

FLÁVIA PINHEIRO

7 ABIKU SOLOS FOR 11 BACTERIA FALLING THROUGH

FOROUGH FAMI

THE WAITING ROOM

AMPARO GONZÁLEZ SOLA

IF EVERY ROCK IS A HOLE

ALEXA SOLVEIG MARDON

PORT OF EVERYWHERE

MASTER PRESENTATIONS 2022

In September 2020, amidst the pandemic, Alexa Mardon, Amparo González Sola, Flávia Pinheiro and Forough Fami got together for their first seminar at DAS Choreography. This seminar happened live in Amsterdam, after a half year of online encounters for the previous groups in the programme. The September weather was still warm and we could do some of the sessions outdoors. They introduced their research by means of personal histories, games, concepts, rule-based working sessions and dancing. We read together from Gloria Wekkers' *White Innocence*, where she discusses the racial grammar of Dutch self-representation, hoping to already be sharp and to politicize where we are, and we engaged with practices and conversations on choreography, situatedness, inequalities and collectivity.

Since then, these four artists have developed their singular artistic research trajectories alongside one another. There have been moments of sheer pleasure, of tension, of friendship and dispute. There have also been moments of questioning the programme, each other, and choreography as an artform. To us, these four dear artists have generated nebulous collective formations of internal organizing, while staying attuned to and demanding of institutional responsibilities.

DAS CHOREOGRAPHY

There is no way that we can make general statements of their works. Each of them has their own artistic trajectory, personal history and cultural background, that matter greatly to their practice and their aesthetics. Yet their practices speak about possible ways of thinking/feeling artistic practice, choreography, dance, performance and research.

Now we are about to attend their presentations, which are also the outcome of several conversations that have taken place over time between them, with us and with their collaborators and mentors. Denise Ferreira da Silva has said that “a conversation can and usually is taken as an encounter, a convergence, but one that might just be [...] nothing more than that which takes place there, in that moment, under those circumstances, towards those particular ends”. These presentations can also be seen as conversations that the attendees are invited to take part in and to further. And yet, they are no regular conversations. They probe and evoke relationalities and cosmologies that are shapeshifting, that are opaque, and even eerie.

The presentations raise questions about the invitation to the audience. About the way we enter the spaces they have prepared for us. In the works they have prepared, we will be entering spaces where the seating is not arranged in a frontal way. The dancing is not to be presented as a symbolic gesture. The moving bodies take care of us, they speak to us. Or not at all, they are quiet, and they have become forms that we are invited to study or to hold with our attention. Or they are portrayed in screens, evasive and elusive, yet, the screens are responding to our behavior in the space we have entered. As such the presentations raise artistic disciplinary questions, do they show us a dance, do they speak about choreography? Is there a disciplinary orientation to what we are asked to engage with?

As audience members we are made to observe each other, we become part of the events, what we are invited to do is part of what the artists want us to notice and experience. In this way the presentations, each in their own way ask questions about the collective experience of the audience. Will we, as attendants, become a collective body? Are we somewhere between anonymous presences and in-crowd, peers, colleagues? Do we get to know each other during and after the performances? Do we get to know the artists better, and

does that matter to the work that is presented? How do our responses influence what is presented?

Each work stages a different set of relations to the spectator, from interactive touch screens, to hosting individual care for each audience member. At the same time all the pieces also speak about absence in some way or another. In the embodied memory, in a sense of loss, in the sense of being silenced and erased from history. Absence appears in forms of waiting, in imagining something that is not there, in remembering, summoning and seeking to name those who are not here anymore.

After two years of studying in times of great uncertainty, which is inevitably reflected also in the artistic works, we are privileged to be able to invite you to be witness to these presentations. These are part of an artistic research trajectory carried out during the four artists' study. They hold the grains of what will come in and for the future.

- Jeroen Fabius and Konstantina Georgelou, March 2022.

In the Yoruba language, the word Abiku means "the one who was predestined to die". It refers to babies who died right after birth, and to the ones who remain cursed by wandering souls. This project is about an unacknowledged past, from a queer transatlantic ship that remains as a ghostly memory embodied in a mutilated, foreign existence.

