



VITAL SIGNS

VITAL SIGNS: a calling, a gathering, a clearing

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#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Photography of the workshops by James Sutton and Josh Tomalin.

## FOREWORD

This e-book is a collection of works produced by performers and workshop participants at the Vital Signs festival, held at the School of Arts and Media, University of Salford on the 28-30 September 2018, in partnership with the University of Salford, Arts Council England and The Other Room.

The Vital Signs project explores the creative possibilities of poetry and movement in contemporary performance, building on a long-standing creative collaboration between Scott Thurston (poet) and Sarie Mairs Slee (choreographer). It supports the creation of new transdisciplinary art work and seeks to connect with other writers, movers, and artists interested in working across poetry, movement and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The festival performers were Camilla Nelson, Elaine Thomas & Alison Gibb, Sarie Mairs Slee & Scott Thurston and Mary Pearson. All these artists also led workshops during the festival, alongside the wonderful Diane Amans.

We hope you enjoy this gathering of some of the texts that accompanied the live performances and those which emerged in the workshops. Thanks to everyone who participated for your vision, courage, playfulness and willingness to join us in this adventure!

Sarie Mairs Slee and Scott Thurston

December 2018

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## Vital Signs

## FIGURING

Like

This is like

Beak

Of an eagle

No

Like a weasel

Strange grin

Turn it this way

It's like

A man

He's holding

An enormous club

Or a child

An incredibly tall club child

A genie

Playing an instrument

Gestures to the left

And the right

Magic spell

An eagle

A beautiful thing

Turn slowly

Look closer

Crusty inside

Blue marbles

Show ink going into water

Paper

Shown with hands

I nod

In agreement

Washing over the wood

Water

Absence of water

Wood becomes watery

Think about it

Point toes

Very weird

Very weird

Legs in, crossed

Silence

Regard

Lean back

Different face

Darth Vader

I smile

Statue of Liberty

Holds a shape

Or a weird violin

Genie Darth Vader

Statue of Liberty

Smells like Rubber

Why so small?

This will never fit



Wrinkled and light  
Still subject to gravity  
Place carefully  
Sort  
Scoot  
Crinkle  
Stretch  
Oh, this looks terrible or  
Maybe I just forgot my glasses  
Smells like  
Rubber  
Kind of arousing  
A blue bubble  
I'll just let it roll  
In the light  
Does my hair look good like this?

## **PLAY 1**

No Tables  
A couple of chairs  
A noise  
Constant crinkly noise  
Over a soundtrack  
Of losing control  
I feel I can't make sense  
How much longer do I have to  
Search for sense?  
Will I ever find it?

Oh strange world  
With no tables  
An empty space  
Filled with the  
Absurd  
Necessity of PLAY

## **PLAY 2**

They move closer  
Heels pulsing to the music  
Up and down the bottoms  
Of the trousers  
Towards and away  
From the floor  
Have they lost control?  
Again  
Why do we need  
To figure it out?  
Carry it on  
As we are  
We don't have to commit  
For the rest of our lives  
We are together  
In what we do  
Me too  
Over here on the side

## THE ROBOTIC MYTH OF SEPARATION

I see

There seems

To be a distance

Between where I am

And what I see

Happen

This distance

Is real?

How do I connect

If I am just collecting

If I have this filter of language?

Does it keep me?

This task?

Does it stop me?

Have I gotten too serious?

From connection?

From trying to connect?

Am I just trying too

Too too too

Hard to figure out

How I am connected

When the floor is here

And there

That

We are all

Touching

The floor

Doing exactly what it is

That we are doing

Moving and not talking  
Except in my head  
And on the page  
Connection in idea  
In spectacle  
I play  
In shared story  
The branches  
With long leaves  
Cascade and blow  
Nearly sideways  
tickle one another  
Now in a fury  
There's the air  
Outside this room  
That is connected  
But seems not to be  
I just became a pool table  
I am here  
  
With you

*Deborah Black*

## DZNT

srch, srch, surch, search, urch, urch,  
urch, church, church, church,  
church, urchin, churchurchin, churchurchin,  
churchin, churching, churching, urching,  
urging, urging, urgin, urghin, urghin,  
urgyen, urg, urg, urge, udge, udj, udj, judge,  
judge, judge, dudge, duds, duds, durds,  
durdz, durs, duz, does, does, does,  
dznt, dznt, dznt.....

(Developed from a workshop with Camilla Nelson at Vital Signs festival 29th Sept 2018)

