

This year „Tour through thoughts“ 2021 happened online via Zoom. The curator Inge Koks in collaboration with the *Uferstudios Berlin* and Simone Willeit invited seven performance artists to take part of this exchange event. In nine online sessions each of us had the opportunity to present an individual session with the focus on a couple of questions invented by Inge Koks. „Who am I?“, „What do I want to say with my work?“, „What do I care for?“, „What interests me?“, „What makes me stand up and shout out?“ or „Which question is not asked but I want to answer?“. Inge left it up to us how to deal with the questions. To mention a couple of participants like Mariana Romagnani, who is a performer based in Berlin and mother of a child. Mariana talked about some of the connections that are dear to her work and gave us reflections on matters related with invisibility through topics of motherhood, water and magic. All of us had to prepare a special question for the group to discuss after the presentation, which was a fantastic idea. Marianas question for example was “How do we relate with a notion of responsibility in our artistic practices regarding to our topics of interest?”. Another presentation by the Canadian performer Robin Leveroos, currently based in Berlin was about „rules and expectations within art disciplines, and the relationship with the audience, how to 'inform' them to watch differently and how do we as artists create room for silliness, frivolity, lightheartedness in the very serious art world, and what happens if we do?“ Ula Liagate talked about her research work in relation to the so called „Sick Women Theory“ by Johanna Hedva. Ula calls her practice also the „Sick Women Practice“ and asked us to participate in her daily practice by filming us and afterwards giving her the film material. She will use this for her new creation of her solo.



Because the sessions were so fruitful and overwhelming we decided to make an add on session with time and space to discuss and exchange again about things that were already mentioned during the individual sessions. Inge really did a great job by supporting us before and after the sessions. She cared a lot about how we can feel safe and free to open up current questions of interests. In my case we had a couple of Zoom extra sessions to prepare more precisely how to talk about my own work and practice in connection to my current project „ECHO“. My session was about the mythological figure *Echo*, who is not only a female figure from the mythology and a historical body, but also a reference point for the current question of how we can cope with experiences and crises that have been physically inscribed in us?

At the end we could put together a mini catalogue of keywords and questions related to all the topics of the sessions, some of them I want to share because I think they could be relevant to think about for many people:

New rituals

Allowing yourself (to break the rules for example): act of liberation

Mourning / grief as a source of creation

Ecosystemic strategies

Ecosystemic performativity

„Response-ability“

Mother's bodies

How to not be representational?

Importance of water as new way to see life / society

How does patriarchy work in society and how is it reproduced by its members?

How are narratives created? What are their importance?

Relationship between object and performer

How to get rid of a neutral body?

What is a neutral body?

What does physical intimacy mean to us?

How goes the process of victimization?

Is vulnerability a privilege?

What is a sick body, a healthy body?

Sickness as potential for space

Taking care versus having each other's back

The importance of trust in creation

Report Tour Through Thoughts – DANCE HUB #4 – Pamela Barberi

HOW DID YOU EXPERIENCE THE SET-UP OF THE TOUR THOUGHT THOUGHTS?

When I started the project it took me easy inside. The organisation was open to any request and to explain any question.

Good planed and structured. Gave me new skills to work with zoom and on-line.

HOW DID YOU EXPERIENCE YOUR OWN SESSION AND THE PREPARATION FOT IT?

During the preparation for my session, thanks to Inge, I found the right way to wage. We talked about my artistic pratice and we found out my topic that I wanted to discuss with the other fellow artists colleagues.

HOW DID YOU EXPERIENCE THE RESPONS ON YOUR SESSION?

The return was a progressive result. Everyday thinking on what my collegues told to me. Gave me a lot of motivation, answers and questions back too. Listening to the feedback helped me and brought to me a lot of input. I felt every sessions conntected each other.

HOW DID YOU FEEL IN RESPONDING TO OTHER PEOPLE'S SESSION?

Everytime the discussion brought a good conduct to let everybody talking about the concept. The moderator (Inge) was great to mak let all feel comfortable and in the same level.

HOW DID YOU THINK WE COULD ENTICE MORE DISCUSSION?

Adding more time to get to know each other. A session to present our work and a session to discuss on it. Wachting performances together and discuss on it. Creating something together such as workshop or exercise.

