

ELLA TIGHE

THE HOSPITALITY OF SURRENDER:

RE-SITUATING AGENCY
WITHIN DANCE PRACTICE

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THE HOSPITALITY OF SURRENDER:

RE-SITUATING AGENCY WITHIN DANCE PRACTICE

ELLA TIGHE
MA PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

A Thesis presented by Ella Tighe to Master Performance Practices, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts in Performance Practices, 2021.

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2021

SYNOPSIS

The Hospitality of Surrender; Resituating Agency in Dance Practice is a practice as research project. This thesis is an accompaniment to two dance practices Form and Streaming and a performance entitled FORMLESS. The research advocates for an expansive understanding of surrender, opposing the colloquial perspective which is based around letting go or giving up one's power to another. Drawing from an eclectic range of sources, specifically that of psychology and yoga surrender is outlined as state. In taking a yogic perspective the state of surrender is experienced as a state of being, presence and quality of which the dancer encounters through practice. Identifying surrender as a state, shifts surrender away from its conflation with submission, not determining surrender through binaries of doer/done to but instead as intra-active and emergent depending on the conditions of which it emerges through and with. Surrender in this research redistributes the concept of agency and is purposefully not bound to hierarchies of power and control. This situates the dancer in a position of ownership and choice, with the ability to navigate conditions arising in the practice which extend into collaboration and an encounter with an audience.

Through the methodology Illuminating Surrender, the research outlines the subtle experience of being inside of

the movement landmarks within Form and Streaming. It uses the philosophy of hospitality to outline how the composition of FORMLESS utilised a dramaturgy which heightened the affective quality of movement through returning to movement. This shares with the reader how the dancer invited the audience to experience the state of surrender through performance.

In inviting a discussion of form and formlessness into the research, the thesis addresses how the inclusion of yoga and the compositional choices in Form and Streaming challenge the ways in which form is understood within Expanded Dance Practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr Mariella Greil who has inspired, motivated and supported me through this artistic research. Thank you for allowing me to follow what was important for me and for challenging me to go deeper in my practice.

With thanks to my external mentors Lucy Suggate and Sri Louise. I would like to thank Lucy for her critical eye on the development of my performance FORMLESS. I would like to thank Sri for sharing her wealth of knowledge on the yoga discourse with me and doing this with her fierce passion.

Thank you to my collaborator Nikkie Kemp for bringing your soft assertiveness to the work. For sharing your voice and musical skills to create FORMLESS. You transformed the work! I am very grateful for your insight.

Dr João da Silva, thank you for many inspiring conversations over the two years, for always asking the difficult questions and for always bringing it back to the practice.

Thank you to Dr Pavlos Kountouriotis for constantly challenging me throughout this Masters. I am proud to have been part of this ecology.

Fenia Kotsopoulou and daz disley, for all your generous help and support along the way. For all the photos, videos and technical advice!

Thank you to Maeve O'Brien Braun for your support with the academic writing.

Thank you to Ulrike von Meier for the help and support during this Masters

I would like to express my thanks to Gitta Wigro for proof reading this thesis.

Thank you to my colleagues on the Master Performance Practices, it has been an inspiring two years to work alongside you all.

Thank you to Amy Voris for your ongoing mentorship and for sharing returning to movement with me.

I would like to thank Jill and Lori Tighe for endless support and encouragement.

With thanks to Dancers Career Development, UK who helped make this research possible and ArtEZ for the many hours of studio spaces and facilities.

DECLARATION

I, Ella Tighe, hereby certify that I have personally carried out the work depicted in this thesis entitled "The Hospitality of Surrender: Re-situating Agency Within Dance Practice".

No part of this thesis has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma prior to this date.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an accompaniment to two solo dance practices, Form and Streaming, which later became a performance entitled FORMLESS. The thesis attempts to articulate and offer insight into a more expansive understanding of what surrender is and can be by drawing on an eclectic range of sources including psychology, yoga and philosophy. I build my own understanding of surrender, identifying surrender as a state of being, quality and bodily presence which I situate within Expanded Dance Practice. This shifts surrender away from how it is colloquially understood, which is through the language of submission.

The research questions explore how I, the dancer, have invited the state of surrender into my dance practice and then shared this subtle, nuanced experience with an audience. The state of surrender I identify as a way of being, a bodily presence held in movement. I have explored the philosophy of hospitality as a perspective to identify conditions and activate invitations that composed the two dance practices and the performance FORMLESS, bringing the state of surrender to be perceptible for audience. Luce Irigaray on speaking about hospitality states "I must be able to open my horizon while remaining capable of turning back within it, even if it will be modified by the meeting of the other" (2013, 51). In finding ways to share the state of surrender with others, the research draws

on posthuman discourse to ask if common binaries usually associated with surrender can be broken down to allow for agency to be re-distributed within the surrender process. FORMLESS does not advocate for a doer/done to, passive/active dynamic but advocates for surrender as a state that emerges under certain conditions, and that happens within the shared space between all parties involved in creating those conditions (Bennett, 2010, 22).

As a practice as research project, the practices of Form and Streaming have been the central mode of inquiry for this research. The research methods developed out of the practices their specificities. The methodological framework is entitled Illuminating Surrender and points to methodology's aim: to make surrender perceptible. It follows an over-arching structure of returning to movement, and then contains Movement Landmarks, Poetic Condensation Writings and A Video Archive. These allowed me to identify the hospitable conditions with which to compose FORMLESS and share my experience with an audience. Robin Nelson in his handbook on practice as research terms such an approach as 'insider knowledge': knowledge that arises from the practice itself (2013, 37- 44). This 'insider knowledge' of working through surrender in dance practice I propose as a significant contribution to the field of Expanded Dance Practice.

The motivation for this research stemmed from a personal

frustration with the limited understanding of surrender that I encountered both colloquially and in dance practice. Surrender is thought of as letting go or giving up and often confused with the word submission¹. I too in the initial stages of this research undertook performance experiments where I explored surrender within the binaries of power and control. I would explore giving my agency to the audience, allowing them to move my passive body, control my computer desktop, or tell me what to do². These experiments did lead to interesting results, but I was keen to interrogate the other sides of surrender and do this within my practice of dance. I worried that if I did not research surrender in this way it was in danger of continually being understood through the language of submission. In dance practice, I see that this demonstrates a dancing body that is passive, loses control or gives up to another's power over them. These images I believe to be problematic as they reproduce certain structures of power, hierarchy and exploitation that are already present in the field of dance and in the wider social landscape³. I take my privilege and responsibility of being able to undertake artistic research within an institution as an opportunity to research the underacknowledged side of surrender. I frame

¹ Submission emphasizes the process of giving up through "the act of yielding to the claims of another or surrendering to his will" (The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary 1971, 3124).

² Appendix A: Surrender (2020) and FOLD//ER (2021)

³ There are several recent examples where surrender or submission have become visible due to the exploitation of a power relation, such as the murder of George Floyd in 2020, or the rising number of cases in the Me Too Movement where individuals have come forward to expose a case of sexual abuse or assault.

surrender within spiritual and psychological discourses, where surrender can be considered as (and not limited to) "a sense of the realization or nature of one's true self" (Wallace, 2001, 70). I tackle this issue to propose an expansion in how surrender is manifested in dance practice.

I propose yoga discourse as an approach to expanding an understanding of surrender within dance practice. Yoga has religious roots, the Vedāntic texts based in Hinduism. In including yoga discourse, I must acknowledge my position as a White British woman, removing yoga from its cultural origins and super imposing it onto my practice within the Western Institution. In this research I work with the discourse with appreciation and care for the cultural context of yoga. Secondly, even though I frame surrender both from psychology and yoga, I deal with surrender through embodiment. I am not claiming through my practice or performance that neither I nor the audience will experience a transcendental or religious experience. The spiritual underpinning that yoga offers proposes an insightful approach which is relevant to the dancer's understanding of the concept of the self, and perhaps the precarity that lies within the notion of being a dancer, even now when most dancers identify as independent dance artists. To what extent is agency present within independent dance practice? This is something that my thesis underscores in the two dance practices.

This thesis arises from practice and so I invite the reader to consider the video material and images as part of the overall text and advise them to follow links and QR codes embedded in the text.

FORMLESS

I invite the reader to view FORMLESS before reading this thesis



figure 1

FORMLESS is a cyclical, looping movement and sound pattern crafted anew daily. It addresses surrender as a staying with, a choice and a commitment. Based upon a daily practice worked with from Nov 2020 - May 2021, the process takes returning to movement and to the movement landmarks which have appeared over time as a condition to surrender into. It seeks a soft yet assertive bodily presence that advocates for an ownership within the process. The movement works with an emergent soundscape created live and held within a fixed form. Performers share a mutual reciprocity, investigating a



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figure 2

nuanced approach to agency as the movement and sound meet. FORMLESS contains two dance practices Form and Streaming, alongside a spoken word section.