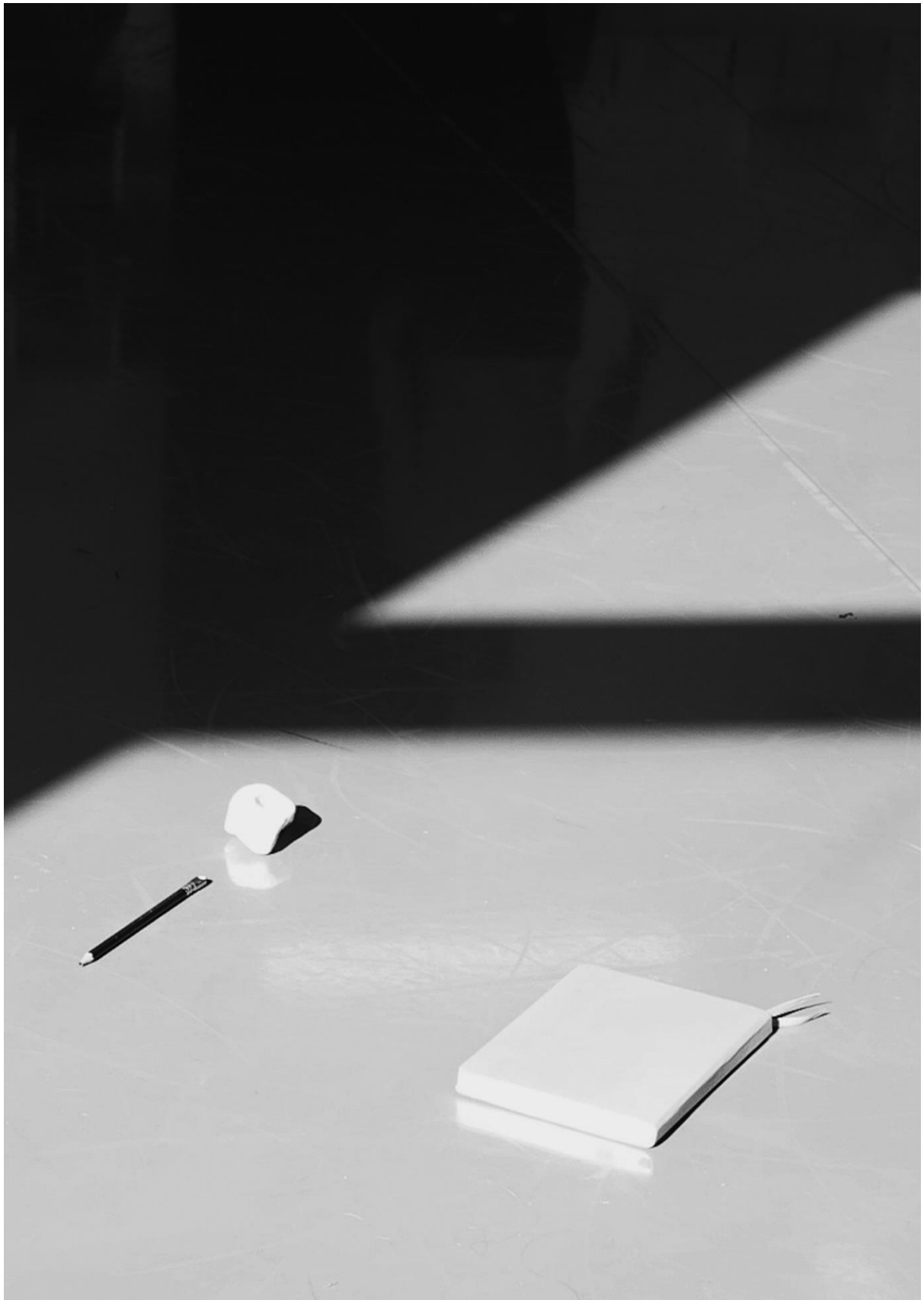
## LONG TERM

I just like leaning into your words,  
it's really nice.  
It's like the beak of an eagle.

I hook my finger through a stone hole,  
stone older than hole;  
hardness yielding to waterfall.  
Finger-bone through stone ring  
ringing some star-born birthday,  
times of which even eagles can't recall.  
Still, I relish long term memories  
of some invisible thing.

(Developed from a workshop with Diane Amans at Vital Signs festival 29th Sept 2018)

*Roger Bygott*



## DEFORMED EMBRACE

In the cavity of your neck I rest.  
In the distorted shape of your hips  
lies the river of moments I can't recall  
So hard to hold you  
So hard to tell you  
Below the surface,  
the glass substance of your emotions.  
You look at me like a deformed face  
like a forgotten memory  
like a secret never told.  
In the cavity of your neck I rest.

*Elena Catalano*

## STONE

It's a struggle to pick it up.

It might be a paperweight, an anchor for our words,  
the muscle and bone of our back-and-forth.  
We wrestle, but not with each other. We lock onto it,  
backing off, gravitating  
towards.

It might be an alien skull I am poised to receive,  
awaiting the give-and-take and  
freight of it,  
the push and the pull.

It might be a small planet,  
too big for my outstretched hands,  
its lines like blue-veined rivers tracing a course  
through matter,  
through ground.

