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'Crystallisations, Constellations, and Sharings: Exploring Somatic Process with Sandra Reeve'

Emma Meehan

Introduction

In this chapter, I will explore the topic of performing process in somatic-based performances, focussing in particular on my study with and of UK-based movement artist Sandra Reeve.ⁱ I will identify how she draws on her training with Javanese movement artist Suprpto Suryodarmo (Prapto) to foreground process as the performance. I will give an overview of several performances which I experienced through participant observation, to offer an insight into the processes that are performed. My analysis ranges from a discussion of the open days which form a key part of her workshops, to a more formalised indoor performance called *Solo Encounters* (2014) at the Buddhist Arts Centre in London. This chapter's main aim is to give an overview on how somatic practices contribute to the debates surrounding the sharing of process which are raised in this book.

Figure 1: Sandra Reeve, Borobodur Temple, Central Java, Indonesia (2011), photograph by Andrew Carey.

Sandra Reeve is a practitioner-researcher currently settled in Dorset. Previously, she had spent many years travelling including performing in a Grotowski-based troupeⁱⁱ in Switzerland and studying in Indonesia with Prapto. She returned to the UK during a period of violent political crisis in Indonesia, and trained as a dance movement psychotherapist. She also facilitated her *Move into Life* programme of varied workshops which slowly formed into a distinct cycle of workshops from 1999. She undertook a PhD at the University of Exeter to articulate this established practice coherently, completed in 2010, where she brought together strands of her therapeutic, creative and spiritual practices. The practice as research project revealed the movement principles and dynamics underlying her work, as well as the 'Ecological Body' approach which then became a new workshop in the cycle. The 'Ecological Body' (Reeve 2011/2014b), develops the participant's awareness of and capacity for an adaptive relationship with the surrounding landscape (including all aspects of the wider ecology). She comments that:

As moving, adaptive beings we study our relationship to change itself as the only constant in life...We learn to move more fluidly with change, embodying less resistance or grasping and reacting less to it. The world becomes a shared habitat rather than owned territory. This sense of belonging and sharing is profoundly 'ecological'.

(Reeve 2015c)

This approach reflects the underlying attention to the ongoing nature of life, which manifests in a form of public performance that does not rely on a linear or climactic journey (Lavelle 2014: 127-136).

Such work can be situated and contextualised within a field of practitioners such as Deborah Hay and Anna Halprin, who in my view work with performance as an inquiry of constantly unfolding in relation to scores and audience. Each of these practitioners, including Reeve, comes from a background in dance and theatre training, so that their work can be defined within the realm of performance. However, somatic practitioners often work in non-traditional performance contexts, where there is less distinction between the stage and auditorium, or performer and audience. Autobiographical material, site, community and interdisciplinary creativity are often brought together in presentations or 'performances' that cross the boundaries of therapy, activism, spirituality, daily life and art forms. I therefore define performance in this chapter in relation to performance studies, and more specifically to Kershaw's ideas of how 'ecology performs'. Kershaw's writing suggests that humans are embedded in the ecology they inhabit, in a sphere of mutual influence, so that humans perform actions that deeply impact on the environment, for example, climate change. Simultaneously, while 'we commonly consider Homo sapiens possesses an agency unique among species, it is fundamentally performed by Earth's ecologies' (2016: 270). This relationship of exchange with the living landscape informs the concepts and practices that shape Reeve's practice, at the same time as providing the stage for performance work.

I focus on Reeve as a case study for describing how somatic practices engage with the trend of performing process and sharing practice. Somatic practices have been well defined elsewhere and it is beyond the remit of this chapter to consider this topic in depth (see *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*). In brief, however, principles include reflection on movement habits, opening up movement capacity, the development of subjective styles, and attention to multi-sensory rather than primarily visual attention to the body. Somatic practices are often used in psycho-physical therapies with clients to address movement issues ranging from physical injury to personal trauma, however, they have also become integrated into many performance training programmes. For example, the Alexander technique was developed by an actor who found ways to release psycho-physical restrictions in ways that aided performance, while the Feldenkrais method is used in theatre and dance training to explore personal constraints and to open up creativity (Kampe 2015). Many somatic forms were developed by performers, for example Authentic Movement practice was developed by dancer Mary Starks Whitehouse drawing from her training in Jungian analysis and Mary Wigman's expressionist dance techniques. Somatic practices in performance is an extensive international field, with performers integrating somatic forms into training methods and performance projects, impacting the performer's relationship with their own body-mind, along with the relationship between audience, performer and space.