7 ABIKU SOLOS FOR 11 BACTERIA FALLING THROUGH is a performance installation that merges sounds, texts, images and movement in a multidisciplinary attempt to conjure the ghostly traces of the unborn.

Scan to read more about ABIKU



7 ABIKU SOLOS FOR 11 BACTERIA FALLING THROUGH

A complex microbial choreography
of he unstoppable troubling spirits
I am ABIKU, The unborn
A crossroads
Of despair and celebration
Becoming a flock of birds
The endless no return.

THE SEQUESTERING PRECURSOR (OR, THE ANTE/ANTI-BIOTIC)

There's a precursor to the history of performance and its theory, even of performance art and its theory, that anticipated in way that now seems totally uncanny, that the real problem of performance, performance's essential problem with (its) real is not the question of Life but the question of Life -- or rather, the question of living. That anticipation, written with no concerns whatsoever with anything remotely related to the arts, is the amazingly insightful, prescient, indeed oracular short technical book, published in 1951 and titled, "Qu'est-ce que la documentation?" by Suzanne Briet. It is, supposedly, a purely technocratic study.

In its 48 brief pages, many filled with tables and graphs, Briet advances her ontology of the document by addressing first of all, not the bureaucratic machine, not the technological apparatuses required for that new concern of the liberal nation-state, the document, not the archiving procedures for the ever-expanding realm of documentation, "that new word," she writes, "to be found everywhere these days." Rather, Briet starts her book with an animal. An antelope running in an African savannah. It is from that life roaming free in the wild, that Briet slowly builds her techno-ontology of the document, and therefore, of the political unconscious subsisting in the act of documentation. She writes: "An antelope running in the wild in an African savannah is not a document. An antelope in a zoo, is a document." In other words: it is not that the document "captures" the surface of the real and represents it otherwise, for some rational future accessing. it is rather that whenever there is captivity,

there is “documentation.” Whenever one is to find a life (form) fixed, in vitro, there one will find a document. Even if the antelope is “live,” alive, its existence behind the fences of a zoo turns it already into an after-life, or a sub-life, a kind of hollowed-out existence.

Flávia Pinheiro knows this mechanism of living while in a state of being sequestered from Life quite well. It is, in itself, the logic of coloniality and in knowing that mechanism, with all its colonial(ist) anti-biotic, anti-zootic impulses and implications, she dances with it nevertheless, moving at the edge of an impossibility. For, isn't every step within the frame of representation (including that mechanism of representation called “identity”) already a kind of suffocation of what in every living actually lives? Pinheiro choreographs and dances then on the fine line/ fine life between representation and the anti-colonial(ist) imperative to detonate with the very logic that makes possible even to conceive that such entrapment could ever make any sense at all; particularly as the majoritarian logic driving the organization of human collectives and their ways of desiring and sexing. Pinheiro's ‘video-performance-manifesto-farce-tragedy’ in one act danced to a cacophonous sound composition for buffalo, deer, different species of monkeys and (unsurprisingly) antelopes, and where she is dressed as a large white macaw, enacts this knowledge of what it means to being condemned to live as a document of oneself (which is the generalized condition of technocratic state power, ever more so, particularly in what Shoshana Zuboff has called our current state of “surveillance capitalism,” where one compulsively documents one's life 24/7). Meanwhile, in the zoo (actual zoos, or the zoo of Instagram-tik-tok-FB) the animals may not consciously know that all life behind bars is never quite life anymore. But their bodies' do. Animals may very well be presenting themselves to their audiences “live,” in full color and smell, tridimensional, sonic... And yet, they might as well be embalmed, so deflated are they of vitality and movement-that-matters.