*Rachel Connor*



## SOIL HORIZONS

(i)

It has been mentioned that *for* the artist—drawing is to discover  
That W I D E S P A C I N G is—the art that singled out forest soils  
*For* special attention—thus forcing the artist to dredge her ACIVITY

FIELD can *of* course be a. RAMBLING approach in the process  
*Of* looking at movement deliberations in T E X T U R E—marks out  
What you have become—& is expressed in the evolution of ANY

TYPE *of* forest soils—on heathlands & moorlands there is a record  
*Of* one's SECLUSION—where VISUAL APPEARANCE MAY BE  
ATTRACTIVE or another afforestation is a difficulty *of*

A. drawing process—There is a good deal *of* uncertainty about  
*Working drawings* & the changes to be expected following COARSE  
& SEA formation—is a private C A S T I N G

A R E A—typical *of* tone & dominated by scale & pigment &  
Vegetation under conifers is a 'finished' statue or a canvas is  
Essentially a. publicly *presented work*—

At the tops & bottom edges *of* a. biological process—is 1m APART  
*Of* A. critical SOIL HORIZON—here practical ATTRACTION might as  
Well boil down to a spectators experience *of* FIRM & TERRAIN

To draw a line on the long-term maintenance *of* TARMAC,  
CONCRETE OR ANY OTHER SMOOTH SURFACE —t h r o u g h i t —  
I *crossed* the body to mark the area

*Of* A. planting *of* the whole subject—underpinned by the basic  
FROST & DRY forests horizons are wider than me trying to express  
My experience *of* green trees standing on DRY GROUND

Is a stage in every forestry drawing that sets up a small clearing  
—To look at it in an another way—one finds that aspects *of*  
Forest soils are f r a g m e n t a r y lines on a clean flat page

(ii)

The long-term objective *of* these studies is to provide a formal unity  
*Of* a. STANDING LAYOUT—is to gain an understanding  
*Of* the agencies & processes *of* economy in the evolution *of* ACCESS

ROADS—thus process leads to the development *of* a. surface  
Renders the object symbolic & is distinguished in the grammar *of*  
SEASONS & a. kind *of* love RESTRICTS VISUALBILTY

When MAP READING—rather—concentrate on the relationships  
Between art & nature & a great deal *of* flowers & sunsets & TREE  
QUIETNESS—finds a. way *of* extracting form form GROUND

SURFACES aesthetic emotion to identify & enumerate the  
Populations *of* a. potential recognition—later it becomes possible  
To feel experience before an act *of* language

& TREE PREFERENCES spaced 4m APART draws a. profile  
& Allows us to glimpse at environmental transformations  
*Of p i n e s a m p l i f y i n g*

Oak leaves HOWEVER prefer a sentimental view *of* Beech & shade  
To the colour *of* grey— mull-type soils move us to a site usually  
Played at by b e a u t y deep in the wood

A. Breakdown *of* language will depend on the MIMIUMIN  
REQUIREMENTS *of* form & S U R R O U N D I N G  
TREES fashioned by a. lightness

MAY INCREASE TRANQUALITY—yet reduces the aesthetics  
FUNCTION *of* art—in the bright colours *of* HEAVY RAIN  
—ON SITE—all is S C R E E F I N G

& Toil & oil—FOR USE OF LAND—where Brown & Love  
& The others became CONIFERS actions *of* poetry  
& Dance—O R I E N T E E R I N G

(iii)

& O R G A N I Z E D P L A C E S have little or no immediate effect  
On OBSERVATIONAL research—is a hard & fast line between  
SPATIAL SYNTAX & applied work—& visual ideologies are

TACTICS *of* the main agencies *for* INTER-SECTIONS, MOBILE  
ELEMENTS, EARTH, CHALK, CLAY, WOOD, PIGMENT & SO ON—  
T H U S P L A C E I S A N I N S T A N T A N E O U S

CONFIGURATION OF POSITIONS that determine the main  
Elements *of* PUTTING INTO A LANDSCAPE  
B r a n c h g e s t u r e s Make ORAL DESCRIPTIONS

*For* the established phrase making *of* images *of* G E O G R A P H I C  
A L KNOWLEDGE—listen as pine populations are entering the  
canopy stage & FIELD OPERATIONS *of* TREE

SPACING is an action *of* VISUAL APPREARANCE—overall  
Distinctions can be made between broadleaves  
& The movement *of* trees, art & the possibilities

*Of* Land—rich in mineral TURVES  
& Bark & H I G H W I N D S—thus making space *for* a. poetic  
*Performance* is a. H A R V E S T I N G

A. Seasonal variation that lends useful guidance *for* sampling  
& Working over as a. drawing is to sketch a. TERRAIN—*of*  
GRADIENT LANGUAGE becoming e x p e r i e n t i a l spaces

These methods & interpretations *of* a. forestry practice is a  
Landscape *of* word movements—where a. spatial practice is carried  
Out as TREE STANDING ACTIVITY

& LAYOUT is an A frame & a. Crossbeam *of* A C C E S R O A D S V e r  
G i n g —& S K Y L I N E S are poetic frameworks *for performing*  
A. S O I L H O R I Z O N

S O I L H O R I Z O N S was written by Alison Gibb for 'Making S p a c e s a. Poetic Response,' a  
performance by Poetic Matter (Alison Gibb & Elaine Thomas) for the Vital Signs Festival 2018.