While somatic forms are often identified as focusing on the internal landscape of the individual, I believe that the changing context and how it impacts on internal process is central to somatic approaches. Martha Eddy (2002) notes on somatic practices that 'The ever-changing and self-governing process of the individual soma is a given, which perhaps mistakenly, leads to a notion that an orientation to the individual versus its cultural context is central in somatic practice.' Reeve's Ecological Body approach foregrounds the importance of context within somatic work in a clear way. The body-mind is seen as being in a constant state of change, rather than static or stagnant, in response to the shifting circumstances. The cultural situation or background, the urban or rural environment inhabited, are all part of this context. When bringing somatic approaches, therefore, into a performance context, movement artists such as Reeve have concentrated on an ongoing attention to the unfolding of bodily becoming as it responds to self and context. Developing a structure for gathering emergent materials and finding modes of sharing the process with others as it continues to change, forms part of the performance practice.

Considering the contextual nature of somatic work that I argue for here, a note on cultural context feels important, especially as Reeve's work draws extensively on an ongoing exchange with Javanese artist Prapto. One of the critiques which has been levelled at somatic approaches is that they have borrowed from ancient non-Western practices without due acknowledgement (Eddy 2002). Researchers such as Goldhahn (2007), Nelson (2013) and Holmes (2015) have also identified how some somatic methods have promoted an 'ideal' Western body such as the upright, 'well aligned' body in Alexander Technique and Pilates. Further, there is the potential of contemporary non-Western practitioners and dance forms to contribute to redefining perceptions of the 'soma' or 'body-mind'. It is significant in this discussion then, that Reeve lived and worked in Indonesia for many years working directly with Prapto, and regularly returns to work with him there. Prapto also often teaches and co-teaches week-long intensives with Reeve in the UK (as part of his international teaching in Europe, the US, Australia and Asia). In this sense, I suggest that Reeve is not borrowing out of context, considering her investment in living in Java for an extended period of her life; and their continuing exchange which allows for a dialogue between cultures and approaches. She also acknowledges Prapto's impact on her work through referencing his approach throughout her teaching; while further offering visibility to his expertise by hosting him to teach in the UK, and co-editing a book on his work (2014). Further, Prapto has encouraged his students to develop their own adaptations of his approach called 'Amerta Movement'.ⁱⁱⁱ Reeve teaches her perspective on training with him, drawing also from her work as a theatre artist, dance movement therapist and researcher, in developing her *Move into Life* programme. She returns regularly over time to particular sites, to integrate the geographical, historical, social and cultural aspects of the place into the movement practice. This leads to a specific, located, adaptive and responsive practice, rather than suggesting an ideal or universalised notion of embodiment. The efficacy of somatic approaches depends on how they are used and facilitated, through an 'active self reflection on how one can act as an ethical being'

(Markul, 2004: 311) and this is a continuing source of investigation for Reeve, such as reflecting on her work in relation to class or the British colonial past, for example (informal conversation, 2015).