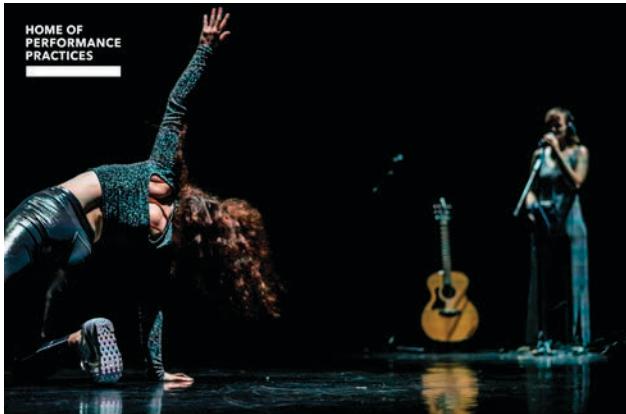


figure 3



figure 4

CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT OF RESEARCH A NOTE ON EXPANDED DANCE PRACTICE

I situate this research on surrender within the field of Expanded Dance Practice. This positioning is specific to how I would like dance to be seen and experienced within my work. Mårten Spångberg in his text Post Dance states that "an expanded understanding of dance further questions what forms of representation dance can take on" (2017, 372). The notion of expansion within dance questions exactly what can be perceived as contemporary dance now, and poses interrogation of the assumptions held about dance from traditions that have been carried forward. Dance is the form within which I interrogate surrender within this artistic research, it is an embodied investigation.

In my engagement with dance practice in this research, I have been able to encounter what I term a state of surrender. The state of surrender is a quality, a specific bodily presence, an awareness and a state of being that arises in relation to the practice⁴. I have defined this state of surrender through yoga. Yoga introduces a non-western approach into the dance field which has historically been dominated by Western approaches. This approach proposes an expansion of what kind of physicality can be understood as belonging

⁴ This will be unpacked in further detail in Shifting the understanding of surrender within the field of dance practice, from a yogic perspective

to 'contemporary dance'. The physicality that I propose embodies a more yoga-based vocabulary of which perhaps does not belong to what is known as 'contemporary dance'. In my dance practices Form and Streaming, I work with movement landmarks. The movement landmarks are centred around on a handstand, a movement that could be located in acrobatics or gymnastics rather than in the traditions of ballet and 20th century modern dance, which is what most contemporary dance education have based their teaching upon.

The choice to work with dance practice is a distinct choice for the specific needs of this research to investigate the state of surrender. In his manifesto Spångberg makes an argument to release dance from choreography, distinguishing them as two different things. He proposes choreography is something which is fixed, stating that choreography is organised, bound to structure and lacks movement (2017, 361). He identifies that dance has historically been confused with choreography, because dance is placed into organising structures, but that this is not dance itself. Dance, he states is first an experience of pure affect, a non-organized structure, not yet bound to form (2017, 361). He proposes that dance is not the execution of a structure, it is experiential, live and moving in a way which choreography is not. To research surrender as a state therefore requires openness to the different agencies within each encounter. Choreography does not have the openness

to honour that, whereas dance as a practice does. I would like to address that although I work with dance as an embodied enquiry, in the practice when I use the method of returning to movement, although I literally do return to a fixed form of movement, that form is a vessel to access the state of surrender. Returning to movement could therefore imply the returning to the state of surrender which is not bound to the 'movement' of the form/dance itself, but to the searching for the state of surrender.

THE LANDSCAPE OF PERFORMANCE AND DANCE WORKS DEALING WITH SURRENDER

As this thesis takes the perspective of hospitality to understand surrender, I have narrowed down the landscape of performance and dance artists working with surrender to those who align closely with the discourse of hospitality. Anne Dufourmantelle states that "hospitality describes a figure, a space that allows a gesture of invitation to take place" (2013, 13). The selected artists from performance art and dance who comprise this research context all created works in which an experience of surrender is shared with an audience through the piece's dramaturgy. It is evident that there is a dominant mode in which surrender is presented particularly within the works of Yoko Ono, Marina Abramović, and Aitana Cordero who undertake their explorations through a passive body and therefore a loss of agency as part of their work. This again shows the confusion between submission and surrender. My

proposal to shift towards a more expansive understanding of surrender, most aligns with choreographer Isabel Lewis' work which I would propose uses hospitality to open up the potentiality for the work to begin to reveal invisible, intangible human and non-human 'others' that are usually excluded from our perceptive fields (Battista, 2018, 3).

Choreographer Isabel Lewis hosts Occasions. The Occasions form a larger work which Lewis names 21st Century Ritual (2017) and are a composed environment of dance, speaking, sound and music and other sensorial experiences. Within the Occasions Lewis takes on the role of a host to create atmospheric states that enable the visitors to tune into the subtle nature of the different sensorial experiences in the work. Lewis' work exhibits a more expansive understanding of surrender that incrementally changes the perception of the visitor to engage with the nuances that the arrangement of the material proposes. As a more contemporary work than the other artists' works within this thesis, Lewis' work invites surrender beyond a representation of submission, drawing the audience into the nuances of her propositions.

"Instead of giving the audience what the artist chooses to give, the artist gives what the audience chooses to take" (Ono, 1974). This was the premise on which the seminal work Cut Piece by Yoko Ono was created. In the piece, Ono sat on stage alone wearing her best suit. With a pair of scissors

in front of her, she invited the audience to use the scissors to cut away pieces of her clothing. Ono submitted to the audience as she made herself passive to their actions. Cut Piece explicitly deals with the invitation of the stranger into the work and the piece opens up an interaction which calls for a sense of responsibility from the audience member. In its notion of giving, it also shows Ono engaging with spiritual underpinnings making reference to a story about Buddha and the nature of giving alongside letting go of the artist's ego (Perry and Elliott, 1967). In the many readings of the work Ono's passivity led to Cut Piece being identified as a work in which Ono was representing a hierarchy in gender politics through her representation of a passive, vulnerable female body.

Known for pushing the limits of her physical body, esteemed artist Marina Abramović has engaged in acts of surrender in many of her works. She has dealt with surrender as a loss of agency but also as a spiritual endeavour. Similar to Ono, Rhythm 0 (1974) sees Abramović relinquishing control to the audience by objectifying herself over a six-hour period. She sits behind a table with 72 objects⁵ placed for the audience to choose how to use in relation to her. The work asked how far the public would go when given this control with the knowledge that Abramović would take responsibility

⁵ Objects included a loaded gun, a kitchen knife, a hammer etc.

for whatever the public would do to her. Although radical in exposing what happens when control is given to others without the need to take responsibility, this surrender was extremely dangerous with Abramović being cut by audience, handled carelessly and nearly being shot. This work explicitly shows how treating surrender as submission can lead to violence. On the contrary Abramović has also engaged with spiritual surrender. *The Artist is Present* (2010) sees Abramović enduring stillness for many hours by sitting silently on a chair at the centre of the performance space waiting for members of the public to sit on another chair in front of her and reciprocate her gaze (Battista, 2018, 29). The work is an invitation to share an authentic presence with the audience member and borders on a religious or spiritual experience. This is a different kind of surrender, one of commitment and endurance in the interrogation of what it means to be present and what it means to be present for another and 'the other'. This mode of attending to surrender as a commitment and staying with something through duration inspired my practice Form.

In dance, choreographer Aitana Cordero created a series of pieces *Do You Want to Use Me* (2003), *Sex Me Not* (2004) and *3 Duets* (2009) accompanied by an essay entitled *Surrender* (unknown)⁶. In *Do You Want to Use Me*, Cordero looked for

different makers and asked them to direct the creation of a solo to play with the hierarchies and power dynamics between "choreographer-maker-master" and the "performer-dancer-directed". Surrender is positioned within power dynamics and binaries. This work is a critical approach to how dance operates structurally, but it again sees the dancer/maker in a position of losing power. In *Sex Me Not* the work revolves around the language of sex, using this language to arrive at new performative states. The dancers are vulnerable, naked for most of the piece and performing intimate movement. The dancers are positioned to be vulnerable with the audience positioned as voyeurs to an intimate encounter. Although I see how Cordero is approaching the nature of form and expectation, this work leaves me questioning if the body always needs to be shown as vulnerable in order to use surrender to arrive at new performative states? Is there a way in which the process could begin from agency to arrive here? *3 Duets* includes 3 duets in which Cordero's body is completely passive and motionless. The duet partners chose what to do with her body. She accepts whatever is done to her. The documentation of the work shows the duet partners approaching her in a playful way, almost careless. The documentation shows that two out of the three duet partners are male, which provokes the reading of a power dynamic between genders. This work illustrates the dominance of submission within the engagement of surrender as Cordero loses her agency to her collaborators.