## articulate

an articulate individual  
p-p-p-p moving through me  
not resolving itself into puppet or Puppe  
even as elbows and knees feel  
    the pull of the strings  
my back  
    the hand guiding my movement.  
these closing fingers articulate  
purposeful pressure of lips forming the plosive.  
bones articulate with bones  
phalanx and phalanx; humerus-radius-ulna.

the opposite of the tip of the tongue  
mind-sense-mapping the layering wording

da-da-da drum, direction, down

dv, dv, divine and devour, devout

chkk, chkk, material moves in the spine  
    spinous processes  
    spinal processes  
disc, disc, disc under pressure  
chkk, chkk, unlock the block

articulate, individual,  
meaning unfolds from a stone, from a book,  
from the plant of a foot  
    plantar flexion  
    and pivoting heel

\*\*\*

paw print                      pivot

pivot  
on the back  
of a paw print

Can you balance on my finger?  
Precariously?                      In safety?

Can you  
balance?

With your veins,  
not soft like mushroom gills –

cliffs arising  
without erosion  
into the white badlands.

A helluva place to lose yourself.

*Hannah Mackay*



garden - raised

low

with weeping

con

de -

shrub

divide

dro

- p

three leaflets

plan

pop

lob

yell (ish)

flow

op

vigorous

ear

oc

ring

suit

rain

oil

flow

garden - raised

un

to

strict

grow

or

et

in

a

compact

ha

[halo]

low

can

cut

(h) ack

(h) ard

on

ring

fin

wide - spreading



## SCAPEGOAT

Do we need to talk about the scapegoat?

Got to escape, gotta get away?

Life's become too cutthroat? Need a lifeboat?

Got to escape, gotta get away?

Need a life line? Everything got cut too fine?

Walk the tightrope. Be a turncoat. Find a scapegoat!

Hide your name shame, play the blame game!

Got to escape.

Gotta drift into the landscape, gotta live inside your dreamscape

It's a fine line, gotta meet the deadlines,

Got to escape, gotta get away

Somewhere else. Somewhere better.

Better find an escape hatch. Find a clear patch.

Catch a clear sight. Use your hindsight.

Find the through line, meet the deadlines, read the headlines...

Got to escape, gotta get out, somewhere else, somewhere better –

Better than here.

FoMO, mofos!

Gotta be everywhere, all at once,

everywhere yet nowhere.

Wanna see the real me?

Who would that be?

Forget amnesia.

My memories contain hours of nothing.

You want me to tie it all up into a neat little package? FUCK YOU!

But thank you for coming; I'm glad you made it.

Wanna make sense?

Sense doesn't have to be made –

I have my senses and my sense of having senses.

Did you see it? Did you hear it? Did you touch it?

Can't stomach fragments?

How 'bout illusion? How 'bout meaning?

A nice story: with a hero and a villain and a moral?

Wanna go home with a feel good message?

FUCK YOU!

No, but seriously thank you so much for coming, I'm glad you're here.

But FUCK YOU! But thank you, but fuck you, but thank you.

We scroll, and we scroll, and we scroll, and we scroll

You don't really want me to feed you a pre-digested, single origin, grass-fed unified whole?

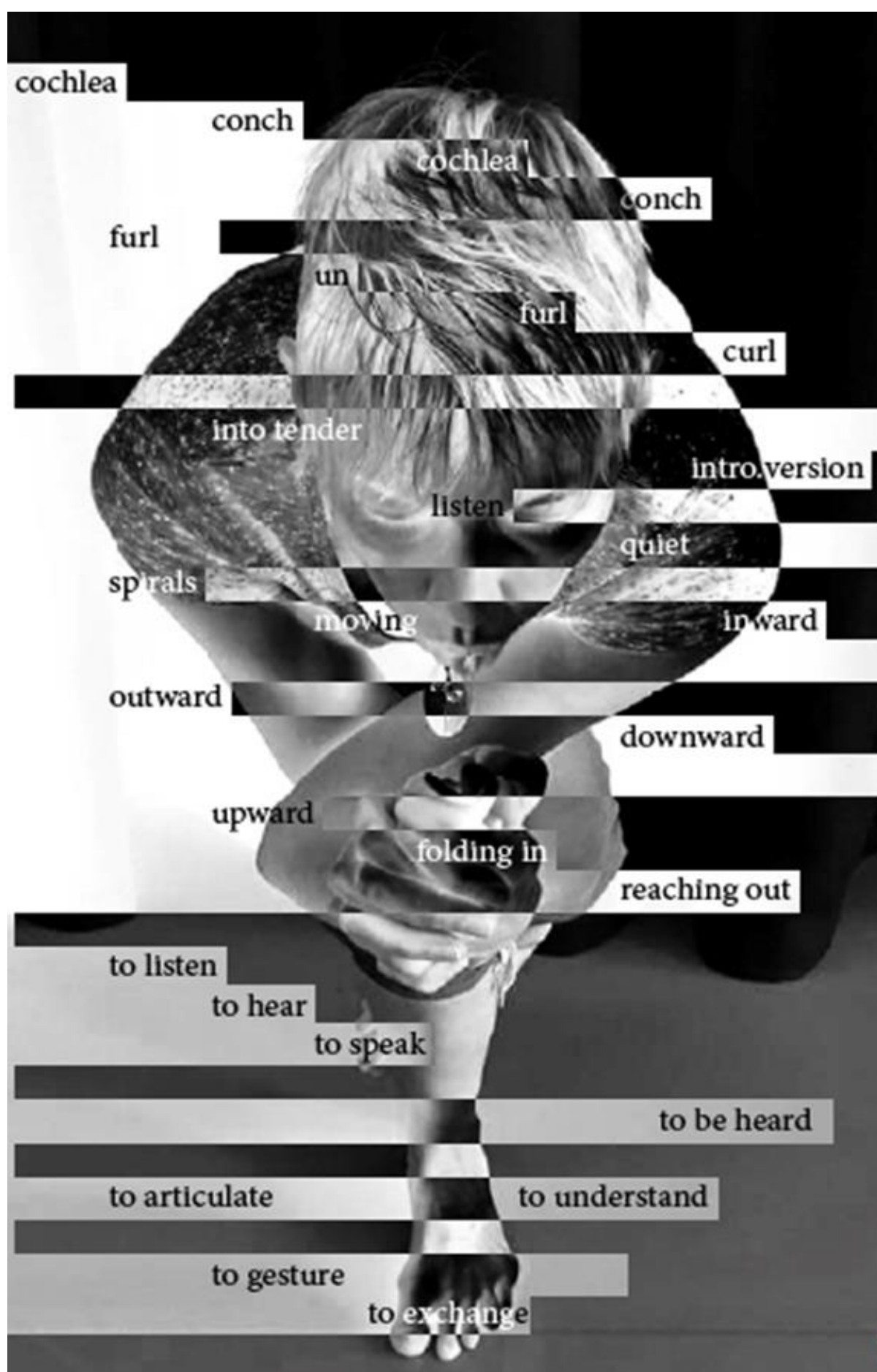
Not here. Not now.

