic visions, and choices. How could I accommodate the transition between these dimensions, or their coexistence, in a way that ensured the explorative nature of the work and the dancers' personal engagement were not compromised?

[158] Taken from Lin's questionnaire form, Appendix G.1, p. 244.

6.3.3. Outlining Horizons

To facilitate and, at the same time, direct a process that held a deeply personal and vulnerable quality for everyone engaged, I had to develop a specific presence. This presence required qualities resembling the distilled post-practice notions of *softening awareness* and the ability to *stay between and across* diverse internal and external processes.

Hunter outlines the role of embodied cognition and Damasio's body-minded brain and somatic markers[159] as essential in her decision-making processes in the context of performance-making (2013). Her approach examines the devising of a solo performance "that is, ultimately, personal and subjective" (2013, p. 173). According to her, framing a practice through the "somatic markers hypothesis" and the body-minded brain "seems to act as a filter for [her] experience; like a magnifying glass which spans all material but shines a light on that which is remarkable (even if it's unremarkable)" (2013, p. 173).

Within the parameters of this work, my role did not involve the embodied explorations that the dancers were going through. The attentiveness towards my own imaginative, associative, tactile, and embodied experiences as the leader of devising process had to expand to embrace the collaborative context. My decisions within this collaborative dynamic, therefore, needed to consider the experiences, feedback, and energy of those involved. These were decisions I had to make as an artist-researcher facilitating a space for the deeply personal to emerge.

I passed through stages of total engagement with the contents of my imagination, realising that imagery and ideas, even though powerful and creatively potent, can—if not constantly related to the collective dynamic—have a tyrannic quality and lead to total identification with them. This process pulled me away from what the explorations revealed, placing me in a role aligned with the didactic aspects of the collaborative dynamic, sometimes leading to a lack of integrity.

By trying to soften my awareness, as I conceptualise it in this thesis, and to open up to my tacit, embodied processes, I realised that the potential of what the dancers and I were doing required a specific attitude from the lead choreographer. To stay with the essences of what

[159] Acknowledging "both visceral and nonvisceral sensation", Damasio uses "somatic" to refer at a "gut feeling" that arises in response to a potential outcome in a decision-making situation or in the solution of a problem. That bodily sensation (or "gut feeling") "marks" and is linked to a particular image unfolding in the mind (1994, p. 173).

had already been discovered in the process, I had to find a balance between witnessing and active engagement, an oscillation between being a facilitator and an artist, or embodying both simultaneously. Within this state, hints about what to let go and what to continue working with emerged. Such a devising process required openness on my part as a choreographer-director. It required an ability to sense the collective dynamics and the research context, while noticing my own inspirations and artistic ideas. I acknowledge that this process would differ with each project and that it is never fully complete—it requires continuous cultivation.

Reflecting on the investigation, I acknowledge the performance-making process in Phase Three as resulting from the challenges encountered during the creation of *Inner Spaces* (2023). In the previous chapter, I discussed the collapse of ultimate framing when situated within practice based on Authentic Movement. During Phase Two, both my collaborators and I were drawn to Authentic Movement as "meaningful to [us as] participants", while also feeling challenged by translating it into stage language (Ellis & McLeod, 2019). Although not explicitly articulated at the time, I encountered an aspect of Authentic Movement that Ellis and McLeod acknowledge: that the practice "frustrates the artist's impulse to 'make something' as crafting the elements of the experience would entail making judgments" (Ellis & McLeod, 2019). Within the parameters of Phase Two, in which Authentic Movement was directly incorporated into the process, the transition to performance-making revealed these characteristics of the practice, suggesting that it either resists certain conventional approaches or demands its own way of sharing (or 'offering') in a performative context.

In Phase Three, I incorporated principles of Authentic Movement and phenomenology as a foundation of a model aimed at artistic articulation and framing. As the reader could follow, the process during Phase Three integrated exploration with structuring and scoring, encompassing both lived experiences and artistic projections, elaborations, and assessments—all can be considered judgements. However, the performance-making endeavour was distinct with its intention to frame a world, a situation, in which dancers could continue the explorative process while performing.

Given the characteristics of such a process, I would like to distil a performance-making approach which, during the process, was nonetheless implicit. In retrospect, I recognise my intentions during Phase Three to create a piece structured around different levels of framing, encompassing both fixed and open scores. My overall approach, however, was guided by the intention to transfer the qualities and potency of the explorative practice into the

performance. This potency lies within the not-yet-sensed and not-yet-expressed, that which emerges on a moment-by-moment basis. Looking back at the process, I describe the integration of the explorative practice (as informed by Authentic Movement and phenomenology) into performance or dance making as an act of outlining horizons. This is an approach that resists ultimate framing and rather sketches possible futures and situations, inviting performers to soften and access these situations, while allowing emerging and re-emerging phenomena to manifest freely. The approach of outlining horizons enables the performance to breathe within in-flux parameters. The performers follow fixed and open scores while drafting new, not-yet-framed possibilities that exist in a shared dimension with the audience and evolve with each performance.

The implication of this approach is more of an intention for future investigation than a reflection on Phase Three in its entirety, as during the work I went through different approaches, gradually becoming aware of what the specificities of the process and my role were. Returning to the performance-making endeavour, I was piecing together the puzzle of a collective dream which was an assemblage of pre-decided and framed moments and moments that gave space for the dancers to continue exploring.

6.3.4. The Collective Dream

As the dancers and I explored through creative endeavours with personal experiences and their unconscious dynamics we gathered material for solos, duos, and trios. I arranged the discovered elements, which included movement scores and phrases designed by the dancers as a result of the explorations and Extracting phases, movement phrases choreographed by myself, and elements choreographed collaboratively. As the process unfolded, different scenes began to emerge, including ones I named *Prima Materia, Embryos, First Encounter, Rain,* and *Hug,* among others. As choreographer-director, I used the emerging scores to sculpt a collective dream, shaped by the individual dreams contributed by the dancers. My intention was to invite the dancers to carry forward aspects of the explorative process into the structured piece. The decisions I made regarding aesthetics, audience engagement, and the use of music within the performative act were guided by the central focus of the work: the dancers, their presence, and their embodied experiences.

- Movement Aesthetics

As a choreographer-director I led the process with openness to the movement qualities the dancers brought to the practice. Throughout the process, I utilised these qualities as the basis for the act of choreography, appreciating them as shaping specific movement aesthetics. The final work was thus informed by the movement vocabularies of the dancers and their personhood.

- Vision

From the early stages of working on the performance, I intended to include video material as a moving image projected from above onto the performative field. I worked on this projection for weeks, transforming and compiling water-related videos I had recorded and editing them using a video-editing programme. Engaging with the projection-making process was both creative and inspiring, and it allowed me to accumulate material that suggested a particular visual aesthetic.

The video material I designed emphasised clear separation between the scenes and strict framing of the performative field. It came with certain requirements for the dancers regarding their positioning in space and their interaction with the projected video. It also suggested particular situating of the audience. Weeks before the premiere, it became clear that rehearsing on stage with the projection would not be possible until the day of the performance. At that point, I had to make an important decision.

Considering the explorative nature of the process, I felt that the presentation of the piece, particularly as a result of the adopted approaches, had to focus on the dancers themselves, allowing them to lead the action. I decided to remove the video projection as a strong visual stimulus and to invite the audience to focus on the dancers and feel the gravitational field they create through their presence as they navigate their attention and explore their inner worlds. In this way, the dancers themselves led the progression of the performative act and the transitions between scenes, grounding the structure of the piece in their ongoing experiential processes. To further accentuate the presence of the dancers, I adopted a minimalistic approach—the dancers were dressed in white, moving on a white dance floor, accompanied by sound and subtle lighting.

- Music

The music and soundscapes were created by dancer, visual artist, and musician Kohei Nakatsu. Throughout the performance-making process, I continuously communicated with Nakatsu via email (as he was in a different country), elucidating the studio practice and sending video materials. Nakatsu whole-heartedly followed the explorations, suggesting ideas regarding the sound atmosphere. He witnessed and engaged with the process via our emails.

As an element introduced to the dancers later in the process (initially we worked in a quiet studio), the music added another layer to the world we were creating. During the performance, changes in music were triggered by the dancers' movements, allowing them to lead the action.

In the final piece, the music created a meditative and dreamlike atmosphere. It was a combination of tracks that Nakatsu had previously created, some of which he edited to suit the performance. The music acted as an additional layer of information and an integral component of the performance, creating an environment in which the performers and audience coexisted.

- Audience

I chose to invite the audience to sit around the performative field (on two sides), observing the dancers from the perspective of witnesses. As Olsen says, "the relationship between the mover and the witness parallels that of performer and audience" (2007, p. 323). The abstract, dreamlike structure and execution of the piece were an invitation for the audience to enter a dream and observe, recognise, and embrace whatever resonated with them in the moment.

The final performance was a collective dream. It was an invitation for the dancers to go through moments of free exploration of movement, movement scores created and fixed by them, fixed choreographed phrases created by myself and, overall, to go through a journey which happened slightly differently every time, depending on the dancers' current psychophysical conditions. In this context, the 'repeating' of choreographed phrases and scores was seen as "returning to movement material", which is "a creative practice" in itself (as Voris suggests), facilitating further exploration (2019, p. 148). Some movement elements that were decided upon were also subject to transformation within the process of their execution.

Before the performance, I advised the dancers to "go through the whole piece in an open way, allowing [themselves] to be surprised by the new things that [they] discover and by the things that we have already fixed". I encouraged them to go through the performance "as if [they] are going on a journey", "follow[ing] the different scenes [and recognising] how [the scenes] transform [them,] how [they, as dancers,] interact with [one another,] and how [they] go back to being on [their] own", while "execut[ing the movements] freely, authentically and creatively".[160]

I attempted to inspire an approach to the fixed movement phrases and scores that nurtures curiosity and openness, encouraging the dancers to recognise and embrace the unknown. This approach supports a truthful, deep, and honest experience, appreciating that a movement phrase can never be repeated in exactly the same way. With sections allocated for moments of stillness and turning inwards, as well as moments for free explorations of movement, the performative act facilitated a continuation of the explorations, inviting the dancers to move and be moved from within. This allowed them to bring the underlying principles of this research into a performative presence.

In its totality, *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024)[161] formed a synergistic physical performance. It was a fusion of imaginative and tactile personal experiences, seen as distinguishable solutes. The piece established a solvent realm that contained these solutes and provided a space for them to occur, to interact, to dissolve, and to transform. Their intrinsic nature was transmissible, and through their contact they composed an abstract amalgamation of visceral and psychological landscapes.

A video recording of the performance can be watched in *Video 6:* Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions *(2024) Physical Performance* (https://youtu.be/ynW5BoDScKs).

[160] The text is taken from a Choreographer's Sheet that I created for the day of the performance's premiere.
[161] *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* was presented on 11.12.24 at the Bonnie Bird Theatre, Trinity Laban.

6.4. Findings and Conclusion

The conversations between my collaborators and me, together with the reflections noted in the questionnaires, provide evidence that the Collective Imagining Process supports the opening towards and articulation of personal experiences through somatic and creative dance-making. All the dancers had surprising experiences arising from the memories, associations, images, movements, and bodily sensations that emerged during their explorative processes. The questionnaire forms, which serve as a testimony of their experiences, can be found in Appendix G, p. 244.