⁶ Publication date not stated

This chapter has demonstrated several approaches to surrender through the work of dance and performance artists' works. It has demonstrated a shift from how surrender was being addressed in the 1960s/1970s (Ono and Abramović) to more contemporary times (Lewis and Cordero). My methodology and performance have been inspired by how Lewis creates environments for subtle experiences to be shared and I too found additional methods to compose FORMLESS.

SHIFTING THE UNDERSTANDING OF SURRENDER WITHIN THE FIELD OF DANCE PRACTICE, FROM A YOGIC PERSPECTIVE

I propose through this thesis an expanded approach to surrender which draws directly from the discourse of yoga. Psychologist Gordan Wallace's work shifted an understanding of, and research into, surrender in depth psychology and spiritual experiences. In his PhD entitled *Dying to be Born: A Meditation on Transformative Surrender within Spiritual and Depth Psychological Experiences* (2001) Wallace brings together a range of sources that support the idea that letting go or giving up in surrender is not in relation to another but is the psychological process of a letting go of a world view which puts the conscious ego at the centre of the universe (Wallace, 2001, 51). The process of surrender is therefore a process related to the self. He proposes that the ultimate purpose of surrender is to discover one's sense of self and experience a

wholeness and unity with others (Wallace, 2001). Surrender is positioned as a positive transformational experience.

Within his PhD Wallace references the work of Emmanuel Ghent, a psychiatrist who wrote a paper entitled *Masochism, Submission Surrender* (1990), a key research paper in the field. Importantly for this research, Ghent analyses the differences between submission and surrender and challenges the doer/done to dynamics which are part of submission and confused with surrender. Ghent does this through emphasising how surrender is understood differently in the East and the West. Ghent explains that in the West surrender has meant defeat while in the East it has meant transcendence or liberation (1990, 110). Wallace also notes the distinct Eastern approaches to how surrender is understood.

Wallace locates yoga within the discourse of religion and spirituality. Surrender is an underlying framework of which the discourse of yoga is built upon. The first written accounts of yoga are located in The Vedāntic texts which include The Bhagavad Gita, The Brahma Sutras and The Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads are the last of the Vedic texts and deal specifically with philosophical questions regarding the self and existence. Within The Upaniṣads surrender is described as the letting go of the individual's bondage with maya, the illusion of the phenomenal world (Wallace, 2001, 70). Atman (the real self) can be realized when the maya of the ego is transcended

and when the realization appears that atman (the real self) is actually an aspect of brahman (the universal self). Surrender within the Vedāntic tradition is therefore approached as the knowledge that existence is not limited to the form in which one inhabits: it is the proposition of formlessness, the self is not bound to form.

Juan Mascaro states that in the The Bhagavad Gita, spiritual surrender results in a sense of Being:

"Being can be felt in the silence of the soul. When an inner surrender of the self-conscious will takes place, there is great peace of mind and body, and gradually the movements of the mind seem to stop. There is no thinking, but there is a deep feeling of Being, of a deeper reality than the reality of ordinary consciousness." (Mascaro, 1962, xxix)

Surrender within the discourse of yoga is therefore not primarily about control and power. At the core the experience is presence and being and the ability to apply this quality of presence and being to different situations and relationships that are encountered. As my yoga mentor Sri Louise emphasises in her teaching on Vedanta, it is the knowledge that existence is never at stake and that there doesn't need to be anything else happening than what is happening already in this moment (Coles, 2021). Throughout this thesis I take on this discourse to underpin my working approach to surrender. I understand surrender as a state, as a process and an approach to working with others. This allows me to shift away from the language of submission and work with surrender as a process, rather than an action towards

someone or something else.

In taking the yogic approach to surrender, surrender stops being held within the binaries of power and control structures which submission presents. The concept of agency within surrender is shifted from being about losing control and power, to negotiating control and power. Surrender is still about letting go and giving up, but by taking a yogic understanding that letting go and giving up is not bound to another being. It begins with the self, and in that there is a nuanced negotiation as one encounters others within a process of surrender. I take the following definition from psychiatrist and author Bessel Van Der Kolk who states that agency is:

"a technical term for the feeling of being in charge of your life: knowing where you stand, knowing that you have a say in what happens to you, knowing that you have some ability to shape your circumstances." (Van Der Kolk, 2014, 94-95)

This definition of agency indicates having ownership and actively being able to make choices and decisions. Surrender is considered as a pathway to the discovery of one's identity, one's sense of self, one's wholeness and one's sense of unity with other living beings (Ghent, 1990, 109). It is therefore important that one feels one has ownership within surrender. In constructing Form, Streaming and FORMLESS I attempted to keep this at the heart of the process, so that agency was constantly negotiated between myself, my collaborator, the audience, and the different elements within the process.

CHAPTER 2:

METHODOLOGY; THE PRACTICE OF FORM AND STREAMING

METHODOLOGY APPROACH

Like many dance artists I claim dance practice as a space in which embodied research happens. Chrysa Parkinson outlines practice through the following three features; practice as an active thought or filter, practice as a habitual and regular activity and practice as the trying and attempting repeatedly (Parkinson, 2009). Dance practice is a processual pursuit in which the dance artist questions and gathers information through the embodied experience of dancing through time. After choosing to position the practice as the central methodology for this research, it was only appropriate that the methods used to gather information arise from the practice itself and are therefore specific to the construction of these practices, rather than borrowing other methodological frameworks. Because the research is about my embodied experience within the practice, it has taken a phenomenological undertone. Phenomenology asserts the importance of the individual's subjective and perceptual experience of the world as part of knowledge production (Merleau-Ponty, 2004, 8). While I agree with this standpoint, applying phenomenology was beyond the scope of this dissertation. I instead wanted to remain close to the specificity of my practices Form and Streaming and the knowledge that

they were producing their own knowledge, rather than side stepping into or borrowing from other disciplines (Bacon and Midgelow, 2014, 12). This emphasises the value I place on dance practice as a mode of research and knowledge production.

FORM

Form is the practice of returning to a fixed form daily to find the state of surrender within form. It began with one movement landmark, which through a daily engagement with returning, developed into a total of seven movement landmarks.

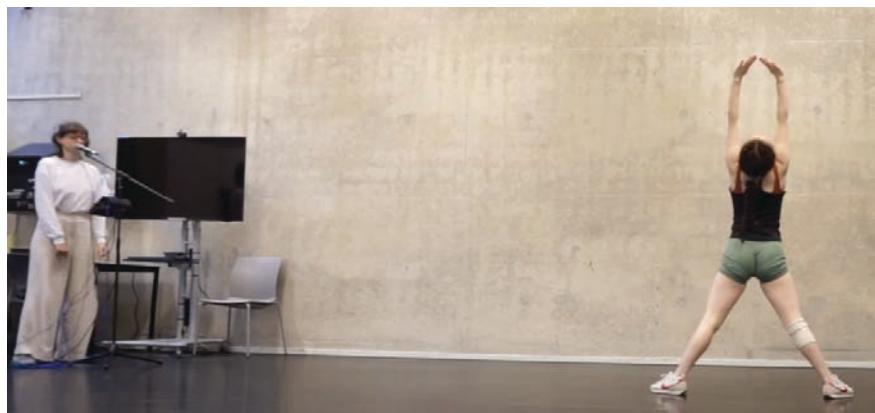


Figure 5: Form practice image, Ella Tighe & Nikkie Kemp



Figure 6: Form QR Code

STREAMING

In contrast to Form, Streaming investigates surrender as an unfolding process in movement. The movement landmarks emerge from the state found through Form, which is always practiced before Streaming. Streaming practices the concept of being unaffected, in order to maintain the state of surrender that has been found. It is concerned with placing personal agency at the heart of the exploration rather than being at the will of other entities. It asks if *āsana* can be arrived as through formlessness rather than rational decision making.



Figure 7: Streaming Practice Image



Figure 8:Streaming QR Code

ILLUMINATING SURRENDER

The methodology used within Form and Streaming is a group of methods entitled Illuminating Surrender, which sought to make surrender perceptible. The methods include the movement landmarks, poetic condensation writings and a video archive. The overall methodology uses returning to movement both as an overall structure and as a sub-method within the movement landmarks. Structuring the practices through returning to movement saw a daily engagement with the practice from November 2020 - May 2021 until the culmination in the performance FORMLESS. Engaging with the practice over time produced concrete information about how surrender appeared in relation to the daily conditions encountered. Each practice session included the practice of Form, which would work with the camera as witness, followed by a poetic condensation writing. Streaming was also practiced with the camera as a witness, with a poetic condensation writing. After completing both practices, I would leave the studio and watch the videos.