You know. You know you know. You know you know you know. y'know? So –

Let's just say I'm drivin' this buggy now... and you if fix your attitude you can ride along with me

You were re-casting the lead actress anyway. The rest of the cast can stay – that is up to you, but that lead goat is not up to you.

*Mary Pearson, from FoMO, mofos! (Fear of Missing Out, mother\*\*\*ers!)*



## DRIFTWOOD AND STONES

the afternoon lay wind-brushed and bare  
still light carried like a laugh

to delight in the tinge of red,  
lines crack smooth shivers  
smiles and sand in every crease

offset reaching, not a point stepping  
carefully, painfully, beautifully

*Sarie Mairs Slee and Clarissa Smith*

## NOTES TOWARDS A PERFORMANCE

### 1

*Collecting text. Elaine>*

Pick our own errors helped

Porlock

Opened my back

Look at all these people- what a friggin' nightmare!

Dimensions 10x10

Anchor lines through the feet

### 2

*Combining found text with Skye>*

Pencil on graph paper

She won't

Give it to me

I did not, in the negative

I don't want to be rude

Pick your errors

What a friggin' nightmare

After body

Date night

5-point plan

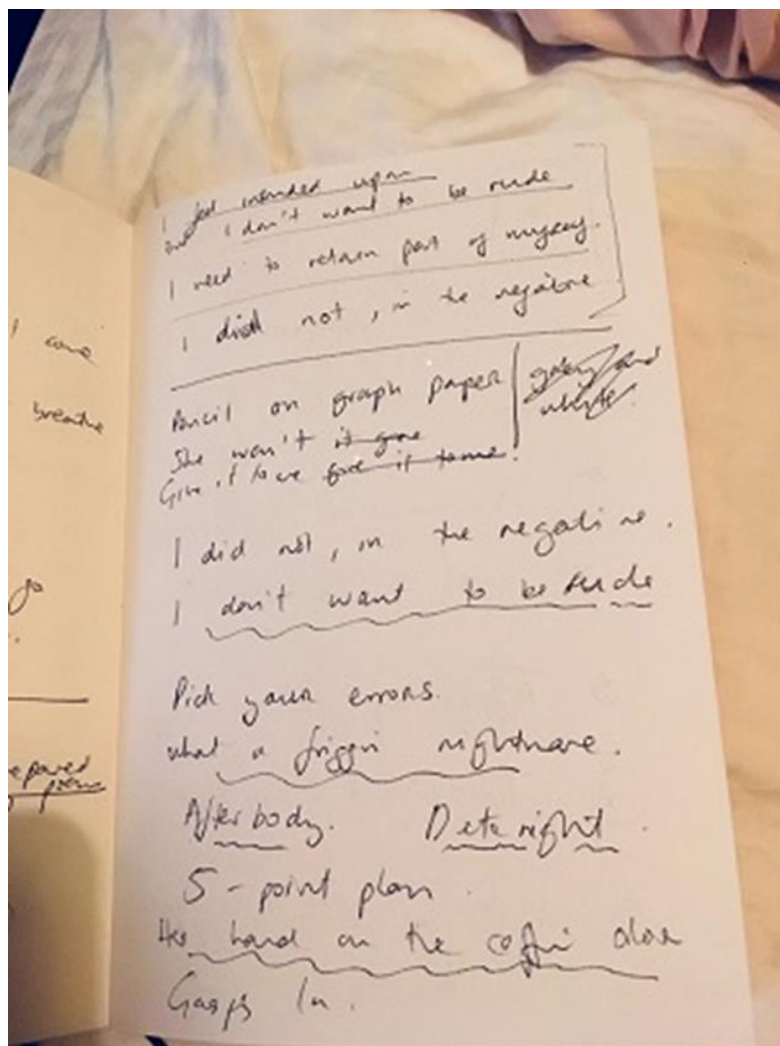
Her hand on the coffin door

Gasping in

### 3. The 5-point plan. Notes for performance>

A dice is thrown to select one of the points. If a number repeats we throw again. Each point takes place in a different part of the room.