Flávia Pinheiro, in her ridiculous and hilarious, and deeply sad costume, dancing half lost, half found, in the half-life of parody, in the quasi-death of tragedy. Gesticulating sometimes no more than half a meter of the zoo's visitors, embodies then, before the captive animals and besides the humans, a frontier. As frontier, as limit, her roaming presence on the side of humans, of the visitors, of the public produces a quiet restlessness that subtly annoys, that

cannot be properly contained as proper. The restlessness derives from the slow realization of this fact: the bars and fences separating the animals/documents from the humans/public, function as a kind of screen, or rather as a kind of mirror. Looking at the animals as documents of themselves, living but devoid of Life, “alive” but definitely already dead, is to look at the eyes of the genre of humanity that makes that captivity entertaining, scientific, even. Yes, an expression of Goodness. At that moment, with Flávia Pinheiro-Macaw going about her dance, the public cannot help but suspect their apneic condition in their “live” eventness of ‘being-there’. In the “open” zone of the supposedly free humans, captivity and ‘living-while-dead’ also rule. In this sense, Pinheiro’s choreography becomes a necrography. The only way out: embracing joyfully that danse macabre and then escape, run away. Laughing like a herd of buffalos and antelopes while monkeys jump high above the canopies; fucking like pansexual bacteria; joining the proliferating cacophony of non-human animals; running away without papers, without documents, without comment. Finally totally get rid of any “genre of the human” (to use Sylvia Wynter’s expression) that posits captivity, hollowed-out life, antibiotic being, living in vitro, as the only mode of understanding the living. As Flávia Pinheiro writes, or maybe as something writes through Flávia Pinheiro:

In the land of enchantments
 A polyrhythmic language arises
 In an absent presence
 The unstoppable troubling spirits
 Somersault, levitate, turn their heads, tear
 their limbs apart, shattering the edges
 The anti-antibiotic formula-poem-dance.

- André Lepecki, March 2022

CONCEPT, CHOREOGRAPHY AND ARTICULATOR: Flávia Pinheiro PRODUCER: Tom Oliver Jacobson ARTISTIC COLLABORATIONS: Tom Oliver Jacobson, Leandro Oliván, Rodrigo Batista TEXT: Chakirou Salami (Baba Ketu) and Flávia Pinheiro COSTUME: Marc Andrade WEARABLE SCULPTURE: Daphne Kartens PERFORMERS: Tom Oliver, Mario Lopes and Rodrigo Batista SOFTWARE PROGRAMMERS: Leandro Oliván, Jakob Povel, Willem Veemhoff and Emanuel Nijkerk MUSIC: Gabriel de Oliveira, Niels Luteijn, DJ Dolores. SOUND DESIGN: Kris McDonald & Misha MacLaren LIGHT DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY: Emanuel Nijkerk and Rembrandt Pieplebosch LIGHT OPERATOR: Rembrandt Pieplebosch VIDEO DESIGN: Emanuel Nijkerk PHOTOGRAPHER: JEAN SUPPORT: Erick Lint and ID LAB, Cross Academy Fund, AartJanszen Fonds, AHK Internationalisation Fund, Funcultura Brazil, La Caldera (Barcelona), C.E.M (Lisboa) MENTORS AND TUTORS: André Lepecki, Ana Lira, Pedro Manoel, Konstantina Georgelou and Jeroen Fabius.
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PHOTO: JEAN



FLÁVIA PINHEIRO - ABIKU

FOROUGH FAMI - THE WAITING ROOM

PHOTO: Thomas Lenden



THE WAITING ROOM

A fragment of an interview:

*

◇ Ok, I see, but Forough, some find your artistic work indirect or better to say, far from the research-practice that your works stem from. How do you feel about that?

* Instead of dissecting my research-practice and instead of defending my works, particularly the one that you are referring to, “The waiting room”, let me start with this: Fears are subjective and intersectional, therefore the name of my research-practice; “Fears in Motion” could trigger multiple anticipations and/or expectations for the spectator about the content of, firstly, the research-practice and secondly, what kind of outcome it should result into.

◇ Let me ask you, do you think that there is a difference talking about “Fears in Motion” here in Europe where you are based, in comparison to the context of where you are coming from?

* Based on our different identities, things are being projected on us. When hearing the name; “Fears in Motion”, as a research practice of a woman from the Middle East, immediately there are assumptions that are made. Elements such as artist’s identity, background and relatively certain topics, could easily be associated with certain forms of processes, presentations and aesthetics. It can restrict and reduce the possible imaginations about the modes of engagement.

