

Phenomenological costume-making: an embodied  
approach to movement and materiality in the making  
of performance wearables

By

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## Abstract

This practice-led research examines the creative agency of costume through a phenomenological framework that defines the relationship between the designer's body and materials within processes devised through this PhD. While scholarship on costume materiality and creative practice is gaining ground, by leading this research through a sustained and iterative examination of the development of my own embodied costume design and making processes, an original approach to costume creation as movement practice is developed. This entails a constructing of costume as elemental, iterative, and abstract, rather than its representational, text and character-centred form.

Questioning how costume might be understood as valuable creative agent within performance emerges from my own experience as costume design practitioner for both conventional theatre and expanded approaches to performance making. As traditional costume design procedures embedded in hierarchies of performance practice do not engage with the costume maker's own bodily movement, this analysis provides a phenomenology-led methodology that positions the costume designer as the initiator in processes of performance making. This research therefore extends the theorisation of costume as open-ended and collaborative process, which can engender performance within the workshop space and positions costume as integral to the development of movement and sense making at the core of performance.

Such embodied costume design process is framed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory of the body-in-the-world (1945, 1964a) and the first-person experience of the phenomenon as relational to self, materials and others. In the devising of *Movement-Wearable Making* laboratoire, this research builds on Jacques Lecoq's *Laboratoire d'Étude du Mouvement* framed through phenomenology as site for co-creation with and through costume materiality.

The experiential movement-led methodology that results from this PhD advances understandings of the relationship between costume and performance by examining the unfolding of phenomenological costume-making processes and materiality as a mutual and co-creative process. Situated in the scholarly development of interdisciplinary approaches to costume, movement and performance, this research

also contributes more broadly to phenomenology-led, experience-led and practice-led research methodologies beyond performance. This research could be applied within other disciplines that employed embodied research methods.

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In memory of my mother Bernadette and my brother Paul.

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## Navigation

This thesis contains 11 short videos that are intended to be viewed during the reading of the dissertation. These videos are extracts from film documentation of laboratoire practice research. Video links are cited in the text.

The submission of the online version of this thesis is accompanied by the pdf document 'BFortin Thesis Video Links', containing the 11 video links. Videos are made available through University of the Arts London.

Solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal:

Video 1.mp4

*Laboratoire 1:*

Video 2.mp4

Video 3.mp4

Video 4.mp4

*Laboratoire 2:*

Video 5.mp4

Video 6.mp4

Video 7.mp4

Video 8.mp4

Video 9.mp4

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Video 11.mp4



## Introduction

What new insights could be gained on costume and performance practice from the examination of the designer's embodied knowledge of designing and fabricating performance wearables? This practice-led research applies phenomenology to the investigation of the agency of costume in performance making and calls for the reassessment of costume design as a collaborative phenomenological exploration process. While scholarship on costume materiality and creative practice is gaining ground, the phenomenological position taken for this research provides a detailed and iterative examination of my own embodied costume design and making processes to develop a new practice and experience-based research method of costume co-creation. Framing my practice within Merleau-Pontian theories of embodiment I develop an original approach of costume as movement practice, thus challenging conventional notions of 'costume' as representational.

How does examining the essential nature of the costume 'in-becoming' and the relationship between movement and materials contribute to the development of costume as an open-ended and collaborative process? To engage with this question and to lead this research on costume as experiential and iterative, the concept of phenomenological costume-making is developed and mobilised. Phenomenological costume-making is concerned with the embodied costume-making process evolving from relationships between myself, materials and others. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory of 'the body-in-the-world' (*Phénoménologie de la Perception*, 1945, *Le Visible et l'Invisible*, 1964a)<sup>1</sup> and the first-person experience of the phenomenon as relational to the self and others provides a framework on which to develop a methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry.

The definition of 'costume' for this research is of a materiality that emerges through the initial encounter with costume-making movement, one that becomes known within and through this encounter with the body. This approach is grounded in Merleau-Ponty's understanding of perception as taking place through the moving body (1945).

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<sup>1</sup> The original French and English translations of Merleau-Ponty's *Phénoménologie de la Perception* (1945) and *Le Visible et l'Invisible* (1964) are used in this thesis. The English translations used in this thesis are *Phenomenology of Perception* by Donald A. Landes (2012) and *The Visible and the Invisible* by Alphonso Lingis (1968). Sources are specified in the text.

Therefore, I place the research focus on the costume creative process itself as effectuated through the interplay of body and matter, rather than on the final costume object, a position that departs from costume as 'theatricality' charged with the function of 'covering or changing an individual's identity or the process of locating a wearer in place and time' (Bugg, 2021, p.217). The prioritisation of costume in the creative process (Barbieri and Pantouvaki, 2016) underpins my argument for an approach towards costume understood as a transformative agent that exceeds conventional costume assignments of representation and thereby reconsiders the role of costume design in performance creation. Thus, the demarcation of costume for this research is abstract and 'in-becoming'. It corresponds to a process taking place through perception, non-linearity and temporality and is focused on the development process. This re-definition of costume is at the heart of the phenomenological process of costume-making that I propose with this research.

### **Aims and objectives**

This enquiry addresses two aims. One is to systematically apply Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology so as to transform my own costume creation process, thus expanding the role of the designer. The second aim is to develop a new costume method as a movement practice that questions the fundamental nature of costume.

The objectives engaged by these aims are:

- To formulate a methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry developed from the costume designer's own bodily engagement and responses in-movement.
- To explore, through phenomenology, costume as a processual, open-ended, co-creative and collaborative practice.
- To investigate the relationships between bodily movement and materiality in the process of phenomenological costume-making.
- To define the role of materials within the relationship between making movement and collaborative phenomenological costume exploration.

- To develop a workshop practice that repositions the costume designer as the initiator in the development of collaborative performance and creative research practice.

### **Situating my research in the critical and nascent field of costume and embodiment**

This research builds on a growing field of existing Critical Costume discourse and on the acceptance that costume has agency in performance making as much as in culture (Barbieri 2017), a notion that has recently come to the fore in scholarship as much as in practice, see for example, the Costume Agency on-line exhibition in 2020. Costume as having agency was first discussed by costume scholar and designer Donatella Barbieri in *Encounters in the Archive: Reflections on Costume* (Barbieri, 2012b) in relation to archived costume objects. The gap in Critical Costume theory and practice addressed specifically in this thesis is the role the costume designer's own body in-movement plays in revealing the agency of costume as phenomenological practice. While agency arising from movement has been acknowledged within a workshop context (Barbieri, 2006, 2007, 2012, 2021), the physical and phenomenological engagement of the designer with wearable materiality of the performance as critical in the attribution of agency to costume has been under researched. In the analysis of costume practice the prioritisation of the audience and the performer's experience limits the designer's input to the visual appearance (Bicât, 2012), something that my research disputes by placing costume matter and the designer's own moving body at the core of the investigation.

The investigation of the designer's embodied costume process and sensory experience of designing and fabricating prompts the questioning of performance presuppositions, placing this research in the theory and practice established through the Critical Costume international research network (Hann, 2014). During the past decade, the important development of biannual Critical Costume conferences and exhibitions has produced new scholarship and new practices. Costume 'considered in and on its own terms' (Pantouvaki and McNeil, 2021, p.4), and as a field of research in its own right, is the result of an accumulation of research and practices, and the emancipation through actions and initiatives by practitioners, designers and scholars. Founded in 2013 (see footnote 18), Critical Costume developed as a network of costume research and practice proposing new questions and scholarships between

body, design, and performance (Hann, 2014, p.3). This framing aimed to develop a field that challenges the conventional understanding of costume as subservient to other aspects of the performance (Hann, 2014, p.4) and address limited costume discourse due to 'the absence of a significant canon of literature or established methods for costume enquiry' (Hann 2014, p.3). The establishment of *Studies in Costume and Performance* in 2015 has provided a space for theory and practice to find expression, including some of the sources from which this research draws, particularly those involving experimental methodologies through movement and costume materiality.

Previously, publishing on costume was largely 're-publications of old classics', mostly guides concerning accurate historical re-production (Barbieri, 2012b). The limited research led by practitioners meant that conventional understanding of costume dominated the theoretical field (Hann, 2014, p.4). Critical Costume co-founder<sup>2</sup> and scholar Rachel Hann attributes the expansion of Critical Costume to the development of practice as research (PaR), thus through methods of costuming 'as a means of examining the status of the body within contemporary art and performance' (2014, p.4). The subordination of costume maintained by the conventions of naturalistic storytelling, in theatre as in film, has meant that the definition of costuming has centred on making costume with its workers 'invisible'. This assumption is refuted by Critical Costume and addressed with the focus on the growing academic identity and profile of costume studies (Hann, 2014, p.4) as a field of research of which this thesis is part.

Performance studies scholar Aoife Monks' *The Actor in Costume* (2010) has been pivotal in promoting costume and its significance in performance. By centring on the discourse between performer, costume, and audience in the making of performance, Monks' seminal book moved forward the discourse on costume. However, foregrounding the actor's body in the relationship with the costume maintains the limits placed on costume as subordinated in the performance. Furthermore, its overlooking of the relation between material costume and moving bodies engaged in costuming processes, leaves the status quo unchallenged. My research focuses rather on the creative impetus of movement and making.

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<sup>2</sup> *Critical Costume* was founded in 2013 by Rachel Hann and Sidsel Bech. Sofia Pantouvaki convened CC2015 at Aalto University. All three are founding convenors of Critical Costume.

Barbieri however proposed interdisciplinary approaches to research in costume, both in *Costume in Performance, Materiality Culture and the Body* (2017) and in her previous publishing, by framing costume as ‘the complex object’ engaged with and through the absence of a wearing body. From this viewpoint, costume is the means by which to ‘acquire agency in the “dialogue” with an engaged viewer in the here and now’ (Barbieri, 2012b). I have approached my research through the absence of the performer not only as a viewer but as a mover-maker informed by an instrumental engagement with phenomenology.

Costume as independent mediator (Hann, 2017, p.1), thus agentic, offers this study a methodology which also builds on performance studies and the development of phenomenological approaches foregrounding the body ‘to address the absence of discourse on costume’ (Barbieri, 2012b). In this thesis the focus on the experience of costume is not concerned in debating the audience relationship to the performance but builds on research that intends to perceive costume as the means to ‘highlight or even generate gesture and movement’ (Barbieri, 2012b), pointing not only to the material agency of costume but also to its performativity in the act of wearing. I build on both Barbieri and Hann and their foregrounding of the designer in the creation of the performance to frame the study of my designer’s experience, with costume matter as independent mediator. The examination of the designer’s body costuming from the perspective of costume acting on the body that this analysis enacts, is a means for exposing the entanglement of bodily movement and materiality of costume.

The investigation of the role of the body and materiality in the creative process of costume design has seen recent developments of costume design methodologies by designers, some of whom are trained, practice or have experience in disciplines other than costume design, such as contemporary dance (Hammond, 2019), sculpture (Lane, 2019), and ceramics (Summerlin, 2019). Abigail Hammond used her embodied knowledge of dance to understand corporally and channel the movement performed by others in the design procedure. The analysis of movement was the initial stage of her costume methodology. Methodologies developing from the dissolving of boundaries between disciplines and the engagement of the designer’s body in the process of costume expose new perspectives of creative practice. I too draw on my fine arts background to orient my artistic approach of costume. For the research centred on the designer’s corporeal self as the first-hand medium, my art practice permeates my phenomenological costume-making, thus enriching my descriptions of

the performativity of costume materiality (descriptions of my phenomenological costume-making practice are presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6). Charlotte Østergaard's methodology of costume, which she calls 'performing artistic research on costume' (Østergaard, 2018), integrates her movement and her art, fashion and textile object practice. Her work involves collaboration with practitioners from different fields. Research presented at the third *Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition* at the University of Surrey (CC2018) included a performance by Østergaard and interdisciplinary performer Sally E. Dean (Taylor, 2019). Their work was one of several examples demonstrating the growing interest around the agency of costume and how it provides a way to expand practice as relational. While neither Østergaard nor Dean approach their practice from a phenomenological perspective, we share similar concerns of placing our own bodies at the core of the material process of creation. I presented my pioneering work on the methodology of phenomenological costume-making during the on-line *Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition 2020* (CC2020)<sup>3</sup> as part of the *Guided by Material* panel discussion, which was included in the *Costume Agency Artistic Research Project*. Prior to this, at *Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space 2019* (PQ19), I introduced my project at the OISTAT *Costume Design for Performance* event<sup>4</sup>. *Prague Quadrennial* and *World Stage Design* (WSD) are led by practitioners who are shaping the field. These successive international events advance alternative and experimental approaches to costume led principally by practitioners.

Innovative costume design methodologies by designers, such as the ones mentioned above, are contributions that evidence the ways in which costume design approaches that innovate by incorporating artistic disciplines and wide-ranging skills is beginning to transform perceptions of both the designer and of what constitutes costume. Whilst this research sits within the interrogation of costumed bodies and the craft of costume through practice and the questioning of methodologies of costume, the foregrounding of the materiality of costume and body in movement also places this research beyond straight forward compartmentalisation of costume within scenography and performance design, thus transgressing into physical performance research and the study of the laboratory of performance making.

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<sup>3</sup> CC2020 was initiated by Christina Lindgren and Sofia Pantouvaki.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.oistat.org>

Sofia Pantouvaki and Peter McNeil's *Performance Costume: New Perspectives and Methods* (2021) presents new approaches to research on costume and materiality from scholars and practitioners that contribute experimental and exploratory developments to the growing field of Critical Costume studies and interdisciplinary practice. Of particular interest to my study are methodologies of costume overlapping materiality, movement, performance, embodiment and experience. These include Barbieri's development of movement and materials workshops from costume practice-led methodology of performance making that expand costume in the field of phenomenological studies. Jessica Bugg's interdisciplinary approaches to dress and performance applying phenomenological and practice-led methods of investigation is also of interest. While I build on their research, my engagement with phenomenology over an extended period of analysis and iterations of practice is unprecedented.

*Performance Costume* (2021) also includes Sally E. Dean's somatic costume design methodology for performance and the 'touch in wearing' method. Her *Somatic Movement, Costume & Performance Project* was developed in collaboration with costume designers Sandra Arrònz Lacunza and Carolina Rieckhof who made all the workshop wearable elements. The development of costume as part of the devising process brought costume material expertise to the somatic movement and performance workshop methodology. I have benefited from these workshops, which are amongst the ones I attended as part of my own research (see chapter 4.1), however, my practice differs as I work unaided, being both mover and maker.

Dean's article 'Where is the body in the costume design process?' (2016) centres on costume design methodologies used as part of the *Somatic Movement, Costume & Performance Project*. However, phenomenological costume-making practiced for devising a new costume method (see Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework') brings together professional knowledge of materiality, experience of the craft of costume, phenomenology, movement and co-creative participation by actions of making. This study of relationships between the designer's body and other bodies entwined with the materiality of costume is critical because, situated outside of the performance space and within a workshop context, it contributes to the discourse on costume interdisciplinary practices and challenges boundaries between costume, performance, movement and art disciplines engaged with performance, movement and embodiment.

The detailed examination of my designer's self creating costume through my moving with materials on me and in space exposed the complex relationship of the body that designs with the materiality of the performance wearable and with the environment of creation. The relationship of my experience of designing with other diverse bodies affected by the same costume materiality enables my engagement with 'the interdisciplinary tensions that score how costume is encountered, conceived and articulated' (Hann, 2017, p.8). Therefore, describing the costume from the experience of the agency of materiality on my creative process enabled the distancing of my design practice from the pre-determined objective of costume production, and with this the stepping away from the prioritisation of completion over sensory experience (Barbieri, 2021; Dean, 2021).

This research is original in the way it describes costume design actions as sensed and intimate; wearing materials whilst fabricating the performance wearable on my designer's body exposes subtle and distinctive aspects of the agency of costume. Centring the research on the process I embody, positions costume as the interplay of my movement of making and matter. From this understanding, the research foregrounds the open-endedness of costume rather than the exclusivity and exactness of costume prescribed by an assigned performance (Maccoy, 2014; Reid, 2013; Unwin, 2004).

I build on critical discourse on phenomenology and costume (Barbieri, 2012b, 2021; Bugg, 2021) and on scenographic materiality (McKinney, 2015, 2019) to position phenomenological costume-making, the costume as abstract form put forward with this thesis, as material embodiment process and movement. Re-defining costume as process, situates my research beyond the limits put upon costume in dressing the performing body. Within *Critical Costume* my research can engage with 'the associated interdisciplinary challenges that this idea engenders' (Hann, 2017, p.2).

Along with the knowledge and experience of costume design acquired from training and working as professional costume designer for theatre and devised performance (site-specific and outdoor narrative-based productions), my training in fine arts orients my artistic and experimental approach of costume. Drawing actions carried out during the research when re-enacting my movement of making costume with drawing medium (see section 3.6) was initially to supplement the collection of observations through descriptions of the lived-experience of the costume in-progress. Drawing evolved into a new form of costume-led practice (see Chapters 4 and 6) and by

translating costume making movement into drawing actions, my costume practice has expanded. This development of a new art practice from costume embodiment is contributing to the field of Critical Costume new practices, methodologies, and scholarship (Barbieri, 2021; Dean, 2021; Østergaard, 2018; Bågander, 2020; Bugg, 2021). This PhD is the first study to contribute to the discussion on costume agency a methodology of costume as experiential movement-led practice developed from an analysis of the designer's and participants' bodies in-movement with materials. Phenomenological costume-making introduced with this research enabled the development of a research laboratoire method, *Movement-Wearable Making* (MWM) (discussed later in this section and outlined in Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework'), to practice actions of costume-making from an understanding of costume as transformative agent. This concept builds on Joslin McKinney's agentic capacity of things and is grounded in Merleau-Ponty's embodiment of senses (McKinney, 2015, p.123). The time-bound laboratoire space created through the Merleau-Pontian phenomenological principle of 'bracketing' sets aside what ties bodies to conventions and accepted understanding. In this delimited space, the materiality of costume-making with its power to interfere with bodies subverts orders and positions of body and materiality. As experiential and as a process, costume originating from the space of co-creation is un-prescribed and in constant change. Thus, the definition of costume I present, phenomenological costume-making, challenges conventions, evolves my costume process into a critical practice of costume design and locates this research in the critical and nascent field of costume and embodiment.

### **How the practice attends to the aims and objectives of the research**

The methodological approach has been developed to specifically address the aims and objectives of this research. Framed by phenomenology, the embodiment of costume underpins the development of the investigation of designing and fabricating 'performance wearables', and is the locus of the relationship between movement and materiality. The focus on body-sensing enables intimate insight into the relationship between bodily movement and costume materials. The analysis presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 provides a detailed description of my first-hand sensory experience of the costume making process. This centralising of my body and an on-going reflection on my phenomenological practice attend to my research aims, which are to transform my own costume process and develop a new costume method which figures as a movement practice.