The Collective Imagining Process, as an articulation of a work-in-progress, represents a foundation that requires further development. As such, my work on the model continues beyond the parameters of this study. Within the timeframe of Phase Three, the development of the model acted as an important first step. However, in moving towards a clearer articulation of the model's design, I acknowledge that all of the model's phases, as articulated in Phase Three, call for clearer and simpler directions. Furthermore, the approaches of *softening awareness* and *staying between and across*, though implicitly present (as conceptualised post-practice), need to find explicit application within the framework of the model.

This chapter presents the culmination of this research project: the articulation of the Collective Imagining Process and its application within a collaborative devising and dance-making context. By integrating explorative and generative processes aimed at artistic creation, the model suggests a framework that facilitates observation, reflection, playfulness, and creative articulation in a collective context. Thus, the preceding pages present the maturation of this investigation, suggesting its contributions to knowledge and future perspectives. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

7.1. Introduction

This final chapter summarises my doctoral PaR project and recognises the knowledge it contributes to the field. The chapter begins with a recap of the entire investigation. It then considers the contributions of this research, presented as a combination of the past, present, and future, discussing its limitations and potential for future development. In the final section, I share my thoughts and feelings on my doctorate, thus concluding the main body of this document.

7.2. Research Recap

The processual investigation presented in these pages involved the gradual development of ideas and methods intended to establish a deliberate relationship with personal experiences, utilising these in artistic dance-making processes. Focusing on the recognition of processes that are unconscious, throughout this thesis I followed my research and examined the ways in which my collaborators and I engaged with somatic movement explorations. The process determined discoveries related to the creative articulations of individual and collective experiences, sedimented personal historicity, and unconscious dynamics. The adopted methodological approach, founded on the synergies between Authentic Movement (as connected with Active Imagination) and phenomenology, evolved through three principal phases.

In Phase One, my collaborators (Orzelek and Ryberg) and I focused on incorporating the shared principles of Authentic Movement and phenomenology into studio practice. As our work, predominantly engaged with the phenomenon of inner witnessing, developed, I incorporated principles of working that resemble Adler's early practice and the utilisation of starting points in Stromsted's work. We started engaging with, as I termed it after that phase, Authentic Movement with intention (referring to phenomenological intentionality),[162] utilising a pre-considered psychophysical phenomenon at the beginning of a movement session. The explorative process led to the development of two purely artistic, generative

[162] See Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4. Introducing Intention, p 81.

activities: exploring movement and extracting and utilising of moments, movements, and themes from explorative sessions.[163] Phase One laid the foundation for the subsequent research phases.

Phase Two involved delving deeper into the personal. It involved explorative sessions focused on work with imagination, memory, and dreams. In this thesis, the examination of Phase Two was accompanied by the distillation and conceptualisation of major principles that characterised the way in which my collaborators (Orzelek, Pribyl, and Ryberg) and I approached explorations. Designing original ways of bringing together imagination and remembering in an embodied context,[164] the focus of the work fell on the dynamic between the psychological and the physical aspects of experience. The explorative process then engaged with recognising how these aspects are connected and intertwined, mutually influencing one another as facets of a whole. One of the major principles of exploration distilled in this thesis is the manner of *staying between and across*[165] the aspects of experience, which requires *softening awareness*[166] and continuous openness towards the periphery of awareness. The approaches of *softening awareness* and *staying between and across* suggest the observation and consideration of information as it occurs, without identifying with it. Phase Two, realised through embodied work with memories and dreams, resulted in the creation of several drawings and paintings, the performative sharing *Inner Spaces* (2023), and the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023).

In Phase Three, I articulated the Collective Imagining Process[167] that was employed and developed through the work with my collaborators (Cheng, Lin, and Snizhko) on the physical performance *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024). As the culmination of this research, the model represents my attempt to articulate a generalisable, artistic, and generative method that integrates both explorative and dance-making processes. Essentially, the model is built upon and brings together: the employed synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology, the ways of practising discovered throughout the previous research phases, and the incorporation of external stimuli.

[163] See Chapter 4, Section 4.3. Creative Endeavours, p. 83.
[164] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1. Remembering, p. 98.
[165] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2. Staying Between and Across, p. 105.
[166] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3. Softening Awareness, p. 108.
[167] See Chapter 6, Section 6.2. The Collective Imagining Process, p. 148.

The phases of this research, which can be seen as a dynamic curve of development and maturation, form the spine of this investigation and determine its contribution to knowledge. Below, I outline the methodological and educational contributions that my PhD offers, based on the dynamic curve of its processual development.

7.3. Contributions to Knowledge and Future Perspectives

An essential aspect of this investigation is that it began with the subjective. It was guided by the experiences of all participants-collaborators, as well as by my own subjective experiences and observations as the research leader. According to Bacon and Midgelow, the artistic researcher is someone able to "let go of 'innocence'" and abandon their own illusions of "idiosyncrasy" in order to increase their "awareness of and ability to name connectivity to artists and theorists intersecting" the field of their research (Bacon & Midgelow, 2019, p. 10). This PaR project is situated among a colossal number of practitioners and everything done during its phases was informed, challenged, surprised, and inspired by them. In this sense, although this research followed subjective experiences, the encounters with "objective reality" informed its academic aspects. Bacon and Midgelow consider the topic of artistic researchers who use their own experience as a foundation. They observe that this approach is often accompanied by the "assumption that subjective experience is easy to articulate and easier to access than objective knowledge", noting that as "fundamentally incorrect", as "objective reality is more often than not our predominant mode of engagement" (Bacon & Midgelow, 2011, p. 5).

Resonating with the above, the aim of this thesis was to utilise and contextualise the subjective aspects of my research, acknowledging that my work contributes to ongoing practices and discussions rather than standing as an idiosyncratic breakthrough. The articulation of insights as new knowledge stems from positioning this doctorate as accessible work within a vast landscape of practitioners. By elucidating my collaborative processual investigation and by proposing theoretical, methodological, and practical perspectives, I augment the existing body of knowledge on which it is founded.

7.3.1. Methodological Contributions

A key feature of this research project is my attempt to integrate principles of Authentic Movement with phenomenological methodologies. This thesis presents and examines the synergies between these paradigms, employs them as a methodological foundation within a PaR context, and suggests their generalisability. Throughout the research, this methodological foundation evolved into the articulation of the Collective Imagining Process, applicable to a wide range of dance-making and idea-generating processes. As the methodological approach is central to this practice, the contributions presented below stem from its development.

- Practical Insights

This thesis follows the employment of Authentic Movement principles. Using the concept of phenomenological intentionality, I suggested a perspective on the adoption of intention in Authentic Movement practice through the utilisation of a pre-decided psychophysical phenomenon to which the one exploring attends, without compromising the practice's core principles. Through this approach, which resonates with both Adler's approaches in her early practice and Stromsted's utilisation of starting points, I attempt to bring Authentic Movement closer to its connection with aspects of Active Imagination and to explore ways of incorporating it into artistic, generative practices.

In this thesis, I distil specific terms and approaches to exploration, which are an original contribution of this doctoral study. I conceptualise the following two principles of exploration: *staying between and across* the different aspects of experience and *softening awareness*. Principles behind these approaches were applied in my artistic endeavours in drawing and painting.[168] Furthermore, I bring principles of Authentic Movement into creative and generative tasks and dance-making—exploring movement (suggesting a playful movement exploration that utilises principles of Authentic Movement, Active Imagination, and eidetic variation) and extracting and utilising movements, themes, or pools from explorations. Together with specific and systematic reflective approaches to movement exploration and experience, documentation, and analysis, these principles were applied in the

[168] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.4. Artistic Endeavours in Painting and Drawing, p. 111.

creation of the *Inner Spaces* (2023)[169] performative sharing and the short film *Inner Spaces 1* (2023).[170] The adopted methodological foundation and its development are further employed in the articulation of a model.

- Contributions to Somatic and Choreographic Practices

This research culminates in the development of the Collective Imagining Process. It represents a generalisable and widely applicable framework for both creative exploration and artistic articulation of personal experiences within somatic, choreographic, and collaborative contexts.[171] Informed by the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology, the model's phases (Arriving, Interacting, Exploring Movement, Extracting, and Collective Dreaming) and the approach of continuous tracking of and reflection on the experiences evoked throughout them constitute this work's original methodological contribution. Within the parameters of this research, the model was applied in a collaborative devising and dance-making process and resulted in the creation of *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024).[172] In this thesis, the model is articulated as a work-in-progress, and it represents aspects of this research that will be further developed.

- Theoretical Recognitions

Through this research project, I build upon the already-recognised similarities between Authentic Movement and phenomenology. This thesis recognises links between Active Imagination and phenomenological eidetic variation, presenting a perspective on the Jungian method of intentional imaginative engagement as resembling aspects of eidetic variation, and thus augmenting the recognised commonalities between the fields of phenomenology and psychology. Based on Sager's work, in which she identifies similarities between the principles of inner witnessing and epoché, this research project highlights parallels between all stages of Husserl's phenomenological methodology (epoché, phenomenological reduction, eidetic variation, and intersubjective corroboration) and elements of Authentic Movement, demonstrating the effectiveness of their synergies as a PaR methodology.

[169] Link to performance: https://youtu.be/RLuGlpj8JeQ
[170] Link to short film: https://youtu.be/Bpw6YV1OHdA
[171] See Chapter 6, Section 6.2. The Collective Imagining Process, p. 148.
[172] Link to performance: https://youtu.be/ynW5BoDScKs

7.3.2. Educational Implications

What I present below is a suggested contribution to educational practices. I articulate it along with the limitations encountered during this research, acknowledging perspectives for its future development.

It is difficult to discuss the limitations within a processual PaR project, as the conceptual framework of such an investigation is open and flexible by nature, welcoming alterations of direction and embracing new insights and horizons. Thus, the limitations identified below were also a great stimulus for the process—it would not have developed as it did if those aspects of the work had not been present.

I collaborated with different people throughout the phases of research. Exploring with the same people was not possible due to reasons related to time, availability, and new opportunities for those involved. Inviting new participants to join brought new perspectives to the work, and I acknowledge this aspect of the investigation as beneficial for both myself and the process.

On the other hand, I was not able to conduct a thorough investigation with the same participants and to follow how the different phases affected them over a prolonged timeframe. This would have enabled me to gather more specific results through analysis. I acknowledge that, even though the three phases of research were strongly connected and followed a curve of related activities, they also had an open quality and suggested multiple directions. In this sense, this research could be perceived as not narrow enough. However, I acknowledge this multi-directional pathway as a necessary part of my process, enabling me, through collaboration with dancers-in-training and professionals, to foresee the potential of such an endeavour. For the future continuation of this work, I intend to conduct a long-term study with a larger number of participants engaged from beginning to end. In such a study, I would focus on a particular topic, which would determine a more specific approach to practice, data analysis, interviews, and questionnaire forms, which in this investigation had flexible parameters.

This research project comprised two phases conducted in collaboration with dancers-in-training. Following my collaborators' encounter with the practice, it clearly revealed that

aspects of Authentic Movement can contribute tremendously to dancers' education.[173] However, potential application of Authentic Movement in educational processes should be undertaken with great care. My investigation evolved as a practice that reveals the very personal and is, in these terms, a vulnerable practice. I clarify that none of the approaches developed and presented throughout this investigation can be directly transferred to educational practices.