- ◇ Have you experienced such expectations and/or assumptions? How?
- * I started this research-practice some years ago, as a way to face my own fears at the time, to employ them as a motor. For me this was a beginning of a small personal play, in order to change a narrative: instead of being a victim of paralysing forces, I wanted to play. As I went on, some of the smaller ones disappeared, reduced in their intensity or their forces changed into generative ones. I formulated my little fun games as a serious research-practice to try to find sustainable ways of allocating time and attention to it. Now, I have a feeling that there are issues that need delicate care when being formulated. If you insist on analysing the rules of the game, you may lose the time to play it. When you are in the middle of a game it's not the proper time to start reporting about what playing feels like, because then you will simply have lost the time that you could have continued playing. For me here is the threshold where issues with assumptions and expectations from the educational and professional fields enter.
- ◇ Is "The Waiting Room" a game you are inviting your audience in?
- * (She laughs) you could say so.
- ◇ Do you have an idea in which direction you would like to continue?
- * I would like to reflect on the disparities that are embedded in the variances in perspective. The differences of reception and feedback in the contexts different from the professional and educational environments I've been part of, since I'm studying, living and working here, to re-acknowledge those different perspectives that I have had access to.
- ◇ What about now?
- * For now I'm thinking of modalities of sharing, with focus on not neutralising or synthesising this sensation (I mean fear). I would like to continue my play as a recognised way of reflection, research and practice. To play and to invite others into it. I consider it as an immersive space where reality and imaginaries mingle. A space for the unexpected to emerge. It is a lighter form of engagement, that contains the weight of the content that it is reflecting on.
- ◇ You know , when considering

THE WAITING ROOM

The Waiting Room is an immersive space in which Forough Fami invites her audience to spend time. It's an uncanny playground in a non-linearity of time.

An invitation to the space of artist's mind and studio, and an invitation to wait as the room is under construction.

Type One:

LIGHT DESIGN, CHOREOGRAPHY AND PERFORMANCE: Forough Fami
MENTORING : Jee-Ae Lim
MUSIC: Richard Cartier

Type Two:

LIGHT DESIGN, CHOREOGRAPHY AND PERFORMANCE: Forough Fami
PERFORMANCE: Fariborz Karimi, Simone Weber, Mami Kang
MENTORING: Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink, Aslan
MUSIC: Richard Cartier, Murcof

3D MODELING: Siavash Naghshbandi

THANKS: Young Art support Amsterdam, Velvet Leigh, Harco Haagsma, Udo Akemann, DAS choreography tutors (Jeroen Fabious, Konstantina Georgelou) and DAS cohort.

FOROUGH FAMI is an Iranian choreographer and dance artist currently based in Berlin where she lives and works individually as well as in collective constellations. Previously, she studied Bachelor of Choreography, Dance and Context at HZT. Her current research practice "Fears In Motion" includes several and ever-emerging sub-researches that revolve around the sensation of fear. By considering the variety of possible approaches that do not necessarily focus on theatrical settings, she examines the moving power of this sensation, which paralyzes beings.

AMPARO GONZÁLEZ SOLA is an argentinian choreographer currently based in The Netherlands. She researches the intersections between perception, choreography and politics. If every rock is a hole is part of a larger research project in which she opens a critical reflection on dominant ways of thinking of presence, gaze and time.
www.amparogonzalezsola.com

IF EVERY ROCK IS A HOLE

an attempt

to choreograph
making of the back a bridge
a crack
an insistent question mark

to suspend
tensing the muscles until detaching from the ground
resisting gravity by surrendering

to refuse
withdrawing something from the gaze
holding a forgotten form
becoming a fossil of the future

to surrender
pulling with the fingers the invisible thread
that unweaves the edge of the insides and the outsides

to hold
digging out
sharing a wound
turning to rock
falling in rapture
becoming a hole

IF EVERY ROCK IS A HOLE emerges from the choreo-political questions of:

How can we perceive the resonances of what seems invisible, still, or silent? How can we attend to the quiet frequencies of what refuses to come into view? How can we engage with absences that hold our presence?

In the work these questions are addressed through the notions of resistance and surrender. It is an exploration of curves, tensions, folds, suspensions, setbacks and interruptions. The audience is invited to listen to the forms, to attend to the holes, and to hold them with their gaze; to suspend for a while.