Researching my embodied costume process enables me to systematically apply the Merleau-Pontian theories of intersubjectivity, reversibility and flesh in ‘the here and now’ of the reciprocal engagement between me and the environment of actions of making and materials of costume in which costume is created. The relationship between body and materiality in the creative process is examined from the perspective of phenomenological costume-making generated from the organisation of the time-bound research *laboratoire*, outlined later in Chapter 3, ‘Methodological framework’. In this thesis the term ‘*laboratoire*’ refers to the physical space where temporal and intensive corporeal and material explorations of the process of making costumes by a group of participants<sup>5</sup> takes place. ‘*Laboratoire*’ encompasses a definition of space grounded in the performance workshop, a distinct physical location dedicated to experimentation, yet separated from the performance space. The development of a new costume-based *laboratoire* research method enables me to explore my experience of relationships between bodily movement and the materiality of performance wearables as ‘phenomenological costume-making’.

In recent years, the contemporary discipline of costume design has prompted a considerable amount of published literature, which has investigated the role of the body and materiality in the creative process. The research has tended to involve the development of costume methods by designers who have been trained in dance (Hammond, 2019), bodily movement (Lane, 2019), interdisciplinary approaches of materiality (Østergaard, 2018; Summerlin, 2019; Dean, 2021) and fashion (Bugg, 2021). Importantly, these outputs mark the ways in which innovative costume design practices are beginning to transform perceptions of both the designer and of costume, yet this research remains largely centred on the production of costumed performance as a final outcome. In contrast, practice-based research increasingly challenges the conventions of costume through explorations of the role of movement. Costume and materiality workshops (Barbieri, Pecorari and Connolly, 2015) are contributing to a critical approach to costume by questioning the primacy of the body and the role of matter in the design process. That said, until now costume as a phenomenology-based practice exposed through the analysis of the designer’s bodily engagement has not yet been treated as the focus of research. Existing research related to

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<sup>5</sup> In Chapter 3.5, ‘Recruiting *laboratoire* participants’, I explain the role of participation in the preparation of the *laboratoire* space. *Laboratoire* participants are also called ‘movement-wearable makers’ in the thesis to emphasise the importance of movement in the method.

phenomenology in costume and scenography includes work on agential costume practice and phenomenology (Barbieri, 2016, 2017, 2021) and on the agency of materiality within scenography and performance (McKinney, 2015). However, sustained phenomenological approaches to costume materiality and costume process outside of performance and design are sparse and, to the best of my knowledge, no sustained investigations on bodily encounters with materiality, such as this research offers, have been published.

The focus on abstract costume, movement and the space of co-creation together set the limits of the research on a definition of costume as a processual, open-ended and iterative practice. Abstract costume has a wide frame of reference including modernism and the avant-garde, and the birth of modern dance, that I will discuss in the next chapter<sup>6</sup>. However, in mobilising the abstract form of costume for this research, I diverge from the work that I have previously done within narrative and storytelling contexts where the use of semiotics is prevalent. Abstraction delineates the nature of costume as experiential and changing, the very characteristics with which this thesis is concerned. Abstract costume corresponds to processes and creative potentials. It is a form of costume which primarily exists outside the boundaries of narrative and naturalistic performance production convention, while at the same time being included, but not restricted to, other types of performance-making through costume. This approach is rooted in performance practice and the evolution of performance workshops. Hans-Thies Lehmann's 'postdramatic theatre' (2006), identifies the on-going transgression of traditional theatre rules that have foregrounded actor and text and dominated discourse and practice since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Developments such as Lehmann's contextualise the performance workshop, described by Richard Schechner as a site 'where new ways of doing things are explored and where resistances to new knowledge are identified and dealt with' (2013, p.235). The emphasis placed on the relation between bodily movement and the materiality of abstract costume positions this method in the 'pre-performance' phase of what Schechner identifies as the 'structure of performance' (2003). Framed by anthropology (*Les Rites de Passage*, Van Gennep, 1909) Schechner's structure of performance is inclusive of all parts of life, ranging from theatre to reality itself

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<sup>6</sup> In the last ten years, a large volume of published studies describe costume in modernism and the avant-garde, including: Pritchard, 2011; Barbieri, 2017; Trimmingham, 2017; and Andrew, 2020.

(Schechner, 2003). Schechner's definition thus situates abstract costume squarely within the performance system and in so doing emphasises the preparation stage as a vital constituent of performance, the mode of transformation by which 'people turn into other people' (Schechner, 2003, p.xviii). My research intends to address the performance system's preliminary stage in detail.

The purpose of phenomenological costume-making is to observe the interaction of the bodily movement with materials in both solo and group settings, an aim which required the development of a group practice specific to my research. As a phenomenological methodology, the interpretative approach I adopt for the description of the lived experience means that it is not the actual objects produced that are analysed, but instead my experience of the costume-making process. This approach is grounded in the tradition of theatre laboratory and workshop (Brown, 2019) and the new ideas about theatre and performance, independent of the space for performance, that these have provided.

The context of my research and its intentions render the defining of the material bodily practices developed through this PhD purely as 'workshops' inadequate, as my practice iterations go far beyond the scope of the movement workshops that are often devised for performers, movement practitioners and actors. I therefore adopt the term 'laboratoire' that derives from Jacques Lecoq's *Laboratoire d'Étude du Mouvement* (LEM) and his work that originates from body movement, object and space (*The Moving Body*, 2000; *Theatre of Movement and Gesture*, 2006). While using these works as a guide, development of acting mastery is not the concern of this study. Lecoq's work with mask and physicality is expanded through the engagement between the movement-of-making and the materiality of costume in-becoming. My physical engagement with Lecoq's principles has contributed to my development of '*Movement-Wearable Making*' (MWM), the laboratoire method of phenomenological costume-making enquiry. I have devised 'MWM' over three stages of practice research. The first stage of research method development is the solo practice research, the second stage is *Movement-Wearable Making Laboratoire 1* and the third is *Movement-Wearable Making Laboratoire 2*. These three stages of practice research are introduced in Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework', and their analysis is presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

## My position as costume designer at the centre of the research

I trace the beginnings of my interest in the exploration of the bodily relationship with materiality as a creative approach back to my studies as an MA student in Costume Design for Performance at the London College of Fashion (2008-11). At that time, I was introduced to experimentations with the design process through the involvement of the body in-movement. I began to perceive ways through which the designer's own bodily movement could hold the potential to generate costume from movement that engaged with the spatial and temporal setting. Since that time, the foregrounding of the bodily movement, more specifically my own as a generative creative locus for costume and performance has been an important preoccupation in my work. Following this my collaborations with art practitioners and performance makers (detailed below), applied a collective approach to the creation of experimental attires and masks, which oriented my practice towards exploratory research into material-led making.

My concern with costume's potential as a creative agent emerged as a personal professional practice while I was designing costumes for both conventional theatre and theatre in the expanded field<sup>7</sup> (Read, 2013, McKinney & Palmer, 2017). My experience of costume within an expanded approach to scenography<sup>8</sup>, notably with the site-specific company dreamthinkspeak (2010, 2011, 2012)<sup>9</sup>, encouraged me to work in ways that blurred the lines between costume roles and responsibilities. *Before I Sleep* (2010), for instance, was a scenography-led devised piece created for a multistorey disused Cooperative department store in Brighton. Consumerism and climate change were the basis for multiple re-creations of site-specific scenographic compositions in which scenes inspired by a naturalistic theatre production of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* were enacted. Installations of inanimate objects,

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<sup>7</sup> The re-defining of theatre in the expanded field of performance was introduced by Schechner (1973) and described by Alan Read (2013) as a responsive approach to the connectedness of theatre, performance and disciplines including anthropology, psychology and sociology (Read, 2013, p.xi). Read's identification of the 're-invigoration of art forms' as an intention shared by many performance researchers (2013, xxii, xxxvii) situates the co-authorship of costume in the collaborative process of creating the visual and spatial construction of the performance.

<sup>8</sup> In *Scenography Expanded* (2017), Joslin McKinney and Scott Palmer attribute the 'significant expansion of scenography' and the 'radical re-visioning of practice' that has taken place over the last decade to the bringing together of academic research (2017, p.35). While this emphasises the radical change that has taken place recently, costume continues to be referred to as part of scenography.

<sup>9</sup> *Before I Sleep*, 2010 and 2011; and *The Rest Is Silence*, 2012.

props and set, as well as live and filmed action in costume were placed around the site and juxtaposed against a near-future landscape of globalisation in a re-imagined 'world' retail experience. My costume role for this production encouraged me to make a move away from conventional theatre in that it incorporated all the necessary costume specialisms, including design, supervision, sourcing and making, as well as wardrobe management. At an early stage of my career, the scope of the costume responsibilities I assumed for this production of devised theatre, and for others that followed<sup>10</sup>, has provided me with insightful experiences from which I have developed my practice of experimental approaches to performance making. Collaborating with performance makers and performers increased my understanding of my contribution as a designer to the development of the performance. When costume is integral to this process, closeness, empathy and a physical understanding of the wearer's expressive movements emerge. A key experience in this realisation was my professional involvement in an outreach production by the Sabotage Theatre Company<sup>11</sup>. I took unfinished costumes that I had designed to a rural rehearsal location at Romney Marsh, Kent. There I invited the performers to get involved with the finishing. At this invitation, one performer expressed how much sense it made to her that she should put the fastenings onto the bodice that she would perform in and she said that sewing her garment would help her to better embody her character. Creating such an opportunity for collaboration between designer and performer in the making process was especially powerful because it stimulated a different physical enactment of the performers' character, thus bringing a new corporeal expression into the performance making process. However, like conventional theatre, devised theatre production procedure still embeds and maintains traditional hierarchies of practice: costume remains subordinate to directorial authority and can be impacted by restricted budgets (Bicât, 2012, p.12). Even within the expanded field, my role as costume designer was liable to be relegated to designing for performers and actors at a late stage in the process, usually beyond the point when I could have made any substantial impact on existing ideas. This research thesis therefore argues for recognition of the value of costume-making as an integral element of the development of performance. Taken together, the collaborations, research approaches and material experimentations stimulated the interrogation of my position within the

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<sup>10</sup> See Bibliography, 'Selection of costume and performance collaborations', page 207.

<sup>11</sup> *Ravens*, 2013. Touring theatre production, Kent.

process of creation. These experiences led to my doctoral study that proposes costume as a phenomenological process and explores my experience of costume-making that is inspired by the observation of corporeal movement in the space of creation. I was awarded a scholarship in research by London Doctoral Design Centre (LDoc), part of AHRC-Funded PhD Studentships in Design Research to develop my research as a contribution to current and future investigations of creative design practice.

During the research my practice of costume was re-oriented towards designing through the experience of the materiality of costume on my body and how I am moved by this sensation (see section 4.4). When compared to my previous design practice, for example when I designed a period dress to depict a scene from Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* (dreamthinkspeak, 2010), the difference is the prioritisation of my sensory experience whilst designing instead of having the design already in my mind from prescribed assigned performance, as was the case for the Chekhovian dress. This sensory experience is framed by the Merleau-Pontian notion of touching. Touching as 'sensing by being sensed' (Barbaras, 2001, p.181), means that touch, rather than being limited to the hands or the epidermis, becomes integrated into a total experience of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.226). This experience framed through phenomenological relationality, is within the sensible world. The sensible world, or *the other* (see page 49), allows the experience to exist outside of the body (Barbaras, 2001, pp.38-39), thus making the costume designing process a procedure of questioning by describing. I channelled this kinetic knowledge into the devising of an experiential costume-making method to engage corporally and sensorily people invited to take part in the research laboratoires. To expand my design methodology through experiential costume-making, I built on two main aspects of my former professional practice of costume design. Firstly, and previously mentioned, my physical interaction with directors, designers, performers and other creatives from theatre and performance assignments. Working with creatives during rehearsals and costume fittings provided me with knowledge of materials of costume through bodily empathy (see section 3.1). In this way, I acquired a physical understanding of the performer's movement-related interactions with costume in-making. This experiential framing of costume and its development as research method contributes a phenomenological costume design methodology to the critical costume definition of interdisciplinary practice. Secondly, the experience of designing in spaces dedicated to collaborations on costume-led performances and art exhibitions, (notably with artist

Adam James, discussed later, see page 31). This made me aware of the need to challenge the prioritisation of the visual experience in costume design (Barbieri, 2012b; Maclaurin & Monks, 2015; Bicât, 2012) and which I subsequently addressed with the foregrounding of the haptic experience in the devising of the MWM laboratoire method. I therefore, built on experiences of designing costumes in spaces of collaborative performance creation, outside the boundaries of theatre production and the effects these had on my costume process, to develop my phenomenological costume design practice. Of particular note was how sharing spaces and creating costumes amid artists and performers enabled me to assess my physical experience of designing from material exploration and the contribution of the creative environment to this process. The use of found materials to create artefacts (see 'Costume and performance making collaboration', page 31) was significant as it brought me to consider and explore components for making costume that are not traditional wearable materials, dress fabric for instance. Materials that required research on assembling methods and ways of wearing led me to develop experimental costumes by designing-through-making. Initiating costume design from the exploration of unconventional wearable materials (pages 31-32) generated different making actions than those used in my previous design work, such as placing the materials unassembled on a performance collaborator, and so different to a traditional costume fitting. From this I acquired new knowledge on assembling materials into a wearable. When I put costumes onto other wearers, I observed the materials' responses to their movements. I noticed how their bodies were changed by the corporeal experience which the costume effected. By undertaking these processes, I discovered new ways to design costume. This exploration directed my attention to the materials' performativity, and in this way prioritised *doing* over the thinking process.

Previously, designing costume for theatre and devised performance (see page 13) began with renderings, seated at a table or desk. Moving only my arms and hands, my body would remain mostly static until at a later stage of designing when physical contact with materials would take place. Designing costume for performance in the expanded field was prescribed by narrative-based concepts and the external directorial veto<sup>12</sup>. In contrast, in the spaces I organised and dedicated to my new

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<sup>12</sup> One example of production hierarchy I personally experienced was for a site-specific production, of which I wish to withhold the name, that employed me as costume designer to realise the director's vision, scripted to its finest detail. Whilst I, as all performance design professionals, was credited, in practice very limited creative agency was given to any of the skilled and experienced designers and makers involved.

approach of initiating costume through my movement, designing evolved from putting the costume in-progress on my body. Standing up and putting costume materials on me in the making space prompted the expansion of my gestures (see 'Solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal, page 123) and focused my attention on how the materials of costume made me move (figure 12, page 124, video 1.mp4). Moving in the space with materials, thus as mover-maker, informed my designing of costume.

The objective with this new costume design approach was to devise a research *laboratoire* method to engage participants in-movement through the materiality of costume in-the-making. I aimed to recruit creative people who reflect on their own practice by exploring movement (see page 87). I proceeded with the organisation of my practice of phenomenological costume-making to devise this method. This entailed designing modular costume components and fabrication processes (see section 3.4) and deciding on individual *laboratoire* time frames (see section 3.3) to progress with the research through empirical costume-making activities (see section 3.5). I applied my costume skills to the development of self-assembling pre-cut costume materials systems (figure 9, page 117) that engage the maker with movement-wearable materials in a way that prompts their movement of making, this whilst influencing, enhancing and maintaining their physical interaction with the *laboratoire* space (see section, 5.1 and figure 14, page 132). By being descriptive and incremental, activities of assembling pre-prepared materials had the purpose to generate an increasing expressiveness of MWM during iterations of *laboratoire*. This research method is outlined in Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework'.

As I proceeded from the standpoint of the materials having agency on my costume actions, I increasingly questioned my practice of costume design. The phenomenological framing of my experience of the materiality of costume pre-existing my professional design practice ('The Phenomenological approach', section 2.1) brought me to notice how this materiality influences my design movements. By centring on my sensing of the costume nascent, I practiced costume design in a way that facilitates my return in succession to the physical sensations generated when an exchange takes place between my movement and costume materials. Recursive making actions of assembling material (see section 3.1) together and on me, thus making while wearing, produced the haptic engagement of my whole body. This assisted me in going beyond impulses of movement brought about by a design already in my mind, and to instead act from the relationship with the materials

surrounding and touching me. Examining my professional practice from my personal and intimate experience of costume enabled my design process to evolve into a means for accessing new knowledge through relationships between myself, materials and others. By examining my haptic experience of individual material's properties, I evaluated their suitability for implementing the *laboratoire* method (see 'Materials' section 3.4), which generated new costume design decisions. The sequence of 'making while wearing' became a component of the MWM technique practiced in *laboratoire* (see sections 3.1 and 3.4).

Since beginning this PhD, I have re-focused my professional researcher's role beyond my pre-existing practice as a costume designer and maker by completing a one-to-one LDoc funded training programme in body-movement specifically devised for my needs. The training was delivered by theatre and performance maker Peta Lily to support my own movement expertise and my bodily awareness of others' movement. I also took part in several creative movement workshops led by prominent practitioners including Sally E. Dean's *Somatic Movement & Costume Workshops*<sup>13</sup>, artist and choreographer Cornelia Krafft's objects and movement physical workshop<sup>14</sup>, Donatella Barbieri's *Wearing Space*<sup>15</sup>, somatic performance practitioner and choreographer Thomas Kampe's improvisation and movement workshop<sup>16</sup> and performance practitioners Cass Fleming's and Amy Russell's *Imaginative Embodiment: Michael Chekhov and Jacques Lecoq*<sup>17</sup>. These specific workshop experiences provided me with an invaluable experiential understanding of embodiment which informs the development of the phenomenological enquiry. I discuss the workshop's content and the learning that these facilitated for me in more detail in Chapter 3.

Costume as materiality and as agent, along with the departure from the representational role of costume, converges with scenography researchers

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<sup>13</sup> Sally E. Dean's *Somatic Movement & Costume Workshops*, conceived in collaboration with costume designers Sandra Arróniz Lacunza and Carolina Rieckhof, Siobhan Davies Studio, London. February 2015; Clarence Mews Studio, London. March 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Cornelia Krafft's objects and movement physical workshop, London College of Fashion, December 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Donatella Barbieri's *Wearing Space* workshop, in collaboration with Giulia Pecorari and Mary Kate Connolly, London College of Fashion, June 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Kampe's improvisation and movement workshop, Siobhan Davies Studio, February 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Cass Fleming's and Amy Russell's *Imaginative Embodiment: Michael Chekhov and Jacques Lecoq*. Goldsmiths, University of London, May 2018.

Joslin McKinney and Scott Palmer's scholarly overview *Scenography Expanded: An Introduction to Contemporary Performance Design* (2017). They present theories developed from advances made within scenography as an expanded field that build on phenomenology and new materialism. McKinney and Palmer claim that more critical practice and reflection on scenography is needed to 'examine not simply what it is, but what it does and how it does it' (McKinney & Palmer 2017, p.19). As a creative and autonomous practice in emergence, scenography expanded is examined from the phenomenological concepts of relationality and affectiveness. Scenography expanded also provides fertile ground for further new materialist enquiries, which are however beyond the remit of this thesis. McKinney proposes that 'the affective register that emerges is in part the result of this new-found appreciation of materials' in scenography expanded and 'what they can do' (McKinney & Palmer, 2017, p.13). While research on the materiality of costume advances existing knowledge (Barbieri, 2017, 2021; Bugg, 2021; Dean, 2021), engagement with the Merleau-Pontian body-in-the-world in relation to the materiality of costume enables an examination of questions around the primacy of the body in its relationship with matter. For the purpose of centring on my corporeal self as relational in the material environment of making, and in focusing on the relationality of materiality to the experience of making, this research does not develop from new materialism. The position that this phenomenological practice-led research adopts on materiality is presented later in Chapter 1.