Nonetheless, the dancers-in-training with whom I worked articulated that witness consciousness and reflection on movement practice were essential to them and were aspects of the work that affected their artistic endeavours and dance classes beyond this research. Considering the synergies between Authentic Movement and phenomenology, specifically their commonalities in relation to inner witnessing and epoché, as well as phenomenological reduction and reflection on movement sessions, I highlight their benefits when applied in an educational context. It would be worthwhile to develop this research into a teaching case study in which its methodological foundation (Authentic Movement and phenomenology) and findings (including aspects of the curve of activities during all of its phases and the Collective Imagining Process) serve as the groundwork for a carefully designed investigation situated in a purely educational context. This intention is not only to consider dance students, but also students from different artistic disciplines.

7.3.3. Transdisciplinary Artistic Contributions

This research highlights the role of the body and physicality in the formation of imagination, thought, and memory. In Phases Two and Three, my collaborators and I observed numerous instances where memories were triggered or enhanced by the position of the body or by physical sensations. Thus, this research presents an embodied and somatic approach that is not isolated from thought formation but is one with it.

[173] See Chapter 5, Section 5.4. Findings and Conclusion, p. 145.

Following from this, I would like to suggest that the curve of activities and the Collective Imagining Process represent a framework for working with personal experiences, applicable not only in work with dancers but also with painters, writers, musicians, and actors.[174]

It is not commonly traditional for musicians, writers, and painters to intentionally employ a somatic approach to idea generation and creativity. Considering that in Phase Two I applied the discovered principles of work to my painting and drawing practice, exploring their interdisciplinary potential,[175] I would like to suggest a future continuation of this research, related to work with transdisciplinary artists and artists who are still in training.

This research demonstrates how an embodied approach to experience reveals a vast landscape of artistically charged themes, feelings, movements, and ideas. All artists are embodied human beings who, consciously or not, encounter the world, the generation of their art, and themselves via tacit or explicit embodiment. Through the activities presented in these pages and the articulation of the Collective Imagining Process, this research offers pathways for artistic articulations that are based on personal experiences and are embodied in nature. Thus, this study contributes a generalisable methodology applicable to transdisciplinary artistic endeavours and appeals for attention to embodiment, considering embodied experiences as sources of creativity.

Finally, I would like to offer this research and thesis to PaR practitioners specialising in dance-making, somatic practices, and choreography, as well as to Authentic Movement practitioners. This work could be useful for anyone embarking on an academic journey or professional practice in these fields. This research could also benefit practitioners in phenomenology and psychology by offering perspectives on triggering, observing, and simply being in personal experiences from a somatic perspective.

[174] In the context of theatre, Christina Kapadocha's (2017) Somatic Acting Process (SAP) demonstrates the implementation of somatic movement practices (Body-Mind Centering and Authentic Movement) in actors' creative processes and training. My background in theatre determines a particular interest for developing my investigation in work with actors. The processes, principles, and the model presented in these pages offer an opportunity for application of this research in work with actors and in work with text as external stimulus. This opportunity is a future direction of this work, which would augment the established somatic approach in actors' creative processes and training.

[175] See Chapter 5, Section 5.2.4. Artistic Endeavours in Painting and Drawing, p. 111.

7.4. Conclusion

As I reach the final stage of my doctoral studies, I experience a passage of psychophysical transformations. I acknowledge my research project as an essential part of that embodied passage. My PhD is a continuous phase that serves as an initiation, a process of letting go of patterns that no longer serve the present moment, while embracing the new and the unknown.

Throughout my investigation, I was often surprised by how seamlessly my waking and dream lives outside academia were synchronised with the studio explorations, making me unsure whether my research practice or my endeavours outside of it were the origin of events. I observed how the slightest change in my approaches, understandings, or adopted patterns of behaviour (as related to my academic endeavours or the world outside of it) affected all aspects of my life and this research tremendously. Despite my investigation dealing with deeply personal and subjective matters, it constantly revealed the interconnectedness of things—body and psyche, events and people, inner and outer, and the separate individual and the collective. While my research deals with tacit and unconscious processes, it is ultimately an investigation concerned with consciousness itself and approaches to its understanding, expansion, and creative potential.

The collaborative nature of my research was an essential aspect of the process, triggering not only the artistic and academic findings that accompanied this investigation, but also the personal discoveries I experienced. I do not consider meeting my collaborators to have been coincidental, but rather synchronistic. As my PhD comes to a close, I feel gratefulness for the opportunity to have met and worked with everyone involved, recognising that my research happened between and across the experiences of the individuals and artists I had the pleasure of collaborating with.

As a part of my broader interest into personal experiences and their hidden, unconscious aspects, this research, as mentioned before in this chapter, suggests future investigations in the personal, psychological, academic, artistic, and educational spheres. These trajectories represent the multifaceted nature of this research and could be used as a direction and an inspiration for scholars in the fields of creative practices, choreography, somatic movement practices, phenomenology, and psychology. I am particularly interested in the potential of this practice as an educational and creative tool applicable to transdisciplinary artistic fields. I would like to continue developing the Collective Imagining Process and to engage in

investigating with both dancers and artists from the fields of theatre, fine arts, music, and creative writing. The continuation and application of this research within the sphere of higher education for transdisciplinary artists suggests the development of an embodied approach to artistic creation, which can find its realisation through the conduction of a teaching case study. Acknowledging my background in theatre, I foresee the potential benefits of this practice in the context of actors' creative and educational processes. Another aspect of this work that I am drawn to is its relation to the deeply personal and its potential application in the context of people who do not identify as artists.

In conclusion, I would like to present my PhD research as a phase of continuous exploration, commencing before and continuing beyond the parameters of the doctoral programme. Writing this thesis and revisiting, elucidating, and analysing the processes that my collaborators and I undertook evoked a wide range of feelings, thoughts, and ideas within me. As I write the final lines of this thesis, I recognise a feeling of gratitude, and I look forward to the next phases of research, collaborations, and encounters with the unknown.

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APPENDIX A: Information Sheet and Consent Form

This appendix contains photos of the Information Sheets and Consent Forms signed by my collaborators.

Information Sheet and Consent Form

The following document presents information about the practical experimentation side of the PhD research 'The Performer's Body – a Pathway towards Individual and Universal Archetypal Energies' (working title), designed and led by Hristo Ushev.

The aim of this document is to outline the characteristics of the PhD project and to be presented to the participants invited to take part in the research's practical experimentation. As a consent form, the document requires to be signed and dated by each participant at the time of study participation.

- **Information about the study**

The research, designed as a PaR (Practice as Research), aims to develop a practical solo and collaborative artistic experimentation, establishing a systematic process of intentional work with the body and its movements. The research is informed by the following areas of knowledge: psychology, somatic practices and phenomenology. All of these are aiding a process which is directed towards the recognition and the articulation of unconscious processes/experiences, as noticed and as manifested by the subjective psychophysical being of the one experimenting. The unconscious as term used in the context of the research is indicating everything that someone is (yet) not aware of, but is experiencing or is affected by on both psychological and kinaesthetic/corporal level. The research is looking at these unconscious contents as a stimulus for artistic activity and for the creation of artistic work.

- **The participants in the research**

Everyone invited to become a part of the research is willingly agreeing to participate in the movement one-to-one sessions, executed ones per week for approximately 2 (two) hours. The participants are completely aware of the nature of the process, which, at its beginning stages, does not aim to deliver performances or any other artistic outcomes. The research is focused on the experimentation itself. Respectively, the participants are aware of the unpredictability of the way the practical sessions might develop and of their potential artistic outcomes. Nevertheless, the participants (if they don't find themselves engaged with the subject or if they feel any discomfort being part of such an investigation) are free to leave the process at any stage of its development.

- **Potential risks or discomforts associated with participation**

The research encourages an environment of trust, accountability, and mutual respect among all involved. In these terms, the participants taking part in the experimentations are invited to articulate and share anything that makes them feel uncomfortable on a psychological or a physical level. Actions taken from there will be considered with the changing or the re-establishing of the practical experimentation, ensuring the well-being and the comfort of the participant. The participants will also be advised to refer to TL counselling, if they need to.

- **Information about anonymity and confidentiality**

The participants are informed that every session is planned to be video and audio recorded. That happens with their absolute approval. The participants are aware that the documented material will be securely stored and used for the analysis and the development of the research itself. The information (data) collected will be treated as anonymous and confidential. Only the leader of the research and their supervisors will have access to it. Furthermore, any incorporation of the collected data into the final dissertation or other materials (video or audio) used for the demonstration of the research will be prior consulted with the participants, asking for their absolute approval. It is according to the decision of the participant if they want to figure in the final dissertation as anonymous or with their names.

If there is an aspect of the study that concerns the participants, or they change their mind throughout the process of the research's development, they can contact the leader of the research or the teachers supervising it.

The Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved the Project.

Contacts:

Hristo Ushev (leader of the research): [redacted]
Naomi Lefebvre Sell (supervisor): [redacted]
Jonathan Owen Clark (supervisor): [redacted]

The following to be filled by participant:

I declare that I have read and understood the information presented above and I agree to participate in Hristo Ushev's research.

Name and signature of participant: *Date:*

Figure 47: Consent Form 1

Information Sheet and Consent Form

The following document presents information about the *'Collective Dreaming'* performance making process seen as a distinctive aspect of the PhD investigation *'Encountering the Unconscious – A Practical Research Across the Fields of Psychology, Phenomenology and Somatic Movement Practices'* designed and led by Hristo Ushev.

The aim of this document is to outline the characteristics of the process, and to be presented to the participants invited to take part in it. As a consent form, the document requires to be signed and dated by each participant who agrees with the below:

- **Information about the study**

The research, designed as a PaR (Practice as Research), aims to develop a practical, studio-based exploration that follows intentional work with the unconscious (or the not-yet conscious) psychophysical processes, accompanied by a rigorous theoretical investigation. The research is informed by the following areas of knowledge: psychology, somatic movement practices and phenomenology. All of these are aiding a practical exploration which is directed towards the recognition and the articulation of unconscious processes/experiences, as noticed and as manifested by the subjective psychophysical being of the one experimenting. The unconscious as term used in the context of the research is indicating everything that someone is (yet) not aware of, but is experiencing or is affected by on both psychological and kinaesthetic/corporal level. The research is looking at these unconscious contents as stimuli for artistic creativity and for the generation of artistic work.

- **The participants and the performance making process**

Everyone invited to become a part of the *'Collective Dreaming'* process is willingly agreeing to participate in 2 to 4 hours long practical session (rehearsal) in a studio, once or twice per week. The process starts from the beginning of the academic year (2024/2025) and finishes with the premier of a performative act (beginning of December 2024). The studio activities invite for meditative, somatic based and personal approach, which leads to free and improvisational in nature collective exploration. All of these explorations form the contents of the final performative work. The rehearsals are an important aspect of the research's development and are testing and putting in action principles of specific methodology, designed and developed throughout the investigation. In these terms, the rehearsals are not just representatives of the research, they are the research itself. Respectively, the participants are aware that the activities are audio and video recorded, and that the data (plus written feedback, interviews and questionaries) might be used for the further development of the research and for its analysis.