In previous writing about somatic practices (e.g. Meehan 2010/2015), I have focused on detail, positioning myself up close to the practices to reflect on the work, in order to value the subjective perspective as offering significant insights. By contrast, this chapter takes up the 'bird's eye' view, seeing Reeve's work as it relates to somatic practices and linking this to the wider theme of performing process. Although this places a strain on the boundaries of the chapter, it also replicates my experience of working with Reeve. Noticing my position in relationship to the whole environment is one dynamic that I have learned in her workshops. However, rather than proffering an objective position above and outside, her work affords a wide angle, 360 degree, awareness that extends from my body out into the world around me. In this chapter, I am therefore writing from a position of 'panorama', keeping within my awareness the range of Reeve's work, and the broader relationship to fields of performing process and somatic practices. While at times, I hone in on detail of my own experiences, at the same time I am concentrating on moving between my position and wider fields of practice and theory. Methodologically, I have engaged as a practitioner-researcher in participant observation at workshops and performances, writing field notes and interviewing Reeve, performing my own process at open days, reflecting through library-based research and writing from a broadly auto-ethnographic position in relation to Reeve's practice. The nature of this approach means that my relationship with Reeve and her work has become interwoven with my own practice-based research over the years, so I do not suggest a position of 'objectivity' but rather reflexivity in analysing and bringing new perspectives to bear on her creative projects.

Performing Process Through Crystallisation and Constellation

Both Prapto's and Reeve's workshops include sharings or open events, where participants along with past students can come together and share movement for each other and an audience. In relation to Prapto's work, Lavelle (2014: 129) describes these 'crystallisation-performances' as 'moving and changing from one moment to the next – the performers, the site, and the spectators' while also noting that there are 'building-blocks (or special points)' from the mover's process which inform the performance. These building blocks are drawn from the site-based and personal investigation, which might include movements that arise, places that inspire memory or imagination, objects of special value, and so on, that provide a 'structural framework' (Lavelle: 132) for improvised performance. The process of working in a particular site or with personal materials are crystallised into important points for sharing with a public audience.

Reeve describes (2015a) crystallisations 'literally like a snowflake, so if you imagine water turning into ice and then that snowflake becomes water again, so it's like the audience make you create a snowflake, it is about really being seen in your process.' Crystallisations are part of the workshops offered by Prapto, linking with how Reeve

describes the processual nature of performances in Indonesia, such as Javanese puppetry evenings which include audiences dropping in and out, sleeping, eating, chatting and watching. In her description of these performances, Reeve (2015a) notes that they emphasise 'maintaining a plateau of intensity...what's important is where that takes you over time'. Here she is also referring to Bateson's (1963) writing, where he identifies in neighbouring Bali how an appreciation of a non-climactic, 'steady state' is embedded within the culture. This move away from linear development, building and releasing tension, is also reflected in Reeve's approach, attending to a body in process and in relationship. The process of relating becomes central, identified also by Bateson (1963: 41) when he notes how in Bali, a story teller begins, pauses for audience interaction, and then continues in this manner of relay. In this system, the process of watching and performing are in a dynamic sense of interchange, so that placing an emphasis primarily on the performer is lifted and attention is dispersed.

Reeve has reflected on the terminology used in developing her own training and performances, stating that 'I use the word "constellation" as it carries a sense of three dimensions and textures' (2014a: 69). Constellation describes the position of the movers in relation to the group, objects and place, and she notes that 'maintaining an awareness of constellation gives me the opportunity to create a fresh and refreshed response in the improvisation by following a different impulse or by moving differently' (69). This sense of freshness is maintained by attending to relational factors which are changing as we move, such as the contrasting proportion or proximity of the body to trees, sea, stones, sky and so on. Resonating with Buddhist principles, with both Reeve and Prapto as regular meditation practitioners, the concept of impermanence underlying the work invites the shifting nature of life to inform the work as it unfolds. Reeve sees the mover as 'An ecological self, which I define here as being-becoming-being, rests in impermanence and is settled in the unknown' (2015b: 325). At the same time, constellation work can involve improvisation with varying degrees of structure. As part of a continuum from daily life practice to public performance, Reeve describes how in a dance she performed at her own wedding, her concern was to 'allow myself to be seen in that emergent process' (2014a: 74); while her performance called *Absence* (2010) at Saint Gabriel's Chapel in Dorset combined 'tightly scored material' and 'parts of the score which were open to changes of action, following impulses and influences of the moment' (2015b: 322).