HOW WAS TTT BENEFICIAL (OR NOT) TO YOUR PRACTICE?

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT SUCH “DISCURSIVE ONLY” FORMATS/ PEER FORMATS?

Gave me an input to go ahead with my practice and continue researching and experimenting. Also tryin to perform online. The discursive format gave me time to reflect on my work and on the work of the others. This project help me a lot in this period of Covid-19. It gave me the opportunity to meet new artists coming from different backgrounds and cultures.

ZOE ALEXANDER

So here are my thoughts on our Tour Through Thoughts – LLB

- how did you experience the set-up of the Tour Thought Thoughts?

It was a big pleasure to be a part of it. I had never used zoom for ongoing meetings before and I had no idea how this would evolve. It felt very natural and well organised, and although we were not physically in the same space I did not feel that there was distance between the participants. There was liberty to express our thoughts and our projects, ask questions, receive help and guidance. It also helped me learn new things about the function of zoom and technology which is very helpful and inspiring for the future for my work.

- how did you experience your own session and the preparation for it?

As I was the first one to do a presentation, I didn't exactly know what to expect and how/what to prepare. Inge was really helpful in guiding me and pointing out directions and subjects that led me to doing very useful research. While preparing, I discovered many things I had not thought about previously and thought about ways to communicate my subject of interest. I felt comfortable during my session and, through Inge's questions, I was guided into expressing my thoughts and my project. I would have liked to have more time to explain more aspects of my projects and in retrospect, if my session would have taken place later, I would have wanted to make a more visual presentation (share videos etc) which I didn't think about beforehand. I really enjoyed my session and preparing for it., as well as the fact that I somehow felt free to improvise while doing it.

- how did you experience the response on your session?

I felt comfortable during my session and I had the impression that the other participants were open to listening, asking questions and sharing their thoughts and their knowledge, with honesty and genuine curiosity. We didn't have the time to get into many details but I still got some input and inspiration about areas that I want to investigate further.

- how did you feel in responding to other people's sessions?

All the subjects that were presented in the other sessions were very interesting and intriguing. While doing the homework for the other sessions I was able to discover many new things that I did not know or hadn't thought about. The information that was shared during the other sessions was very enriching and the discussions fruitful. I also felt that there is a connection between many of the subjects that interest us, although our projects are very different and although we all come from different artistic backgrounds.

- how would you think we could entice more discussion?

I think that it we could use more time during each session, 3 hours instead of 2, so that we can ask more questions and be able to go more into depth. Also, we could have some follow up sessions, once a week for example, during which the participants would not present a new subject, so that we can talk about what we have discussed so far, discuss our progress and possible new questions or information that might have arisen. Something like our goodbye session, but one a more regular basis.

- how was TTT beneficial (or not) to you and your practice? how do you feel about such „discursive only“ formats / peer formats?

TTT was very beneficial for me, first of all because it gave me the chance to feel connected with other artists in this current covid reality that we are all experiencing. It reminded me that we are all somehow facing the same struggles and that we all have the same needs and urge to express ourselves, to connect and to create. This was much needed after a year of lockdowns and isolation. It was also very helpful because it made me think about how it is possible to include technology in our practice, without looking at it as something negative but as a new form of expression and a means to connect with each other and by exploring new paths in our creativity. To me it was more than a "discursive only" format, it was a way to connect and move forward - and we even practiced virtual hugs :)

I had the chance to go deeper in my research and I had so much useful and inspiring information from all the other artists involved, not only in a theoretical level, but as a true inspiration about ideas and matters that I would like to incorporate in my own work.

Report Tour Through Thoughts 2020-2021, Dance HUB – Life Long Burning
By
Rob Leveroos

Hey there,

Here are some responses. Thanks again for a great experience!