- **Potential risks or discomforts associated with participation**

The rehearsals encourage an environment of trust, accountability, and mutual respect among all involved. In these terms, the participants taking part in the experimentations are invited to articulate and share anything that makes them feel uncomfortable on a psychological or a physical level. Actions taken from there will be considered with the changing or the re-establishing of the practical experimentation, ensuring the well-being and the comfort of the participant. If any of the participants is willing to leave the rehearsal process earlier than the premier date (no matter what the reason is) – they are invited to do so.

- **Information about anonymity and confidentiality**

The participants are informed that the studio sessions are video and audio recorded. That happens only with their absolute approval. The participants are aware that the documented material will be securely stored and used for the analysis and the development of the research itself. The information (data) collected will be treated as anonymous and confidential. Only the leader of the research, their supervisors and people involved in the performance making process will have access to it. Any incorporation of the collected data (text, video or audio) into the final dissertation or other materials used for the demonstration of the research will be prior consulted with the participants, asking for their absolute approval. Once approved, it is according to the decision of the participant if they want to figure as anonymous or with their names.

The Trinity Laban Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved Hristo Ushev's research project.

Contacts:

Hristo Ushev (leader of the research): [redacted]
Naomi Lefebvre Sell (supervisor): [redacted]
Jonathan Owen Clark (supervisor): [redacted]

The following to be filled by participant:

I declare that I have read and understood the information presented above and I agree to participate in the 'Collective Dreaming' performance making process.

Name and signature of participant: *Date:*

Figure 48: Consent Form 2

APPENDIX B: Research Project and Thesis Release Form

This appendix contains the Research Project and Thesis Release Form signed by my collaborators.

I grant Hristo Ushev permission to use the information gathered through questionnaire forms and audio/video recordings of sessions and discussions during our work on his PhD research project for his thesis.

I agree for video material in which I appear to be included in Hristo Ushev's thesis as supplementary material.

I consent to being referenced in Hristo Ushev's thesis by my name. I also consent to being quoted and to the questionnaire forms I completed being included in his thesis.

Name and Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX C: Solo Exploration

This appendix contains reflections on a movement exploration as a part of my solo practice throughout Phase One of this research. The text below is a revisited extract from a reflective writing on explorations during Phase One.

I am going to present my experience during an exploration I did in the beginning of 2022, during Weekend Three of Authentic Movement and Therapeutic Presence with IBMT in Ashprington Village Hall (04.02.22 – 06.02.22). The text below is an account of my vivid memories of the experience.

I am sitting on the floor. My knees are bent, touching each other, and my hands are on my legs. My head is a continuation of my spine. I am aware of the back of my neck. Slowly, my head bends forwards and down. I am aware of my chin touching the upper part of my chest. I sense the boniness of that touch.

All of a sudden, I become aware of the middle part of my chest. It brings memories. I remember a situation from a few years ago, when I felt a big hole opening in the middle of my chest. I am aware of that memory and am also aware of my current sensations in my chest. They have nothing to do with what I experienced back then. I find myself being curious about this difference.

I am aware of the tension at the back of my neck. Memories begin to emerge. All of them are related to this period of time—when I sensed that feeling in my chest. I stay like this for some time, just remembering. Places, people, situations... A certain phase of my life.

I have a memory in my mind's eye, a very clear one, representing me lying on my bed in a specific posture. In the memory, I am with my hands on my chest, with fingers crossed—overlapping each other, covering the middle part of my chest. My legs and feet are crossed. Locked. At that moment I become aware of my breathing—it has changed. Now I breathe heavily, deeply.

My head rolls back and up. Not intentionally. I am focusing on my spine. I am aware of it—now it is straight, my head is a continuation of it. My breathing relaxes. I am aware of my hands. The right one is with the palm facing the ceiling. The left one slowly moves backwards. I feel the movement coming from the elbow. My elbow is moving backwords,

slowly. And the hand is following. I am aware of the texture of my trousers. I sense my hand and my whole left arm completely relaxed. I feel it as if it's not functioning at all—it just senses. I am aware that even the pull from the elbow is as if coming not from me—as if something else is moving my arm. My hand reaches my pelvis and falls on the floor. Now my whole left arm is completely relaxed. My right hand is on my right leg, with palm facing the ceiling and my spine and head are erected.

I become overwhelmed with memories from the same period of my life. Now I remember situations that I have forgotten. I don't find myself analysing anything. I am observing the moving images and thoughts projected in my mind. I feel tense from remembering all this. At the same time, I feel some of the emotions I felt back then. They were all negative. The memories start changing quickly, but are all connected with the same period of time.

All of a sudden, my left hand trembles, the muscles across the length of my left arm contract and relax very quickly, and then, the hand itself moves and sticks to the base of my right shoulder—where the shoulder meets the chest. That happens very quickly, without me expecting it. I feel surprised. I feel still affected by the memories, but now I am back in my body. I am aware of my breathing again. It is deep and heavy.

I start being aware of my left arm. It is like dead—hanging from my shoulder, with heavy elbow, in front of my chest. I remember a sensation now. I remember a moment, when I had the exact same feeling. I remember me sitting on those stairs, with my left hand relaxed and me wondering—how is it possible? It's like dead… And I can do everything with it, but it's like there is no life in it. And then I remember all around this situation. I remember people, relationships—all make me feel tension and nervousness. I am now aware of this left arm, left part of my body, and I am also aware of me thinking why is it the left arm, left part of the body, why is it feeling like this.

Then I touch the floor with my right hand and I straighten up my legs, and lie down. I am aware of my breathing. I feel calmer. I am focused on my breathing.

A memory comes again—it's the one with the feeling of a hole in the chest. Now I remember the sensation I had. I remember the physical sensation, and I also visit the place (in the body) where I had this physical sensation, but as it is now, as I feel it now… What I remember is a feeling of 'sucking'. I remember that something from inside my chest, from inside and beyond 'the inside' of my chest—like there is a point there, a place—very deep there... Like a cosmos

inside the chest, an enormous space. And from that place, from that point, the very middle, the centre of that cosmos—there is suction. I remember sensing this suction. I remember sensing how a small section in the middle part of my chest, somewhere around the heart, is sucked inside that cosmos, and a hole opened. And then—an emptiness in that hole…

All of a sudden, I realise that I am lying on the floor with my hands with crossed fingers placed on my chest, covering my chest, and my legs and feet crossed. Locked. I am surprised. I intentionally open my eyes and stand up.

That experience was significant for me. First, I was immersed in my memories, and secondly, I had the chance to observe how my body reacted to them. Most importantly, I noticed how these memories, or the emotions they triggered or trigger, influence my body behaviour.

Chodorow researches body behaviour as seen through the lens of Jungian concepts. Her work identifies several ways in which specific unconscious processes can manifest in the body during an Authentic Movement session:

> The process of active imagination in movement is extremely complex. But with careful attention, one begins to see patterns. Movement from the personal unconscious can serve as an embodied link to an individual's past. Movement from the cultural unconscious is our bridge to mythic images and the development of cultural forms. Movement from the primordial unconscious may, for brief moments, put us in touch with the completely untransformed primal affects. Movement from the ego-self axis of identity gives us the experience of being moved by the ordering and centering process of the psyche. (Chodorow, 1991, p. 4)

According to Chodorow, idiosyncratic themes and movements that originate from the personal unconscious (or are repressed by the conscious mind, forming the Shadow aspect of the personality) are extremely difficult to identify, particularly in the beginning of practising Authentic Movement. However, as the practice develops and these movements are recognised as patterns, they "can be traced to emotionally charged events in the past that for one reason or another could not be fully experienced at the time. When strong feelings cannot be felt, they split off and form the emotional core of a complex" (1991, p. 120). When discussing her encounters with such manifestations, she explains:

> In addition to idiosyncratic movement patterns, specific parts of the body may be invested with repressed emotion. For example, some body parts carry heightened tension. Other parts may look and feel dead. There are also times when psychological pain is so unbearable that it converts to symptoms that cause physical discomfort

> instead. One way or another, a particular somatic condition draws attention to itself. If the mover can stay focused on the body part or symptom as it is, without trying to change it, the process of denial and repression may be reversed. A meaningful symbolic gesture may emerge along with feelings associated with the complex. When this happens, we see a symbol in the process of transformation, as it moves out of the personal unconscious and into an expressive form that is bearable and can be consciously understood. (Chodorow, 1991, p. 122)

Chodorow's view of how body behaviour is linked with the psyche supports my process of shedding light on my own experiences. It should be noted, of course, that I am viewing my experience and my movements from a subjective perspective, with an understanding that what Chodorow names and categorises is her own analysis of perceived phenomena related to Jungian concepts and terms. However, this research adopts a phenomenological approach to examining experience and reveals data that can be associated with psychology. This suggests that what I have experienced may be related to personal unconscious data stored in my psyche and body, and thus reveals that the adopted phenomenological methodology benefits a psychological perspective.

I perceive two important movements, as gestures and body structures, as symptomatic and symbolic of my processing. The first is the sudden trembling and contraction of my left arm, as if moved by someone else, followed by an immediate change in position towards the base of my right shoulder. My left hand is placed on it, with my left elbow hanging down. The second is lying on the floor and being 'locked'. What is curious about these movements is that they happened without myself being 'active' in doing them. It felt as if an energetic impulse was moving me without my consciousness being involved at all. They both took me by surprise, especially the second one. I realised that I was lying on the floor in that posture without realising how I got there.

A third manifestation is also extremely interesting for me. It is the sensation that my left arm is dead. Interestingly, this feeling was present when I was constantly checking my body during the exploration, and I also remembered experiencing it in the past. It clearly points to my subjective way of dealing with or being in specific situations. It is an idiosyncratic physical manifestation of my processing and experiencing.

Another interesting aspect of the exploration relates to the sensation I experienced in my chest. Recalling the sensation and revisiting it has provided much clarity in terms of how my body reacts to and stores certain situations.

Interestingly, all of the movement patterns that have manifested seem to be connected. They are all related to a specific moment in my life and form a language of the body—a language that my body speaks when it is affected by certain external or internal factors that trigger a reaction or emotion. As Chodorow articulates:

> An emotion, by definition, is at once somatic and psychic. The somatic aspect is made up of bodily innervations and expressive physical action. The psychic aspect is made up of images and ideas. In psychopathology, the two realms tend to split. By contrast, a naturally felt emotion involves a dialectical relationship—a union of body and psyche. (Chodorow, 1991, p. 3)

The example from my practice presented above is something that was observed within a single session. It gave direction towards observations of my psychophysical processes outside the studio and revealed data regarding my personal patterns of behaviour. From the perspective of a dance and theatre performer, the example also demonstrates that the discovered physical behaviour has artistic potential in the following ways: First, it can be used to articulate a physical language that can be applied in choreography or theatre to express specific psychophysical moods or processes; and secondly, it reflects my own way of experiencing specific psychophysical moods or processes. If executed in a performative context, this would potentially awaken my authentic presence.

References (also in Bibliography):

Chodorow, J. (1991). *Dance therapy and depth psychology: The moving imagination*. Routledge.

APPENDIX D: Workshops

This appendix presents information on the workshops organised throughout the three phases of research development.