This research questions both the linear models of design and the *status quo* of costume practice, by way of creating a space that supports the costume designer's bodily engagement not only with what Merleau-Ponty (1945) terms 'the sensible world', but also with abstract costume and materiality. Therefore, the research attributes agency and value to costume designers while contributing to the research fields of costume, performance and phenomenology. I claim that my research provides a methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry which could potentially allow for important and innovative creative development enabling costume artists, designers, movement practitioners and performance artists to expand their practice through physical and material explorations. This practice-led and phenomenology-based research involves close analysis of the costume designer's and participants' bodies in-movement with materials. It is the first study that I am aware of that contributes to the discussion on costume agency from this perspective. I presented my pioneering work on this topic during the *Critical Costume Conference*

*and Exhibition* panel discussion which was included in the Costume Agency Artistic Research Project on-line conference in 2020<sup>18</sup>.

Generated initially from my own experience as a costume designer, then re-framed and advanced in the *laboratoire* practice developed through phenomenology, this enquiry contributes to critical costume studies and practices a thorough investigation that challenges the prioritisation of performers' bodies alone in the costume process and in the processes of performance making.

### **Key terms**

Throughout this thesis, the term 'costume-making' will refer to 'abstract costume-making'.

The practices '*Movement-Wearable Making Laboratoire 1*' and '*Movement-Wearable Making Laboratoire 2*' are referred to as '*Laboratoire 1*' and '*Laboratoire 2*' throughout the text.

'Laboratoire participants' are also referred to as 'movement-wearable makers' in the thesis to emphasise the movement in the method.

### **Structure of the thesis**

In Chapter 1, I situate my research within the field of costume studies. I contextualise the phenomenological framing of my designer's body to foreground my costume process in the development of the methodology. This is in the context of performance workshop and the organisation and structure of theatre, performance and body-oriented workshop and *laboratoire*. I explain how phenomenological costume-making workshop is used to question the relationship between body and material in the creative process and how this supports my critical approach towards a new definition of costume.

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<sup>18</sup> The Costume Agency Artistic Research Project was the host for the 2020 edition of the *Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition*. Sodja Lotker and Christina Lindgren were the conveners and Yuka Oyama was the curator of the exhibition. Due to the Covid 19-pandemic, the event took place in August 2020, online on [www.costumeagency.com](http://www.costumeagency.com)

In Chapter 2, I present the theoretical context and the phenomenological framework that supports the position I take in the research as initiator of a costume-making process. This involved setting up the structure and terms for costume collaboration that challenges conventional understandings of costume. I present my engagement with the notion of reversibility that is integral to the development of this research and to the transformation of my costume design process. I introduce the theories and practices of performance, scenography, materiality and movement on which I build, and my investigation of the original French writings of Merleau-Ponty.

In Chapter 3, I outline the methodological framework, research methods and structure of practice for the development of my own embodied costume design and making processes and collective making. These I use to investigate the dynamics of making actions and materials that shape the development of a phenomenological costume-making method. This chapter outlines the three consecutive stages of practice-led method development: stage 1: Solo practice research; stage 2: *Movement-Wearable Making Laboratoire 1*; and stage 3: *Movement-Wearable Making Laboratoire 2*.

The following three chapters present the analysis of the development of phenomenological costume-making through practice research. Chapter 4 begins with a description and evaluation of the first stage of practice research. I examine: the solo preparation and testing of components that I used to create the space of research; research on my own costume designer's movement in group situations of movement workshops; body-movement training; and the development of the MWM technique and *laboratoire* activities. The second part of this chapter scrutinises specific experiences of rehearsing in the solo setting, the making technique and activities, and evaluates their outcomes.

Analyses presented in Chapters 5 and 6 are based on evidence collected from observations of phenomenological costume-making during iterations of *laboratoire*. Chapter 5 examines the creation of the environment of phenomenological costume-making and intersubjectivity. This is done using observations during *Laboratoire 1* of recursive making actions, body and costume matter relationships, and reciprocity of participants' embodied costume movements and materials. This is followed by a reflection on my phenomenological researcher's position in the *laboratoire* space and a summary of findings. Chapter 6 focuses on my experience as one of two co-participants of *Laboratoire 2* as well as its instigator. The analysis develops from observations of a cycle of actions that trace the progression of the

phenomenological approach to costume from my taking part in live reciprocal making. This is followed by a reflection on the phenomenological costume designer's body and ends with a summary of findings.

In the conclusion I present an overall summary of the findings and identify the contribution to knowledge of the research and its potential future applications.

## Chapter 1. Research context

I approach the costume process as a sensory, kinetic and experiential movement method. Merleau-Ponty's concepts of embodiment and the ontology of flesh that I will discuss in the next chapter enable me to theorise the costume process as phenomenological as well as offering me a critical framework to advance costume-making as a method of co-creation capable of transforming the practice of performance making. The notion of flesh, seen as the space outside the self that both surrounds the body and folds back onto it (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, pp.152, 265), enables me to theorise 'costume in-becoming' as the interface between body and senses. This notion grounds my approach to the materiality of performance wearables as being relational to my corporeal self and to the seer looking at me. It also informs my understanding of the intersubjectivity of costume-making by changing not only the costume process itself, but also the way that I feel and experience it. As a phenomenological body examining costume's emergence from movement and materiality via the sensory and the relational, I can transcend costume's traditional limiting hierarchical structures and formulation as discussed above via my own experience as a practitioner as well as Tina Bicât's reflections on her practice.

### Abstract costume

This research centres on the primary and elemental stage when 'in-becoming' costume exists in a state of construction, iterative and abstract. Since the late 19th century in Western culture, abstract costume has featured in non-representational and non-narrative artistic expressions. Abstract costume centred on the experience evolved as part of the modernist and cubist art movements (Paris, 1906-08), which were notable for their use of corporeal expression, movement and dance, the latter epitomised by the dancer Loïe Fuller's silk dress (1891). Abstract costume that 'morphs and transforms on the performers' (Trimingham, 2017, p.139) is integral to the developments of costume practice in West European avant-garde art and stage design<sup>19</sup>. From his own experience of making and moving,

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<sup>19</sup> In the visual structure of the staged event, costume operates within a context of analytical procedures and semiotics developing from both theory and practice (Melrose, 1994). In *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture* (2003), the theatre theoretician Patrice Pavis highlights the relationship of costume, body and space in semiotics and the role of costume for social and cultural meanings of performance, thus

Oskar Schlemmer<sup>20</sup> changed the practice of costume and performance design<sup>21</sup> by using his own body to create costumes for devised performances (Trimingham, 2017, p.139). While acknowledging that there is a paradox in discussing a costume as 'abstract' while at the same time knowing it is worn on the moving body (Trimingham, 2017, p.139), the costume definition proposed within this research as in-becoming and phenomenological, adheres to a definition of 'abstraction as means rather than as ends' and 'as the medium rather than the object of study' (Andrew, 2020, p.xxiv).

In using abstract costume, I separate this practice from the work that I have previously conducted within contexts that were narrative based and used semiotics. This abstract form of costume exists outside the conventional boundaries of performance production and may also be included within, but not restricted to, the performance-making field of practice. This chapter presents the context of expanded costume research and movement workshop practice showing how these are rooted in post-dramatic theatre, performance practice and body-oriented practice.

## **1.1 Expanded costume research**

Theatre and performance convention sustains an approach to costume founded on a definition that binds it to production. This definition infers the purpose of costume as representational and builds on the tradition of naturalistic and artistic garment interpretations for depicting a recognisable character (Reid, 2013, p.72). The hierarchical system of production, including director, actor, designer and maker, compartmentalises creative disciplines. Under this system the process of costume continues to be approached as an 'afterthought' rather than as part of the creative development of performances from the outset (Barbieri, 2012b; 2021). As a result of this, costume is commonly portrayed as a subordinated practice, a perception largely maintained by directors and scenographers (Maccoy, 2014; Reid, 2013; Unwin, 2004).

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questioning through costume the hierarchy of perception in conventional signifying systems.

<sup>20</sup> Oskar Schlemmer taught at the Bauhaus (1919-25).

<sup>21</sup> Within performance and spectatorship, 'abstract costume' such as Bauhaus Theatre ballet costumes i.e. Schlemmer's Triadic Ballet, operates within signifying systems (Pavis, 2003, p.173).

In recent years, an increasing interest in the costume creation process and the collaborative work of costume design and production has been the subject of publications by costume researchers, practitioners and scholars. The craft of costume exercised through its specialisms of supervision and making, for instance, is being increasingly discussed by costume professionals (Pride, 2018; Shura Pollatsek, 2016; Bicât, 2012). While the consideration of costume skills is contributing to changing the perception of costume production and of collaborations between designers and makers in costume creation – by recognising costume as integral to the creative development of the production from the outset – the designated role of costume as an artistic expression of the director’s vision rather than a collaborative process prevails (Maccoy, 2014; Reid, 2013; Unwin, 2004).

The widespread understanding of the role of costume ‘to create a language of the body in performances shared with their audiences’ (Barbieri, 2017, p.25) underpins both the structure of the designer’s involvement with movement and the relationship between the actor – the conventional wearer – and the costume itself. The costume designer’s success in realising a creative expression of the performance is evaluated on the ability to convey the visual research (period, style, for instance), based on character description, while providing the technical support to a performance which is conceived and conducted by those responsible for movement, be this the director, choreographer or performer (Bicât, 2012, p.12). The costume production convention that extends to physical and devised theatre specifically allocates to the designer the responsibility for producing an ‘impression of style’ and for thinking of ways by which the expression of the movement already agreed can be conveyed through costume for the viewer (Bicât, 2012, p.46). This understanding of costume’s role prioritises the audience experience, playing to their acquired knowledge and existing expectations. The designer is responsible for attending rehearsal so as to place herself in the situation of the viewer by observing the movement performed: via such involvement the designer’s experience becomes integral to the process of creating. However, the usual costume convention limits the designer’s input to the visual experience alone (Bicât, 2012, p.21). Costume practitioner Tina Bicât identifies viewing rehearsal as ‘the best way to design for movement’ (2012, p.49). The convention on costume that limits the physical input of the designer to *visual* experience of movement omits the costume designer’s own body in the creation of costume and does not attribute to costume any power or effects arising from movement.

Research in costume is increasingly challenging the agency of the body in the relationship with materiality. The attribution of agency to materials currently supports an interrogation of the position of the body in the costume creation process. Increasingly, this proposition is addressed through workshops (Barbieri, Pecorari and Connolly, 2015) and demonstrates the growing exploration of relationships between materiality and movement. In her summary of the *SpaceLab* costume workshops at *Prague Quadrennial 2015* (PQ15), Barbieri (2016) demonstrates how these events were interdisciplinary and experimental: she describes how they highlighted the possibility that costume can be transforming, and that workshops are spaces that might be capable of ‘subverting the structures’ of performance making. Barbieri’s contention grounds an approach to making that engages with innovative ways of thinking about the relationship between body and material in the creative process. The PQ15 costume research workshop aligns with costume scholar and designer Sofia Pantouvaki’s and Barbieri’s (2016, p.4) suggestion that prioritising costume in the creative process opens onto interdisciplinary theory and practice. The centrality of the costume designer’s body that I propose for the investigation of material agency within the creation of costume evidences the importance of costume in fuelling innovation. Hence, the embodied costume process, examined as the locus of the relationship between movement and materiality, situates this research in the field of costume methodologies which depart from traditional practices and thereby challenges those limiting hierarchical structures which ultimately impact on how performance is created. In this chapter I present the context of the evolution of performance through workshop and laboratory activities which have transformed practice through being undertaken outside the performance space.

Research presented at the third *Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition* at the University of Surrey (2018)<sup>22</sup> demonstrated the growing interest around the agency of costume for which new materialist approaches to the power of material things provides a way to expand practice as relational. Research outputs were exhibited by designers and artists including costume designer Charlotte Østergaard who collaborated with interdisciplinary performer Sally E. Dean (Taylor, 2019) and costume designer Linnea Bågander (Bågander, 2020). Such works evidenced the

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<sup>22</sup> *Critical Costume* 2018 was convened by Rachel Hann and took place at the University of Surrey, Guildford.

change that is taking place in the investigation of the relationship between the body and materiality.

The yearning for experimental approaches revealed during the PQ15 costume workshops is described by Barbieri (2016) who suggests that by opening its costume's definition to 'concept, process and object' as well as to 'pre-existing, or coexisting, the making of the performance' while also 'extending beyond its required presence on the performer's body', costume is developing as an interdisciplinary practice (Barbieri, 2016, p.200). This situates the focus on the materiality of costume and on its initial encounter with movement by which, I contend, this research contributes to the development of the interdisciplinary practice of costume. Through a phenomenological approach to the costume-making process centred around my bodily movement, a new understanding of the costume designer's corporeality as a pre-reflexive phenomenological body becomes possible. The pre-reflexive experience, understood as the original relationship of the body with the sensible world (Merleau-Ponty, 1945), frames my first-hand experience of costume as consisting of bodily expression prior to language. This definition enables me to foreground my movement as the creative locus by which costume comes to exist: it also allows me to develop a new definition of costume as an open-ended, co-creative and collaborative process. I present in detail the phenomenological framing of the research practice in Chapter 2, 'Theoretical framework'.

The opening of the practice of costume design to multiple possibilities, both integral to and beyond performance, is reflected in recent research. Katie Barford's PhD (2016) challenges the *status quo* of the designer's role by investigating drawing as an interpretative method of recording the creative experience of costume. While Barford's study contributes to the advancement of costume as interdisciplinary and as a tool for research which includes drawing, the designer's corporeal self as the first-hand medium for experiencing costume and its relationship with costume materiality and movement as the genesis of creativity are areas that have not yet been investigated. Adopting a phenomenological approach to frame myself as 'costume experiencer' enabled me to advance my costume practice through the method of working in experiential and abstract costume workshops that I devised during this PhD. My research also employs drawing techniques aimed towards exploring my bodily engagement with materials.

The interdisciplinarity of costume is reflected in the expansion of costume events. *Critical Costume 2013*, a symposium and exhibition of costume practice, established a platform for the development of interdisciplinary study of costume. In 2018, I attended *Critical Costume* (CC2018) where an international network of costume and interdisciplinary practitioners, researchers and scholars discussed topics including authorship, ethics, embodiment and agency of costume. In CC2020 I presented my research as part of an international community of designers, artists, researchers and scholars. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this took place as a digital/online event. More than 400 world participators were involved and contributed videos, exhibits, working groups and panel discussions<sup>23</sup>. My contribution addressed Merleau-Ponty's theory of the body for the development of a methodology of costume co-creation. My presentation included some developments from the research practice for my PhD.

### **Costume-practice-led methodology**

The costume event, *Extreme Costume*, took place during PQ11 in 2011: in this costumes were exhibited beyond the context of their original performance thus demonstrating the on-going interest in costume as a distinct field of practice within design for performance (Pantouvaki, 2019, pp.87-88). This distinction is useful for me to build on, as it allows me to situate the research on my costume designer's bodily movement as research on costume as process. As Pantouvaki (2019, pp.86-87) says, such approaches indicate a changing perspective that has moved 'from the costume designer to the actual work and its product', the costume, 'and, more recently, to the field of practice', costume design. Recent visual essays published in *Studies in Costume & Performance* document the surge in costume design methodology facilitated via the innovative engagement with the costume process. Costume designer and scholar Abigail Hammond builds on her training as a dancer in her approach to costume design for dance performance. For the performance *Maze*, choreographed by Jasmin Verdimon (2015), Hammond's embodied knowledge of dance enabled her to use the movement performed by others to build the design procedure, and, by this means, to situate the analysis of movement as the initial stage of her costume methodology (2019, p.246). As the performance space was being created through rehearsal, Hammond practiced paying attention to her body as it

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<sup>23</sup> Source: [https://costumeagency.khio.no/?page\\_id=37](https://costumeagency.khio.no/?page_id=37)

recovered its own physical memory and understanding of actions performed by dancers in rehearsal. This attention to her kinesthetic empathy enabled the precise noticing and recording of the progressive stages of the body and costume-integrated performance. The input of the designer's bodily self on the transformation of costume practice also derives from an embodied knowledge of materiality. Costume designer Kate Lane's material-led practice is underpinned by her training at LEM (Lane, 2019, p.209), which I also draw from in this thesis. For the co-production *Trinity*, Lane (2019, p.210) used this training and her understanding of the 'interchange between form, body, space and movement' to develop her design of costume. This involved creating by channelling 'oppositional forces' in material engagements between the body and the costume, seen as the 'push and pull' by which the costume and the body of the performer together develop the integrated performance (Lane, 2019, p.212). This approach which integrates materiality, Lane (2019, p.213) writes, 'allowed opposition and contradiction to be played and enabled the wearer to 'transcend type' and create an action that could create drama or an event'. I too draw extensively from LEM in this thesis. Hammond and Lane's methodologies show how an engagement with movement via the designer's body is changing the approaches of the designer and the perceptions of costume. In her review of *Bodily Scenography: The Body in 20th-Century Stage Design* symposium, Rachel Grew (2019), attributes the change in the perception to the interplay of body and costume by which costume 'creates the body and vice versa' (Grew, 2019, p.153). Costume methodologies such as Hammond's and Lane's, Grew posits, are 'forging interplay between the material and bodily senses, knowledge and emotions' (2019, p.155). The investigation of my own corporeal experience, as designer, focused on the materiality of the creation of costume advances current research on the body and costume relationship.

The transformation of costume practice is also taking place through costume designers, makers and artists expanding their methodology by adopting interdisciplinary approaches to materiality. Costume designer and ceramic artist Dawn Summerlin explored, through materiality, a new way of designing costumes. For the performance *Perspective Fragility* (Summerlin and Man, 2015), Summerlin designed costumes made from porcelain. The design developed through making ceramic costumes which deliberately integrated porcelain's fragility into the devising of the movement performance. This process was based on Summerlin's observations of the interaction of dancers as they moved with the porcelain forms on their bodies during costume and movement workshops (Summerlin, 2019).

However, Summerlin's methodology attributes the costume's movements exclusively to the dancer and, by this, maintains a link to the *status quo*. Summerlin's account of her methodology does not provide a detailed description of the designer's physical experience of the materiality of costume such as I present with this research and by which I contribute to the development of interdisciplinary approaches to costume and performance creation.

Using their own bodies as costume methodology instruments, Østergaard<sup>24</sup>, in collaboration with Jeppe Worning, developed the project, *MASK*, as critical research into costume design aimed at questioning the role of the designer's body in the development of costume. At the origins of this project was a shared interest in the exploration of the relationship between sensations and aesthetics and the desire to explore both the inside and outside dimensions of mask creation (Østergaard, 2018, p.61). The relationship between materials and movement and their interdependence in the realisation of costumes was initiated through Østergaard's and Worning's physical engagement in the co-creation of masks. Their method evolved from interchanging their roles as wearer and maker. In turn, each of them took the maker's role, arranging cutlery and tape on a mask directly attached onto the body of the other.