RETURNING TO MOVEMENT

The overall structure of the methodology is embedded with a cyclical process of returning to movement. Returning appropriately links to the roots of the word surrender. The Latin roots of surrender are reddere (to return) and rendere (to render). The word therefore implies "to give in return, to make return of" (The Oxford English Dictionary 2nd Edition, 1989). Returning to movement first implies that there is a

potentiality to be found in going back to something that is known.

The movement landmarks were a vessel for surrender. Dance artist Amy Voris addresses returning to movement as going back to a state, quality, sensation that has emerged in an encounter with movement. It is a method of going back to movement you have experienced before, in order to deepen or further develop a relationship to it (Voris, 2019, 98-109). Although I was going back to the movement landmarks, I was actually returning to the state of surrender through them. Returning was an important approach to working with this state of surrender. If the state of surrender is a state of being which is always in flux, there is no guarantee that surrender would always appear. Emmanuel Ghent says that "one cannot choose to surrender though one can chose to submit. One can provide facilitative conditions for surrender but cannot make it happen" (Ghent, 1990, 109). Returning to movement was one of these facilitative conditions that invited surrender's appearance, alongside other conditions that I will be outlined later.

Returning to movement, like surrender requires receptivity in its engagement. Voris proposes that returning implies encountering material with a quality of openness (Voris, 2019, 98). Unlike repetition, this openness suggests that returning allows for an improvisatory approach to how the

form is practiced each time it is encountered. Performance practitioner Eirini Kartsaki explains that returning documents the differences that take place in each encounter with the work; it opens a dialogue which is about the present context of the encounter (2016, 5). The movement landmarks are an open form⁷, and they must be for surrender to emerge. If surrender is about finding presence, the immediate circumstances must be acknowledged as contributing to the emergence of surrender.

Returning to movement embraces the vitality of encountering the movement landmarks. It accepts the conditions and circumstances that affect the practice to be part of the practice's emergence rather than disregarding them and placing focus on an exactitude of repeating movement. Political theorist and philosopher Jane Bennett speaks about vitality of human and non-human entities and materials. She proposes that vitality is the capacity of things to act as agents or forces with trajectories, propensities or tendencies of their own (2009, viii). In coming to Form such conditions like my energy, mood, mental state and how prepared my body was, were material forces that influenced the encounter with surrender on each return.

⁷ I understand Open Form, through Joao Da Silva's framing of Open Composition which he states that form is always-already open (never fully closed) and as such always contingent (Da Silva in Allsopp and Monni, 2015, 157).

THE MOVEMENT LANDMARKS WITHIN FORM

View the movement landmarks in Appendix B

The movement landmarks in Form:

- The Handstand Cycle
- The Prayer
- Grounding and Gathering
- The Backwards Walkover
- Drop and release
- The Backward Roll
- The Running

The movement landmarks are a cycle of movements that were found through a single fixed form as a vessel to surrender into. They are present within Form and Streaming but used slightly differently. In Form, the movement landmarks are executed in a durational looping pattern of returns which navigates the incremental transitions between the different landmarks. In Streaming, the movement landmarks arise out of addressing surrender as an unfolding process in movement. Engaging with and observing my experience within the movement landmarks was the space in which I researched surrender. I reiterate that the first movement landmark was selected on engaging with surrender through agency and choice. Spiritual writer Bert Parlee states that surrender may be understood as a gesture of free will, it is not a matter of coercion or manipulation, but rather a decision that is entered into freely,

Figure 9: Poetic Condensation, Day 63 - Form

The whole space opens up + I am taken by it.
I am pouring myself into it, nothing
ever lands or remains. Only present
for a second. I allow the body to just
go. To fill. To give. To be. Not stopping
what wants to happen. Because I don't
fix or remain in anything it gives
wise for this to not be defined. It just
keeps going. Slightly relentless + driven
by something. Maybe the state appeared
after all. Things appear/disappear, reappear,
surprised, mistakes, mess, an almost unruliness.
Like nearly out of control but not quite
out of control. I want to keep being
surprised. But the more I think about that
the less surprised I am. I never stop
because if I stop it stops + then it is
over. I like to play, I like to listen,
I like to go with what I hear.
I am carried by what I hear.
I feel strong + I feel powerful. Clumsy
my space. Claiming the space for
my dancing. Taking the space
I want to take. No question,
no worry, no hesitation. Just fucking
doing it.

Figure 10: Poetic Condensation, Day 63 - Streaming

I have been returning for a long time, I am
trying to return. Maybe the trying is where the
problem lies, so I try to shift my attention.
I go back focus, focus my eyes, find drishti
points. The wall, the floor, my hands as
the movement shifts the drishti shifts and
as the mind wanders I pull it back.
Simplicity somewhere. It takes a while,
a long while + then, something meets.
My body continues without my control,
for a moment I only feel sensation, a
luxury of movement. Extraordinary to feel
details; shifting of weight, pouring of
weight. Extension, elongation, length.
When I arrive in the handstand somewhere
there is even further to go. This is
juicy, my shoulders extend, my legs
split, my back arches to find the line.
Then in the next second it is gone +
the energy continues. The cycle continues.
I am not thinking anymore only doing +
feeling + taking in all the information that
is rising in my body, my awareness,
my attention,

even though it arises spontaneously (1993, 57). It is important to acknowledge that what emerged from surrender could arise because of this freedom of choice.

The movement landmarks were developed through using sound as a descent into the surrender. In the development of Form and Streaming, I experimented with silence, pre-recorded sound and live sound as conditions to surrender into.

The poetic condensation writings emerged directly from the practice of Form and Streaming. They are a mix of description and identification of significant moments which give insight into when surrender appeared for me and what was happening in those moments. These writings were part of making the experience of surrender more tangible. They allowed me to identify whether the same conditions would also invite an audience into sharing the state of surrender with me. This allowed me to construct the performance of FORMLESS in such a way that I could guide the audience's experience into the state of surrender that I was experiencing.

THE VIDEO ARCHIVE

I used the camera as witness to practice sessions of both Form and Streaming, creating an emergent video archive. The archive was an extremely important element of making my experience of working with surrender visible. The camera

as witness added accountability, which helped me commit to surrender, especially in the earlier stages of the research when I was undertaking the practice alone. It allowed me to see if the internal experience I was having was visible externally. After each practice, I would select a section of material, watch it back and save it in the archive. Building an archive of practice allowed me to see how the state of surrender was shifting and changing through the returning to movement over time. It allowed me to identify patterns in what was happening when the state of surrender would appear. By witnessing myself from the outside, I could then go back to the practice the following day taking information with me about how to tweak what was needed to allow the state of surrender to emerge.

*There are 87 practices of Form in the video archive from Nov - May⁸.
There are 48 practices of Streaming in the video archive from Feb - May.*



Figure 11: Video Archive QR Code

CHAPTER 3: INSIDE THE MOVEMENT LANDMARKS; SUBTLETIES AND NUANCES OF THE STATE OF SURRENDER IN DANCE PRACTICE

The premise of this research is the sharing of a complex, internal process of surrender in dance practice, which is difficult to share with an audience. The yogic understanding of surrender perhaps makes this even more nuanced. Through engaging with the methodology of Illuminating Surrender, I could start to gain clarity on how I was navigating the state of surrender in the practices, to then construct a hospitable space for these to be shared with audience.

THE MOVEMENT LANDMARKS AS ĀSANA

The movement landmarks are structured as āsana both in their physical execution and their overall approach of engagement. Āsana, gives a different perspective to working with movement material to how one might think about it in dance. An āsana is what is more commonly known in the West as a yoga posture, it is the coming into a still position in which the mind also becomes still (Sjoman, 2013, 43). In his translation of the The Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali⁹ Norman Sjoman, scholar of Sanskrit and yoga translates that āsana is not about achieving a position, real asana exists when you are truly residing in the state of absolute awareness, the

⁹ The Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali is one of the most authoritative texts on yoga, containing 196 aphorisms outlining the eight limbs of yoga.

awareness of the self. (Sjoman, 2013, 240). Āsana is therefore not the form of the posture itself nor the yoga, it is the vessel to doing yoga.