I have conducted six different sessions, open for dancers and dancers-in-training, which were designed to communicate the discovered principles of studio practice and to test their relevance in a workshop setting. These workshops played a key role in the development of this research, as they were followed by discussions which revealed the potential of the work and the areas that needed improvement. I will present the workshops in chronological order, explaining their structure and purpose.

- Authentic Movement and Phenomenology Workshop—03.02.23

The workshop took place in the Studio Theatre at Trinity Laban and was attended by six dancers training on the BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance programme (Asher Norridge, Francesca Roe, Honor Petitt, Leora McNamara, Lucie Pribyl and Weronika Orzelek). The workshop lasted approximately 2 hours and had theoretical and practical stages. It started with an introduction to the principles of Authentic Movement and phenomenological methodologies, during which I discussed how these affect my studio practice. This was followed by a discussion with the dancers. After a short break, the dancers were invited to pair up and practise moving and witnessing, mirroring the approach adopted in Phase One of this research. In this workshop, I acted as a facilitator.

- Remembering Workshop—31.05.23.

This workshop took place in Studio 6 at Trinity Laban and lasted approximately 2 hours. Two dancers-in-training (Lucie Pribyl and Weronika Orzelek) and one professional actor-dancer (Luis Odriozola) took part in the session. The workshop was based on Phase Two of this research project, and I introduced the participants to the concept of working with memory via embodied imagination. The theme of the workshop was remembering a person from the past who the one exploring had romantic feelings for. Before the workshop, I asked the participants to create a timeline of their life, indicating the people who had played such role for them. I acted as both facilitator and active participant in this workshop. I began by introducing the principles of work: witnessing, moving and inner witnessing. After that, the participants worked in pairs, taking turns to move and witness, with the mover starting their

practice by imagining a person from their past. This was followed by a reflection phase, after which we swapped roles. Each of us then had time to prepare a short solo based on our experiences as movers, including forgotten data discovered during the reflection process with the witness. Finally, we performed the solos in pairs, witnessing how two separate solos can exist in the same space.

- The Imaginary Beings Workshop—20.06.23.

This 2-hour-long workshop took place in Studio 1 at Trinity Laban. In this workshop, I acted as both facilitator and active participant, and two dancers in training participated (Leora McNamara and Weronika Orzelek). The workshop focused on work with external stimulus, and it was one of my first attempts at using something external to provide intention for the practice. During the workshop, we worked with a collection of texts from The Book of Imaginary Beings by writer Jorge Luis Borges (2006). Prior to the workshop, I sent the participants texts from the book that I had chosen. These texts describe imaginative and mythical creatures with archetypal characteristics. I asked the participants to choose a creature that they felt most drawn to. I started the workshop by explaining the plan for our activities. We began by each reading the text describing our chosen creature. After that, one person moved and the other two witnessed. The mover had to choose a word or phrase from the text or a psychological or physical characteristic of the creature, using it as a starting point, and intention for a somatic exploration. Each of us then moved, followed by time for reflection on the experience with the witnesses (mirroring the principles of the practice during Phases One and Two). The workshop finished with us structuring three solos individually, which we then offered to the others. After that we executed the solos together in space, exploring how they altered in the presence of others.

- The Collective Imagining Workshops—three workshops on 10.05.24, 07.06.24, and 01.07.24.

These workshops, named post-practice after the model developed in Phase Three, were between 3 and 4 hours long each and took place in Studios 4 and 10 at Trinity Laban. They were carried out during the initial stages of Phase Three and set the foundation for what would later develop as the Collective Imagining Process. Between three and five dancers and dancers-in-training participated in each workshop (Becky Horne, Chi-Hsuan Lin, Diana Snizhko, Francesca Roe, Kilta Rainprechter, Luis Odriozola, Siin Lee, and Yun Cheng). They were invited to work with external stimuli: the first two workshops focused on the theme of

water, and the third on water and wood. Each workshop offered engagement with a model of five phases (Arriving, Recognising, Interacting, Exploring Movement, Extracting) with established timings for each phase. Although the Collective Dreaming phase (later introduced during the performance-making endeavour in Phase Three) was not part of the workshops, the participants were invited to engage with collective explorations while working with the extracted material (as separate solos) from the Extracting phase. As a facilitator, my role was to welcome everyone and introduce them to the practice. I began by explaining the activities. Then, following principle of chance, everyone chose a zone (by picking a piece of paper) and the activities began. Once all the phases of the model had finished, there was time for collective reflection. After a short break, we came together again to offer our solos to the others witnessing. Each solo was followed by a period of collective reflection between the mover-dancer and the ones witnessing. Finally, those participating were invited to explore how their solos would change if they had to perform them in the space with one or two other dancers, following different movement and choreographic tasks. My role was to facilitate the practice, witness the process, indicate when the next phase was about to begin, and to suggest choreographic tasks.

An edited footage of some of the Collective Imagining workshops that my collaborators and I had can be watched *in Video 3: The Collective Imagining Workshops* (https://youtu.be/sWEoU3kJ0dA).

References (also in Bibliography):

Borges, J. L., & Guerrero, M. (2006). *The book of imaginary beings*. Penguin.

APPENDIX E: Questionnaire Forms, Phase One

E.1. Weronika Orzelek

Below is Orzelek's reflection on her experiences during the Phase One of this research. She decided not to answer the questions in the form, but to follow her own way of reflecting.

Connecting to the multi-nature of the self

Starting from just looking closer, writing down, being aware of, and noticing my dreams, to the practice of embodying it and practice of working with my subconsciousness. I have gained a perspective of looking at my existence in a way that I can see how its multi-nature works. I see my body, my spirit, and my psyche in a way that they connect, influence each other. The practice of the Authentic movement revealed a new sensation of connecting with my inner self, separate from what was visible. The experience of the Authentic movement sessions gave me a new idea for the discovery of the inner dynamics, that exist within the complex inner world of my psyche. During the authentic movement sessions and the reflection after I can see the inner energies of my psyche and my soul that are manifesting somatically. During our second session especially, I discovered that my life is dominated by visual information, after discovering it I decided to focus more on listening from the inside rather than what I can see/hear from the outside. I noticed the voice that I know is living within me, I know it's my intuition, however, sometimes I can feel how hard it is to notice this voice, how hard it is to fully be aware of it. That was the session where I focused on discovering my face and my body in a new way. I felt the importance of this practice in my life. As I said before being dominated by the visible information it's hard to connect with what we carry inside, our thoughts, intentions, dreams, what we want, and what our inner self wants. Now after the reflection I see how this voice is my hidden instinct, intuition, that is always with me however sometimes it's hidden somewhere deep down and I need to put an effort to nurture the self through unity with my instinct, I believe it's a very valuable practice.

Rejecting the Judgment

Why do we need to judge? Why am I so often judging myself?

The authentic movement allowed me to step aside from judging myself in a way I do in everyday life. From the beginning of the practice, I tried to allow myself to fully listen to what is happening inside and how it feels when I can connect with it. Without judgment, I can get to know the processes of my sensory being. Sensations from the inside. The sensations that are needed for me, not somebody, and the importance of noticing them. Not judging with the critical eye but just allowing them to be. So often we judge how things look like, that we disconnect from how we can feel them rather than see them. I got fascinated by listening to my inner world and my body without judgment. And now I see how important the process of rejecting the judgment is for the process of getting to know your inner state. Allowing those energies to exist rather than shooting them down with the critical and judgemental eye.

Entering this non-judgmental state led me to internal transformation of the psyche, I see great value here, as soon as I began to understand what is happening to me, I was able to get to know the experienced emotion, let it be, flow through me, see its birth and its death.

After reflection on the sessions, I can also see that the judgment lives in my psyche, it's not my spirit or the body. It's my psyche that is strongly influenced by my past experiences and future projections. I discovered that in the authentic movement I can differentiate those processes and experiences of the past, and allow them to be without analysing them with my mind, just let them flow, accept them rather than cutting them away from me. It's very important to be in this process of really letting those experiences be part of you, not rejecting them, but fully accepting. By practising Authentic movement, I could also get to know my ego better, listen to what it has to say and how it is different from what your inner self wants to say, what my body says, and what my soul says, what is the state of my psyche right now and where my past experiences are living in me.

Working with the shadow/ego

The practice of writing down my dreams very often shows me my demons. Demons as low vibration energies, obstacles, defeats. I believe when I listen to them, they show me a way to fully wake myself from them. I know they need to exist. I know they need to be. I had the same nightmare a few times now, for the past 3 months when I started to bring attention to writing down my dreams. The scenario of those nightmares is a bit different every time, but I see that the meaning is coming from the same trauma I had. I believe this dream will not go away until I will fully understand its importance in my life until I will learn a lesson. I believe

that nothing attacks us except our own confusion on the inner level, and that is what this nightmare says to me. This gives me room to grow as a person.

Feeling the emotions

Authentic movement sessions were quite emotional for me. I think the rejection of being perfect, allows me to fully engage with what am I feeling in the moment and fully engage and understand it. I believe those emotions create an inconceivable, delicate being. I feel emotions as burning or icy, gentle or quivering. I am trying to use this knowledge of how to feel the emotions and feelings to break out of the inferiority, ignorance, and senselessness of life.

Reflection on the uniqueness of those emotions is leading me to my empathy for others.

Observation, being a witness

Being a witness taught me how sharing authenticity is important in giving a new life on stage. The state that the practitioner is experiencing, somewhere in its decks has a heart and its breaths. I think it is a very intimate practice that can be intimidating and revealing, it can reveal the darkest passages that live in oneself. It is a very vulnerable practice. Watching the practitioner, I felt invited to the inner world of his multi nature, through watching his body, I felt invited to the scope of sensations of his psyche and the relationship with his soul. The way the higher bodies are speaking in humans. The relationship of the practitioner on the getting to know the truths of his own life and the life of others.

Here I can also go back to the practice of non-judgment. I am still learning how to not put any assumptions on the movement, just experience it how it appears and it’s giving me a whole new spectrum to explore.

Name: Weronika Orzelek

Date: 29.02.22

E.2. Moa Ryberg

The following questions were given as a written survey after the first block of explorative sessions.

1. **How would you describe your experience in an Authentic Movement session?**

Like a moment for self-reflection of both the daily form and the constant subconscious.

2. **What is the Inner Witness for you?**

For me the inner witness is supposed to be an objective voice, simply stating facts without valuing them. When trying to achieve this the inner witness instead becomes a judgemental voice questioning everything I do.

3. **Did you surprise yourself in the experiments? How, in what way?**

It was surprising and interesting to see what movements became a reoccurring theme when doing authentic movement experiments. They became an accurate representation of my movement vocabulary. Which is something that I have been searching for.

4. **Did you learn something about yourself?**

I thought that the creative part of me allowed me to accept abstraction and leaving things unsaid. However, there is an organisational part of me, that heavily affect my everyday life, and it appears it can show itself in creative processes too. This manifests itself when I find myself asking for a task or reassurance that I have done the correct thing.

5. **Have the sessions changed in time for you? If yes, in what way?**

…….

6. **Have the sessions affected your everyday life? In what way?**

The sessions have made me reflect over certain parts of myself which has affected my everyday life. Like stated in the previous answer.

7. **Have the sessions affected the way you move/dance in your everyday life or classes?**

Yes. Before the research I thought that improvisational dance classes were equal to authentic movement sessions. Now, I am learning how to be more aware of the difference between authentic movement and improvisation, and how these can serve different purposes.