No matter what level of structure the performance has, a process of responsiveness to environment and context are central. Reeve (2015a) describes her work as moving 'between my inner landscape and the external landscape...on that threshold as it's changing.' As mentioned, in somatic practices, there is often the perception that it is 'internally' focussed work on personal emotions and experiences, however as argued here, somatic practices emphasise the exchange between internal experience and the external context. In translating this into performance, the site becomes of equal importance to the performer, shifting the attention of both the mover and audience. Reeve asks the question 'how can site-specific performers shift

the audience's habitual expectation and experience of a particular site as backdrop to activity towards an experience of finding themselves incorporated within the site?' (2015b: 310). In this sense, the processes performed include those of the performer, audience and site as they engage in an exchange. Each participant brings their own cultural and social context to bear on the crystallisations and constellations that they produce. In my experience of working with Reeve in the UK and Ireland, interrupting my own expectation of the centrality of the mover to produce 'interesting' material, and the climatic development of movement or narrative can be challenging. The crystallisations or constellations offer a moment to reflect on the overall experience and put into practice the principles of adaptability that inform the work; at the same time as confronting personal, social and cultural perceptions that may clash with these principles.

Sondra Fraleigh (2015: xxix, original emphasis) notes that in somatic practice: *'Perception and consciousness are essential, as is creativity, transformation, and change...awareness of the moving self in relation to others and in community is increasingly important to somatic studies...Process is everything in somatics.'* Here she points to principles of awareness, change and relationship with community, indicating that the emergent 'process' is the primary place of attention in somatics. Fraleigh advocates (2015: 9) that 'presentation is a necessary cycle of transformational learning, and certainly transformational dancing...we have to share in order to grow the self, and this can be risky.' She is suggesting that as we learn to be responsive and adaptive through somatic movement, it is important to show this process to others in order to embed the new information. In the risk of public sharing, the habitual modes of behaviour can easily reappear (such as prioritising virtuosity over responsiveness to context), challenging the mover to become aware of old habits and to test out new choices. Performing process is an apt mode of presenting this kind of work, as a way of sharing the changing individual experience in relation to a shifting context. Maintaining the principles of somatics in performance is a topic for debate in somatic practices (see for example Davis: 2007), and in the next section, I will discuss some of the ways that Reeve shares movement practice.

An Experiential Journey: Sharings, Open Days, and Indoor Performance

Other than drawing from writings by and about Reeve, I want to discuss my experiences of Reeve's approach through encountering her training workshops, performances, and open days. Again, this will offer a panorama of experiences, dipping into a range of possible forms of performing process, as an indication of the many ways in which her work reveals the practice in performance. I will also take this opportunity to move in and out of proximity, by describing the details of specific moments to offer a flavour and experience of the events, while drawing out how this relates to issues of performing process.

Reeve's longer workshops often result in an open sharing for an audience in the site where participants have been working. For Reeve (2015a), the sharing serves several purposes, firstly to become 'aware of what had gone before', and to 'just do

the next piece of work'. At the same time, the sharing will explore 'my relationship with being seen, of my relationship with having to present something'. She notes that:

...the idea of a crystallisation to an open public is still largely horrific for most workshop participants. They don't understand why they're doing or why they need to do it. There aren't many workshops really open like that to the public. But I'm completely convinced by, not only the value of it for the participants...but there's something of reaching that place of being witnessed and not calling it 'work in progress', which somehow can be a bit of a get out clause.

(Reeve: 2015a)

Instead of working with the idea of 'work in progress' or 'open rehearsals', the events are complete in themselves even though they are in a process of change and development. As a way of working, the sharing of process allows the distillation of learning, experimentation with new movements and attitudes before an audience, and the development of a score that is open enough to accede new questions to the inquiry.

Figure 2: Theresa Burke, Mary Cantwell and Mary Quirke, Ecological Body Workshop, An Talamh, Skreen, Co. Sligo, photograph by Emma Meehan.

Figure 3: Therese O'Driscoll, Ecological Body Workshop, An Talamh, Skreen, Co. Sligo, photograph by Emma Meehan.