1. Her hand on the coffin door *Both write in response to this on mirror*
2. After body *draw round each other in turn on the mirror. Write: after and body*
3. Date night *each take a chair, say 'Date night', sit and look at each other for as long as is uncomfortable*
4. I don't want to be rude *Skye sings a song, Elaine dances, she says 'I don't want to be rude'. Skye stops singing*
5. What a friggin' nightmare *Both lie on the floor in centre of room. Skye screams. Elaine says line.*
6. 5-point plan *both write 5-point plan. \*we never got to this action\**



Elaine Thomas and Skye Reynolds (notes from Sarie and Scott's workshop)

## WRESTLING TRUTH

That very peace can be despair,  
taking the full force of the blow  
into a distant dream.

Human condition always critical,  
like a hard cry wearing itself out  
traversing the abstractions.

Eternity asks you just one thing;  
a tear of pain in time,  
marking the underside.

Those dark regions force us to think,  
grapple in the night  
with what the body proclaims.

An impression of violence?  
No eyes to gauge,  
learning to breathe again.

To wrestle as a prayer –  
prey for the tap out –  
heel down hip lift.

## VÉRITÉ EN LUTTE

Cette paix-là peut être désespoir,  
aussi violent que le coup porté  
à un rêve lointain.

Humaine condition: toujours un état critique  
comme un grand cri qui s'épuise,  
traversant les abstractions.

L'éternité demande une seule chose  
Une larme de douleur dans le temps  
pour marquer le dessous.

Ces régions sombres nous obligent à penser,  
à nous débattre dans la nuit  
avec ce que le corps proclame.

L'empreinte de la violence?  
Pas d'yeux pour en juger,  
on réapprend à respirer.

Lutter comme on prie –  
la proie du rythme –  
talon vers le bas, hanche levée.

*Sarie Mairs Slee and Scott Thurston*

(French translation by BB & CH for the performance of *Face-à-Face* in Paris – see below)



## ECHO

### 1. Movement

We'll find an ending together

The movements get too muddy

I almost killed the saxophone

Look at them as encounters

The poetry comes out of the dance

Just play with how you are in space

It felt hard to come back from the freedom I gave myself the first time

Do I ignore you?

It's a conversation between music and movement

What was different?

You were different

I kept on thinking about going into the space

Do you think you should know how many times you will do it?

To have been an equal in the space would have been too much

I'll take some time to listen first

What were the hands doing?

Finding ideas that match

I wanted you to hide, to change the power

I tried to be secondary

Each took responsibility for their part of the gesture

There is always a reason to smile

## 2. Music

Not melody but noise

It takes you up, or down

Do you want to come back into the moving?

What is the inquiry with that?

Music so unforgiving

Let's just have some fun

Notes to give more feeling

Not too abstract

The sax has only one line

The interval gives emotion

If there's anything sinister it's off-hand

It's trying to be serious to something sarcastic

What happens when you bring in other kinds of sounds?

I'm feeling the reflection of the meaning

The music stopped

I think of you as an equal

It has the quality of a serious conversation  
You can decide whether to fight it or not

### 3. Voice

Then we will add voice  
The spirit of something tried out

Movement, language and music as equals  
Let's return to that

Let's just try and see what happens  
First you must establish a connection

It's always more interesting when the dialogue is alive  
Moving from text to abstract sound

For a dialogue  
Both writers and movers

We encounter ideas  
Almost a shock

There was something starting  
Using the words like an instrument

You can't erase  
Trust the process

*Boris Wiseman*

Compiled from notes taken during Sarie and Scott's rehearsals with Pierre Levy for *Face-à-Face* (Encounters) at the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe of the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris in July 2018.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

**Deborah Black** is a multi-disciplined embodied teacher and artist. Her current research engages embodiment as a tool for social and artistic change by utilising her knowledge and practice of the Six Viewpoints, Suzuki and Grotowski Actor Trainings, various somatic trainings, and dance. She works with UK-based poet, Alyson Hallett, teaching workshops on writing from the body. A former faculty member at the Fontys Hogeschool voor de Kunsten in Tilburg (NL), Deborah currently offers workshops and private coaching in Holland, France, Germany, Belgium, the UK, NYC, and on-line. Previously, she performed in Wijland (Tuning People, BE), Edda/Voluspå (Ymist, NO), Ann Hamilton's exhibition, *An Event of A Thread*, at the Armory in New York as an associate artist with Anne Bogart's SIT Company. Dance credits include adapting and performing locally and internationally, two commissioned solos of Deborah Hay; and dancing in the works of Susan Rethorst, Anneke Hansen, and Fitzgerald and Stapleton.