8. **Is there something in particular that you experienced and that was very important for you? Would you share what?**

Obviously, the session where the movements turned into stomping, hitting, throwing and screaming will be difficult to forget. It was a shock to see what was inside me that day and noting the feelings before, during and after was an important experience to me.

9. **Is there a movement (or movements) that you did and that stay with you, that you remember vividly?**

When in the middle of movement my wrist gets stuck in my arm crease.

10. **Did you experience an image/thought that still stays with you?**

The questions that came up during one experiment that was the only way to express that experience.

11. **Which aspect of the work is interesting for you?**

I find the process of conducting the experiment interesting. I find it interesting to see the different outcome of every session. Although I find the process important, I am interested in seeing what the results and/or final product will be.

12. **Is there something in the sessions that you would change? Something that you missed.**

I wouldn't want to change anything from the previous sessions. For me, that would mean admitting failure or mistake which is my greatest fear. Instead, I will see the sessions as trying and searching within the given frames.

13. **Do you see all the 5 sessions as connected? Or as separate events that don't relate to each other?**

I see the sessions as connected when thinking about them in relation to the research. However, I also them as separate, thinking about how the sessions have been highly influenced by daily form. Therefore, the outcome has been separated to the previous sessions and not necessarily connected from one experiment to the next.

Filled by: Moa Ryberg

Date: 26.02.22

APPENDIX F: Questionnaire Forms, Phase Two

F.1. Weronika Orzelek: Phase Two, Stage One

Provided to the participants-research collaborators engaged in the first block of one-to-one sessions during Phase Two, Stage One[176].

1. **How would you describe your experience with Authentic Movement throughout the work with memory?**

I found it quite challenging at the beginning. I'm a person who doesn't often like to go back to the past experiences and memories that are sometimes forgotten. I felt anxious at the start and I was afraid of going back to some of the memories. My body was also resisting it didn't want to go back. However, I found it very enriching in the end and I would love to continue and dive a bit deeper into this practice. A lot of things from my unconscious that I haven't been aware of came up and especially connecting with the emotion of fear and why I so much didn't want to go back and experience the memory this was very challenging to actually face it and go into the memory even if it wasn't the pleasant one and be there. I think knowing the inner witness really helped me here, to know the presence of the inner witness that is observing without judgment what is going on in the process gave me a sense of safety while being in the process.

2. **How was working with places/environments from your past for you? Was it easy for you to enter these environments? Did memories that you have forgotten came up?**

It wasn't very challenging to enter the place/environment, however I found it quite challenging to navigate through it within my imagination and to actually be present in it. What was especially intriguing is that I felt a sense of remembering the place, the way I felt in the place in my body. I felt my body was remembering the place how my body felt in this place at certain times. There were memories that I have forgotten that came up, however there is a question I am asking myself of how am I really remember, is it possible to really

[176] The questionnaire form was provided only to Orzelek. After the first block of sessions during Phase Two, Ryberg decided to leave the process due to other engagements. My invitation to her to return to the explorations remained open.

remember the forgotten, am I not creating the memory from the little scratches, few images that stayed in my, or is it something that happened, how am I remember as a person and how my body remembers is also quite different.

3. **How would you describe the process of imagining places/environments from your past? Did that process change throughout time?**

Yes, the process changed throughout time. The moment I started feeling more connected with the place/environment through my imagination I started being more present and being able to navigate through the place, I was more aware of what is stored in the unconscious of mine, what was forgotten and what was still remembered in my body and how I can connect with the place that has been forgotten. It has been wonderful to see the change while I was changing the focus, while I was listening to my body and what the body remembers and then the difference in how my psyche remembers.

4. **How would you describe the relationship between the imaginary world and the movements of the body? Did that relationship develop/change in some way throughout the practice?**

The imaginary world completely took over my movements, it was the imagery that moved my body. It did change throughout the practice. I think I started developing connections between the imaginary world and my body that is unknown to me, I felt I could completely free my body while my imagination was moving my, I felt there is a lot of images that are moving the structures of my body. Images that hide all the memories, feeling and emotions that then are moving me into dance.

5. **How was your inner-witnessing developing throughout the process?**

The inner witness is always present. I'm aware of that subtle structure, and I know that I need to be very much in the present and be aware of how to put my focus on the inner witness at the same time having in my experience of what is coming and where am I in the process of imagination and authentic movement. The process of being in the experience and being aware of what's going on in the body is still very challenging for me. I feel very often that it's my imagination leading my body into the movement and then I am too much present into how it feels and resonates in my body rather than thinking of how I can observe it from outside as an inner witness. It's still incredibly interesting process and every time while I'm in the process I am experiencing my relation with the inner witness differently.

6. **Do you remember specific moments vividly (both imaginative and/or physical)?**

There is a lot of images that influenced me strongly from the authentic movement and I remember specific images from the practices much more than the movement itself. There are few movements that I started to be curious about from the experience of authentic movements however all of them that I remember came from the place of an image memory or place/ environment, from the imaginative practice itself.

7. **How did you feel with working with people from your past? How was it different from the other task (with the places/environments)?**

I think it brought much more emotions that are strongly resonating in my body. It wasn't just memory or feeling from the past. I felt a stronger presence of the emotion/feeling that was feeling whole of my body. The memory of a person was the strongest for me, the image often very clear and emotion that was felt in the body was very strong and alive. It was also very easy to access it.

8. **Did the practice support you in finding new aspects of your personality? In what way?**

I think yes. There's a sense of subtle energies that are creating me. These are all of the memories I remember and the memories that have been forgotten however they created who I am now and they live in the unconscious, through the connection with them I can have a new presence I can see more clearly why I am who I am. Why am I behaving in a way that I am. This connection with what has been forgotten or how the memory created who I am now is fascinating.

9. **What would you change in the way the sessions are happening? Was there something missing for you?**

I would love to make a week of sessions and have them more continuously at some times, however it's not always possible. As sessions do require special focus, that can be gained through mindfulness or meditative practice before the session, and full attention and focus on what is being explored.

Filled by: Weronika Orzelek

Date: 26th June 2022

F.2. Weronika Orzelek: Phase Two, Stage Two

Provided to the performers-research collaborators engaged in the Inner Spaces *(2023) performative sharing (provided more than a year after the performance).*

1. **Do you remember how you felt during the movement sessions of working with memories?**

Working with memories brought up a spectrum of emotions, depending on the memory being explored. At times, I experienced anxiety and fear, while at other moments, I felt curiosity, happiness, gratitude, and reflection. I was amazed at how many memories I had neglected or chosen not to remember, yet they remained a significant part of me.

2. **How did you feel as a mover/witness? Did you prefer to be in a particular role?**

I didn't have a preference between being a mover or a witness. Both roles required a different kind of presence. As a mover, I had a safe space to explore my unconscious and connect with deeper sensitivities. As a witness, I was given the opportunity to observe, sense, and experience another person's stories and movement. Both roles were meaningful to me in different ways.

3. **Did you feel safe?**

Yes, I felt safe throughout the process.

4. **How did you find accessing memories through the activities?**

It was a very interesting process. I found that working with memory heightened my senses—particularly my sense of smell and visual perception. Through authentic movement, I was able to recall more details, which often surprised me. Simply closing my eyes and focusing on details to my memory allowed me to access memories I hadn't thought about in a long time.

5. **Do you remember discovering something new and surprising during the investigation?**

Yes, I discovered that focusing on sensations allowed me to access memories and dreams from different perspectives—ones I might not have reached otherwise. Authentic movement helped me in uncovering emotions and meaning that I had previously neglected or

suppressed. Although it was sometimes difficult, I learned patience and the ability to be present with my body, memories, and dreams.

6. **Did the studio sessions have an impact on your everyday life back then? If so, how?**

Yes, they had a noticeable impact. I became more attentive to my dreams and more aware while watching and performing dance. The practice allowed me to reflect on life experiences from a new perspective. At times, I felt as though I was reliving certain moments, but with the ability to process them differently. I also found myself writing and reflecting more, which deepened my connection to dance practice and my artistic expression as well as self-reflection on a daily basis.

7. **Did you learn anything new about yourself during the process of experimenting?**

Yes, I learned a lot about myself. The process raised many questions, such as:

* Why do I remember some moments and not others?

* Do I choose to forget certain memories because of trauma or my personality?

* How can I be more present in my daily life?

* What drives my movement patterns, and what do they reveal about me?

This self-questioning allowed me to explore my identity and artistic choices more deeply.

8. **Would you consider that there was a psychological impact on you as a result of the practice? If so, how?**

Yes, the practice had a strong psychological impact. It made me more aware of my inner dialogue and encouraged me to question my thoughts and emotions. Being an observer of all the feelings in particular, forced me to step outside of my own mind and become more present in the moment.

9. **Was there a particular moment(s) during the sessions that was significant for you?**

Yes, one of the most significant moments was the reflection after movement practice. It felt like waking up from a dream—having a moment to process everything without judgment or

restriction. I also found that free writing became a powerful tool for me, allowing me to express thoughts and emotions that I might not have otherwise articulated.

10. Did the sessions affect your dance studies or other performative work? If so, how?

Yes, absolutely. My movement is always influenced by my past experiences, and these sessions reinforced that connection. During improvisation, I now pay more attention to sensations, imagery, and memories as sources of movement. It has deepened my approach to creating and performing.

11. Was there anything you missed (in general)?

I wished I had more time for the sessions and for reflection afterward. Since I had to balance my studies and work, I often didn't have the time to fully immerse myself in the practice. However, in terms of facilitation, I found the experience fulfilling and complete.

12. Did you encounter experiences and psychophysical contents in your explorations that you would consider hidden or surprising? Would you consider them to be unconscious before you encountered them?

Yes, I encountered hidden memories and emotions that I wasn't fully aware of before. Some of these experiences felt surprising, as if they had been lying beneath the surface, waiting to be discovered. Before engaging in this practice, I would have considered them unconscious.

13. Was it interesting for you as a performer and creator to be part of such a process? Did you learn new things, and was it challenging?

Yes, it was a very interesting process. The challenges were more emotional, psychological, and mental rather than physical. It required deep self-exploration and vulnerability, which was both rewarding and intense.

14. Was creating and performing "Inner Spaces" different from the work you have done before? If so, how?

Yes, it was very different. My previous work was often driven by external aesthetics, whereas "Inner Spaces" was rooted in internal experiences. Throughout this process, I realised that the feeling and intention behind movement were more important than the visual outcome.

15. Is your current practice affected by "Inner Spaces" somehow? If so, how?

Yes, it has influenced my approach to movement and performance. I now try to be more mindful of the source of my movement—whether I am moving from habit or from an internal

image or emotion. This process has encouraged me to question my creative choices and explore movement beyond technique and aesthetics.

16. Is there something that you would like to share about the overall process?

This process allowed me to be more of myself and step into the unknown. It gave me the space to explore, reflect, and connect with my inner world in ways that I hadn't before.

Name: Weronika Orzelek

Date: 18.03.2025

F.3. Lucie Pribyl: Phase Two, Stage Two

Provided to the performers-research collaborators engaged in the Inner Spaces *(2023) performative sharing (provided more than a year after the performance).*

1. **Do you remember how you felt during the movement sessions of working with memories?**

I was connected to my soul. It was quite a vulnerable feeling. Each movement session was an opportunity to get deeply lost within a library of memories.