Figure 4: Barbara Collins, Ecological Body Workshop, An Talamh, Skreen, Co. Sligo, photograph by Emma Meehan.

In 2015, I undertook an 'Ecological Body' workshop with Reeve at An Talamh house and gardens in Skreen, County Sligo, a rural area in the north-west of Ireland. During the workshop, we explored movement dynamics such as position and proportion mentioned earlier, as well as the ecological lenses niche, pattern and emergence.^{iv} Over the course of the week, I noticed my pattern of gazing close to my body to avoid becoming self-conscious about possibly being watched by other participants, then challenged this habit by opening my gaze to make direct eye contact with others and to see the landscape surrounding me. The discomfort of being watched engaging in emergent material was further emphasised by having to 'perform' in the open afternoon, despite my previous work as a performer. My self-consciousness exposed personal attitudes towards performance as a display of skill or a way of communicating intentions. It also revealed perceived hierarchies of self in relation to the ecology, in that I still felt that I should somehow perform 'well', placing my movement at the centre of attention rather than in response to the environment. This was in contrast with the e-invite to the sharing, in which the audience were welcomed to 'experience first-hand the joy of movement in a landscape which is constantly moving and changing' and to 'participate, should you so wish, in movement in the garden with all participants'. The invitation is clearly to be part of the whole landscape, of movers, site and audience together rather than viewing the 'performer' as the sole focus of the sharing.

In the same year, I also attended an open day after Prapto's workshop 'Dream World, Reality World' hosted by Reeve in her garden in Dorset in 2015. Along with participants who attended a week-long workshop at the location, there was also an open call to practitioners who have worked with Reeve or Prapto in the past to share something in the garden. A programme of pop up performances, group or solo movement sharings, words, food, ritual, song and conversation was formulated that lasted several hours. I joined one group in the upper garden to move without set material to perform, just the niche of the garden pond that provided some familiarity from previous visits. Though I maintained my attention to site and other movers, in my thoughts I found myself hoping to discover something 'interesting' and to somehow appear 'good' at what I was doing. Reeve (2014: 69-70) promotes Prapto's advice to 'make less the hoping' and to instead 'practice "being among" and giving equal value to my own movement, to the movement in the environment and to the movement of others I am with'. This value system became apparent for example when a man invited us all to search with him for 'summer spaces' in the garden, so that we participated in moving and looking at the same time. Later, a woman performed in the circle of trees, with clear and fluid bends in knees, arms and torso so that simultaneously I was aware of her movement, its connection to the trees surrounding us and her position in relation to the whole group and environment (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Helen Poynor performing at 'Dream World, Reality World' open day in Westhay, Dorset in 2015, photograph by Emma Meehan.^v

At the open days, alongside witnessing the movement and garden, there is participation, community activity and the sharing of food and conversation. Consuming food is a process as it is forming and unforming; conversation is a dialogue and exchange; place is in process of growing and changing; the movement offerings are emergent in relation to the site and audience. Performing process includes the process of the everyday and the whole ecology – movers, audiences and place – as they assemble at a particular moment in time. Kramer (2015: i) describes this as 'intermaterial confederations that cross the familiar human – non-human divide.' She also notes that 'Such confederations allow for a decentralization of human positionality that is relevant beyond dance and affects ontological conceptualisation and practices of life at large.' The meeting of matters – garden, food, sea, human, inter-human – move together towards the intermaterial such as negotiations, interchanges and temporary formations; reflecting a wider world view of ecological thinking.

In addition to the open days, Reeve also creates more tightly structured and sometimes indoor performances. She describes her ambivalence between scoring and sharing process, noting that (2015a): 'I still have quite a traditional thing about, if I've got funding to create a performance then I feel I need to guarantee a level of professionalism, which my history and my way of working says, "You're going to have to score this a bit".' However, she also states that she has relaxed her attitude

over the years, indicating that 'the dots have got far more widely spread' and also 'my condition might be very different each night so it's not fixed in that sense.' In November 2014, I attended her performance as part of *Solo Encounters*, 'a sharing of work by artists exploring the intersects of Buddhist and performance practices' (Facebook). The evening of performances at London Buddhist Arts Centre included 'New solo performances by Alex Crowe, Amaara Raheem and Sandra Reeve with accompanying writings by Andrew Carey created in collaborative community' (Facebook). In preparation for the evening of performance, the artists worked alongside each other in a studio in Dorset, following the same theme, but working on personal projects.