**Roger Bygott** is a multidisciplinary artist and writer based at Suite Studios in Salford, Greater Manchester. He uses mark making, photography, found objects, dance and video as an enquiry into what it means to be an embodied being. Roger collaborated with Scott Thurston to provide the photography for two poetry publications: *Poems for the Dance* (Aquifer, 2017) and *We Must Betray Our Potential* (The Red Ceilings Press, 2018). Artist statement: 'I look for charge in the body, energy in the urban landscape, play in process, and delight in expression. I work with the tension between the desire to contact a childlike innocence and the need to engage with adult concepts.' Roger is a director of Manifest Art Festival and a Temporary Custodian of Islington Mill Arts centre in Salford.

**Elena Catalano** is a dance artist and a scholar. She has established herself as one of the finest exponents in the Odissi style (Indian classical dance) in the UK and has been the recipient of several scholarships and awards, such as the prestigious Nritya Yuva Award 2017. She is a core member of the pioneering Odissi Ensemble and has been touring with this across the country since 2015. She works at Kingston University of London, teaching Odissi, somatic practice, dance anthropology/ethnography, post-colonial studies. As a creative artist, she is interested in exploring the relationship between word and movement, investigating the potential within traditional approaches to poetry in dance. She is also interested in investigating the boundaries between micro and macro-cosm, the human body and the earth-body. Elena is also engaged in applied choreographic practice, using creative processes to empower communities of people and produce a positive impact on society.

**Rachel Connor** is a dramatist, dancer and writer of fiction. She is the author of award-winning short stories and a novel, *Sisterwives* (Crocus Books). Her debut radio play *The Cloistered Soul* was broadcast by BBC Radio 4 as part of the Original British Dramatists series. She has also written for stage, including a site-responsive adaptation of August Strindberg's *A Dream Play* for Manchester Festival Fringe, which won the award for most innovative use of space. As the Course Director at Leeds Beckett University, Rachel oversees undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Creative Writing. For over twenty years she has danced Gabrielle Roth's Five Rhythms, which underpins her evolving embodied creative practice. You can find Rachel on Twitter @rachel\_novelist and online at [www.rachelconnorwriter.com](http://www.rachelconnorwriter.com)

**Alison Gibb's** work investigates language through experimental explorations into creative processes and artistic methods of making art, poetry and performance. She has performed her work at a variety of conferences, reading series and arts events, including The Other Room, POLYply & E:Poetry Festival and was resident at The Banff Centre, Canada as part of the In(ter)ventions Literary Arts programme in 2013. Alison has published three pamphlets with The Knives Forks and Spoons Press: *a.vase* (2017), *Silent Diagrams* (2013) and *Parallel to Red In Chorus* (2011) and a sound collage CD, *Pomegranates in*

*the Oak*, was produced by zimZalla in 2012. Her bookwork *I am knot . . . a poster in pieces of POWER* was published by ambergris press in 2016 and other recent work has appeared in *Long Poem Magazine*, *Poetry Wales*, *Colony* and *3am*. See [www.alisongibb.com](http://www.alisongibb.com)

**Hannah Mackay** practises and teaches shiatsu in Manchester. This practice includes bringing together words, concepts, feelings, movement and interconnection within the experience of the physical body (self and other). Hannah has a PhD in Psychology from the University of Leeds and has worked as a Research Fellow on projects investigating psychotherapy (process, training and outcomes) and shiatsu, including writing for publication. She has been involved in dance and movement throughout her life. As a child and young adult she was involved in ballet, contemporary dance and physical theatre, and devising shows with her sister in the living room. Since 1994 she has been practising conscious dance (Five Rhythms, Open Floor and Movement Medicine) and is now an Apprentice practitioner of Movement Medicine. She has performed at poetry events in Manchester, and her poetry has appeared in publications in the shiatsu and movement world, as well as in the magazine *When Women Waken*.

**Camilla Nelson** has published, installed, exhibited and performed her work in Europe, the Middle East, North America and Australia. She is currently touring her first solo show – *Reading Movement* – a movement language work whose draft script was long-listed for The Leslie Scalapino Award for Innovative Women Performance Writers in 2016. Camilla was awarded a PhD in Performance Writing by Falmouth University in 2012 and is the founding editor of Singing Apple Press, a small independent press that produces hand-crafted, limited edition poem-prints, books and other objects. See [www.camillanelson.co.uk](http://www.camillanelson.co.uk)

**Mary Pearson** has trained, performed, and mentored at Ponderosa Dance P.O.R.C.H. summer school (Germany), and studied physical theatre creation at Kiklos Teatro (Italy). Her BA was in visual art and English literature, with dance, from Oberlin College, (USA). Solo works *FoMO*, *mofos!*, *The Sand Dog Cometh*, and *FAILURE (& other opportunities for non-linear success)*, centred on themes of failure, gender performance, consumerism, excess and digital age overwhelm, and toured in the UK and internationally 2012-18. Mary's latest project, *How to be Afraid?* is a duet collaboration with Mayfield Brooks (NYC) that approaches the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade as a haunted house, finding 'hauntings' and unresolved trauma in our current psyches. Alongside her performance work, Mary teaches regularly as a visiting artist in HE, at Liverpool Hope University and various UK performance departments. As an independent, she teaches, curates and organises improvisation and performance workshops and international artist exchanges, recently including FAILURE lab and REMIX residency at Betonest (Germany). She is based in Liverpool.