2. **How did you feel as a mover/witness? Did you prefer to be in a particular role?**

As a mover/witness, I felt like time had been stretched out. Each movement I did/witnessed was accumulated into fine details. I did not prefer a particular role. In both, it was a rather liberating feeling.

3. **Did you feel safe?**

Although working with sensitive memories, I did feel safe in the space. Everything or anything I brought into the space was welcomed.

4. **How did you find accessing memories through the activities?**

Accessing the memories through the activities came rather naturally to me. The activity instructions were clear yet still very much open to interpretation. When the space was quiet, my mind could go quiet too. The memories would come to me.

5. **Do you remember discovering something new and surprising during the investigation?**

I discovered memories that I initially only remembered as a glimpse. A photographic format perhaps. But was surprised to find, once moving, there was such more to the memory that I had buried somewhere. I was interested in how much detail my brain had deeply stored away. The memories became a film. Movement brought these memories close to me again. They weren't lost. Just waiting to be found.

6. **Did the studio sessions have an impact on your everyday life back then? If so, how?**

The studio sessions would leave me with an altered mindset. I would continue my day with a more introspective outlook.

7. **Did you learn anything new about yourself during the process of experimenting?**

I learned that I can trust the decisions that I make whilst experimenting. Trust the process.

8. **Would you consider that there was a psychological impact on you as a result of the practice? If so, how?**

Yes, there was a psychological impact on me as an individual. As a result of the practice, I've felt as if each experience I've encountered is something I am being guided through.

9. **Was there a particular moment(s) during the sessions that was significant for you?**

Yes. Transcribing the movement I have experienced into a two-dimensional format. Whether this be written or drawn. I remember working with particular childhood memories that evoked so much use of colour when drawing afterwards. However, when I worked with more recent memories, the colour seemed lost. Perhaps this was connected to my outlook on my life and growing up.

10. **Did the session affect your dance studies, or your other performative work? If so, how?**

It's affected my dance studies and performative work to focus on working in the moment. Taking personal experiences and using those to shape my movements. Knowing that an experience of movement can never be the same. Enjoying the differences.

11. Was there anything you missed (in general)?

I miss connecting to my younger self through movement.

12. Did you encounter experiences and psychophysical contents in your explorations, that you would consider as being hidden, surprising? Would you consider them being not-conscious or unconscious before you encountered them?

Yes. I've repeated my answer to question five. I discovered memories that I initially only remembered as a glimpse. A photographic format perhaps. But was surprised to find, once moving, there was such more to the memory that I had buried somewhere. I was interested in how much detail my brain had deeply stored away. The memories became a film. Movement brought these memories close to me again. They weren't lost. Just waiting to be found.

13. Was it interesting for you as a performer and creator to be part of such a process? Did you learn new things, and was it challenging for you as a performer?

Yes, it was a really interesting process to be a part of. A wonderful contrast to my dance studies at Laban. I learned how to move from the inside. How to move for me. It wasn't challenging as a performer. I enjoyed sharing my memories with people.

14. Was creating and performing "Inner Spaces" different from the work you have done before? If so, how?

Yes, it was completely different to how I've worked before. I felt, for the first time, that I was creating and performing for myself. My whole soul and body were moving with me.

15. Is your current practice affected by the "Inner Spaces" somehow? If so, how?

Yes, my current practice is affected. I carry those memories I explored within the "Inner Spaces" process with me. Now, I like to move as a whole. Not just my current self, but my past.

16. Is there something that you would like to share for the overall process?

It was a wonderful opportunity which I feel grateful to have been a part of.

Name: Lucie Pribyl

Date: 16/02/2025

APPENDIX G: Questionnaire Forms, Phase Three

G.1. Chi-Hsuan Lin

Provided to the performers-research collaborators engaged in the Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions *(2024) performance-making process.*

1. **How did you feel during the explorative sessions?**

In general, I enjoy the explorative sessions very much. It's quite satisfying to jump between conscious and unconscious in a really personal way. I mean, I get the time and space for things to happen and have the freedom to manifest things that have enough weight, or to put it in another way, things that are 'ready' to manifest.

Constantly switching between reflection (the writing part) and exploration feels time-consuming, but then it wasn't a big problem.

2. **How did you feel during the meditations? Was there something missing for you? If so—what?**

I feel the meditation is crucial and could be manifest in a still or moving form, in the early rehearsal phase we do have this time more regularly, and everyone kind of acknowledges that. But getting closer to the performance day, this time somehow is a bit neglected due to the time pressure. Slowly the need for this 'emptying' time comes back, and it transforms into a mutual need between us three like a special link has been formed. So, for me toward the end, this time is like meditation/tuning time.

3. **Did you feel safe?**

I do feel safe.

4. **How did the external stimulus affect you?**

During the process of selecting external stimuli, my senses became more open and receptive. Through repeated filtering, a particular external stimulus became increasingly vivid in my perception. Initially, it had a more intuitive impact—such as the five senses—but gradually, I established a certain relationship with the stimulus. I felt that these stimuli formed a kind of

"situation" for me. This exploratory process mobilised my inner state to engage in dialogue with them.

5. **Was there a particular stimulus (image, scent, etc.) that you were more attracted to work with?**

I think it was the sense of smell. Compared to other types of stimuli, I have worked with smell the least, so it felt fresh and new. Through the exploration process, I discovered that scent directly triggered my memories and bodily sensations, which was a unique and special experience.

6. **Did you feel that the structure of the explorative sessions supported your process? Would you change anything about it?**

I felt that the overall structure allowed me to delve layer by layer into a mysterious creative state in a very detailed way. However, at times, the duration felt a bit short. On the other hand, the time frame seemed like a bridge between the real world and the creative world, maintaining their connection and preventing us from getting lost in it. Perhaps exploring flexibility in the time frame could be a possibility?

7. **Did the studio sessions have an impact on your everyday life? If so, how?**

During the rehearsal period, I often felt that time inside and outside the studio belonged to two different worlds. The creativity in the studio constantly reminded me of a light and transformative quality in life. In daily life, when I felt limited to just option A or B or a sense of helplessness, this quality reminded me that life is not restrictive—it even had a healing effect.

8. **Did you learn anything new about yourself during the process of experimenting?**

Yes

9. **Would you consider that there was a psychological impact on you as a result of the practice? If so, how?**

Recently, I came across a phrase that I feel aptly describes the psychological impact on me: "unnecessary beauty."

10. **Was there a particular moment(s) during the sessions that was significant for you?**

For me, the most profound moments were during the exploratory phase. Whether visually or through smell, the experience of expanding my inner world and leading my body to change

accordingly was deeply impactful. It felt as if ordinary things gained another layer of meaning from another world, adding depth to them.

11. How did the sessions affect your imagination? Did you think about what you experienced in the studio in your everyday life?

Following the previous question, I sometimes ask myself: If there was a kind of knowledge within those special moments, how would it communicate with and apply to my daily life? However, I feel that this question might not have a simple yes-or-no answer. The influence of these experiences is difficult to capture or analyse in a quantifiable way in my everyday consciousness. Through retrospection, I might be able to summon certain "feelings," but compared to those "real moments," retrospection feels more like active imagination. That said, I do recognise the value of active imagination—it empowers my daily consciousness with agency.

12. How was the transition from the exploratory sessions to the performance making process? How the making/structuring of the performance differed from the explorations? And how were they similar?

Building on the previous question, the empowerment of active imagination became even more pronounced in the transition from exploration to rehearsals. For me, structuring is the process of translating mysterious things into known language, imagery, or any communicable human tools. Inevitably, I felt a sense of compression. At first, I encountered some internal resistance, but when this translated active imagination was placed in space and received or recognised by others, it transformed into a different state. I cannot say that its state was always the same—it felt like it had a certain life of its own. Yet, this life carried a new mystery that I did not have full interpretive authority over, and at that moment, the sense of compression disappeared.

I would say that both the exploration and structuring phases went through a cycle of moving from a mysterious realm of freedom to a feeling of compression. However, this process was cyclical—it started from self-exploration, then moved to interactions with space and others, and then cycled back again.

13. How was it for you to revisit your own reflections and movements? What did you find challenging?

I think revisiting can be divided into two situations, both connected to past fragments. If this serves as a preliminary step leading to action, the first situation occurs when I initiate the

process myself—whether through words or movement. This takes some time but is usually not too difficult to transition into action.

The second situation arises when my original material is selected and interpreted by the choreographer. Whether transformed through language or imagery, this part can sometimes be challenging. It feels like encountering something both familiar and unfamiliar at the same time. In these cases, I need to find a compromise or an "entry point" into action—such as maintaining a low level of movement in space or focusing my awareness on a specific body part. However, I feel that I still have a considerable degree of freedom in establishing these "entry points."

14. **Was there anything you missed (in general)?**

……

15. **Did you encounter experiences and psychophysical contents in your explorations, that you would consider as being hidden, surprising? Would you consider them being not-conscious or unconscious before you encountered them?**

Yes, I was particularly surprised by the material I discovered during the exploration of intimate relationships. Before the exploration, I had certain expectations about what I might find, but what I actually discovered was completely different. What surprised me was that the material in the exploration emerged from my body—more specifically, from the perspective of my skin. It felt as though the "lens" of my inner world was positioned on my skin rather than my eyes. My bodily sensations and memories were magnified, leading to the creation of new experiences.

16. **How was the 'Collective Dreaming' exploration phase for you? Did you prefer to be alone or with the others?**

…….

17. **Was it interesting for you as a performer and creator to be part of such a process? Did you learn new things, and was it challenging for you as a performer?**

……..

18. **Was creating and performing "Collective Dreaming – Embodied Solutions" different from the work you have done before? If so, how?**

…….

19. Is there something that you would like to share for the overall process?

…….

Name: Chi-Hsuan Lin

Date: 13.03.2025

G.2. Diana Snizhko

Provided to the performers-research collaborators engaged in the *Collective Dreaming—Embodied Solutions* (2024) performance-making process.

1. **How did you feel during the explorative sessions?**

I felt relaxed and comfortable.

2. **How did you feel during the meditations? Was there something missing for you? If so—what?**

In the beginning of the process, I agreed with myself to let the process lead me. I approached each meditation with curiosity and feeling of calmness.

3. **Did you feel safe?**

Absolutely YES.

4. **How did the external stimulus affect you?**

Each stimulus opened different ways to explore my body and movement.

5. **Was there a particular stimulus (image, scent, etc.) that you were more attracted to work with?**

I would love to work more with sounds, that's probably my favourite stimulus.

6. **Did you feel that the structure of the explorative sessions supported your process? Would you change anything about it?**

I did feel it was structured enough, maybe in the future I would add some exercises/practices for contact with each other as it takes time to get use to another body involved in process. Even if you know that person, it's kind of to tune myself to work and explore collectively.

7. **Did the studio sessions have an impact on your everyday life? If so, how?**

Definitely yes. At some point It active some parts of my consciousness. But at the same time, I did have some moments of impulsive decisions which absolutely I am not used to. I think through the process I learned how to let go of oneself and just be. I still feel it's not easy to do so. But I start be more conscious of my body and feelings and somehow it added some playfulness.