Entering the performance space on the cold November evening, the performers greeted attendees as they arrived. It seemed that through this action, everyday life held equal value to the 'performance'. In the first performance piece of the evening, Reeve's twisted hands and feet reminded me of a different cultural context, perhaps stemming from her work in Indonesia. I noticed stones on the floor and anticipated that they would be 'used', though they were not touched during the performance. As I was sitting in the second row of an audience in the round, I stretched my back to the left to see Reeve perform between the heads and bodies of other audience members; and I reflected on my tendency to focus primarily on the performer. Questioning this behaviour, I became absorbed within the environment, seeing other people, feeling the warmth of the room with a memory of the cold outside, and seeing Reeve's body in relation to the wider space as she moved. At one point, Reeve spoke about the energy used to open a door, which brought me back to a memory of learning to 'yield and push' in Body Mind Centering practice^{vi}, finding ease and efficiency in movement rather than using force. As I watched, I wondered whose process was being performed – the performer's or the audience's – because throughout I constantly reflected on how I was watching the performance and my responses.

The implication of audience process is complex in the sharing of practice, and this became particularly noticeable to me in seeing Reeve perform at an indoor site and in a more highly 'scored' performance. The experience of watching *Solo Encounters* could also be said to be brought about by my prior knowledge of the work. Blades (2016: 285) in response to Melrose (2009) notes that 'A question is posed as to whether the skills of the spectator are enhanced by acquiring the knowledge of the expert-practitioner.' For example, my experience of other somatic approaches like Body Mind Centering appears to resonate with the material in Reeve's performance. At the same time, Melrose (2007) suggests that the role of expert performer and expert spectator operate differently, commenting that expert performance-makers can 'trigger a particular sort of action in a spectator, where that action, and its outcome, is fundamental to the workings of the event.' How the performers related to the audience in the moments leading up to the performance, for example, enacted relatedness rather than separation between audience and performers. Reeve (2015b, 312) discusses how she attempts to incorporate the audience into the site and practice through the performance process; noting the importance of 'how

something had been made and the attitude within that process.' In other words, the practice is an underscore to the performance work, and Reeve embeds the practice in the performance through various strategies.

In the examples I have given, the formats for sharing the somatic process include sharings, open days, and indoor performance which include open scores, emphasis on the site and audience, and social activities. The sharing of process in the work can bring awareness to how humans are 'conditioned by an alienated view of themselves at the centre of the world, or at the pinnacle of a hierarchy of usage' (Reeve 2015: 310). It also therefore raises questions about the nature of performance, if shifting process and ongoing enquiry become central, while communication, delivery of rehearsed material, and divisions between audience and performer are decentralised. What emerges in the sharing landscape includes a co-creation between the individual mover, the collective of movers, audience-participants and the sites and modes of inhabitation. In bringing somatic movement approaches into performance, there is an appreciation of the internal landscape as it makes contact with the surrounding environment (familial, geographical, social, cultural, political etc.), heightened by the sharing of process with an audience who bring an additional element to the ecology.

In this analysis of Reeve's work, I argue that somatic practices have informed a certain strain in the field of performing process. Attention to the unfolding nature of the body-mind is relevant for somatic practices as training and performance tools internationally. Mei Chu Liu (2016: 4) points to an underlying belief that the somatic body-mind '...grows at its own pace, able to adapt and change; therefore soma is not a fixated "solid body" but a "process". In other words, the occurrence of life does not refer to "what", but the process of "how"'. Therefore, part of the journey of somatic practice is to engage with the living body as process, and in bringing somatic approaches to performance, there is a quest to seek formats that encapsulate and allow for the sharing of the processual nature of the practice.