Āsana require surrender because they are complex, not only because of the physical skill required to execute them, but also the ability to arrive at this state of absolute awareness. Āsana, is a combination of breath, movement and stillness of mind and body. I selected the handstand cycle as the first movement landmark because it contains a play with control in the body and mind. Entering the handstand is a play between the desire to enter the āsana and the act of moving itself. On entering I would first have to move with the movement muscles to get into position, then I would have to slacken the effort, let go and release to relax into the postural muscles which would then take over to find balance. This is what Sjoman names as a shift from conscious volition to unconscious content (2013, 45). Volition emerged in the movement landmarks as something which could prevent the state of surrender from arising. Volition was necessary but if focused on too hard would prevent surrender from happening altogether, instead I would find myself obsessing over how I was executing the handstand rather than the experience I was finding within it. At these points I would often find myself caught up in the rational mind determined by the desires of my ego. Wallace stated that:

"A prominent feature of surrender involves the action of letting go of ego control of psychological defences. Central to this concept is the letting go of a world view that puts the conscious ego at the centre of the universe." (Wallace, 2001, 51)

Instead of allowing the conscious ego to take over, I needed to be in the experience inside of the movement rather than allowing external thoughts to disrupt this. This was something that I was constantly trying to maintain in the movement landmarks. Successfully navigating the tension between control and losing control in āsana in the pursuit of the balance is what creates the steadiness of the mind to achieve yoga.

In the poetic condensation writings, I often wrote about the balance between control and losing control. Figure 12 gives an example.

STAYING WITH/COMMITMENT

The movement landmarks work with the premise of staying with and committing. They involve a durational aspect, however not for the purpose of arriving at physical exhaustion,

I am pushing against a resistance. I started + it already felt tough. I try to find the steadiness in the inner rhythm of the movement + it doesn't seem to appear. I try harder + it's still not there, actually I lose it even more, but I need to find and elongation, my focus, keep focusing, I need to find balance. I keep going, try to pay attention to what I'm feeling rather than my thoughts. Sensation rising, feeling. For a few moments I have to focus on the technicality of the handstand, who activating my shoulders to press up + lifting + breathing + engaging. I have to do several rounds like this before AH. It happens, it just shifts, it takes me. I don't know how it happens, but from then it keeps happening. Settling in, I ride the wave. Momentum kicking in + then BAM! I am rolling backwards in the next landmark. Forget for a moment what I was doing, just tumbling backwards continuously. Then I am not I have to make it happen all over again. Take control.

Figure 12: Poetic condensation example- Day 44

but to attempt to give time to arrive at the formless moments, where affect is brought to the surface. During the process of staying with and committing I attempted to expand the amount of time spent in each movement landmark to increase the affective capacity. Catherine Pickstock writes in her book *Repetition and Identity*, that repetition is the means by which an entity can be perceived, for a thing to exist at all or to be observable by us, it must hold beyond the instant; it must have some continuity (2013, 43) Although I name returning to movement specifically 'returning', repetition is happening to a degree and helps provide a visibility for the state of surrender. Through staying with the returning there is an insistence on encountering the affects of the movement, which might not ordinarily be obvious. Gregory J Seigworth and Melissa Gregg in *The Affect Theory Reader* propose that affect is a force of encounter, it refers to the intensities that pass from body to body, in the resonances that circulate about, between and sometimes stick to bodies and world in the passage between these intensities and resonances (2010, 1). The movement landmarks produce and contain affects. The backwards roll and drop and release, for example have a drop and release in weight before momentum takes me into either the backwards roll or the leg swing. In connecting with the state of surrender the affects start to become heightened as the relationality between the sound and the movement intensifies.

RELATIONSHIP TO SOUND

In recognising the potential contribution sound could have on the affective quality of the movement, I began a

collaboration with musician Nikkie Kemp. In Form Nikkie worked with a loop machine and vocals and in Streaming an acoustic guitar and vocals. The loop machine mirrored the process I was undertaking in returning to movement, staying with a fixed form. The loop machine had 6 forms which Nikkie could navigate through layering, accumulating, removing and echoing. The sound brought resonance. Resonance is described by theoretical physicists as the fluctuations of multidimensional vibration (Ruiz and Vourloumis, 2021, 9). The vibrational aspect of resonance not only entered and affected my physical experience of the movement, allowing me to find different energies and intensities, it also created a resonating atmosphere within the space.

It was the staying with the movement landmarks that constructed the practice of Form. In the beginning I only had the intention of remaining with the handstand cycle as a single fixed form. Over the time of returning to movement, at some moments I would notice that I was in a new/or variation of a previous form. It was in these moments I recognised that a surrender had happened. In speaking about Authentic Movement Practice, Mary Starks Whitehouse addresses this in a way which resonates with my experience:

"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.' Dancers are terribly familiar with 'I move', they are accustomed to think they do it all, that they must exert will power and effort for each thing they want to have happen. I am moved 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 in Pallaro, 1999, 82)

Whitehouse outlines the distinction between moving and being moved. This was rare in my process hence why it took 87 practice sessions to have seven movement landmarks as part of Form. In each practice I attempted to connect with the state of surrender in such a way again to experience this, meaning that the movement landmarks would incrementally transition and shift into another movement because of the emergence of surrender, the resonance of sound and the other affects at play. Ruiz and Vourloumis say that "in their surging motion, like rising and falling waves, forms shift, some visibly and others imperceptibly" (2021, 9). This would happen rarely, but nevertheless I kept striving and trusting this could happen as opposed to driving the movement myself.

Strategies of working with the movement landmarks are detailed in Appendix D.

STREAMING

Streaming proposes a different, complementary use of surrender from Form beginning from the premise of formlessness. Streaming emerges from Form; it carries the state of surrender ideally found in Form and expands. It deals with surrender as an unfolding process in movement, happening in every instance. I wanted to see if I could allow āsana that I work with through my yoga practice to emerge

in my dance practice, again following Whitehouse's insight of being moved rather than moving. I wanted to not know I was in āsana until I was really there. In this practice Nikkie played acoustic guitar and used her voice. The tone and quality of the sound was softer, and this invited a softer emergence of movement from me, after what had been such a fixed and physically demanding practice. In Streaming the tone of my body shifted, it became fluid and gentle whilst having moments of power and force.

The videos in the video archive showed that form was still present within Streaming. The goal of Streaming was not to propose that form would not be visible. Ruiz and Vourloumis speak about formless formations as an unruliness, and this aligns with the yogic understanding of formless in Streaming. They say that:

"unruliness doesn't abandon full structure; from the space of paradox and intricate dialectical turns, the formless formation works from and against definition. [...] How can a form be formless in the process of forming something from form?" (2021, 20)

Even though form appears, the formless lies in a detachment that I bring to the form. I am not bound by the form which releases a pre-occupation with the need to change my dancing form or be at the will of what I think dance should be or look like. In this I have agency.

CHAPTER 4:

RE-SITUATING AGENCY WITHIN SURRENDER

In Shifting the understanding of surrender within the field of dance practice, from a yogic perspective - re-situating agency, I presented Van Der Kolk's notion of agency as a starting point to how agency would be dealt with within this research. Through Illuminating Surrender I gathered further information about the conditions that were needed for me to enter into that state of surrender. In this chapter I will speak about agency in Form, Streaming and FORMLESS.

Maintaining Van Der Kolk's definition of agency, I reiterate that agency begins from a space of choice and ownership. I emphasise this to bring back an important feature of this research which is to distinguish surrender from submission and not perpetuate a perception of passivity within the wider social structure and the dance field.

What became clear through Illuminating Surrender was that the state of surrender was held in the moments where I accessed a formlessness, both within Form and Streaming. In Form these were the moments where I found a way of being in the movement landmarks that was not confined to their form.

"To think of form as formless does not mean to emphasize a lack of form, but to unleash it from deterministic structure, to attend to form's momentum and its inseparability from other configurations." (Ruiz and Vourloumis, 2021, 9)

Form can act as a structure, but it also contains affects which are live and entangled with other matter. If one can connect to this matter it has potentiality to find a state of surrender in which one can be open to those affective qualities rather than becoming passive to its structure. This is important when considering maintaining agency, because in becoming passive one experiences the absence of freedom as opposed to the finding of freedom (Restaino, 2019, 49). Releasing form from its deterministic structure proposes a greater choice in experiencing form.

AGENCY WITHIN COLLABORATION; SOUND AND MOVEMENT

During the practice I had consistently worked with sound as a descent into the state of surrender. I discovered that the state of surrender appeared more often when I was working with sound. As a dancer, I have musicality within my moving body and I naturally align to the melodies, harmonies and structures that sound proposes. Initially I worked with pre-recorded sound, a selected playlist which would appear in an unknown order but would be returned to. The fixed nature of this lacked the openness that the rest of the practice followed. As João da Silva suggests, I needed to continually create the conditions within the form to unknow the material I returned to daily in order to access the surrender (Da Silva, 2015, 154). The fixed form of the sound started to close down the possibilities to surrender, instead taking me into habitual

and known spaces. I questioned where my agency was within this arrangement. At times I felt like I was submitting to the sound rather than having a choice in how I would navigate it. Overall, it did not allow me to maintain the openness to surrender central to my research, and I met musician and yoga teacher Nikkie Kemp who was interested in working with me, sharing this concept of surrender and a common ground in our yogic approach. Intuition and surrender told me that in working with Nikkie there would be another opportunity to embrace the unknown and encounter new possibilities. This was the beginning of Form and Streaming transitioning from practices to the composition of the performance FORMLESS.