Østergaard and Worning's innovative costume methodology, with the body at its core, aligns with Summerlin's attention to the interplay of costume-body relationships (Grew, 2019, p.153) in the process of developing the costume. The focus on the relationship between the designer's movements made in response to materials highlights not only the role of the designer's body-knowledge but also what this corporeal / material understanding can bring to new approaches of costume creation. Stand-alone costume development practiced independently from performance direction (i.e., choreographer, performance practitioners) informs the exploration of the designer's evolving role as generator of new costume approaches. The methodology I present expands the approach of the designer's bodily knowledge of materiality by theorising, through Merleau-Pontian understanding, my costume movement as pre-reflexive, thus enabling a more detailed and extended exploration of costume as an origin of artistic expression.

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<sup>24</sup> Charlotte Østergaard is currently carrying out doctoral research on the costume design process and co-creation at Lund University, Sweden.

The exploration of costume and movement undertaken to specifically develop creative approaches has been the subject of recent dance practice-led research. For five years dance practitioner and educator Lorraine Smith (2018)<sup>25</sup> collaborated with the London College of Fashion MA Costume Design for Performance. This experience led her to question conventions of dance practice and the approach to costume that reinforced a pre-conceived thematic visual aesthetic. Smith describes her work with MA costume design students as contributing to her ‘developing understanding and use of kinesthetic movement expression’ (2018, p.181). Dean (2011; 2015; 2016) studied the effect of costume on the soma<sup>26</sup> in the process of ‘awakening the body’, asserting that costume ‘is simultaneously creating the haptic and kinesthetic experience whilst stimulating images, associations and meanings.’ (2016, p.99). The foregrounding of touch in the sensorial experience of costume challenges the convention of visual experience. As dance and movement practitioners researching the effect of costume on movement, Smith’s and Dean’s findings rely on their collaborations with costume designers to advance their method that is facilitated through costume. My proposition of costume materiality as an agent for performance creation originates in my own body as a costume designer and my understanding of the costume process and materiality. Integral to this proposition is the fact that it is my movement, rather than the movement of an invited performer or dancer, which leads the phenomenological costume-making practice research prior to further collaborative interactions.

### **Costume and performance making collaboration**

The workshop practice context of costume-making used in this PhD research develops from my earlier collaborations with companies and artists for the production of performances. During these I engaged in a collective approach to the creation of costume and bodily attire. My collaborations with, amongst others, performance and film artist Adam James whose participatory art practice involves creating performances through sessions where groups devise works via a process of

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<sup>25</sup> Lorraine Smith has been collaborating with costume designer Daphne Karstens, who completed an MA in Costume Design for Performance at the London College of Fashion. They were awarded a *Festival of Thrift* commission to create a community based costume performance project in 2020. This suggests increasing acknowledgement of the field of interdisciplinary costume, movement and performance practice.

<sup>26</sup> ‘Soma’ is the internal physical perception at the basis of somatic movement techniques such as Alexander Technique and the Feldenkrais method.

co-creation with artists, designers, and movement participants, has contributed to orienting my practice towards exploratory research into material-led making. For the productions *The Booger Dance* (2011), *Mudhead Dance* (2013) and *Oller Oller* (2014), I developed masks and wearable exhibits in a studio space shared with James and a collective of costume and performance practitioners. We simultaneously engaged in the exploratory process of creating by using the properties of diverse reclaimed materials<sup>27</sup>. Unconventional materials often required research into suitable assembling methods and ways of wearing idiosyncratic creations. This highlighted the potential to generate a creative approach towards making through paying attention to the materials' own performativity, and in this way, prioritising doing over thinking. This was evidenced when I put costumes onto other wearers to observe the materials' responses to their movements, although I also noticed how their bodies were changed by the corporeal experience which the costume effected.

### **Performance workshop practice: laboratory and laboratoire**

The theatre and performance workshop context on which this research builds is characterised by laboratory development figuring as spaces for experimentation with acting, movement and materiality. The shift in scientific research that saw the emergence of the laboratory in the 20th century as a space for creating empirical knowledge led to the discursive advancement of the theatre laboratory in Russia into a frame 'where ideas are not only exchanged but also made tangible through experimentation' (Brown, 2019, p.17). Existing outside of dedicated performance spaces, theatre workshops and laboratories influenced the continuing development of performance practice. Researcher and theatre practitioner Bryan Brown (2019), in *A History of Theatre Laboratory*, traces the origins of the broad environment of contemporary theatre laboratory and the elaboration of its structure from the two archetypes of the 'studio' and the '*masterskaya*'. The studio, Brown explains, is a space created from and organised around the people who comprise it. It encompasses the notion of a retreat linked to spirituality, an etymological connotation from which the dimension of guidance and of mentorship originates. The studio encourages an informal atmosphere through mechanisms of sincerity and festivity, and by so doing, maintains its ethical relations (Brown, 2019, p.9). The unfixed

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<sup>27</sup> Material provided for creating costumes included leather, knitwear, sacking and pliable materials such as willow.

atmosphere that encapsulates the studio suggests a space where one transforms, grows and becomes (Brown, 2019, pp.9-10). The *masterskaya* refers to both an artisan's guild workshop and the master and apprentice relationship that takes place within it (Brown, 2019, p.10)<sup>28</sup>.

MWM is the empirical laboratoire method of making performance wearables, which I formulate in the course of this research from the creative temporal space and the active components of bodies and materials. By its organisation and structure, my MWM method shares key tenets with both the studio described above and the relationship between workshop and instigator that *masterskaya* encapsulates. MWM is also an elaboration of the organisational structure of the laboratory sharpened with Jacques Lecoq's organised construction of objects and body-oriented work at LEM<sup>29</sup> and is presented later on page 38.

The workshop space also developed through the expansion of the physical work of actor training. The performance context of early 20th century European modernism evolved from the questioning of the prioritisation of the mind in acting methods (Murray, 2003, p.6) while focusing on the foregrounding of the body<sup>30</sup>. Such movement-based actor training methodologies developed as a departure from naturalism. This change took place through experimentations with non-naturalistic<sup>31</sup> forms of acting, notably, the avant-garde work of Russian artistic director, Vsevolod Meyerhold.

Meyerhold's artistic direction is characterised by an acting method developed from physical training fused with expressionistic set design. His style developed as part of a creative approach to the 'inherent contradiction between the two-dimensional scenic

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<sup>28</sup> *Masterskaya's* English equivalent is 'craftsman's workshop' and implies that the master embodies authority. Within twentieth-century Russian theatre, *masterskaya* includes the master as the director, or *rezhisser*, a descriptive that 'captures the ideal nature of the role that combined the functions of author, researcher and pedagogue.' (Brown, 2019, p.10).

<sup>29</sup> *Laboratoire d'Étude de Mouvement* (Laboratory of Movement Study) was created in 1976 by Jacques Lecoq and Krikor Belekian for the optional exploration of movement and space offered to architecture students from *l'École Internationale de Théâtre de Paris*.

<sup>30</sup> As Rick Kemp (2012, p.170) points out, Lecoq's 'training that foregrounds the body [...] does not necessarily neglect the mental activities generally termed "psychological". Instead, it grounds these activities in action'.

<sup>31</sup> Non-naturalistic costume is part of the stylised approach of theatre pioneered by Meyerhold. Stylisation 'as a principle of dramatic art' moved away from the realism of the contemporary stage and from the theatre of Stanislavski. Meyerhold's experimental approach as director to performance was initiated and developed at the *Theatre-Studio* (Bryusov, V., 1906, in Meyerhold, 1969, p.45).

backdrop and the three-dimensional figure of the actor' (Meyerhold, 1969, p.21). One recognisable feature of his artistic direction is the chorus of actors performing schematic and exaggerated actions that interact with the space, realised through the biomechanics system of theatrical training<sup>32</sup>. Meyerhold used an acrobatic style of acting and synchronized actions<sup>33</sup> exemplified by *The Magnanimous Cuckold* (1923), directed by Fernand Crommelynck. Costume and set designs for this production were by painter and designer Lyubov Popova. Meyerhold's material approach towards theatre and the integrated physical style of acting differed ideologically from the aim of 'authentic' performance and the representation of everyday life, notably seen in the acting approach of director Constantin Stanislavski. The acting system developed by Stanislavski, of internalising the process of acting (Stanislavski, 1937), is at the origins of Method Acting (Benedetti, 2013; Krasner, 2000). In 1905, Meyerhold was appointed art director of the *Theatre-Studio*, part of The Moscow Art Theatre, by Stanislavski to assist the progression of his technique from 'the pre-performance mode of behaviour and action' (Evans, 2019, p.83). However, Stanislavski's system of interiorised acting<sup>34</sup> prevented the acknowledgement of the contribution of movement to the innovation of the style of theatre. As a result of this difference, the *Theatre Studio* led by Meyerhold functioned independently (Meyerhold, 1969, p.247).

Meyerhold's non-naturalistic approach to movement-based acting is integral to the structure of the scenography of the productions for which he did the art direction and is reflected in costume. His rupture from the naturalistic representation of 'life on stage' led to his approach to theatre as art by which stylisation is, for him, a way to engage the audience with the action performed as enactment. Meyerhold writes on the role of costume:

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<sup>32</sup> Meyerhold's biomechanics is a system of practical exercises for actors introduced to the public in 1922. Devised in response to the mechanised age, this system was opposed to Stanislavski's 'unscientific and anachronistic' (Meyerhold 1969, p.183) theatre approach.

<sup>33</sup> The acrobatic style of acting and synchronized actions are performed by a group of actors and intensified by the spinning wheels of the constructivist stage.

<sup>34</sup> Stanislavski's (1937) acting approach centred on the actor's unconscious and inner life was influenced by his study of psychology. Ribot's *Problème de Psychologie Affective* (1910) and emotion memory were key influences for his psychological realism style. Stanislavski's system of interiorised acting entails preparing both actor and role through training involving actions, imagination, relaxation of muscles and emotion memory.

‘the actor’s movements vary according to his costume, the properties and the setting. Far from arbitrary, costume is an integral part of the production; its cut and colour are of utmost importance [...]. Theatricality presupposes an inevitability of form.’

(Meyerhold, 1969, p.147)

In Meyerhold’s work, costume is integral to the stylised enactment of life on stage because the performer’s body, trained to respond in movement to the materiality of theatre, performs both from and in relation to the costume on her and the stage configuration. Meyerhold’s directional approach entailed design and performance developing simultaneously and in relationship to each other.

Meyerhold’s biomechanics laboratory (1921-1925) developed as a practice of experimenting with performance theory and technique independent of the space for performance, the theatre. Brown (2019, p.6) attributes the evolution of the laboratory practice in theatre and performance to its organisational structure and suggests that the function of the laboratory rests on how the space for activity is generated. The organisational approach to the workshop method for the experiential costume enquiry presented in this thesis adheres to this principle. The objective of generating creative energy from the costume workshop is akin to Meyerhold’s laboratories for developing new ways of making theatre. To realise this environment, it is necessary to facilitate the conditions by which relationships between the body’s movement and the material components of the workshop space can grow. Meyerhold’s laboratory development demonstrates this. Through experimentation, training and rehearsal the biomechanics laboratory informed Meyerhold’s theatre productions with his students, albeit the two spaces, the laboratory and the theatre, remained separate (Pitches, 2003, p.38). Meyerhold created several theatre laboratories<sup>35</sup> to facilitate his research practice outside of established theatre boundaries. Separated from both the theatre space and repertory tradition, those spaces served specific purposes, such as: taking discoveries made in theatre to the laboratory space; providing a training ground for Meyerhold’s young *rezhissers*, or artist-authors; or for developing an objective assessment method of how dramaturgy operates on performance (Brown, 2019, p.39). The organisational structures of both the studio and *masterskaya* were critical in enabling the

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<sup>35</sup> Meyerhold’s laboratories included the *Club Methodological Laboratory* (1924) and the studio of Dr Dapertutto (1916) amongst others.

development of laboratory research practice independent of the traditional theatre space. This innovative approach to the space of creation was central to Meyerhold's elaboration of his movement-based actor's training methodology. The structure of experiment, training and rehearsal as the basis of Meyerhold's laboratory resonates with the laboratoire space I created while undertaking this PhD research (see Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework').

Akin to Meyerhold's laboratory, the laboratoire space used in my research<sup>36</sup> acts as an incubation space where an environment is created to generate relational situations and transformation. It is in this sense necessary that MWM laboratoire operates as a closed space for costume creative actions to be set in motion for the purpose of generating the creative process, independently of their application outside this space whether applied to performance productions or not<sup>37</sup>. While the workshop method for this research may lead to producing performance in the future, this practice currently stands alone and is intended as part of the generation of new knowledge and the application of phenomenology to costume process, both aimed at evidencing the critical centrality of the body in the laboratoire space.

The contemporary evolution of the workshop method as a space dedicated to experimentation, but separated from the performance space, has led to a wide range of workshop activities since the early 20th century<sup>38</sup>. For instance, the theatre laboratory evolved from performers' training and theatre performance as a space for exercising research-led and intensive rehearsal processes (Brown, 2019, p.6). For Schechner (2013) '[w]hat qualifies all the different activities to be called workshops is that they are used to "open people up" to new experiences, helping them to recognize and develop their own possibilities' (2013, p.233). His designation of the workshop as the space of origin for 'the various means of theatrical production' (Schechner, 2003, p.10) flows from its 'conventional and/or hidden procedures' (Schechner, 2003, p.131) resulting from the experimentations carried out in the enclosed space of the workshop.

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<sup>36</sup> 'Laboratoire' refers to the physical and temporal laboratoire space where *Movement-Wearable Making* takes place. This laboratoire research method is presented in Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework'.

<sup>37</sup> The limitations which the thesis sets on the creative process of non-representational costume making mean that the potential for performance development is not discussed in this study.

<sup>38</sup> The first 'Theatre Workshop' was created at Harvard, USA by George Pierce Baker in 1913 to develop theatre that transcended dialogues and plots, notably using movement and scenography (Wiles, 2003, p.253).

While the MWM method articulated through this study takes place outside the performance space, by being created as a space for conducting explorations into new ways of *doing* costume, this research questions the *status quo* regarding the designer's position in the costume process. In the following section on Jacques Lecoq, I present the relation between my research and two of Lecoq's key body-oriented methods that are integral to LEM: first, his structural organisation of the movement workshop, and second the larval mask practice of entering the form to explore its vibration in the body (Lecoq, 2000, p.57).

### **Jacques Lecoq, LEM and larval mask**

The development of Lecoq's movement training method and of LEM show similarities to both the Russian Laboratory and Meyerhold's organisational structures with regard to the critical role of structuring the laboratoire so as to generate creative energy from both movement and making space. LEM is a workshop-based method involving bodily interaction with objects constructed in the space of movement. It was created in 1976 by Lecoq in collaboration with architect Krikor Belekian, as a course dedicated to movement research (Scheffler, 2016, p.180). LEM is set in a context independent from both the *École Jacques Lecoq*<sup>39</sup> and from performance creation. The course was originally designed for students in architecture, theatre and scenography, and the opening of the movement training space to participants other than actors marked the transformation towards body-oriented work. This innovation, which pointed towards interdisciplinary practice, evolved from Lecoq's interest in the interaction of the body with objects as a practice of movement research. The on-going course, defined by LEM as a department 'devoted to the dynamic study of space and rhythm through plastic representation' (Scheffler, 2016, pp.180-181)<sup>40</sup> is facilitated through the organisation of the physical space into two connecting areas, one for movement work and the other for construction of three-dimensional objects, including costumes and masks (Lecoq, 2000, p.166). The actions of passing between the space of making and the space of movement in a repeated and rotating sequence of operations are

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<sup>39</sup> *l'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq*, or *l'École Jacques Lecoq*, is a school of physical theatre established in 1956 in Paris. LEM was established as a department in 1976.

<sup>40</sup> In Scheffler's quote 'space' refers to spatiality, a meaning that differs from the thesis' phenomenological framing of the laboratoire space of co-creation.

generated through participants' interaction with each other, with the space and with its contents. (Scheffler, 2016, pp.180-184).

As a movement technique supported through its structural organisation, LEM reiterates Meyerhold's prioritisation of seeking over knowing (Brown, 2019, p.154) as well as recalling the communality of his laboratory which was founded on the studio archetype as a space for sharing and generating its own cultural practice. In this way the collaborative exploration of body movement and the construction of forms at LEM is comparable to the apprenticeship of the *masterskaya* and to *rezhisser*. However, Meyerhold's hierarchical approach of collectivity, whereby actors are trained to carry out *his designs* <sup>41</sup>(Brown, 2019, p.154), thus implying that his view is imposed onto their work, is dissimilar to Lecoq's approach. Lecoq's non-hierarchical structure of the *laboratoire* can be traced back to the French tradition of physical theatre (Copeau)<sup>42</sup>, from which he derives, and other practices current in the second half of the 20th century such as Pagneux and Gaulier<sup>43</sup> which each place transformation through movement at the forefront of an actor's training (Evans, 2019, p.83). Lecoq's actor training technique of play, for instance, and the rules he devised underpin his movement training approach and his 'very clear and carefully set out pedagogy' (Evans, 2019, p.50). The organisational structure of LEM facilitates the methodology of body movement work based around spatiality and form, while also aiming to allow for the possibility of 'the playful activity of subverting rules' (Evans, 2019, p.55) for transformation and creativity to unfold.

Barbieri's costume methodology builds on her first-hand experience of LEM (Barbieri, 2006; 2012a; 2016; 2020) and her participation in the two-week interdisciplinary LEM in collaboration with *Complicité*<sup>44</sup>. The programme was led by

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<sup>41</sup> Author's emphasis.

<sup>42</sup> Jacques Copeau (1879-1949) was a theatre director who 'sought a natural simplicity and spontaneity from his performers consisting of authenticity of gesture to impulse, well-spoken text and a sense of collective playfulness leading to a unity of dramatic purpose' (Rudlin, 2010, p.44).

<sup>43</sup> Monika Pagneux (b.1927) is a leader in movement in contemporary theatre. She studied with Etienne Decroux and later with Jacques Lecoq. Philippe Gaulier (b.1943) studied at *l'École Jacques Lecoq* from 1965 to 1967; he is a clown practitioner and founded *l'École Philippe Gaulier* in 1980.

<sup>44</sup> The two-week interdisciplinary *Laboratoire d'Étude du Mouvement* (LEM) by *École Jacques Lecoq* collaborating with the theatre company *Complicité*, took place at Central Saint Martins, *University of the Arts London*, 2005.

Pascal Lecoq and Krikor Berekian and involved a group of participants<sup>45</sup> engaged in physical movement exercises to explore the bodily movement and its relationship to the physical space. Following this the development of characters and forms was translated by creative practical work into structures, objects and masks (Barbieri, 2006, p.108). Barbieri examined how the LEM laboratoire progressed by way of the development and construction of design objects ‘created in response and in anticipation of movement’ to consider the mask principles at LEM for her development on the role of embodiment in costume (2012a, p.149). An aspect of Barbieri’s (2021) work, which is of particular relevance to this research, is her exploration of Merleau-Ponty’s reversibility in the exchange between body and materiality in the space of the workshop. In taking a phenomenological stance on Lecoq’s neutral mask, Barbieri examined the relationship between the mask and the body of the designer in-movement. Her experience of the mask ‘from held to when worn’ led her to observe that ‘in a reversible relationship’ the mask’s role ‘transforms in its wearing’ (2021, p.202). While this analysis provides insight into the phenomenological exploration of the mask, my proposition is to go beyond the wearable object and to approach it as material which is both active and transforming. In Chapter 2, ‘Theoretical framework’, the phenomenological research position in relation to materiality is further explained. The emphasis placed on the relation between bodily movement and materiality in the laboratoire positions this research method in the pre-performance rehearsal space. This framing sets the limits of the research on the creative stage of the costume object outside the boundaries of costume conventions, while at the same time being included, but not restricted to, the performance-making field of practice. In this way my research builds upon Lecoq’s use of organisational structure in the laboratoire.