WHAT IF EVERY ROCK IS A HOLE?
OR HOL(E)DING

The many generous exchanges with Amparo González Sola over the last several months have opened many holes: rabbit holes and portals, but also safe dens and a web of connecting tunnels.

For neither of us is English the first language. Yet it is through the English language that we assess the rocky nature of words, their ability to keep us in place; and we also exercise a sort of perpetual translation, in an attempt to extrapolate new meanings.

A hole is first and foremost an opening. There are, of course, a myriad of those: a trap, a gap, a carrier bag, an entrance, absence, a pore, a pupil, a valve, a cave, a dead spot, a nightmare. The gravitational density of a black hole might be the closest I get to imagining a rock as a hole, but that is extremely literal, Cartesian even. "A Black Hole is Everything a Star Longs to Be", the title of Kara Walker's 2021 exhibition at Kunstmuseum Basel opens other territories. An infinity of unexplored "dark matter" holds the precious little physical world as we know it, literally and metaphorically. They are reciprocal.

Engaging with Amparo's research, I have thought a lot about the many meanings of holding. Holding, as in receiving with cupped hands or open arms, holding tight, as in pulling closely together, holding spaces, holding people or animals in

a place, holding as resistance, holding your ground, holding out. Holding someone's gaze. The difference between "holding on" and the imperative "Hold on", as in wait. As someone whose work evolves around artistic practice approaching decoloniality, it was easy to read into her work forms of protest and resistance against the persistence of coloniality (among other things!). It was immediately visible to me.

Amparo's invitation, however, is another: to resist the impulse to stay with the visible and instead to explore what becomes present beyond. To use the tools of sensing and intuition, rather than interpretation.

Of love, bell hooks says that we experience its absence more strongly than its presence. There is a powerful longing, a bodily force, that comes from the lack of it, the hole. It is not empty, maybe just suspended.

When I think of holding as suspension, I understand suspension not as stasis but as holding tension. This is what Amparo embodies in her work. A pulsing that is in motion without moving, like the barely perceptible moment between an inhale and an exhale, floating mid-air on a trampoline, between contrasts, where "it" is neither. A delicious grey zone. One that operates on a different time, expansion by deceleration. Here, a gesture reverberates, becomes multiple. Suspension holds contrasts. In suspension absence and presence collide. There is a gravity to suspension that can pull (lost) fragments in and reassemble them in its contracting field. Extending/Moving in this territory might open up spaces beyond what is already inscribed in a room, in a body, in histories. A hole holding reverberations.