Upon inviting Nikkie into the process, the concept of agency shifted from being about maintaining my personal agency and experience within the dancing to understanding how that could be preserved within a collaboration. Our premise was that as surrender underscored the process, neither of us should need to submit ourselves to the other, become passive, or sacrifice our practices. The relationship between the sound and movement was one of intra-action. Feminist theorist, Karen Barad names intra-action as the mutual constitution of entangled agencies. Instead of there being individual agencies that interact, intra-action recognizes that agencies emerge through their intra-action (2007, 33). Intra-action moves away from the traditional idea of causal relationships, of cause and effect to propose a mutual emergence. Emergence,

in Barad's Agential Realism, considers the intra-active nature of the non-linearity of relations (Barad, 2007, 393). Relations are not separate entities acting upon one another, they are entangled and impacting one another, constantly becoming. Barad suggests that this entanglement of relations means that matter is dynamic (2007, 224), meaning that matter is always shifting alongside these entanglements. The sound, the movement landmarks, the space were constantly in this changing state. Treating the form as open, meant that Nikkie and I were always navigating this, finding moments of collision, tension, connection. In FORMLESS, aligning with this dynamic created an atmosphere which hosted the state of the surrender and consequently held the state of surrender also for the audience.

In committing to exploring how to retain agency in the work, Nikkie and I investigated how power and control could be repositioned within surrender. If surrender is taken as a state of being, an allowing and an acceptance then could it be possible to both work into a state of surrender without either of us sacrificing agency within that process. Barad proposes that agential realism is a call for a reconsideration of ethics and power. She states that intra-actions have the potential to do more than participate in the constitution of the geometries of power; they open possibilities for changes in it (2007, 246). Becoming present to the intra-actions at play meant that neither Nikkie or I had to step into a position of power,

or in the language of Barad, allow interaction to take over. Interaction is a common mode in which music and dance come together. Traditionally dance is performed to music. The dancers are in service of the music, or the music is in service of the dancers. Either way, one of the practices is at service of the other and perhaps sacrificing personal agency in doing so. Referring back to Van Der Kolk, it means losing the ability to work from personal interests or desires (2014, 94-95). In this relationality there is potentially a hierarchy at play, e.g., if the dancer is dancing to the music, then the musician has power over the dancer. In our process it was impossible for interaction not to happen, of course there were moments of initiation and negotiation where this was present. Sometimes we explicitly worked with one of us leading and the other following to investigate what would happen to the state of surrender in each instance. We found that I would very easily become passive and follow the music; it was harder for me to be the one to initiate a shift in the loops. This informed me about a natural tendency I have to become passive and reminded me why I was taking this stance within the research.

To contemplate agency through Barad's agential realism in relation to form, provides a fluid and constant opening for choice. Ruiz and Vourloumis propose that form could be a thing that is just done, rather than followed (2021, 9). Nikkie and I, embedded a process of continually re-centering towards the work and towards each other in FORMLESS. It

was important that throughout both of us remained on top of the choices that were opening up in the work rather than becoming passive to them and not acknowledging that a choice could be made.

CHAPTER 5:

THE HOSPITALITY OF SURRENDER - FORMLESS

Investigating surrender as a state found inside of an embodied experience makes the visibility of surrender much subtler and harder to grasp for those not personally involved in that experience. This contrasts to the grander gestures of a more submissive surrender that can be traced back to the works of Yoko Ono, Marina Abramović or Aitana Cordero. Taking the findings from the practices of Form and Streaming, I was able to compose a dramaturgy which would craft the attention necessary to share the subtleties and nuances that the state of surrender produced. This became FORMLESS.

The methodology deals with principles from hospitality that underline how I approach surrender. When I discuss hospitality, I refer to a philosophy outlined by Jacques Derrida and further developed by contemporary philosophers. In their paper Non-relational Aesthetics, professor of media theory and history Charlie Gere, and art historian Michael Corris state that:

"Hospitality involves the horizon of an event. It anticipates an encounter with the other. It assumes a level of mastery over space whilst also requiring a level of openness to receive and welcome the other. In the welcoming of this otherness it is the subjectivity that enables the host to be a host, although the guest is also to some level a host." (2008,16)

Hospitality aligns with surrender's main principles which is about becoming receptive without having to sacrifice one's

self to another in those.

I structured FORMLESS, in 3 sections. The piece opened with a spoken word section in which I spoke a series of returns. "I'm scared of standing on my hair, I'm scared you won't come close enough, I'm scared you won't feel comfortable to move". This was followed by Form, expanding into Streaming. The beginning spoken word section was composed knowing that I required a form of hospitality that would bring the audience towards the subtle, affective details they were about to see in Form. I needed to hone their attention. There were two dramaturgical devices at play in this section; the first involved using the "I'm scared of's" as a relational tool and the second using an aporetic structure. According to scholar Hongyu Wang an aporia is:

"a space of perpetual uneasiness of being pulled in opposite directions of contradictory engagements with tradition and promise in a quest for actions that open up non-present possibilities." (Wang 2005, 51)

An aporia is a space of lack, it can indicate the feeling of encountering the unknown or not knowing how to act. The "I'm scared of's" were invitations, not instructions. They were a subtle way of guiding the audience and hinting at how I required them to view the rest of the work. In considering how agency could be distributed to audience I was careful not to take control in this section but to provide an entry point to the work where the audience would feel they had choice

in how to be within the space. The aporetic structure meant that I was working on the edge of my own vulnerability. I was listing things that I was genuinely afraid of happening within the work.

Form required a hosting from inside the movement landmarks, meaning that the state of surrender emerged through my bodily presence. To return to the etymology of hospitality, its Latin roots are hostis which is both enemy and guest and potis which is power of (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000, 45). In hospitality the host welcomes the guest into the space they have power over, whilst also acknowledging that the guest is also an enemy and brings the potential for the unknown. Hostis is therefore connected with hostility. To find the hospitality to share surrender, hostility is negotiated in the balance between welcoming, yet claiming ownership over the space. I perform Form with my back to the audience, my face only seen as I move through the movement from time to time and often covered by my hair. I am internally focusing to host the state of surrender, using Drishi Japa and Prānāyāma¹⁰ to hold an intense bodily presence. I am hosting from within the movement. I cannot abandon this to welcome the audience I have to maintain it so that a hospitality is produced that invites the audience into the affective relation with the movement.

As I return to movement, Nikkie also works with returns on the looping machine, as the movement landmarks incrementally shift so too does the soundscape, heightening the affective relation of the movement. It is in this relationality of the returning to movement and the returning to sound that the hosting happens. The persistence alongside the time spent in these movement landmarks allows viewers to perceive the tiny shifts and variations that might ordinarily go unnoticed. It invites a specific type of spectatorship. As Kartsaki states performances of repetition insist that we participate in them, that we allow ourselves and bodies to be shaped by them (2017, 99-100). The insistence in the returns allows the audience to let go. The work is not going anywhere, attentively the audience do not have to be shifting their attention to receive new movement as they would be in conventional dance performances. After some time, they can relax and find their own sense of presence and being with the work. This enables them to start to become attentive to the details that are made visible through the returns.

Additionally, the lighting design supported the honing of attention. The space was lit by two spotlights, one where I was standing in and the other on the musical equipment. I needed to guide the audience's attention as close to the movement as possible for them to see the affective quality of the movement. They too had to stay with and commit to Form. With the rest of the space being in darkness, the spotlights'

visual focus formed a Drishti similar to how I work within the practice. This limited potential distractions (Vrittis) to guide attention and keep focus on the emerging movement.

During Form the lighting design expands, eventually the spotlights merge and after approximately 25 minutes I break out of the fixed space and begin Streaming. I expand and the form lingers but is also dropped. The sound shifts into acoustic guitar and vocals which bring a softer shift of energy to the space. Here, I lose my internal focus points and the audience are in my direct attention, I am navigating the presence of the audience within my dancing. I practice the yoga understanding of being unaffected, as I take the quality and presence I have found in Form and expand. Being unaffected does not mean ignoring, it means that one does not need to be responsive to other forms, that one's existence is not at stake in the encountering of other kinds of presence (Dayananda, 1989, 12). I propose this is a delicate way of sharing my receptive body with audience and is apt to the proposition of hospitality in that it proposes a co-existence with the audience. Irigaray states that to practice hospitality in relation to co-existence each of us needs a place of our own to which we remain faithful (2013, 43). I remain faithful to the state of surrender that has arisen through Form, I am not in service or at the will of the audience. In this I find agency, claiming space for my dancing which can happen alongside the audience rather than be changed or affected by them. In

this, I can find a formlessness in the form. Streaming is short because it acknowledges that the surrender has a limit and once that limit is reached the surrender, the formlessness has finished. I start to return to my rational and ego-led mind, conscious of what I am doing and the audience's presence. At this stage, both Nikkie and I honour the fact that the surrender has finished, and we end.