Prior to the creation of LEM, Lecoq’s interest in the performance wearable for the interaction of the body with object as a practice of movement research, gave way to the development of expressive mask work, one example of which is Lecoq’s ‘larval mask’ technique. The larval mask movement technique, foregrounded in this practice research of costume materiality, investigates form, matter and movement (Murray, 2003, p.90), a core interest in Lecoq’s method at the origins of the development of LEM. The larval mask was created for the Basel Carnival in

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<sup>45</sup> The interdisciplinary programme participants included theatre, dance and movement practitioners, directors, puppeteers, choreographers – visual artists, designers, and directors. Also taking part were a garden designer, a filmmaker, a photographer and a writer.

the 1960s (Lecoq, 2000, p.59). Lecoq's movement work builds on the simplified facial form and concentrates on the force of the mask during spatial exploration with the body. As a technique for exploring the dynamic of the mask and as a movement research tool within the context of this research, the larval mask facilitates an exploration of movement and form involving the whole body. The larval mask evolved from Lecoq's rediscovery of the leather mask from *Commedia dell'arte*, a movement practice which he approached with the aim of returning to its original intensity so as to regain its universal sense (Murray, 2003, p.11). For this Lecoq discarded the stereotyped movements of the *Commedia dell'arte* mask-based performance style. As a movement-based practice the larval mask is distinct from the kinds of masks used in processional practices. The simple and pre-formed mask, 'not yet resolved in human features' (Lecoq, 2000, p.59) is a form in-becoming. Transmuting, the larval mask opens a space for creative expression of what already exists in the wearer in movement as it is 'guided by the form' (Lecoq, 2000, p.56). Extended through movement, the larval mask object, when placed on the body, assumes unexpected forms. The engagement in-movement with the transforming materiality is sustained by the body that wants 'to know' (Lecoq, 2000, p.57) intertwined with the dynamic of the opposition of forces. These are initiated in the relationship between body and material and maintained as the object gives resistance to actions. The dynamic relationality of the larval mask, by which 'when there is a movement on one side, there is another that happens on the other side' (Gracia Estévez, 2017, p.132), enables the pre-formed mask entwined with the bodily movement to go through a succession of open-ended transformations. During this interplay between corporality and form, movements transform the material configuration and vice versa. When the larval mask, as an incomplete form (Lecoq, 2000, p.38), encounters movement it enables open and fluid sensory experimentation.

My research mobilises the larval mask principle of sensory experimentation to devise a technique for costume-making within group settings of costume-making laboratoire. I see this as a way of effecting extensive coverage of movers with costume materials and, by this means, prompting an extensive haptic experience which arises directly from costume in-making. The larval mask principle enables me to develop the costume-making laboratoire as a method of inducing an open-ended making process generated from the experience of materials of costume. My approach builds on the practice of extending corporally through being led by the form. This supports my

focus on costume as process to enable me to observe the emergence of new and unexpected arrangements of movement and costume materiality.

Among the early graduates of LEM were Andres Bossard and Bernie Schürch, who in 1972 founded the company Mummenschanz Mask Theatre<sup>46</sup> and used the exploration of materials to create the mask objects that in turn create the performance. The larval mask principle of ‘allowing ourselves to be guided by the form’ (Lecoq, 2000, p.56) was put into practice through their exploration of the performative qualities of a range of materials, domestic and industrial, and of construction methods (Murray, 2003, p.119). In an interview on his training at LEM, Bossard explained that it is because Lecoq “robbed” them of using facial or hand expressions as means of communication’ that they learned to find the middle of their bodies as the centre of expression (cited in Goldstein, 1978, p.27). Mummenschanz’s work with the body ‘as a whole’ underpins their development of morphic and transformative masks, which are often oversized and cover the entire body. The progression of Mummenschanz’s work from their experimentation with the performativity of materials provides a model for my objective of engaging with my movement laboratoire participants through their whole body within the space of creation, an aspect of the methodology I present in detail in Chapter 3, ‘Methodological framework’.

Mummenschanz most noticeably developed their work from the material aspect of the larval mask. The different yet interrelated articulations of the larval mask shown in their work provide me with examples of the body developing from the performativity of materials. Mummenschanz’s performance, *Battles* (1974)<sup>47</sup>, is an example of performance through materials. The interaction of two performers wearing clay on their faces is told in silence and through their live remodelling of each other’s facial apparatus. Their mutual antagonisation is made tangible through the elasticity of the clay. The transformations through clay produce a succession of expressive and ephemeral masks that gradually suppress facial features. This interaction in the pre-formed stage of clay masks is generated from the dynamic actions between bodies entangled with transforming performance wearables.

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<sup>46</sup> Mummenschanz Mask Theatre was founded in 1972 by Bernie Schürch, Andres Bossard and Floriana Frassetto.

<sup>47</sup> The link to a Swiss television production on Mummenschanz, from 27th December 1974, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH6MEdvqjz4>, includes the performance, *Battles*, which can be viewed from 2:43 min/sec into the programme.

The pre-form stage of the materiality of a clay mask converges with the phenomenological framing of the research on the pre-reflexive phenomenological body, previously introduced in this chapter on page 27, and discussed further in Chapter 2, 'Theoretical framework'. Together clay masks and bodies undergo transformation and the emerging physical forms develop from situations and relationships. The correspondence between materiality, movement and the temporal and spatial environment of relationship demonstrated by Mummenschanz's performance *Battles* illustrates how, in a space of engagement, 'imagination, creativity and play all take place in a continuous movement' (Murray, 2003, p.120-1) and can generate the development of movement from which the performativity of materials can be observed. In my development of this method (presented later in Chapter 3) I use the term 'body-mask' to describe the performance wearable unbound to the face and guiding the body in its movement within space. This supports my objective of describing how the performance wearable emerges from relationships between movements and materials.

## **1.2 Summary**

This chapter has situated my research within the field of certain costume studies which set out to challenge the primacy of the body in the relationship with materiality. It has contextualised the framing of my bodily self as phenomenological to foreground my costume process in the development of the methodology of experiential and abstract costume-making. I have explained how usage of the phenomenological costume-making workshop serves to question the relationship between bodily movement and material in the creative process and how it supports my critical approach towards costume. The chapter has used examples to illustrate how the centrality of the costume designer's body in recent costume methodologies goes beyond traditional practices. By situating this research in the context of the evolution of performance through workshop, to which this research contributes a detailed description of the designer's physical experience of the materiality of costume, I point towards potentials for developing interdisciplinary approaches to costume and performance creation. My explanations have shown how the phenomenological costume-making method devised during this research builds on the organisation and structure of theatre, performance and body-oriented workshop, laboratory and laboratoire. I have stated my main claim of the phenomenological framing of

my bodily movement as enabling a new definition of costume that contributes to the development of interdisciplinary costume theory and research.

## Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter I present principles of Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodiment and the ontology of flesh which form the framework for my phenomenological investigation into costume movement and materiality. In this experiential enquiry I situate my body-led research within current scholarship of performance developed from phenomenology. I consider methodologies that have been used to study the materiality of performance and movement through phenomenology to critically approach the devising of the costume-making method via an investigation of the costume designer's own body.

### 2.1 The Phenomenological approach

Merleau-Ponty's theory of the body as a physical moving and feeling structure of experience underpins the conceptualisation of movement within costume-making practice seen as a generator of knowledge. The pre-reflexive phenomenological body, understood as a structure of sense-making that develops from the relationship with materiality and other people (previously introduced on page 27), supports my central role in the research: during research my own researching body is rendered phenomenological precisely through the costume method developed while undertaking this PhD. The purpose of adopting this phenomenological approach is to capture and describe as accurately as possible the relationship between bodily movement and the materiality of performance wearables as I experience it from the perspectives of being the maker, wearer and mover. Through phenomenology my body is locus of the first-person experience of the phenomenon and is relational. My bodily intersubjectivity figures as the relation of the self to other people during the experience of perception (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; 1964a). The Merleau-Pontian prioritisation of the body in the lived experience situates me as both practitioner and researcher at the centre of the costume in-becoming process. My adoption of a primary position in the observation of the costume phenomenon is based on the relation between subject-object introduced in *Phénoménologie de la Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 1945) and on the pre-reflexive phenomenological body understood as the original relationship of the body with the sensible world. For Merleau-Ponty the engagement of the subject with the sensible world is flesh, the space where things perceived are made tangible because 'the world and I are within one another'

(Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.123). He notes how 'things touch me as I touch them and touch myself' and how things and their reverse in 'the double inscription outside and inside' (1968, p.261) coexist. Integral to flesh is the visible and invisible relationship. Rather than separating the sensing from sensed, the visible and invisible – or visible and sensing – are intertwined and the pre-reflexive phenomenological body actively perceives from this very coexistence.

During the creation of a new method of costume-making which embraces movement practice, and in the transformation of my costume design process, my research has been underpinned by the examination of relationships between the body in-movement and the environment of the lived experience. This research requires that my body is approached as a field of experience. This definition of the body is based on its attribute of motility and the Merleau-Pontian understanding of perception as taking place through the moving body: 'there is not first a perception followed by a movement, the perception and the movement form a system that is modified as a whole' (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.113). This is the basis of Merleau-Ponty's prioritisation of the sensory experience during which the body is instrumental in revealing experience itself. Phenomenology seeks to describe human experience, and in so doing, departs from objective scientific realism and the facticity of the world as truth. Merleau-Ponty specifically challenges René Descartes' (1596-1650) basic claim of body and mind by rejecting the idea of the body as object, coincidentally related to consciousness (1945). He proposes instead that the human body is itself a subject, and therefore the human subject, as consciousness, is embodied. This is the body-subject and Merleau-Ponty focuses on the first-person as that which is involved for each of us in our bodily existence. The body that is itself a subject is not purely physical as this would lead to the division of body and mind, casting the body as a mere object. It is instead the body as the lived embodiment of the experience that is proposed, a definition that makes the leap from having a body to being a body. Merleau-Ponty's contention that the body, by being part of the world prior to reflection, is active in perception, thus builds on Edmund Husserl's (1964) philosophy of perception and the rejection of the explanation of the world by scientific realism as existing outside or beyond our consciousness. For Husserl, our experience of the world takes place by way of its interaction with our consciousness in an active engagement that can be intentional because it is always directed towards the object being perceived. This suggests that the body is central to perception and, as such, is its constituent and that perception occurs because the body is relational to the world.

The concept of body relationality, or the relationship between subjectivity and body, proposes that the object perceived, by virtue of being situated in the world, transcends its actual appearance – a deviation from Immanuel Kant's transcendental realism (1781) whereby objects in space and time are defined as 'appearances'<sup>48</sup>. Husserl's understanding of experience rests on the hypothesis that, due to its condition of being relational, the body perceives the object through a succession of individual appearances, which make seeing the object from several perspectives the only way to establish its transcendence (Zahavi, 1994, p.65). This understanding of experience leads Husserl to consider perception as a bodily movement for which the duality of the body as both subject and as object lies at the origins of change of perspective.

Returning to Merleau-Ponty, the prioritisation of the body in the lived experience – at odds with Husserl's position on the return to the essence of being<sup>49</sup> – is challenged by the world that exists prior to its objectification. The body as a physical moving and feeling structure of experience points to both its own attribute of movement as a generator of knowledge and to the issue posed by its corporeal facticity. By being-in-the-world, the body is the enabler of experience, yet at the same time it conceals experience by 'being there': hence the problem in accessing lived experience as the 'pure' field of the experience<sup>50</sup>. Merleau-Ponty writes on this impediment and the problem: 'I will have to assume as brute facts; my situation is opaque to my own eyes, it presents aspects that escape me and upon which an exterior look, if such were possible, would have more light' (1968, p.60). The criticism of the Cartesian mind-body dualism causes Merleau-Ponty to discard any ideology that proposes an answer to the human experience, including philosophy itself<sup>51</sup>. However, the problem of the body leads him to centre on the experience for which the body is instrumental, a change of perspective towards ontology that the phenomenological scholar

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<sup>48</sup> This is at the core of continental philosophy as compared to analytical philosophy and Immanuel Kant's doctrine of 'transcendental realism', first published in *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). Merleau-Ponty's aim to grasp being itself as appearing is at the origins of the subject and perceiver as flesh, a concept that challenges classic phenomenology (Morris, 2018, p.121).

<sup>49</sup> Merleau-Ponty departs from the explanation of the world's origins, and from Husserl who maintains his connection with empirical philosophy with this theory.

<sup>50</sup> 'Pure' means that it escapes presuppositions from both intellectualism and realism (Babaras, 2001, p.24).

<sup>51</sup> By refraining from taking a philosophical stance on the origins of perception, Merleau-Ponty wished to avoid the return to empirical philosophy and the dualism of mind and body. However, philosophy seen as the 'roots of phenomenology' maintains the bond with the subject's perceptual position. Merleau-Ponty, being critical of this bond, claimed the need to trace back this reflection in the ontology prior to perception, the body, and an already given subject and object (Morris, 2018, p.127).

Renaud Barbaras (2001) attributes to the occurrence of expression: '[b]y sizing the occurrence of expression itself, rather than rooting it in a body whose state is already predetermined, we have the possibility to deepen its meaning' (2001, p.70, my translation).

The occurrence of expression is at the core of my approach towards experience.

The sensible world, intertwined with the lived experience, constitutes the relationship by which the experience takes place. Both 'the other' (a term I discuss below) and the sensible world enable the process of questioning by describing because they allow for the experience to exist outside of the body (Barbaras, 2001, pp.38-39). It is in this way that my position as first-person in the experience of costume relates to the pre-reflexive phenomenological body. Within the remit of this research, the body, as a physical moving and feeling structure of experience, presents scope for questioning my costume practice through examination of the relationship between my corporality and the sensible world within the space provided by the laboratoire.

The interrelatedness of the self with the sensible world – as the environment of costume movement and materials – which takes place through the body moving, feeling and sensing is further discussed in relation to the creation of the laboratoire space through participation in Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework'.

The importance of the other in Merleau-Ponty's theory, Barbaras tells us, is not limited to the necessity of its presence for the lived body either to experience or to inform the presence of the world: the explanation of the perceived world is carried out from the other. It is as a circular process, Barbaras proposes, that perception is enabled from the other because this entity informs the study of the sensible world, and because the perceived world is tackled from the possibility of intersubjectivity. The conclusions that emerge from this process, regarding the sensible world, in return inform the description of the other (Barbaras, 2001, pp.37-38). I build on this model of relationality for my practice of describing the interrelatedness of my engagement with the sensible world of costume-making as an open-ended process and in relation to intersubjectivity. In the next section I return to the theory of flesh and discuss in detail the notion of reversibility that is central to the development of the methodology of phenomenological costume-making for creating the laboratoire method.

The methodology and the MWM method are further described in Chapter 3, 'Methodological framework'.

## **Flesh, intersubjectivity, reversibility and the costume experience**

The first-person position that I adopt in this phenomenological inquiry into costume-making, together with the experience of the phenomenon as relational to self and others underpin the focus of my practice-led research on reversibility, the core principle of the ontology of flesh. The two decades between publication of *Phénoménologie de la Perception* (1945) and the posthumous work, *Le Visible et L'Invisible* (1964a), saw Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology develop from his concern with the role of bodily experience in interrogating the nature of being. The 'lived body', the concept he defended against the object-body of empirical science, led to the elaboration of the ontology of flesh until his untimely death in 1961. My engagement with Merleau-Ponty's ontology by means of his original French writing of *Le Visible et l'Invisible*, of which a limited selection of vocabulary is explored in this study, will be presented later in this section to explain my interpretative approach to reversibility. I support this examination with theories on sense and expression offered by David Morris and Donald Landes. These theories, developed from Merleau-Ponty's ontology, support an effective understanding of embodiment during sensing, sense-making and of the expression of reversibility.

'Conversely, if it [the experiencing body] touches and sees, this is not because it would have the visibles before itself as objects: they are about it, they even enter into its enclosure, they are within it, they line its looks and its hands inside and outside.'

(Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.137)

The intertwining of the visible and the invisible, of what touches and is touched, like the hand, foreground the haptic experience. This sense is prioritised in the investigation of reversibility from the pre-reflexive relationship between bodily movement and costume materiality and their transformative effect and affect<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> 'Affect' is a philosophical term used in the thesis to indicate the interrelatedness of the body and the materiality of costume and is grounded in Merleau-Ponty's notion of bodily experience being relational to the sensible world (1945). With the elaboration of sensation as 'the manner in which I am affected' Merleau-Ponty set out to address the confusion over the relationality of sensation to which he attributes the dismissal of phenomenology of perception from classical philosophy (2012, p.3). This does not relate to affect theory, which has developed from research in a range of areas including philosophy, social studies, art and critical theory, notably through the research of Brian Massumi (2002) on affect at the intersection of movement and sensation.

on each other.

Merleau-Ponty elaborated the concept of reversibility to identify the relation between the inside and the outside of the self who is perceiving. This theory encompasses the intersubjective and embodied self as both subject and object in perceiving. These two aspects of the perceiving self mean that it is at the same time embodied subjectivity (self) and engaged in a reciprocal relationship with its *other*. The interchangeability of the sensible world and the other is what both enables and links reversibility with its inside and its outside (Barbaras, 2001, p.38). Like flesh (see previous page), reversibility is part of the definition of the perceptual structure of our participation with the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.263) and encapsulates the notion of engagement that is reciprocal. This reciprocity has it that both the self as perceiver and that which is perceived (in this case, the costume generated from bodily engagement with costume materials) are both made of the same thing, namely flesh. Exempt from boundaries, flesh enables reversibility as ‘the sole means I have to go unto the heart of the things, by making myself a world and by making them flesh’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.135). Through seeing and touching, both my body and what I perceive are rendered ‘visibles and tangibles’: their concreteness is sensed from within the self because sense is engendered within being itself (Morris, 2018, p.121). As perception embodied, the thing surrounds and traverses the self as it is making the experience of one thing point to its reverse; and in so doing, being is at the same time another thing (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). It is the occurrence of two simultaneous perceptions that generates an experience of the world that is unique to the self and that each of us owns individually. The relationship which the embodied self entertains with the sensible world involves sensing the object whilst simultaneously being sensed by the world and is informed by an understanding of flesh as the materialisation of the experience enabled by the body. Describing the lived experience through flesh provides a way of examining the first-person experience through the participation of other people involved in my process of costume-making. This informs my focus on costume-making as a collaborative process and justifies the position I take in the research as initiator of this process.