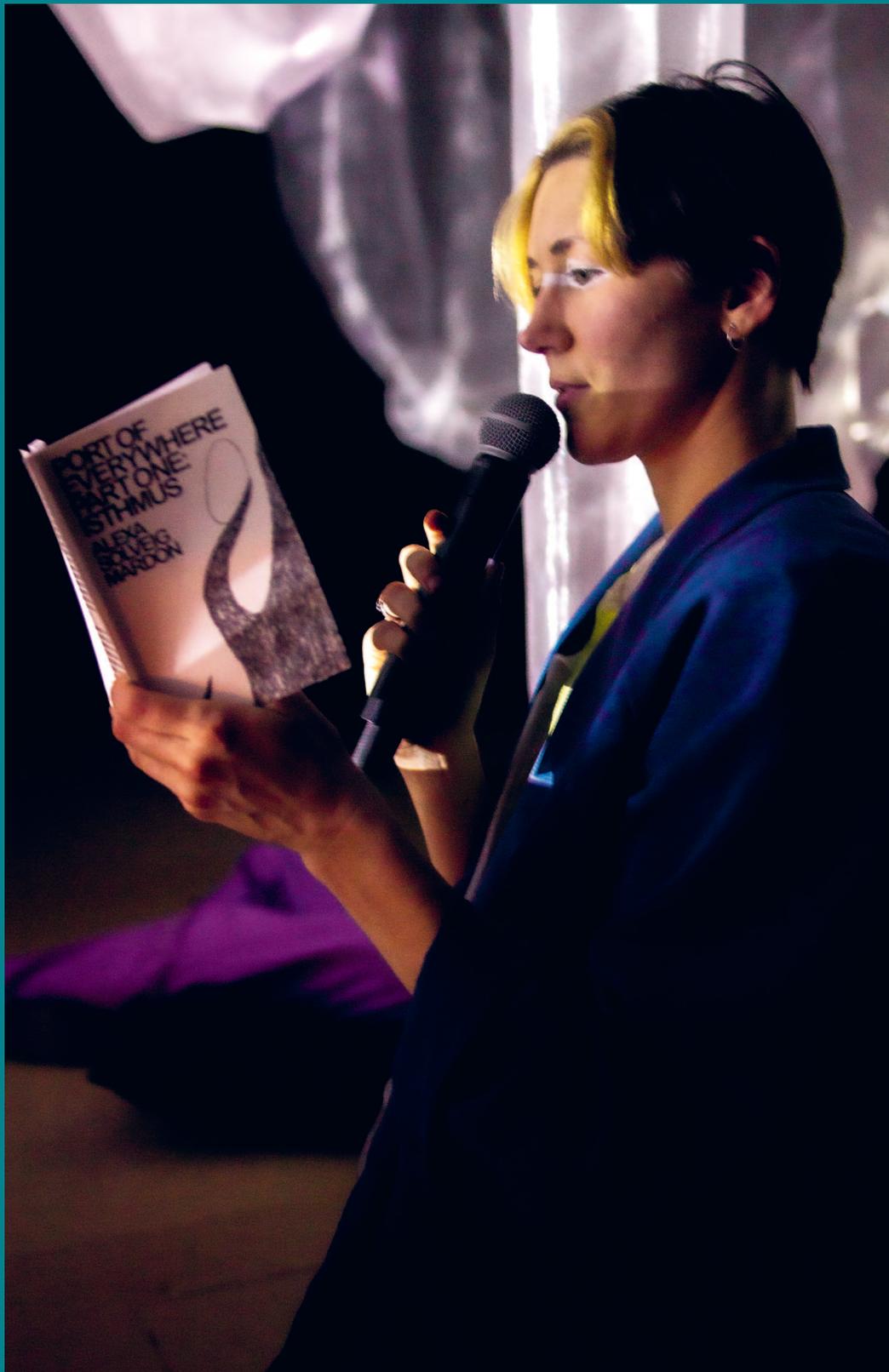
- Kadiatou Diallo, March 2022

SOUND: Nahuel Cano LIGHT AND SPACE: Vinny Jones ARTISTIC COLLABORATION: Jimena Pérez Salerno ADVISORS: Diana Szeinblum & Kadiatou Diallo TUTORS: Konstantina Georgelou & Jeroen Fabius CONCEPTUAL DIALOGS: Laura Culló Maoilearca and Marie Bardet DANCER & CHOREOGRAPHER: Amparo González Sola
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AMPARO GONZÁLEZ SOLA - IF EVERY ROCK IS A HOLE

ALEXA SOLVEIG MARDON - PORT OF EVERYWHERE



PORT OF EVERYWHERE

You walk into a room that is neither dark nor light. words appear from lightning fast hands, disappearing as soon as you hear them. There are others there and you lie down together, an acknowledgment of each others' presence, a shared impending catastrophe, before falling asleep. In the sleep that is neither awake nor asleep, a giant moves small or enormous talismans around while the sea levels rise. There is the thought to wake up, but not the action. Candles turn into sources of prophecy, little wax intestines floating in water, but everyone has forgotten how to read them and the future is inoperable anyway. The story is set 100 years from now. The story is set ten minutes ago, before you arrived in the room. The story is about the impossibility of language within this shared catastrophe, and the possibility that language is the catastrophe. Air is displaced around your head, a foot darts by, a giant or a ghost. All the while, language pours through the porous basin of your sleep. You hold onto

PORT OF EVERYWHERE is the spillage, the excess of the archive, the unruly host for research by Alexa Solveig Mardon. PORT OF EVERYWHERE is the umbrella title for multiple tendrils of research conducted over the last 2 years at DAS choreography: a speculative fictional book, a dance and hosting practice, and questions about gestures of imperfect access as integral practice. The story PORT OF EVERYWHERE is a steep and queer departure from the national Finnish epic the Kalevala, Alexa's matrilineal histories, and messages from the dream realm.