CONCLUSION

In this artistic research I engaged with the discourses of yoga and psychology to offer an expansive understanding of surrendering to dance practice. I proposed that surrender, instead of only being understood through the means of letting go and giving up, could be encountered as a state. This state of surrender is a state of being, presence and a soft yet assertive quality held in movement.

Psychology and yoga outline that surrender is first an act of free will. It involves a letting go, but that letting go is in relation to the ego-bound mind and the construct that 'I' or the self is bound to form (Wallace, 2001, 53). By understanding that letting go in surrender happens in relation to the self rather than another, I was able to shift an understanding of surrender away from the confusion of being identified as submission. The inclusion of yoga within this research was a claiming of my personal agency. I claimed yoga as part of my personal physicality, embracing it as my movement vocabulary and in doing so pushing at the edges of what can be identified as dance. I believe that acknowledging that yoga was part of my 'self' was what allowed me to access surrender in a genuine manner and share this in the context of the performance of FORMLESS. As a practitioner and teacher of yoga, I have claimed the space for yoga to be valued and considered alongside discourses of philosophy and psychology within the Western institution.

Delving deeper into the yogic approach to surrender brought an undertone to the research which investigated the nature of form. The movement landmarks heightened this as they visibly represented form. There is an extensive amount of literature available on form and formless both within dance and yoga, the limitations of this research did not allow me to address this in its full potential and these arguments could have been explored further.

The state of surrender I proposed is a subtle and nuanced experience, especially when investigated as an embodied dance practice, and I developed the methodology Illuminating Surrender to make the appearance of surrender perceptible from within the practices of Form and Streaming. In FORMLESS I used the findings from the methodology to create a dramaturgy in which I crafted a hospitality of surrender for the audience. This dramaturgy invited the audience into a presence, attention and way of being with FORMLESS that was like the state of surrender that I was working with in the movement landmarks. This was made possible through returning to movement, and the affective nature of the movement landmarks as they returned again and again, incrementally shifting to unveil further details in the movement. Kartsaki says; "repetition is too full and too empty, too much and not quite enough" (2017, 160). My experience of returning to surrender is that in each return although it could be assumed nothing is changing,

everything is constantly in flux and being re-negotiated and this is emphasised to the audience through the persistence of returning.

FORMLESS proposed a space in which different agencies within the process could intra-act and emerge alongside one another to create an atmosphere that would allow the state of surrender to be shared with an audience. FORMLESS, even in its performance remained true to the nature of surrender and worked as an open form process. This was not without its complexity. On inviting Nikkie into the process I sought to continually allow for agency to be shared between us, which saw a constant negotiation between power dynamics and hierarchies within the collaboration. Questions arose: how to maintain the state of surrender I was proposing while also making compositional choices to craft a space for the audience? How could the work be crafted in such a way that neither artist had to submit to the other? How to meet the needs of practice becoming performance? How could both artists surrender through FORMLESS rather than 'represent it' in an effort to make a performance?

Through collaboration, I embraced a more complex approach to agency through posthuman discourse. In recognising the intra-active relationship between movement and sound, I could both create an atmosphere that would invite the hospitality of surrender, but also continue to play with these

agencies to examine the micro-structures and moments of power that arise through this entanglement. Barad states that:

"Particular possibilities for intra-acting exist at every moment and these changing possibilities entail an ethical obligation to intra-act responsibly in the world's becoming; to contest and rework what matters and what is excluded from mattering." (2007, 235)

Paying attention to the intra-action between sound and dance and the presence of myself and Nikkie within that, brought questions about surrender, agency and power that are relevant beyond the context of embodied or performance practice. It raised questions about the different structures, situations and people who manipulate a submissive situation. As Ruiz and Vourloumis state:

"If life, is a constant metamorphosis of forms, how can we shift the ways we socially operate to allow for the avowal of their rising and falling change?" (2021, 14)

I question if the more expansive notion of surrender this thesis examined, with its negotiation, listening and attuning could propose a way of socially operating which is not fixed but fluid and constantly re-navigating dependent on the situation faced. This meaning that agency should not have to be lost to fulfil the needs, wishes or demands of another.

Through this research I have claimed space for surrender to be encountered through my personal agency as a dancer. I danced in such a way which was true to the nature of myself. I embodied my strength and flexibility through continually

hand standing, I embraced my wild hair and I let go to the forces of momentum and gravity that moved my body through surrendering. As a result, I did not have to lose my power or agency to another to surrender and in moments, I could encounter surrender as formless as yoga would suggest.

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APPENDIX A

SURRENDER (2020) AND FOLD//ER (2021)

Surrender (2020)

In Surrender I make myself vulnerable to an encounter with the audience. Beginning by speaking my fears, fears about Brexit, togetherness, loss - I open up my body to be moved by the spectator. I invite the audience into meaningful interactions as I invite them to physically pick me up and move me in space. An invitation for an encounter, for touch, for care. What happens when you are given power over another? What choices do you make?



Figure 13: Surrender (2020), Bodies in Dissent, Photo Credit: Fenia Kotsopoulou
Photo property of Home of Performance Practices, ArtEZ

To view more and read an essay that accompanied this performance, please visit <https://www.ellatighe.com/surrender-2020>



Figure 14: Surrender (2020), Bodies in Dissent, Photo Credit: Fenia Kotsopoulou
Photo property of Home of Performance Practices, ArtEZ

FOLD//ER (2021)

In this performance:

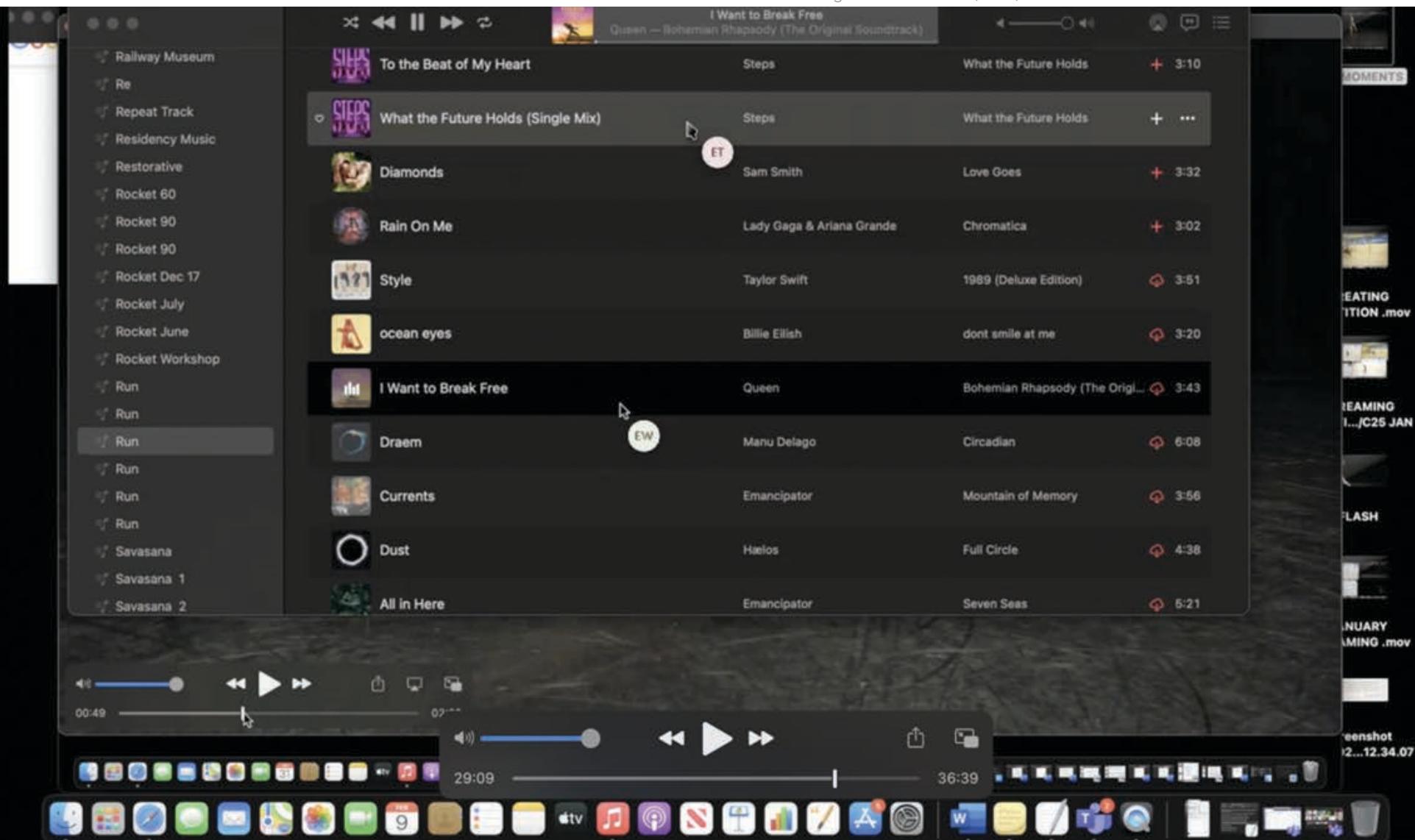
"I surrender my desktop to you"

Meaning that, I will share my screen and a member of the audience can take control of my desktop.