To explain reversibility, Merleau-Ponty often returns to the example of the two hands from the same body touching and being touched by one another. This example

borrowed from Husserl's 'double sensation'<sup>53</sup>, is used to illustrate the exterior of the self, perceived. The hands demonstrate how the experience does not occur just anywhere, but within the embodied self, because as Merleau-Ponty puts it, 'our body is a being of two leaves, from one side a thing among things and otherwise what sees them and touches them; [...] it unites these two properties within itself' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.137). The two hands touching, as Barbaras (2001) explains, is a form of reflexion by which a continuous exchange takes place between touching and touched. As it is touched the left hand makes itself sensing while at the same time the right hand becomes an object by being touched, yet simultaneously the right hand is sensing the left hand. Put simply, the being is sensing by being sensed (Barbaras, 2001, p.181). This describes the movement that exists in flesh and by which the object never reaches completeness, or a fixed objectification. I use this insight on reversibility to question the proposition that 'between my movements and what I touch, there must exist some relationship' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.133). With the costume-making methodology I develop through this research, situations are created where people other than me make a movement-wearable from actions mirroring mine. With this practice-led research I explore the contention that we do not just perceive from a single position. Instead we reciprocate to create an interaction that is relational to the encounter whereby body-subject and object are intertwined and reversible: 'because my eyes which see, my hands which touch, can also be seen and touched, because, therefore, in this sense they see and touch the visible, the tangible, from within, [...] the world and I are within one another' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.123). This theory supports the development of a laboratoire method based on a definition of costume as interaction, rather than as subject. The practice of costume-making implemented through the laboratoire method takes place both as an exchange through materiality and as co-creation.

No consensus exists on Merleau-Ponty's progression from his work on phenomenology to his ontology of flesh developed in later life (Low, 1992). Recent theories (Gallagher, 2008; Morris, 2018), for example, demonstrate that interpretations of reversibility, since Merleau-Ponty, expand from his work.

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<sup>53</sup> 'Double-sensation' is developed by Husserl to explain the change of perspective that presupposes body orientation and movement. This relates Husserl to the spatial dimension of perception (Zahavi, 1994, p.67).

The following review centres on the studies most relevant to the research, selected because they concern ontological concepts and intersubjectivity.

Professor Shaun Gallagher's (2008, 2014) areas of research include phenomenology and the cognitive sciences. In examining relationships between phenomenology as methodology and scientific investigations, Gallagher looks at insights on embodied cognition. Establishing the relation between the structural and functional design of the body and our primary interaction with things, Gallagher underlines the role of intersubjectivity in bringing about perception and the meanings and values that derive from *others*. This is useful when considering the role of intersubjectivity in sensory pre-processing and the body partaking in-the-world as potentiality. That said, the focus of this thesis when describing reversibility through the materiality of body and world diverges from Gallagher's embodied cognition. Developments on the phenomenology of nature and sense by Morris (2018) support my interpretation of reversibility in practice.

In *Merleau-Ponty's Developmental Ontology* (2018), Morris develops a theory which draws from both Merleau-Ponty's late writings on being, sense and the nature of experience and from Morris' own early ontological development and critical engagement with science. These overlapping themes link ontology to movement rather than to pre-existing formalised notions of idea or matter, an approach that presents Merleau-Ponty's ontology as an on-going process of development (Morris, 2018, p.5). Developments concerning the phenomenology of nature and the problem of sense and the question 'how can there be sense [?]' (2018, pp.9-11), support the interpretation and application, in practice, of reversibility, a term implying innate reciprocity between sense, sensing and nature. Morris' proposition that the origins of sense lie within nature (2018, p.11) provides me with an understanding of sense as a property which being auto-generates within itself. I am interested in Morris' approach to the phenomenology of nature and the idea that nature is where we find sense happening because this notion of sense allows for 'standing back in wonder and observing what happens' (Morris, 2018, p.11) when we consider intentions that lie beyond consciousness. By 'letting the phenomena lead the way' (Morris, 2018, p.11) of my body, I approach the process of costume-making as an openness from which to challenge pre-existing understandings of costume.

Morris' analysis, derived from the original French version of *Phénoménologie de la Perception* (1945), provides useful insights into Merleau-Ponty's meaning of the

notion of sense. Morris demonstrates how the phenomenological definition of sense that amalgamates original French connotations of ‘meaning, awareness, orientation and fit’ (2018, pp.7-8) is underpinned by the ‘need to understand how the very activity of reflection is itself engendered in and out of a sense prior to our reflective activity’ (Morris, 2018, pp.9-10). I refer to Morris in particular, for an understanding of the body’s sensing capacities and for the articulation of sense-making. Sense, Morris explains, is the combining of all parts that constitute the sensory experience, which, once put together, produce a sense which is quite different from any of the individual component elements (Morris, 2018, p.7). Based on Morris’ discussion of Merleau-Ponty’s ‘sense’ I derive three meanings of sense to ground my research: firstly, ‘sensation’, or the engagement of the sensory body with materiality; secondly, ‘meaning’, as it relates to ontology and to the philosophy of interrogation; and thirdly, ‘direction’, understood as the real exchange between the physical body responding to the force of materials and the space of creation, both temporal and spatial.

The practice of describing my sensory experience of relationships in phenomenological costume-making requires that I develop a method that enables me to identify the haptic experience in actions of costume-making that are generated from my embodied costume process. This builds on the Merleau-Pontian theory of the body as movement and the need to approach my corporeal self as a field of experience (introduced earlier, page 47). I address this with the construction of a space of origination whereby the bodily engagement with material takes place through a continuous succession of making actions. This space is the MWM laboratoire created in the course of this research and presented in Chapter 3 ‘Methodological framework’. The realisation of a time-bound space of research builds on the concept of ‘bracketing’ developed by Husserl (1859-1938) from his perspective on the body as subject-object and the return to the essence of being<sup>54</sup>. ‘Bracketing’, whereby the everyday is put aside, aims to address the problematisation of the body as a hindrance to the essence of being. However, the bodily engagement in-movement with materials in a continuous succession of making-actions, later presented in Chapter 3, means that the laboratoire in all its articulation is deeply intertwined with the reality of my own corporality being rendered phenomenological during research for this PhD. The concept of bracketing is not about an additional level of abstraction but, rather, offers a means to develop a method that could provide access to the

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<sup>54</sup> Husserl maintains his connection with empirical philosophy with this theory.

relational dimensions of the brute reality (see ‘brute facts’, page 48) that underlies the intersubjectivity of the sensible world – hence my adoption of an open-ended model of bracketing<sup>55</sup>. My contention with the construction of the body as phenomenological is that a direct engagement with my own sensing capacities could enable a return to reciprocal relationships between movement and materials as these coexist within the generative space of the laboratoire.

My understanding of the ontology of flesh is informed by my own readings of Merleau-Ponty in both the original French and English translations of *Phénoménologie de la Perception* and *Le Visible et l’Invisible*. As a native French speaker, my innate knowing of the French language reduces the gap in understanding often produced by arguably incomplete translations of the ontology. This position on the text comes from the acknowledgment that certain subtle meanings may not always be fully revealed when translated into English, and this insight suggests opportunities for further interrogation. For instance, the term ‘coiling’ used in the translated Merleau-Ponty (1968) to describe *enroulement* lacks precision in not indicating an active and reciprocal participation in the action of enrolling, and therefore omits the connotation of physical engagement in the act of perceiving. I return to my engagement with Merleau-Ponty’s original French text writings later in this section.

Investigating the original French writings of Merleau-Ponty offers opportunities for acquiring potential additional meaning, which is embedded in and conveyed through his particular style of writing. This supports my aim to describe primary expression as a ‘creative endeavour that does *not* begin from or express something fully given or determinate’<sup>56</sup> (Morris, 2018, p.125). The notion of expression discussed throughout this thesis refers to this definition. Expression occupies a significant place in the progression of Merleau-Ponty’s thinking towards ontology. The phenomenon of expression brings him to develop his ontology by means of language (Barbaras, 2001, pp.69-71). Merleau-Ponty develops a reductive writing style, notably for the ontological work published posthumously in *Le Visible et l’Invisible* and *Notes de Travail* (1964a). In phenomenological terms reduction refers to essence and

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<sup>55</sup> For Husserl our experience of the world takes place by way of its interaction with our consciousness in an active engagement that can be intentional because it is always directed towards the object being perceived. This situates embodiment at the centre of perception and as such is its constituent. While Merleau-Ponty’s prioritisation of the body in the lived experience over the essence of being conflicts with Husserl’s transcendental consciousness, both develop their thinking from the proposition that perception occurs because the body is relational to the world.

<sup>56</sup> Author’s emphasis.

elemental condition. Barbaras describes Merleau-Ponty's style of writing as a way of developing a means of communicating that neutralises concepts so as to favour a return to pure origins (2001, p.11). On the written expression, Landes says that 'the expressed must paradoxically arrive into the material trace of the expressive gesture, and this is why the material expressions themselves "bear their sense"<sup>57</sup>' (Landes, 2013, p.10). This suggests that the expressed does not precede the expression but is engendered along with it. Therefore 'the phenomenon of expression is not to be understood as a form of corporeal expression but rather as what rests at the core of the expressive operation, without prejudging the categories through which we must describe it' (Barbaras, 2001, p.70, my translation).

Regarding language, the phenomenon of expression as Barbaras explains, entails a linguistic practice that necessitates a form of return to bring us back to 'an authentic experience of expression freed from its intellectualist implications' (2001, p.70). Barbaras explains that language in the philosophy of expression is not to be understood as corporeal speech, but rather as primary expression, an authentic experience of expression at the heart of the expressive operation (2001, p.70). For the practice of phenomenological costume-making, returning to the expression itself to describe the sensible world of relationships between movement and materials entails centring on my experience of real actions, and by this on my movement, as a way to proceed with my own sense-making for this PhD. In the next chapter, 'Methodology framework', I present the movement-led methods I specifically devised to facilitate practice returning to the expression of the costume in-becoming as a sensing continuum. This includes the method I termed 'drawing actions' (see section 3.6) which was used for re-enacting the experience of costume in-making with drawing materials. I now examine the French term *enroulement* I have selected to supplement my descriptions of my engagement in-movement during costume-making, showing how this particular word enables me to explore in-movement the theory of reversibility.

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<sup>57</sup> *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.408.

## Merleau-Ponty's original French writings

My investigation of the original French writings of Merleau-Ponty is integral to the development of this practice-led research. From initial explorations of making techniques and materials in a solo practice research setting (presented in Chapter 3), my engagement with Merleau-Ponty through the dialogue I entertain with the original French writings informs my descriptions of the lived experiences of costume-making as 'the first hints of language' (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.194) a process of putting into words the sense that my actions make within myself. The development of the MWM method was based on the proposition that the concept of reversibility expressed in the original French language of the ontology of flesh (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a) is appropriate to my practice of describing the relationship between movement and materiality as an interrogative method of research. Merleau-Ponty's style of writing in French expounds the openness of the theory, an inherence I use for my interrogation of the process of reversibility. Merleau-Ponty's French writings investigated through this study address the aim to devise ways of describing reversibility within the embodied process of phenomenological costume-making. The French term taken from *Le Visible and l'Invisible* (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a) is *enroulement*. My engagement in-movement with this specific term is practiced to activate movement already existing within me. In this intimate place, as my corporality interferes with the materiality of costume-making, I aim to return to the occurrence of expressions to 'open upon Being' and make my 'habitual evidences vibrate until they disjoin.' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.102). Merleau-Ponty utilises *enroulement* to describe flesh and the ambiguity between 'my things and my body' and the blurring of the boundaries between these two during perception. *Enroulement* indicates juxtaposition and multi-layering to describe facets of perception such as seeing and seen, touching and touched, for example. In the instance of the other perceiving while being perceived by me in the space of research, the *enroulement* of the thing perceived takes place on the one hand by way of the other, a perception outside of mine and therefore invisible. On the other hand, the perception I see, outside of myself, on the other, is the thing, my body. I expand further on the application of *enroulement* in Chapters 4 and 6.

In the practice of describing the experience of reaching for the sensible world of relationships between movement and materials I question whether speech, articulated by Merleau-Ponty as the occurrence of expression (Barbaras, 2001, p.38), can

expand the engagement of my embodied self in scrutinising the phenomenological method of *laboratoire*. I regard Merleau-Ponty's style of writing as a phenomenological practice involving reduction of language and use this tactic to develop my own phenomenological approach of describing what I sense while making costume. This supports my intention to interrogate, through movement in engagement with the space of the *laboratoire*, how the sense of a particular French word related to reversibility can be refashioned in the new context of my embodied practice. This approach to the primary expression of reversibility which uses my corporality 'to forget the self as production [and] to understand the self naively as the mark of a thought transparent to itself' (Barbaras, 2001, p.11, my translation) is supported with the proposition that gesture or speech or any human actions consist in adopting a pre-existing construction 'to initiate a new expression in a new context that catches up with a felt sense' (Landes, 2013, p.12). Incorporating into my costume-making research by actions an examination of Merleau-Ponty's French vocabulary of reversibility presents a way to make my body permeable to relationships, while simultaneously returning onto and within myself.

My endeavour of re-considering the meaning of *enroulement* from Merleau-Ponty's French writings in the context of this research is supported by Landes' study, *Merleau-Ponty's Paradoxes of Expression* (Landes, 2013). Landes develops an analysis of Merleau-Ponty's philosophical development from the position of expression. The incongruity of expression is that what is expressed does not precede the expression but is generated at the same time. According to Landes, the creative process that expression engenders, and for this research specifically language, is neither pure repetition nor pure creation, but the interval between both (2013, p.27). This perspective supplements an artistic approach to the practice of describing expression from a structure that has at its core selected terms of reversibility drawn from Merleau-Ponty's original French writing. Whilst considering the terms and extracts as part of sentences and expressions, the structure of describing facilitates a process of engendering new meanings, understood as senses of experience. Landes writes that 'the meaning of the words is shaped by their use, and yet paradoxically these words are used because of the meaning they will have in this new context' (Landes, 2013, p.11). The circularity I find in the theory of expression informs my articulation of describing relationships in phenomenological costume-making. I contend that a circular open-ended descriptive approach of the continuous arrangement of materials from and around my embodied self enables me to

consider each trajectory and each particular context of experience as elements of a practice that brings forth new meanings.

In his examination of the lived experience, Landes (2013) discusses how the phenomenon occurring prior to any reflection is experienced, yet the initial perception gives way to the human tendency to convert primary experience into language. While not fundamental to the experience itself as it occurs for the individual, language enables sense-making, that is, the ability to make sense of the experience for oneself, and to be able to articulate it to others. Language in this context is a form of

expression, whether silent or verbal, that 'claims the goal of reaching a truth through more and more adequate expression [...] something that exists in advance and that is obscured by language itself' (Landes, 2013, p.93). The formulating and structuring of expression into language, which has the simultaneous effect of interrupting its emergence, implies both the framing and the limiting of the phenomenon, and by doing so going against the phenomenon's expressive nature, a paradox in perception that takes place by way of the body being-in-the-world. The paradox of expression and language limitation that occurs from interrupting the expression that is part of this very act contributes to the practice of describing the reciprocal relationships in the experience of phenomenological costume-making: further, it offers a way of getting closer to what is 'sparked in the irrepressible space between what we live and what we say' (Landes, 2013, p.3).

My engagement with French terms and extracts regarding reversibility supports the idea of phenomenological costume-making being reflective of the circularity of the expression. The openness of *enroulement* presents a way to counteract the collapsing of the experience between the self and its surrounding, or that which is non-self. This rests on the engagement between my making and the space of the laboratoire as an investigation of reversibility whereby no complete distinction can be made between the inner and the outer aspects of the costume in-making because each of these have meaning only in light of one another. Circularity presents a way of observing the other looking onto me as a process of interrogation. Flesh, representing the porosity between my being and the world in perception, exists because sense is already within our being-in-the-world. This helps to put the concept of circularity into the reality of the situation of perception. This also supports my proposition that it is by being in a space shared with others that I can observe myself as self-constituted

and engaged with the materiality of the world I am part of, as ‘the things pass into us as well as we into the things.’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.123). In 4.4, ‘The preparation of *Laboratoire 1* from costume processes initiated by my movement’, page 114, I examine the circularity of making as it is revealed through my solo practice research into the reversibility of costume which is initiated by my movement. Supplemented by my movement-based exploration of *enroulement*, the circularity induced by the *laboratoire* method informs the analysis of phenomenological costume-making as presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

### **Phenomenology and performance material**

Phenomenology has fuelled a change in performance related disciplines.

*Phenomenology and Performance: Traditions and Transformations* (2015) edited by Maaïke Bleeker presents new writings on the interaction between the phenomenological traditions and various emerging performance methods.

Descriptions and applications of phenomenological praxis that push the boundaries of ‘the artistic enactment of practices for others to witness’ informs the development of systems of interpreting the experience ‘that cannot be solved’ and is ‘incomplete’.

McKinney’s (2015, pp.121-139) analysis of the material force of scenography in *Vibrant Materials: The Agency of Things in the Context of Scenography* focuses on spectatorship as a way of studying reciprocity where the seer and the seen are bound together in a reciprocal and reversible relationship. Her questioning of the agency of the maker and the convention of the passivity of things applies findings offered by the anthropologist of technology and art, Tim Ingold (2010), and by theorist and philosopher Jane Bennett’s (2010) investigations concerning the human and nonhuman and the notion of the flow of material. From such works McKinney (2015, pp.126-127) develops her understanding of the agentive capacity of objects, materials and things ‘to become active participants’ or ‘incomplete potentialities’. McKinney also builds on Merleau-Ponty’s theories relating to the embodiment of senses in considering how ‘materials acting on each other and in combination produce a network of sensible matter’ (2015, p.123). Her proposition of the body sensing from apprehending materiality provides me with a framing to lead my investigations of phenomenological costume-making through sensing the materiality and my corporeality acting on each other. To develop further the idea of reciprocal relationships existing between materials and bodies, McKinney (2019) draws from

theories of new materialism to examine how materials can be seen as co-creative and co-operative components of theatre. She employs the example of scenographer Katrin Brack's use of material in stage design to introduce the concept of scenographic materiality and the idea that materials possess creative agency independently from designers or performers. I build on McKinney's ideas to show this reciprocal relationship as co-creative. I also examine the participation prompted by phenomenological costume-making in laboratoire settings to reveal the effects which specific material qualities may exercise over material and movement relationships.

In *Theatre and Performance Design, A Reader in Scenography* (2010), theatre-maker and scholar Jane Collins and theatre academic Andrew Nisbet highlight the opportunity for designers to engage with a discursive examination of their relationship with the scenographic elements at the centre of a transforming multidisciplinary. Merleau-Ponty's *Eye and Mind* (1964b)<sup>58</sup> is included in Collins' and Nisbet's *Reader* for reflections on the entanglement between the visual and the tactile experience within the 'indeterminate and shifting field that is performance' (Collins and Nisbet, 2010, p.1). Within this engagement however, the focus of this research is on the bodily experience of the materiality of costume in-making, independent of the space of performance.

Ingold's view of making as an on-going binding together of materials, flows and sensory awareness (2013b) provides a definition of weaving as an embedded bodily movement, a concept I build upon to present phenomenological costume-making as a creative form of interference with materials. While this research does not develop from new materialism, Ingold's notions of making inform my fluid engagement with costume materials.