www.portofeverywhere.com

a gnarled detail as it brushes your cheek in the dark. To move from water to dirt underground requires a particular kind of dance, something like flicking, darting, and floating all at the same time. If your mouth is open it is possible to jump onto the land of a past narrative. But the next marking follows you, trickling into your spine through your open mouth, causing a rippling like a dog vomiting beautifully. It is danced by you (because it was rarely summoned by you, just happening through). Names dangle in the space and attach and detach themselves to your brow, palm, ankle bone, the edge of your shirt. The names are searching for each other but have to rest on you first, leaving traces of themselves which add to the impossibility of the dance being readable. You are swimming or floating or jumping from one event to the next, but the time between events loses all orientation, folds back in on itself, maintains its position that it is, in fact, happening, now, now, now, now.

“TELL ME, WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF YOU BEFORE YOU CROSS THE THRESHOLD?”

After spending some time in proximity to port of everywhere, this is what I will say:

{about shape}

port of everywhere is a giant that is large enough to hold it all, small enough to be a pocket book, a memory of someone else's dream, and a clump of - molten, then solidified - candle wax that I rub and soften in my hand on my way out. On my way into the story.

{about the threshold}

A threshold is a gate, a door, a boundary, the place where [someone] [something] begins and [something] [someone] else ends. A port is a site of entry (water meeting land), an opening, and a connection between electronic devices. An isthmus is a passageway (land crossing water) and a home to some. While half-asleep, the reality on either side of waking up can feel more or less like a dream. What I am trying to say is: the moment in which [someone] [something] becomes [something] [someone] else, contains all of it. And this is why it shimmers.

{about the way the story is told}

In port of everywhere, everything appears as multiple. Or, more accurately: nothing appears in the confines of a singular narrative or frame.

I'm thinking of something close to phase transition: each phase (solid, liquid, gas, plasma) a different expression of the same element. Each resonating with the presence of every other phase: a story relayed in captions, a dance, a gesture of care for support workers, an invitation to rest.

{port of everywhere}

Is both the spillage of research and its container. Is thinking through excess and access in parallel. Is a singular creation myth undone through the multiple lineages of a side-character. Is the intellectual work of dreaming. Is a divination for unspoken questions in the room.

- Annick Kleizen

I acknowledge that research for this work has taken place on the illegally occupied and ancestral territories of the x^wmæθk^wəjəm, Skwxwú7mesh, and sel̓iwətaʔ peoples, and in Amsterdam, home of many unnamed ancestral ghosts and spirits. I am grateful to the waters and lands of these places, which have guided me most of all through this process.

CHOREOGRAPHY, DIRECTION, PERFORMANCE, TEXT: Alexa Solveig Mardon MEDIA AND PROJECTION DESIGN: Erika Mitsuhashi
SCENOGRAPHY DESIGN: Alexa Mardon, Erika Mitsuhashi SOUND DESIGN: Fernanda Libman SCENOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: Alex Van De Akker
PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE: Francesca Frewer, Rhyan McCorkindale IN CONVERSATION WITH: Staci BuShea, Annick Kleizen, Mala Kline, Jeroen Fabius, Konstantina Georgelou, Nienke Scholts TEXT RECORDING AND TEXT DRAMATURGY: Even Minn BOOK LAYOUT + DESIGN: D. St Amour
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ALEXA SOLVEIG MARDON is a queer dance artist of Finnish, Karelian and British Isles descent living and working as an uninvited guest on unceded + unsundered x^wmæθk^wəjəm, Skwxwú7mesh, and sel̓iwətaʔ land (so-called Vancouver).

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DAS CHOREOGRAPHY

DAS Choreography is an international master's program, aiming to contribute to the field of critical and contemporary dance practice. Individual artistic practices are the points of departure, and guiding threads of the course design. This two-year non-residential program is comprised of seminars, residencies and individual mentoring, in order to facilitate the development of intensive and sustained dialogue.

DAS GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Academy of Theatre and Dance (Amsterdam, The Netherlands) established DAS Graduate School in order to bring its master's, doctorate and research programs together under one roof.

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Amsterdam University of the Arts

DAS CHOREOGRAPHY - MASTER PRESENTATIONS 2022