- how did you experience the set-up of the Tour Thought Thoughts? This was great. really helpful to talk through my work and ideas and have you help identify some common threads and questions from these.
- how did you experience your own session and the preparation for it? I enjoyed this, particularly being connected with Anje and Denis. This was great to get to see a bit of their work, and have a whole additional conversation about these questions and then to see the way in which they reacted and created something from there. I was a bit unsure how much I should prepare, in terms of a slide show or something or prewritten text. Being the third to go gave me a bit more idea from the previous couple and I decided to speak improvisationally through some of my existing material (From the previous examples I would have felt shy or kind of embarrassed to prepare a full presentation) and I am glad I did it this way. Felt empowering to know I can speak fairly spontaneously and coherently about my work in this manner.
- how did you experience the response on your session? It was nice. It felt more like response and impressions about my work in general rather than focused more specifically on my guiding question. So I guess I think i came to some new conclusions in a round about way from their feedback rather than really unpacking the question at hand.
- how did you feel in responding to other people's sessions? This was a bit harder. I think zoom is a tricky medium because we're all quite dictarted by politeness in many ways. I felt like we got into a pattern where everyone was given a round to respond (lasting an average of 3-7 minutes) to unpack all their related thoughts, and then by the end of that we were mostly out of time.
- how would you think we could entice more discussion? Related to above, something about encouraging a variety of quick rounds of thought/responses and longer thoughts to try to vary the pattern of discussion which might help open this polite zoom habit that seems to happen.
- how was TTT beneficial (or not) to you and your practice? how do you feel about such „discursive only“ formats / peer formats? Was super nice. As a new berliner I really appreciated a chance to introduce myself to a group of interesting arts professionals and to meet them as well, in this more in depth way. I'm someone who loves to know and connect people and so this felt like a nice start to that. Everyone in this group will now be in my mind for future possibilities. It was also nice to get to examine our own inquiries rather than discussion around other existing works that we may have seen together. I think this is an advantage that came mostly from the virtual limitation and it was welcome.

Ula Liagate

Report Tour Through Thoughts #3 Dance HUB – Life Long Burning

I must say, that our meeting during the TTT have been the most fun and exiting for me out of all other projects that I am trying to adapt to zoom. I found that it worked very well, I could engage with the speakers, follow the references that they were proposing and really listen. However, during Uris presentation, when we were looking at each other at the screen I couldn't help but feel the void between me and the person I was looking at, the screen is still a screen and it worked best for me, when we were all aware of that and not trying to connect to it but rather through it.

During my own session I felt supported, listened to and really free to tour through my thoughts with all of you on board;) I had to put a lot of work to be able to articulate myself well and speak about the things that matter to me and it was a huuuuge and important step forwards in my practice ! I am gonna use the notes to prepare my applications for masters studies in couple of places and without TTT and having you all there with me I would surely still be unable to speak about my practices in the current context.

I am positively overwhelmed with how all of you agreed to participate to sick practice and had so much to share after. Simone wrote me an email with a very free flow of her thoughts/feelings after practising, I am gonna keep this letter with me. I feel that because of quite a difficult topic, participants were experiencing many mixed feelings and having thoughts that were provoked by those feelings. Therefore the response wasn't emendate and quite often stayed within the format of "in my experience", which I find not so relevant.. i would be more interested to hear what works, texts and other references are people relating my work with. I have to find a way to ask for that.

I feel very bad for how I was on a train during Robin's session and wasn't able to focus and give accurate feedback, I learnt from that experience. I found that all the topics that were presented were linked with each other and therefore I felt like I could relate and respond to every each of them. Sometimes I did write a comment down that I didn't share, because of pressure of time, but all in all I tried to share what was passing through my thoughts and keep it not only related to my personal experiences, but rather ask questions and offer possible topics of interest to the speaker and group.

I think that it is important to find different ways to relate to the topic that is not only personal stories, because as much as it is interesting to listen (and sometimes not) - personal stories stay within the person who is talking... I feel like in some moments we could have taken the responsibility as a group to steer the conversation to a more of a discussion. I noticed you, Inge, were doing it, but it wouldn't always catch on. On the other hand, maybe this way we wouldn't have gotten so close to each other, which is a actually very necessary as well.

I have not had much experience in such working formats and I found it extremely beneficial! I have a list of text to read, I feel like I have more idea of how people are living through this ridiculously difficult time and I know more how to cope with everything. I found that this format offered a feeling of support, that is very hard to achieve through distance and zoom. And all of these aspects intertwine into one big step forward in my practice. I feel like as if I did a show and got a very well thought of feedback from every member of the audience.. ;) I am considering that in the future I would like to re-connect to all of you if I have a thought or idea and I need feedback from a very different, active and supportive group of people!

Ula