### **Phenomenological costume and new materialism**

I consider new materialism from the perspective of my phenomenological engagement with the process of costume-making and the implicit interrelation between costume unfolding and changing. From the vantage point of my own body acting in relationship with the material environment of making, I examine the essential

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<sup>58</sup> A passage from Merleau-Ponty's *Eye and mind* (1964b) is published in *Theatre and Performance Design, A Reader in Scenography* (Collins and Nisbet, 2010, pp.243-245).

nature of costume in-becoming. This research exposes the agency of material, and although it does not develop directly from new materialism, it does however acknowledge the contribution of new materialist theory concerning the relationships between bodies and things and their ability to act on one another.

New materialism's focus shifts away from the egocentric bodies that can sometimes be seen emerging in phenomenology, in particular from Merleau-Ponty's (2012) proposition that perception is effected through the embodied self and that it is within beings that things in-the-world are perceived. The perspective given by new materialism enhances my awareness of the agency of materiality when examining what materials do in the context of costume emerging from movement and material relationships. This awareness grounds my exploration of the body as a materiality functioning in relationship with the materiality of costume, a key aspect in the empirical development of practice research, further discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. That said, phenomenology is the main focus of this research on the embodied nature of the costume process because it enables detailed observations of costume and material relationships initiated by the movement of my own designing body.

Ingold challenges the view that sees the making of objects as the act of projecting a ready-made thought onto materials (2007, 2010). In *The Textility of Making*, Ingold (2010) proposes the prioritisation of an understanding of making as a creative encounter between the interventions of the maker with the life of matter as it follows its on-going course of transformation. Ingold's definition of the maker situates making as an action which 'follow[s] the forces and flows of material' (Ingold, 2010, p.97). He bases this definition on the premise that materials 'are what they do' (2013b) and that it is through 'intervening in the fields of force and currents of material wherein forms are generated' (2010, p.92) that materials reveal their properties. In this encounter the makers' skill lies in their ability 'to find the grain of the world's becoming and to follow its course while bending it to their evolving purpose' (2010, p.92). This proposition originates in his anthropological theory of lines (Ingold, 2007) and the making of traces via the engagement of humans with the life world. To support his position, Ingold uses the example of weaving, positing it as an interaction between the human experience and matter that consists of the binding of threads as a process of making a surface (2007, pp.63-67). The processes of making and the term '*Movement-Wearable Making*' (MWM) I apply in my methodology are based on the action of weaving materials by following their flows and forces as a practice of interrogating the process of costume making itself. In this research 'MWM'

encapsulates the prioritisation of the generative engagement between bodily movement and materiality over the physical outcomes of the phenomenological costume-making process. Ingold's theorisations enable me to situate my body in a relational position with the materials of costume-making in such a way as to allow for encounter with the agentic capacities of the materials. This assists me in going beyond mere impulses of movement initiated by a design in my mind: instead I centre on my response in-movement to the relationship with costume's materiality, an exploration I discuss in Chapter 4.4, page 116.

Theorist Jane Bennett proposes in *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (2010) that force exists in everything as a constituting virtue 'appropriate to its material configuration' and is common to humans and objects, since both categories consist of matter. For Bennett, the power of material puts humans and nonhumans 'horizontally' on the same level of materiality (2010, p.4), hence her consideration of the agency of materiality in relation to ethical and ecological issues, and the proposition of applying 'attentiveness to matter'. 'If matter itself is lively,' she posits, 'then not only is the difference between subjects and objects minimized, but the status of the shared materiality of all things is elevated' (Bennett, 2010, p.13). What is interesting in this approach is how her attention is redirected to the power of materials 'to make things happen, to produce effects', an idea which informs my focus on the force contained in being and matter and constituting the environment of phenomenological costume-making. Bennett elaborates on the causal quality of matter with 'thing-power' and 'agency of assemblage' to consider the complexity of the relationship between human and things. The 'positive, productive power' of things (2010, p.1) encompasses an ambiguity in that it takes the form of the other (2010, pp.21- 23), a blurring of boundaries between object and subject, which points to the openness of things and to their force independent of human will. This underpins my approach to costume-making as part of a wider system of reciprocity between humans and matter and the development of the MWM method as a non-hierarchical practice.

In recent years, the theories of new materialism used in scenography scholarship, developed from Bennett's 'vitality of matter', have stimulated critical scrutiny of relationships between spectatorship, scenographic materials (Shearing, 2015) and ecology (Donald, 2014; Beer, 2016). Tanja Beer, with her thesis on ecologically engaged practice of scenography (2016), which she termed ecoscenography, has contributed to the debate on scenographic perceptions and conventions by

conceptualising ways in which an ecological ethic can be integrated with scenography.

Physicist and scholar Karen Barad's (2007) 'intra-action' supplements the ontological understanding of the body and costume material relationship. Intra-action defines the act as emerging from within the relationship. In this sense all relationship constituents are active and they do not exist outside the relationship, but instead emerge from it. The mingling of humans and things and their ability to act offers the possibility to reconsider the materiality of costume and relationships emerging from within offer an alternative way of thinking about the body with other bodies, with matter, and with environments and discourse in terms of simultaneity.

Intra-action presents a concept for re-thinking the boundaries involved in costume-making, by seeing these as being outside of cause and effect, or individual relationships, or subject-object dualism. In the first application of new materialism published on costume, scenography scholar Greer Crawley and Barbieri use Barad's concept of intra-action to discuss costume as an active participant in the iterative process of its own materialisation. In their analysis of the chorus costumes for the 2018 Opéra du Rhin production of *Eugene Onegin*, Barbieri and Crawley discuss the agential actions of materials of costume as a way to articulate the costume specialists' (designers, makers and material specialists) response to the performativity of materials (2019, p.144). By foregrounding Barad's enactment of the 'agential cut' and 'doing' rather than the 'being', Barbieri and Crawley discuss costume that 'includes the wearer as well as the makers of costume as they come into focus in relation to the materials with which costumes are made' (2019, p.145). In this entanglement, costume materials, costume workers and the costumed chorus are constituents of performance, all acting on one another. Here, costume materialising through intra-action engages human matter 'in a co-production of meaning'. From this perspective, costume workers' whose expertise is in part 'shaped by materials and processes' (2019, p.147) contribute to the performance as much as performers wearing costume and therefore, to the materiality of performance as well as its meaning. Barbieri's and Crawley's examination of costume through new materialism demonstrates the possibility of distribution of agency by which to address the hierarchy of performance production and the limiting definition of costume as representational.

In mobilising the perspectives offered by intra-action, I foresee possibilities for expanding current research on embodied costume-making by considering the

costume in-becoming as a succession of reconfigurations, of doings and of beings. The embodied process, ever changing and unfurling, offers the opportunity to explore moving further away from perceived objects to develop a deeper understanding of costume in-becoming as a process where unfolding occurs through specific intra-actions (Barad, 2007, p.128). This may be considered a topic for future projects beyond the remit of this research.

### **Phenomenological approaches of movement practice in performance making**

I will now look at phenomenological approaches within the context of movement practice in performance making. The philosophy of Merleau-Ponty and its concepts of embodiment and intersubjectivity influenced a number of critical practices of movement and theory<sup>59</sup>. Phenomenological studies of contemporary dance have contributed both concepts and methodologies focused on aspects such as dance materiality and corporeality<sup>60</sup> in embodied interdisciplinary practice. Dance practitioners, scholars and phenomenologists Maxine Sheets-Johnstone and Susan Kozel are of particular interest to the research on my own costume movement as designer. Both Sheets-Johnstone's and Kozel's studies of the moving body developed from their distinct and extensive practice as dancers and choreographers, from their experiential knowledge of auto-generated dance movement and from their embodied phenomenology. As academics, both developed critical approaches from Merleau-Ponty's ontology of flesh. Sheets-Johnstone's research on animate movement expanded through developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience, while Kozel's phenomenology of the lived experience and the senses developed through digital technology.

In *The Corporeal Turn* (2009), Sheets-Johnstone's essay on the nature of kinesthetic memory uses the concept of kinetic melody elaborated by neurophysiologist

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<sup>59</sup> Critical practitioners and theorists who have discussed the influence of phenomenology on their thinking and practice of movement include in the field of actors' training director Eugenio Barba (1991) who develops on the origins of movement in the kinesthetic body, an approach he based on Merleau-Ponty's body and its situation in a context of experiential relationships.

<sup>60</sup> Phenomenological approaches in the study of dance developed from Merleau-Ponty include Sondra Fraleigh (2015) and PhD study by Pao-Yi Liao (2006) whose analysis of the nature of Butoh choreography is carried out through the phenomenological lens of embodiment and intersubjectivity. Liao's foregrounding of the materiality of the creative process and study of Butoh workshop methods aligns with my approach centred on the interaction of body and costume matter in a laboratory setting, similar to workshop.

Aleksandr Romanovich Luria (1973). Kinetic melodies are dynamic patterns of movement that Sheets-Johnstone describes as initiated corporally 'in-the-flesh', rather than as brain events (2009, p.255). Kinetic melodies are inscribed in the body by way of kinesthetic memory, that is, by way of distinctive movement dynamics. Kinesthetic memory is based on kinesthetic experience, which is the bodily felt dynamics of movement, and on the assertion that 'any movement creates a distinctive kinetic dynamics', from the relationship with space, time and spatio-temporal-energetic qualities (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.253). Sheets-Johnstone explains distinctive kinetic dynamics unfolding as 'invariant' and familiar, and as tailored kinetically. This means that kinetic dynamics take place 'through an active series of coordinated movements that is kinesthetically felt' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.258) both as dynamics and as dynamically familiar, yet each instance is 'affected by the situation at hand' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.255). Kinesthetic memory is of particular interest to me as it provides a phenomenological understanding of movement and informs my interpretation of the intersubjectivity of costume-making.

Additionally, Sheets-Johnstone's (2009, p.103) explanation of affect through the sensory modality of tactile-kinesthetic informs my interpretation of the haptic experience.

'Affect may well be better "captured by dynamic, kinetic terms" than special feeling terms because they have their origin in the tactile-kinetic-body. From this perspective, complexity of affect may be tied to the complexity of movement.'

(Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.166, footnote 16)

Sheets-Johnstone's notion of affect held in the tactile-kinetic-body resonates with the objective to devise a method of making to observe in phenomenological terms the unfolding of the bodily movement and costume materials relationship.

Another phenomenological approach I use to develop a methodology of phenomenological costume-making from exploring the initiation of the costume in my body is Kozel's (2007; 2012; 2015) phenomenological methodology. Developed from the proposition that phenomenology is performed, Kozel's methodology emphasises the 'processural' quality of phenomenology. Kozel writes: 'in performing a phenomenology we continuously modify our own practices and methods' (Kozel,

2015, p63). Auto-generated process is the core principle of her methodology and what structures systems of phenomenological application.

The resonance Kozel describes as 'the constant exchange of sound, gesture and sight that makes up the texture of relational and dynamic life' (Kozel, 2015, p.71), and to which I add the haptic experience of costume, underpins the methodology I develop that is centred on my embodied process of costume-making. Resonance informs my description of MWM when laboratoire participants' actions are entangled with mine, which I discuss in Chapters 5 and 6. The following is the list of components from Kozel's phenomenology of lived experience that I explored as part of my practice research.

'Witness what you see, hear, and touch, how space feels, and temperature, and how the inside of your body feels in relation to the outside [...]. What thoughts enter your mind once you suspend the main rational thrust? Register any seemingly trivial anxieties or thoughts [...] do not try to delve into their significances [...]. Let your mind wander and notice lateral associations. Your sense-data depends on your context [...]. Spend time getting in touch with your senses, identify whether some dominate.

Take a break (a moment, a day, a week, a year).

Describe what you experienced. Take notes, record sounds or images.

[...] do not worry about style, grammar or relevance at this stage. This stage may occur immediately after your immersion into a specific sensory experience, or it may happen after an interval.'

(Kozel, 2007, p.53)

Although Kozel describes her method as 'akin to dance, theatre, performance and dynamic processes of expressions' (2007, p.50), as designer re-assigning the role of my movement in the costume process, I find her approach that involves the interlacing of bodily action and reflection as phenomenological process useful to my experience-led research. This process is suited to developing phenomenological research methods that aim to advance my own practice of describing actions of making intertwined with the materiality of the experience. Kozel's methodology of writing about the body of the dancer as 'site for discovery' demonstrates an approach

of describing the embodied process that I draw on to develop the process of writing about the lived experience of costume-making. Kozel's (2010, pp.207-8) consideration of the bodily experience, and of the 're-fashioning' that occurs when trying to put experiences into words, as well as her argument that the transition from raw experience to scholarly writing is an essential part of performing phenomenology (Kozel, 2015), provides insight on writing to advance my own reflective practice of describing actions of making intertwined with the materiality of the experience as research method. I present extracts from my phenomenological writing of notes in section 6.1.

## **2.2 Summary**

This chapter has laid out the theoretical context of my phenomenological approach to the study of the costume designer's body as originator of costume. My discussion of the Merleau-Pontian prioritisation of the body within the lived experience situates me as both costume designer and researcher at the centre of the costume in-becoming process. Key ideas from the theory of flesh have been introduced to support and inform the strategies I use to create a new method of costume as movement practice with the overarching aim of transforming my costume design process. My presentation of the theories and practices of performance, scenography, materiality and movement underpins this PhD's examination of relationships between the body and materiality in phenomenological costume-making. This is with the aim of developing my costume role as initiator of collective and creative costume exploration. This research will be used for setting up the structure and terms from within which such collaboration may be enacted. Taking the perspective of a native French speaker, I have presented my investigations of the original French writings of Merleau-Ponty, offering these interpretations as a way of revealing certain additional layers of meaning which have been previously obscured in translation. The chapter has shown how my engagement with the notion of reversibility is integral to the development of this project's practice-led research because, importantly, it supports my aim of describing the primary expression of costume in-becoming. This justifies the position I take in the research as initiator of a costume-making process, which challenges conventional understandings of costume.

## Chapter 3. Methodological framework

This chapter outlines the methodological framework for the development of a phenomenological and practice-based method of costume-making in co-creation.

There are two main aims of this PhD, which are interdependent. One is to systematically apply Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology to transform my own costume process, thus expanding the role of the designer. The second aim is to develop a new costume method as movement practice that questions the fundamental nature of costume. Situating the methodology of costume-making as an experiential enquiry enables me to lead the research through the development of my own embodied costume design and making processes. This builds on the conceptualisation of my designer's body from the pre-reflexive phenomenological body previously introduced (page 27) as the embodiment of costume in-becoming. My embodied costume process as the locus of the relationship between movement and materiality is the phenomenological framework by which costume is made an open-ended and collaborative process. The phenomenological costume-making practice research is centred on the devising of the MWM research method. I developed this method in three stages, namely stage 1: Solo practice research; stage 2: *Laboratoire 1*; and stage 3: *Laboratoire 2*. An overview of the three consecutive stages of practice-led method development is presented in Table 1 on page 69.

This chapter details the theoretical concepts that provide information about the methods. It explains the specific combination of methods used for the empirical development of phenomenological costume-making practice research and offers an overview of their application. In 3.1, 'Phenomenological costume-making practice research', I present the phenomenological considerations of the practice research organised under the headings 'Embodied co-creation', 'Body empathy' and 'Recursive making actions'. In 3.2, I introduce the MWM laboratoire method. This research method entails two core components, the laboratoire space and the MWM technique. In 3.3, 'The laboratoire space', I describe the physical and temporal organisation of space for collective making. In 3.4, 'The MWM technique', the process practiced during laboratoire is presented under the headings 'Making actions' and 'Materials'. In 3.5, 'The three stages of phenomenological costume-making practice research', I outline the empirical stages and the nature of this practice-led research. I present in 'Stage 1: Solo practice research and preparation of the laboratoire space' the

research on my own costume movement that underpins the embodied approach of costume-making in co-creation. The re-focussing of my practitioner researcher's role is documented under the headings, 'My participation in costume and movement workshops', 'Body-movement training', and '*Preliminary Laboratoire*'. I then introduce the iterations 'Stage 2: *Laboratoire 1*' and 'Stage 3: *Laboratoire 2*', and the 'Laboratoire activities'. In 3.6, 'Drawing actions', I present the movement-led method I devised to complement the laboratoire method. In 3.7, 'Analysis of making', I present the documentation methods and the 'observation-based cycle of analysis in five steps' that I used. Finally, in 3.8 I present a summary of the methodology.

TABLE 1

The three stages of phenomenological costume-making practice research

Stage 1: Solo practice research and preparation of the laboratoire space

Making actions and material research  
Development of the MWM technique  
*(Personal studio setting, Brighton)*

My participation in costume & movement workshops  
*(Various London locations, 2015 - 2018)*

Body-movement training  
*(LCF, London, April to June 2017)*

*Preliminary Laboratoire*  
*(LCF, London, May 2017)*

Development of the MWM laboratoire method  
*(2017 - 2018)*

Stage 2: *Laboratoire 1*

Participants H. Tviberg and C. Bennett; Researcher-enabler (me) B. Fortin  
*(Goldsmiths University, April 2018)*

Stage 3: *Laboratoire 2*

Co-participant E. Lewis; Researcher/co-participant (me) B. Fortin  
*(Goldsmiths University, September 2019)*

### 3.1 Phenomenological costume-making practice research

As presented in the contextual review, the conventional system of theatre and performance production that dominates the performance industry confines costume to a specialism within a hierarchy of production. In a system of creation where costume is pre-determined through accepted and delimited roles and procedure (design, making, wardrobes, etc.) the relationship between body and costume is overlooked (see section 1.1). My research position, framed by a Merleau-Pontian prioritisation of the body in lived experience and as the original structure of relationship, enables me as costume designer to place myself at the core of the experience of performance making and, from this position, to provide evidence of engagement between the maker's movement and the materiality of costume. Adopting an approach to costume that foregrounds the body of the costume designer is to take a critical stance on the conventional production process by addressing the definition of costume and contributing to its expansion. Devising the research method through phenomenological costume-making is an informed process for re-defining costume via a sustained focus on my costume designer's body engaged with the practice research. Placed at the centre of the intimate relationship between movement and materiality of costume, my bodily movement operates as a methodological tool for exploration, observation and recording. I am, therefore, devising through my movement, a qualitative method of phenomenological costume-making. Furthermore, from this intense corporeal engagement comes a detailed examination of the embodied and tacit costume knowledge that is necessary for contributing to 're-defin[ing] costume as agent and instigator in making performance' (Barbieri, 2021, p.197) and for expanding in new ways the existing methods used in practice-led costume-making.

The methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry addresses the objective to observe the relationality of my costume process when other people participate in the same materiality of costume-making. The development of this methodology builds on my experience-led professional practice research, see pages 13 and 31, and on my combining of specifically devised methods. Central to this methodology is an iterative approach, which integrates practice-led, experience-led and qualitative methods to provide a framework for investigation. The thesis is structured around three stages of empirical practice research, an initial period of solo practice research and subsequent iterations of *laboratoire*. The solo practice research for this PhD

corresponds to a movement research on my costume movement-led expansion within individual settings, such as on my own in my studio, and in group situations where I worked amongst other people to devise a laboratoire method suitable for examining the relativity of the costume process I embody. The three stages of this development are introduced in this chapter. I now present the fundamental considerations that informed the methodology: embodied co-creation, body empathy and recursive making actions.