You have 7 minutes - LETS GO!

FOLD//ER is a desktop performance which investigates the hospitality of surrender. Surrender is understood not as a giving up or letting go, but as a nuanced relational exchange between performer and spectator. The work is an invitation to delve into an unknown interaction between performer, fellow spectators and the materials on the desktop. It is an offering from the performer, with trust and excitement. The performance holds no expectations, but hopes to offer spectators the opportunity to explore control and power of this environment.

Figure 15: FOLD//ER (2021)



APPENDIX B

The Movement Landmarks



Figure 16: The Handstand Cycle



Figure 17: The Backward Walkover



Figure 18: Grounding and Gathering

Figure 19: Running

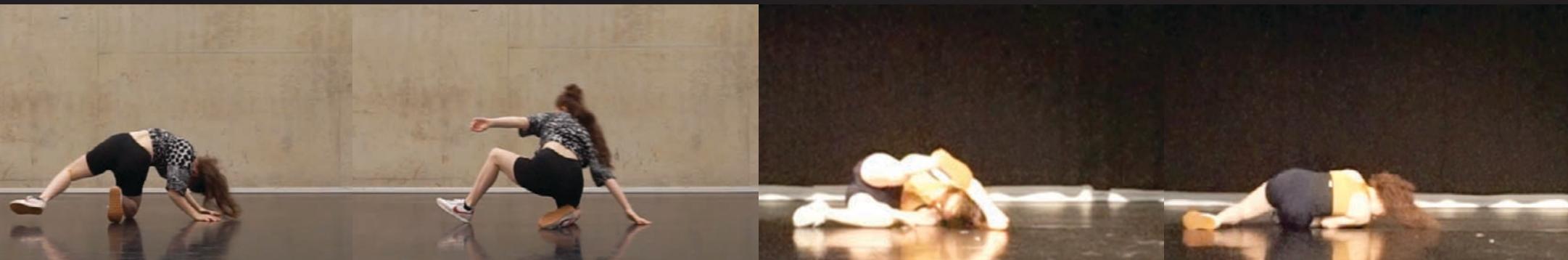


Figure 20: Prayer

Figure 21: Drop and Release

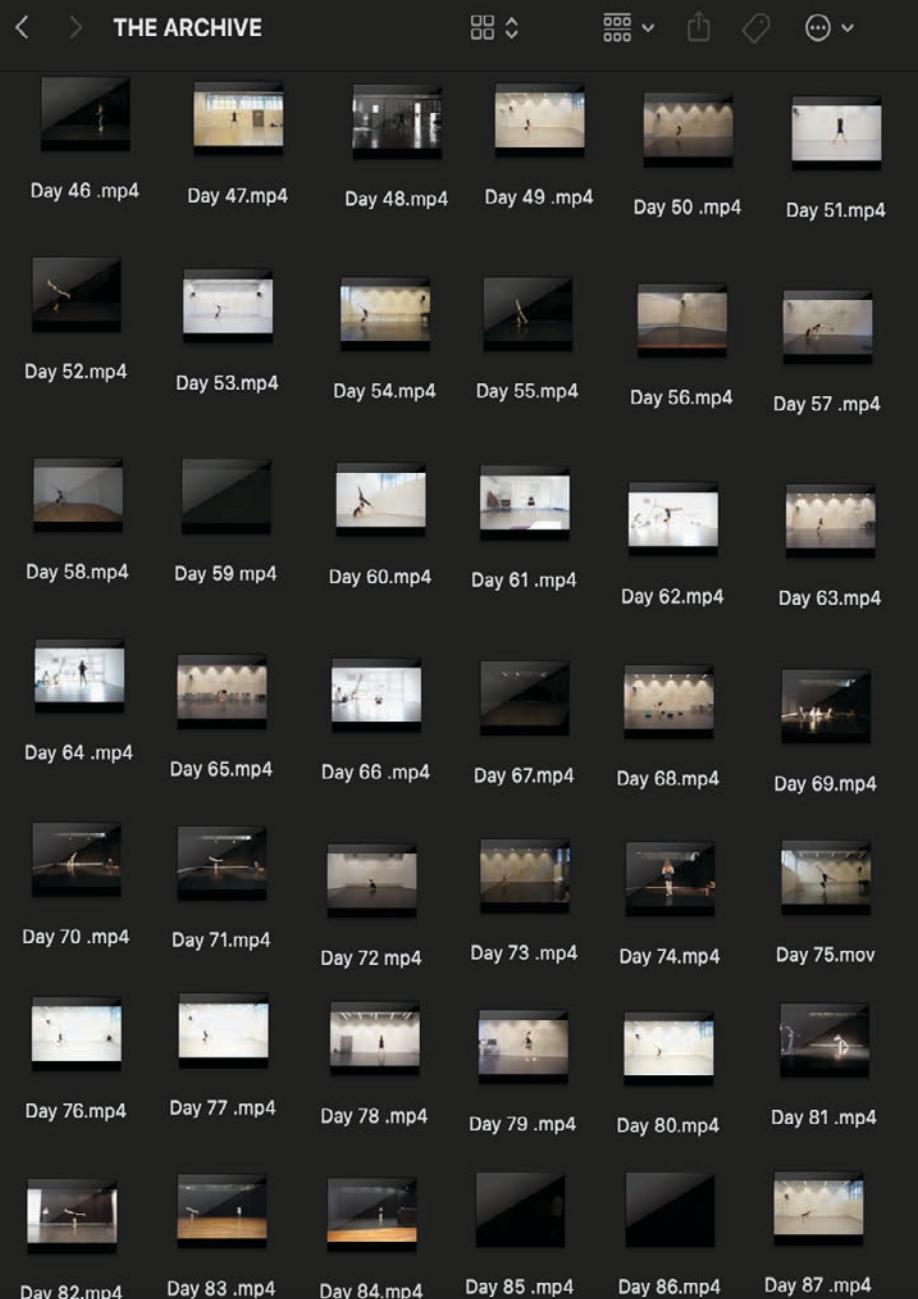


APPENDIX C. The Video Archive

A screenshot of a video archive interface titled "THE ARCHIVE". The interface includes navigation arrows and icons for filtering and sorting. Below the title, there is a grid of 27 video thumbnails, each labeled with a day number from Day 1 to Day 27. The thumbnails show various stages of a backward roll or similar acrobatic movement. The days are arranged in a 7x3 grid, with Day 27 being the last visible thumbnail.

Figure 22: Backward Roll

< > THE ARCHIVE					
Day 28.mp4	Day 29.mp4	Day 30.mp4	Day 31.mp4	Day 32.mp4	Day 33.mp4
Day 34.mp4	Day 35.mp4	Day 36.mp4	Day 37.mp4	Day 38.mp4	Day 39.mp4
Day 40.mov	Day 41.mp4	Day 42.mp4	Day 43.mp4	Day 44.mp4	Day 45.mp4



APPENDIX D

Strategies for staying with

Drishti

Drishti is a gaze point, externally but also in reference to the directing of the internal gaze. A Drishti point is designed to bring into balance the internal and external practice (Swenson, 1999, 12). Throughout Form, I had specific Drishti points in place. I faced the wall, with my back to the audience which was a very clear choice in initiating the conditions for staying with and committing to the state of surrender.

Movement Japa

Movement Japa is: 'the repetitive 'muttering' of mantras, usually in a 'quiet' (*upāmśu*) way through the mouth, but sometimes using a 'mental' (*mānasa*) approach in which the lips do not move at all and the chant is delivered 'silently' (*tūsnīm*)' (Gerety, 2021, 502). In Form the returning to movement acts as the movement japa.

Prāṇāyāma

Prāṇāyāma is breath control. The movement landmarks worked with Prāṇāyāma through vinyasa, connecting a soft subtle breath to movement.

Through using the above strategies for staying with and committing, it became possible to expand the images and affects that were being produced. To elongate their presence and make them more visible to audience.

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