**Skye Reynolds** is an independent dance artist, performance-maker and educator whose practice is experimental, body-based and influenced by the politics of real life. Passionate and curious about multi-artform communication, she has over twenty years' experience working across professional and community art worlds in UK and abroad. Her current work integrates language and movement in a style she describes as 'Stand Up Dance', a body-text performance practice seeking to embody the artist's voice and exploring the question: how to make art as action? Previous collaborations include: Janis Claxton Dance, Curious Seed and Derevo. Her solo work *PITCH* was created 2016-17 with choreographer Jo Fong, supported by Creative Scotland and toured Scotland/Wales 2016-17. Current performance and research collaborations 2018-19 include: Khamlane Halscakda (Sweden); Director Susan Worsfold (UK); pavleheidler (Sweden). Skye's work navigates the edges of dance, seeking new and alternative platforms and partnerships. She was Dance Artist in Residence with Imagineate Children's Festival 2011-13 and has twice been invited to Iran by British Council/Fadj International Festival to co-devise new dance-theatre. Skye co-curates Edinburgh's *Something Smashing* dance &

music improvisation events and is Associate Movement Director for Adam with National Theatre of Scotland. As an educator, Skye is Engagement Artist with Capital Theatres Edinburgh and Associate Artist with Starcatchers. She studies Somatic Movement Education and is training to be a Feldenkrais Practitioner. She teaches Creative Practice Workshop at Paris Summer Dance Academy and was Guest Lecturer with Scottish School of Contemporary Dance. See [www.skyereynolds.com](http://www.skyereynolds.com)

**Sarie Mairs Slee**, a trained musician and dancer, has been working in the messy territories between dance and theatre for the last fifteen years. She is a Lecturer in Dance at the University of Salford and works as an artist/academic across choreography, devising and writing. From 2010-2013, her work focused on collaboration with Studio Matejka, a performance laboratory ensemble in permanent residence at the Grotowski Institute in Wrocław, Poland. Since 2013, her creative work has delved into interdisciplinary collaboration, working with a range of writers, composers, designers and performers on the performative possibilities of the body in creative action.

**Clarissa Smith** is a dancer artist and facilitator. She has a growing interest in the inner workings of dance and performance arts projects, and the way dance can assist people with neurogenic communication disorders. She aims to work as a dance producer and dance movement psychotherapist. Clarissa studied Dance at the University of Salford and during this time worked as administrator for Kapow Dance. It was this experience that led her to delve deeper into what you don't see as an audience member – the hard work put in to make everything happen.

**Elaine Thomas** is a Senior Lecturer at Roehampton University teaching contemporary technique, inclusive and community dance practice, improvisation and choreography. She co-founded the performance collective, Collaborative Dance Experience (CDE) in 2010 to create collaborations and live performances across art forms. CDE have produced performances at Village Underground, London, the Ragged School Museum, London and The New Baltic Dance Festival, Lithuania. Elaine has been a member of Amici Dance Theatre Company for seventeen years, performing with the company in the UK and abroad. She also leads workshops as part of the Amici education team. Elaine has collaborated with Alison Gibb since 2009 to produce, drawings, choreography, dialogues, sound-scores, texts and performances. Their collaborations have been shown at E-Poetry Festival, Practice, Process and Paradox and Dance Fields conferences at Roehampton University. Elaine studied dance, performance, fine art practice and choreography at The Urdang Academy, Chelsea College of Art, Goldsmiths' College and the University of Roehampton.

**Scott Thurston** has been writing and publishing poetry for over two decades and, in the last six years, has explored the possibilities of poetry and movement in work with national and international artists. His poetry publications, *We Must Betray Our Potential* (2018), *Draft Vicinity* (2018), *Poems for the Dance* (2017), *Figure Detached Figure Impermanent* (2014) and *Reverses Heart's Reassembly* (2011), draw on these experiences. In 2017 Scott was interviewed on BBC Radio 3's *The Verb* for a special programme exploring 'The Language of Dance'.

**Sally-Shakti Willow** researches and writes utopian poetics and performs poetry as ritual to open up [r]evolutionary space for positive transformation. She teaches poetry and creative writing at the University of Westminster. Her poems have been published by *Adjacent Pineapple*, *Eyewear*, *The Projectionist's Playground* and *Zarf*. Chapbooks to date: *The Unfinished Dream* (Sad Press, 2016) and *Atha* (forthcoming with The Knives, Forks and Spoons Press). Sally-Shakti's other writings and reviews are published in *The Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry*, *The Contemporary Small Press* and *Northern Review*. Find her on Twitter: @Spaewitch.

**Boris Wiseman** (Visiting Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies, University of Copenhagen) has published on aesthetics and visual culture, especially in their relation to anthropology (see his monograph on Claude Lévi-Strauss). He has an ongoing interest in processes of aesthetic creation. He is currently working on Edgar Degas and the relations between images and movement in nineteenth century France. He is the Director of the Fondation Deutsch de la Meurthe, Cité internationale universitaire de Paris.



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