Context of PaR and Digital Documentation: Concluding Questions

The development of practice as research (PaR) has had an impact on the means of sharing process and practice.^{vii} Hetty Blades (2016: 258) suggests that an increasing interest in choreographic process can be attributed in part to PaR, noting that 'the increased acceptance of practice-as-research in UK Higher Education means that dance artists working within these contexts are often required to find ways to articulate the research-ful nature of their practice.' Reeve was part of a new wave of practice as research (PaR) Ph.D.'s in the UK. She comments that:

I think the biggest shift in my life practice actually was doing a practice as research Ph.D. It was so challenging in 2005 to try and write in the academy about a non-verbal practice, as I then called it, to try and speak about it in practitioner language, speaking out of what I knew from doing it. (Reeve 2015a)

In Reeve's writing, and indeed a wide number of practitioner-researchers, there is an increasing valuing of approaches to articulating what is occurring in the

moments of practice, how these are performed and in what contexts, and the kinds of 'knowledges' contained in the process. Reeve now primarily works outside of academia, although her approach as researcher is palpable in her workshops. Research, theory and articulation do not simply explain process but become integrated as an aspect of her approach. Some examples include how she invites preparatory practice or reading on specific themes of investigation, and offers movement tasks based on her doctoral research. Practice as research therefore becomes a part of the 'ecology' that Reeve engages with, in a shifting landscape of what it means to perform and research today. The increasing focus on performers' processes of making is emerging in part from the pervasiveness of practice as research as a field, generating a willingness to share process as equally valid to a finished 'performance'.^{viii}

How to document the performance practice and process is a question raised in PaR projects. Nelson notes that:

The availability of technological media as means of recording ephemeral events may well, as some commentators have claimed, have spurred the impulse to document. But new technologies by no means solve all the issues...A mature PaR community will recognise both the necessity and the limitations of documentation.
(Nelson 2013: 72)

Many practitioners now have at their disposal the technology to record and share huge amounts of process-based materials online and the question of what to share is raised for those working within and outside the academy alike. Making choices is an aspect of Reeve's work – reflecting on the process to crystallise aspects for public sharing, selection of sites to work in, placement of audience, selecting a title and so on. Attention to choice is also applied to the capturing and sharing of digital materials from the process. After Prapto's workshop in Westhay in 2015, Reeve requested that the closing ritual was not filmed or photographed. She notes (2015a) that 'it was just to give a moment's breath from the recording, to give myself actually the moment to feel 'What's it like when that isn't there, can I remember?'. Again, having more than one choice and noting the difference between options is part of the process of interrupting habits, and I suggest it is this that motivates her rather than rejecting the value of the technologies available.

Sharing process in digital formats appears to be a more complex situation than performing process in a live event, as the context of performance is separated from the context of viewing when recorded and shared. Several aspects of Reeve's work would therefore have to be taken into account in the digital documentation of the practice. Does the record focus on the human figure or the human as part of the wider landscape? Can the 'emergence' of the work between mover, site and audience be re-ignited? The sociality of the performance event and the full multi-sensory experience of it would not be easily replicated by documentation. However, the unfolding process of the audience member as they watch the materials could

still be provoked. In addition, perhaps knowledge of the approach through viewing videos, sound and images might also be helpful in advance of attending workshops or live performances for the first time. The sharing of material online can be seen as a way to inform and introduce audiences, and to create a more clear and accessible relationship to the work (see Synge 2014). However, it is also a space where questions arise around what not to share, how to shape the identity of the 'process' being circulated, the amount of data to make available and what purpose this proliferation of material serves for audiences.

Many somatic practitioners in the past have privileged natural environments, away from technology, as the ideal situation in which to experience somatic movement. However, in recent years, Ashley has noted

...an emergence of practitioners who are deeply educated in somatic movement, are adept in their use of technologies and regard the use of technology in their work as an inevitable part of making a performance work that is relevant to highly mediatized and technologized contemporary cultures.