8. **Did you learn anything new about yourself during the process of experimenting?**

That I can be spontaneous and sometimes letting go is easiest way to approach things. Also, about control, I don't need always control my body sometimes it makes wonderful things when you listen to it.

9. **Would you consider that there was a psychological impact on you as a result of the practice? If so, how?**

All practices were built to work with unconsciousness so I think more yes then no.

I found myself quite hard to answer this question. I think in the way how you approach the process and also the conversations and discussions we had that' more about psychological impact.

10. **Was there a particular moment(s) during the sessions that was significant for you?**

Two situations: 1. when we had exploration for a rain scene and the thunder appears in the sound. How my body react on it and made me realise how much war left impact on me.
2. When I talked with Hristo why I can't let go the body to do movements and why it's so many tensions for, it felt like to much responsibility but in the end I managed.

11. **How did the sessions affect your imagination? Did you think about what you experienced in the studio in your everyday life?**

I didn't think about researches in studio in my everyday life, but somehow, I recognised how I started to be slower and enjoyed presence in the moment. Like tiny things during the day.

12. **How was the transition from the exploratory sessions to the performance making process? How the making/structuring of the performance differed from the explorations? And how were they similar?**

As we talked in studio, it was quick transition. Personally, if we talked about structure and what images or how it should look like it would be easier to make a transition to performance state. In my opinion, research part is really opened and most of the time didn't have any limits, while performance part requires to keep attention to the structure but also has this freedom in the body to explore what else can come during the process, which I found for myself a bit difficult and it took a lot energy to focus on both. However, I really enjoyed the process and how it slowly developed.

13. **How was it for you to revisit your own reflections and movements? What did you find challenging?**

The first time ever I didn't find it difficult because it was research and created by my own body and me, which made it easier to come back to it. Of course, some part of research has faded already but what I found in the moments were a small challenge to repeat the movement because you passed this step and want to developed it.

14. **Was there anything you missed (in general)?**

Can't think about anything, probably nothing was missed.

15. **Did you encounter experiences and psychophysical contents in your explorations, that you would consider as being hidden, surprising? Would you consider them being not-conscious or unconscious before you encountered them?**

More yes then no, but I can't give an example of specific moments. I definitely recall the moments where were the experiences not-conscious. Maybe unconsciousness was more present in the beginning of the process but then trough the creating it came more focused but free in the body and movement.

16. **How was the 'Collective Dreaming' exploration phase for you? Did you prefer to be alone or with the others?**

I do remember this feeling after researching by myself, at some point I was craving to research with others.

17. **Was it interesting for you as a performer and creator to be part of such a process? Did you learn new things, and was it challenging for you as a performer?**

I enjoyed the process and space and people around me so much. I have learned a lot and would like to repeat such project again. Of course, some moments were challenging but I think that's where the new potential and growth begin.

18. **Was creating and performing "Collective Dreaming – Embodied Solutions" different from the work you have done before? If so, how?**

It is different from what I have done before, mostly because of the approach Hristo used during the process.

19. **Is there something that you would like to share for the overall process?**

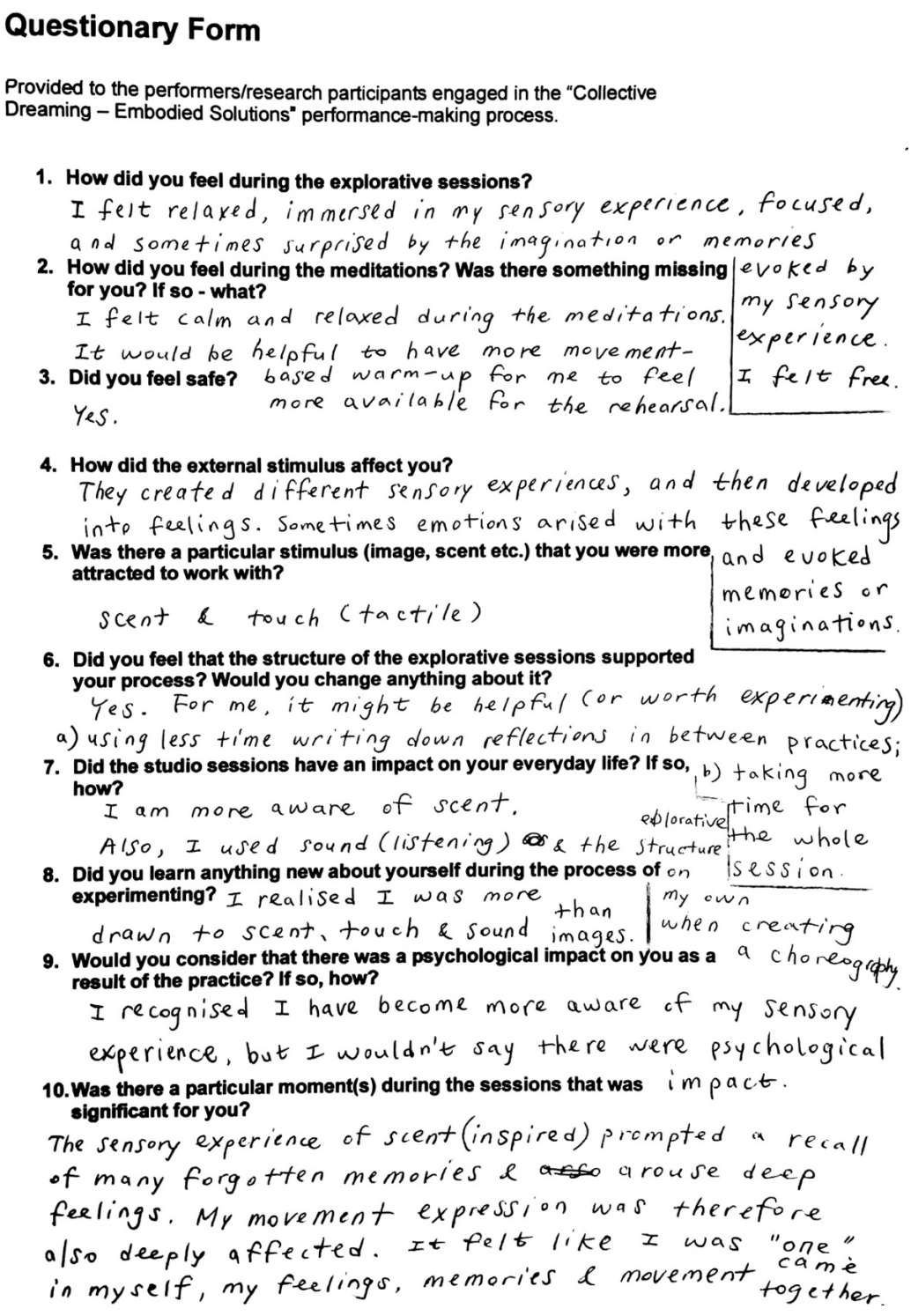
I don't think so. Most of the things were shared above.

Name: Diana Snizhko

Date: 3rd April 2025

G.3. Yun Cheng

Below are images of the questionnaire form filled in by hand by Cheng. She chose to do it this way, resembling the reflective process throughout the explorations.



Questionary Form

Provided to the performers/research participants engaged in the "Collective Dreaming – Embodied Solutions" performance-making process.

1. **How did you feel during the explorative sessions?**
   I felt relaxed, immersed in my sensory experience, focused, and sometimes surprised by the imagination or memories evoked by my sensory experience.
2. **How did you feel during the meditations? Was there something missing for you? If so - what?**
   I felt calm and relaxed during the meditations. It would be helpful to have more movement-based warm-up for me to feel more available for the rehearsal.
3. **Did you feel safe?**
   Yes. I felt free.
4. **How did the external stimulus affect you?**
   They created different sensory experiences, and then developed into feelings. Sometimes emotions arised with these feelings and evoked memories or imaginations.
5. **Was there a particular stimulus (image, scent etc.) that you were more attracted to work with?**
   Scent & touch (tactile)
6. **Did you feel that the structure of the explorative sessions supported your process? Would you change anything about it?**
   Yes. For me, it might be helpful (or worth experimenting)
   a) using less time writing down reflections in between practices;
   b) taking more time for the whole session.
7. **Did the studio sessions have an impact on your everyday life? If so, how?**
   I am more aware of scent.
   Also, I used sound (listening) & the explorative structure on my own when creating a choreography.
8. **Did you learn anything new about yourself during the process of experimenting?**
   I realised I was more drawn to scent, touch & sound than images.
9. **Would you consider that there was a psychological impact on you as a result of the practice? If so, how?**
   I recognised I have become more aware of my sensory experience, but I wouldn't say there were psychological impact.
10. **Was there a particular moment(s) during the sessions that was significant for you?**
    The sensory experience of scent (inspired) prompted a recall of many forgotten memories & ~~esso~~ arouse deep feelings. My movement expression was therefore also deeply affected. It felt like I was "one" in myself, my feelings, memories & movement came together.

Figure 49: Yun Cheng Questionnaire Form 1

11. **How did the sessions affect your imagination? Did you think about what you experienced in the studio in your everyday life?**

It had made me more free in imagining while moving. I felt more at ease to follow the threads of my imaginatio

12. **How was the transition from the exploratory sessions to the performance making process? How the making/structuring of the performance differed from the explorations? And how were they similar?**

The transition was rather difficult. It required me some time to understand how to keep my authentic feelings / imagina- tions / within the choreographic structure. That I had to translate the choreographer's words into a language that my imagination fit into. Once I have these connections, they are more similar.

13. **How was it for you to revisit your own reflections and movements? What did you find challenging?**

There were always something new in the revisit. It was also crucial to have new feelings so the movement & performance does not become dull.

14. **Was there anything you missed (in general)?**

The movement-based warm-up was something I felt needed in general.

15. **What is unconscious for you?**

It is the phenomenon happening within me, which ~~[illegible]~~ are not consciously perceived

16. **Did you encounter experiences and psychophysical contents in your explorations, that you would consider as being hidden, surprising? Would you consider them being not-conscious or unconscious before you encountered them?**

Yes. I would consider them "not-conscious" as only after the encounter I understand more about its meaning for me as a whole.

17. **How was the 'Collective Dreaming' exploration phase for you? Did you prefer to be alone or with the others?**

I would like to be with others. However, I felt difficult to come into the group when I already establishe my own "dream".

18. **Was it interesting for you as a performer and creator to be part of such a process? Did you learn new things, and was it challenging for you as a performer?**

It was very interesting. The process was hard. But I experience my performance full of flows of imagination, and it was a wonderful

19. **Was creating and performing "Collective Dreaming – Embodied [illegible] Solutions" different from the work you have done before? If so, how?**

Yes. The initiative using external stimulis was an unique experience. The practice structure, constituing of movement & reflection at once was also new for me. It was a precious process.

20. **Is there something that you would like to share for the overall process?**

I'm grateful to have been involved in this research. Going through the process, I discoverd the intimate connection between sensory, movement, imagination, and the feeling of truly "expressing" through movement.

Figure 50: Yun Cheng Questionnaire Form 2

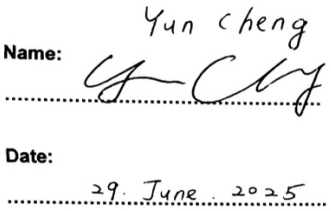


Figure 51: Yun Cheng Questionnaire Form 3