(Ashley 2016: 4)

Reeve's approach means appreciating all aspects of the ecology as equally valid and worthwhile aspects of experience that can be explored through moving, which could include the digital technologies that we interact with every day. In a recent project funded by Coventry University called 'Somatic Performance Practices: Sandra Reeve and Ecological Movement' (2016), I organised an artist retreat with Reeve that included the use of technologies such as Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook, blogging, and audio-visual documentation to consider how this impacts on the process. The use of technology allowed the possibility of continued connection and sharing even when the group worked separately in different sites, and offered a means for reflection following the retreat. It too had the capacity to distract from the expanded panoramic awareness I have experienced in Reeve's work, depending on how we shifted our focus between environment and technology. If indeed the attention in somatics is in the unfolding context, including the non-hierarchical perception of human and non-human, then technology needs to be considered as part of the landscape. Future experiments will need to push further questions about how to engage with and respond to contemporary bio-virtual ways of living in order to provide strategies for dealing with this burgeoning part of the 'ecology' of everyday life.

Somatic performance practices are an important part of the current trend in performing process, with a system of belief that argues for the ongoing enquiry to inform the performance. I have also argued for the centrality of context in somatic movement as informing the performing of process. Reeve's work has emerged within a developing landscape of practice as research and the increasing availability of digital technologies. In the future, it will be pressing to consider how technology is engaged with through practicing somatics: for researchers, participants and

audience who may use devices such as camera phones within performance and workshop events; in considering how to digitally document the process of somatic performances in ways that integrate principles of the practice; in the teaching of a practice either at a remove from or in relation to technologies such as social media, apps and blogging; and in the sharing of process beyond the local to wider publics through online media rich environments.

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ⁱ During this chapter, using the terminology 'Reeve's work/method/approach' feels awkward to me considering the ownership implied by the phrase, in contrast with the ongoing exchange and learning that occurs between Reeve, Prapto, other artists trained with him, and the environment as a continuing teacher. At the same time, I also feel it is important to acknowledge Reeve's particular way of developing and sharing this work as a practitioner researcher too. It could perhaps be best described as a shared community/ecology with divergent shoots, branches and leaves.

ⁱⁱ Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999) was an influential Polish theatre director with a particular emphasis on physical training.

ⁱⁱⁱ Amerta Movement means 'nectar of life movement'. See Bloom, Galanter and Reeve (2014), p. 308-309 on how the term Joged Amerta is now used for Prapto's own work and Amerta Movement is a more general term for approaches inspired by him.

^{iv} Reeve refers to 'niche, pattern and emergence as the ecological lenses through which I chose to explore my PhD practice; and the movement dynamics are active/passive; proportion in motion; transition/position and point/line/angle.' (personal communication). She developed this language for her practice in dialogue with her reading of Gibson (1986), Begon et al.(2006), Bateson (1979) and Ingold (2000).

^v Helen Poynor was one of the co-organisers with Sandra Reeve and Ad Brugman who first brought Prapto to the UK in 1992 (<http://www.triarchypress.net/embodied-lives-timeline-2.html>). Poynor is acknowledged by Prapto as a teacher of Amerta Movement and she currently runs the Walk of Life workshop and training programme in Dorset/Devon, UK.

^{vi} Body Mind Centering is a somatic movement form developed by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, including what she describes as 'experiential anatomy' and 'developmental movement patterns'. The pattern of infant movement called 'yield and push' is described further in Hartley (1994).

^{vii} Nelson (2013, 9) defines PaR as a 'research project where practice is a key method of inquiry and where, in respect of arts, a practice...is submitted as substantial evidence of research inquiry.' Nelson's book also includes discussion on other terms including practice-led research, performance as research and artistic research, which have different cultural and historical lineages.

^{viii} There are several layers of performing process and sharing practice at work in PaR: the actual performance of process as ongoing creative practice; the creative-scholarly articulation of this process through various means of inscription and accompanying materials such as blogs, drawings, books, video, photographs and so on; and the development of other outputs from the process such as the creation of pedagogical and creative tools (such as movement prompt cards devised by Reeve).