### **Embodied co-creation**

The initial period of my doctoral research centred on the development of a phenomenological approach to costume creation and included an exploration of my pre-reflexive process of costume design. This phase involved experimentations with costume-making processes and explorations of materials. I was building on costume procedures I had developed as a designer and maker for theatre, performance and art practice, and on my experiences of working within and from a variety of spaces of creation (i.e., my studio, in a production room adjacent to a theatre). For devised performance productions, such as for *dreamthinkspeak* (see page 13), I had developed costume on-site, during and while attending rehearsals, and from production dedicated areas adjacent to the performance space. Costumes that I had developed from design processes initiated ‘not from a script but through collaborative work’ (Bicât, 2012, p.19) engendered my physical interaction with directors, performers, designers and other creatives. I experienced close physical relationships with performers when placing costumes and materials on them and from this, I gained material knowledge of performers’ movement-related interactions with the costume in the making. This haptic experience of costume supported my growing awareness of the need to challenge the general prioritisation of the visual aspect in the work of a costume designer (Bicât, 2012, p.21). Despite the limitations of costume processes that seek to ‘invent and improvise’ to find solutions (Bicât, 2012, p.19), it was by undertaking these processes that I discovered new ways to initiate costume. Collaborations with the artist James (discussed on page 31) for costume-led performances and exhibition projects enabled me to approach the creation of costume through more exploratory utilisation of materials and experimental processes of making. I found that creating for costume-led performances in spaces dedicated to co-creation was a source of enrichment for my design work. Given that I recognised

this environment to be conducive to experimentation with making, I was keen to use group settings in my methodology. The realisation of the creative effect of the space of co-creation on my work led me to decide on the development of a co-creative method of costume-making workshop.

The methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry frames costume as a process of embodied co-creation. By centralising my designer self during the research I aim to examine the unfolding of costume-making and materiality as a mutual and co-creative process. In the field of transformative and expanded costume practice, phenomenology is applied to body-led research that centres on workshop activities and participants. In the development of her costume practice through movement and materials workshops, Barbieri adapted LEM principles into 'physical design workshops as a means to generate a different approach to costume' (2021, p.198) and to expand her costume-led workshop-based research through phenomenology. Barbieri asserts that the development of physical workshops that mobilise the phenomenology of design 'can be transformative of practice itself' (2021, p.198).

### **Bodily empathy**

Engaging my whole corporality in movement in the research of costume-making is to put into action the theory of costume embodiment. It is from the interplay between my body and the costume materials that the phenomenological methodology of experiential costume-making develops. The sequence 'making while wearing' is at the core of the methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry. The haptic contact is the experience put forward with phenomenological costume-making. Based on Merleau-Ponty, touching, rather than being limited to the hands or the epidermis, becomes integrated into a total experience of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.226). If bodily empathy is in play when making a wearable, then sensing its materiality with the whole self in movement induces an experience of the outside and the inside of the perceiving self (see section 2.1, page 46) and Merleau-Ponty's 'double inscription outside and inside' (1968, p.261), thus initiating a process of reversibility.

The recent shift in the practice and debate surrounding research methods grounded in bodily experience and the interest in embodied knowledge are accompanied by a growing attentiveness to movement as source of knowledge. Action as a focus of enquiry has seen an increase in the development of methodology frameworks based

on sensory bodily experience and embodied methods of enquiry (Chong Kwan, 2016). This interest in bodily experience has expanded to other fields of research, notably, sensory ethnography whereby the researcher's experiencing body is at the centre of the enquiry (Pink, 2009). In the context of this research, sensory bodily experience and embodied knowledge underpin the methodology which is centred on participation and co-creation. The sensory ethnography that builds on phenomenology and Merleau-Ponty (Pink, 2009) offers methodological grounding to address the question of my involvement as researcher from acknowledging both my sensing self and its role amongst the participants' bodies in a shared spatial configuration such as the *laboratoire* space offers. However, the ethnographer and scholar Sarah Pink's sensoriality, given as 'fundamental to how we learn about, understand and represent other people's lives' (2009, p.7) differs from the focus of this research on the participation of people in phenomenological costume-making as an intersubjective experience<sup>61</sup>. Creating research environments for sharing actions has enabled me to experience 'a closer empathy with the participants': such contexts also work as means for 'accessing nonverbal experience' (Chong Kwan, 2019).

Since senses are all inter-connected and constitute the body itself (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.151) the phenomenological costume-making *laboratoire* method is a body-oriented process. The development of the *laboratoire* method involves a technique for enhancing the haptic experience in order to produce the participants' engagement with the research procedure. Sensory sociologist Mark Paterson (2009; 2012) has observed that bodily feelings and haptic sensations are easily recognised yet difficult to communicate, a conundrum that has implications for placing a greater emphasis on haptic knowledge within qualitative and empirical methods of research. The importance of haptic knowledge in experience-led research informs my approach of using recursive movements which enable my sensing self to repeatedly observe haptic experience in order to be able to recognise the emergence of costume-associated relationships. I present in this chapter the empirical methods I developed as a consequence of focusing on the haptic experience.

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<sup>61</sup> Intersubjectivity, along with embodiment constitute the perceiving body that is at the same time embodied subjectivity (self) and engaged in a reciprocal relationship with its *other*. See on page 48.

## Recursive making actions

The methodology I adopt is centred on the time-period when the costume is in the process of being made, prior to completion. This is grounded in the pre-reflexive phenomenological experience which allows for the costume in-becoming and relational knowledge to be produced through movement. To examine relationships between bodily movement and the costume in-becoming, I approached the phenomenological costume-making research practice via the objective to maintain and prolong the in-progress status of a performance wearable. Recursive making actions support the development of a method of costume-making as an open-ended and relational process which can function as a generator of knowledge. Recursive making actions have the purpose of inducing an iterative practice of costume-making. This builds on the phenomenological principle that what the body consists of at a specific moment is determined by what it is experiencing and that 'the perception and the movement form a system that is modified as a whole' (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.113). The pre-reflexive has been examined in recent costume and movement studies. In Barbieri's workshop-based research and the '*Wearing Space*' physical workshops<sup>62</sup>, the pre-reflexive phenomenological experience underpins the creation of the workshop space. This is implemented, for instance, through the preparation of participants by way of a sequence of prompted actions. The warm-up exercises devised with Connolly for Barbieri's workshops, in particular, centred participants on their corporality and breathing as means towards 'letting-go of their everyday selves' (Barbieri, 2021, p.208). Developing from the theory of the pre-reflexive body a method that induces recursive making actions presents a way to look at the relationship between the movement-of-making and costume seen in isolation from performance, thus accessing the temporal bodily interactive space from which costume originates, prior to performance. In the space of origination costume is neither pre-determined nor complete. Recursive actions enable the foregrounding of movement during research on the transformativity of the costume design process embodied. This aligns with Barbieri's description of 'the space of the rehearsal room as a design space' (2021, p.209) in which costume can transgress the limits imposed on it by the performance space.

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<sup>62</sup> Donatella Barbieri's *Wearing Space* workshop, *Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space*, June 2017.

Now that I have presented the topics of embodied co-creation, bodily empathy and recursive making actions which are at the centre of the methodology, I will introduce the MWM laboratoire method (3.2). This research method entails two core components, the laboratoire space (3.3) and the MWM technique (section 3.4).

### **3.2 The MWM laboratoire method**

The methodology of phenomenological costume-making as an experiential enquiry is centred on the devising and implementation of the MWM laboratoire method. My initial research entailed experimenting with making actions, materials and the physical preparation for collective costume-making. This involved an examination of Lecoq's larval mask as incomplete form (Lecoq, 2000, p.38) and the organisational structure of the space at LEM previously presented on page 38. The devising of the MWM laboratoire method involved two empirical developments: one is the structuring of iterative laboratoire spaces and the other is the design of a technique of open-ended and sustained costume making actions.

### **3.3 The laboratoire space**

The empirical development of MWM entails the physical and temporal organisation of laboratoire spaces. The purpose of the organisation of these spaces is for participants to undertake the continuous practice of costume-making processes. Each laboratoire space was prepared so as to engage participants in the same activities, and using the same materiality of making, that I had used in my solo practice when preparing the laboratoire. At the core of this organisation are the following principles: to enhance the haptic experience in order to foster the participants' engagement with the research procedure; to enable the making of performance wearables freed from conventional ideas of costume design; and to sustain the engagement, in movement, of participants with the materials so as to facilitate observation of the reciprocal transformation of bodies and materials.

The physical organisation of the laboratoire space was aimed towards engaging participants with costume-making, other people and the space of co-creation. This was addressed through the preparation of materials and making actions that together constitute the MWM technique, presented below in section 3.4, and a programme of laboratoire activities. The preparation of activities is outlined later

also in section 3.4. The physical and temporal organisation is specific to each individual laboratoire and is carried out for the people who will occupy the space, namely myself as researcher and the recruited participants. In section 3.5, I present the process I carried out to prepare myself for leading the laboratoire and the recruitment of participants.

The organisation of the laboratoire space involves the positioning of equipment and participants for moving and making, as well as the planned position that I would occupy within the space while conducting the research. Materials are specifically arranged in allocated areas of the room to allow for the pre-planned activities to be carried out in a precise sequence. This physical organisation has the objective of progressively bringing participants to transgress the perceived divide between costume and movement, and achieving a fluid and spontaneous passing between actions of making, wearing and moving in the laboratoire space. The central area of the room is kept free from materials to indicate that it is an area dedicated to movement-led costume-making activities. This organisation is to generate expansive bodily movements to explore corporeally the materiality of the wearable in-making. This in turn aims to stimulate the participants' bodily engagement with the haptic experience and to enable the observation of how the materiality of costume making entices participants to move.

My descriptions of costume and the materiality relationships generated from iterative laboratoire produced observations which furthered my understanding of the effects of temporality and spatiality within the space of co-creation and of relationships between my costume embodied self, materials and participants. This analysis is presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

### **3.4 The MWM technique**

The MWM technique is, with the laboratoire space, constituent of the *Movement-Wearable Making* research laboratoire method. The MWM technique is practiced during laboratoire and involves actions of constructing and putting the costume in-progress onto the body while engaged in movement-of-making to produce the corporeal engagement with the laboratoire space. This technique consists of making performance wearables by repeating a set of actions. MWM enables laboratoire participants' making to remain in the developmental stage of the process when costume is being made, that is, before the work reaches completion. Materials

for making are pre-prepared to induce the costume process that I initially developed during solo practice research (stage 1, Table 1, page 69) and later transferred to the *laboratoire* setting. The MWM technique induces an iterative practice to expose the transformative potential of making performance wearables in relationship with the environment of phenomenological costume-making. To achieve this, MWM is devised to stimulate the fluid passing between making, wearing and moving.

The development of the MWM technique began in the solo setting of my studio. I tested the making method to explore how this might enable the physical and mental engagement of the movement-wearable maker with the *laboratoire* space. I also piloted how the method would enable the observation of making actions that would meet objectives set for each *laboratoire* practice within their respective time frames (*Laboratoire 1* and *Laboratoire 2*). To achieve the objectives, I arranged each space I practiced in (i.e., my studio, community space hired for rehearsing *Laboratoire 1*) based on the organisation of *laboratoire* space, described in the previous section. I dedicated a space for movement and making, and positioned materials in a different area of the room to allow for the carrying out of consecutive activities in a pre-planned order. I ensured that I had room to move freely in the space. During solo practice I placed myself in the position of participant in order to learn how to pay attention to the relationship of the movement-wearable maker with the materiality of the costume process. In section 4.4, I discuss my rehearsing of actions of MWM; in these rehearsals I studied my reflection in a mirror to explore the position of the seer of my actions that were otherwise concealed to me (see page 119). This practice was underpinned by the phenomenological questions: 'What is it that I don't see in my making?' and 'How what I don't see affects my actions of making?'. I examine in detail the practice of using a mirror and explain how my bodily situation, as seeing while being seen, prepared me for observing through the lenses of reversibility and the theory of flesh both the space and makers' bodies affecting one another during the *laboratoire*.

### **Making actions**

The development of the MWM technique started with experiments that required no previous costume construction training or experience. I researched methods for assembling materials that would generate similar successive movements, and this enabled me to prepare actions of making that could be sustained and that would

generate a flow of interactions between the costume maker and materials. Making actions in succession are dynamic patterns of movement that enable an engagement initiated in the body, rather than in the mind, and by which, making a movement-wearable is 'kinesthetically felt' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.258). To facilitate my observation of the haptic experience of costume I researched recursive movements that are intuitive and assimilated kinetically. Sheets-Johnstone explains that the body remembers through movement and kinesthetic memory is retained corporally through dynamic patterns of movements sensorily produced and learned by the body through, for instance, repetition (2009, p.258). An example of recursive making actions of costume making is interlocking similar pieces of materials together, and is discussed later in this section. The potential of recursive actions to display original relationships builds on the idea that each action's dynamics, such as direction, intensity or speed will be affected by 'the particular situation at hand' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, pp.255, 258). While recursive phenomenological costume-making actions entail similar corporeal and material relationships each is distinct, so based on this, each time a costume-making action is repeated the materiality of costume-making is experienced differently.

The devising of making actions and the selection of appropriate materials took place simultaneously. Cardboard, one of the first materials I experimented with, was selected following my reflections on the making of masks and objects at LEM. Cardboard constructions, which relied only on masking tape and string to assemble the form, produced rudimentary body-masks. In this way cardboard directed my actions towards an open-ended costume-making process akin to the expressiveness of larval mask (see page 38). Experimentations with cardboard led me to move in a demonstrative way with the materiality of the performance wearable object in-making, a way by which I gained an understanding of letting my experience of materiality guide my movements. However, I came to the decision that materials such as cardboard and techniques that required tape or glue should be discarded because they involved pausing actions during assembling to allow for application of new parts and drying time. From that point onwards a technique requiring only the core materials took precedence in the experimentation.



**Figure 1.** System of material self-assembly using standardised modular shapes i.e., foam segments interlocked.

Using a template, I cut out several identical shapes from a number of single materials (i.e., paper, card and plasticised canvas) and explored ways of attaching them together. Materials cut in 'Y' and 'O' shapes enabled the production of symmetrically shaped segments which allowed for tabs and slits to be evenly positioned at 120 degrees (Figure 1). I found that assembling similar shapes was akin to weaving with the 'bending of threads into surface' (Ingold, 2007, p.53) and that it enabled a practice of embedded bodily movement and therefore a sensory engagement with and awareness of the materials. This led to the devising of a system of material self-assembly using standardised pre-prepared modular shapes with integrated tabs and slits.

While exploring the materials which I had cut into standardised shapes, I also considered their potential properties for eliciting actions that might arise in direct response to the materials. Assembling from standardised shapes allowed scope for intuitive and non-linear configurations and for creating three-dimensional volume. These forms often produced echoes of a wearable, suitable to fit over the shoulder for instance, thus prompting the wearing of the assembled unitary materials. In actions of assembling that bring about the putting on of the form in-making onto parts of the self, costume materials and corporality come together as one configuration. It is from the interaction of 'the two outlines of which it is made' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.136) that costume becomes a relationship that is experienced both on the outside and on the inside of the self.

In the solo setting, I examined materials assembled into performance wearables in-progression both *on* and *off* myself and saw how in this engagement I was re-positioned within the space of making. By moving inside the assemblage, as the materials surrounded me, I experienced impulses to move in response to changes in the material construction worn on me. A flow of re-adjustments of the configuration of myself and of the materials ensued. Making on myself whilst moving encouraged me to be open to being spatially re-oriented by my haptic experience. From following in movement the materials' trajectory I examined my relationship with the materials themselves and with the space I moved in, carefully observing how materials affected me as I made physical movements. Following the lead of the materials also maintained the flow of interactions. Assembling materials that were coming undone, for instance, prompted my actions of re-interlocking segments together to maintain the assemblage in a 'wearable' configuration. The Merleau-Pontian embodiment, active in perceiving, and by which it is in continuous movement from its on-going re-orientation in the moment of the experience guided me in identifying cycles of actions. In one such instance the material assemblage came undone and my actions of re-assembling parts followed as a flow of interactions. McKinney and Iball write that cycles of actions are iterative actions by which the research method, rather than arising from clearly defined outcomes, instead entails a process of on-going physical adjustment to the methods (2011, p.18). With the objective of generating processes of costume from which a 'spiral' of knowledge develops, such flows of interactions were observed during the development of the laboratoire method and then examined to identify the creative potential of certain relationships between the corporeal movement and materials. Flows of interactions form the basis of the analysis presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. In exploring cycles of actions that arose from engaging my whole self, I acquired a physical understanding of relationships between materials, space and movements, a knowledge that helped me to make decisions regarding the materials best suited to inducing cycles of actions and reflections.

## **Materials**

The system of assemblage uses pre-prepared modular shapes with integrated tabs and slits. Preliminary experiments with these shapes informed the materials-based aspect of my research and, later, facilitated the rapid assimilation of the method as participants were introduced to it. The work with these shapes allowed the bodily

movement to become sensorily responsive to the process early on in the time frame of the *laboratoire*. Materials were evaluated for their potential to provide indications of how the living and matter might become affected by mutual interaction. The evaluation of each material's properties, for example, of malleability and durability, as well as their limitations, was achieved by examining the haptic experience of the material construction when in wear by me. Recursive making actions of weaving together pre-cut segments provided spontaneous moments of haptic engagement where I was touching the developing movement-wearable with my whole body. The extended contact with materials allowed my bodily and sensory awareness to become open to the process of making, and in this way to experience rather than direct the materials (See Chapter 4, 'Solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal, on page 123).

Approaching materials as active and transforming underpinned experimentations that involved paying attention to the reciprocal transformation of the body and the materials. Ingold considers making in light of the premise that materials 'are what they do' (2013b) and that it is through their interference with humans or nonhumans in their trajectory that they reveal their properties (Ingold, 2010). This assists me in going beyond impulses of movement brought about by a design in my mind to instead act in response to 'an on-going generative movement' (Ingold, 2010, p.91) coming from the relationship with the materials around and on me.

Assembling numerous material components whilst wearing the body-mask in-development induced a tension that enabled the evaluation of various material qualities. Malleability, durability and the materials' limitations were exposed when, for instance, the tension between myself and the materials increased as a wearable in-construction, that was in place on me, became larger. With this iterative procedure, I considered each material's specific properties and evaluated the sensations they produced and the physical movements they triggered in me. By bodily engagement with materiality, I anticipated being able to explore the arrival of something unexpected and began to sense how this was corresponding to a phenomenological practice of costume-making.

The following section describes the three main materials used for activities of MWM in *Laboratoire 1* (stage 2) and *Laboratoire 2* (stage 3) (see Table 1, page 69).

I approached the selection of materials with the objectives of exploring different experiences of materiality of costume-making and observing a range of spontaneous

expressions of costume through movements. The criteria for the selection of materials were to prompt bodily engagement in movement, to facilitate recursive making actions and to generate sustained physical contact. The order in which different material were to be used was set so as to produce a progression in the development of relationships between movement and materials during the laboratoire. To support an intensification of physical interactions as the exercises progressed, the key qualities I looked for in each material for repeating actions of assembling standardised shapes were malleability, flexibility and durability. The materials' limitations were also evaluated for their effect on the development of the method in relation to reversibility and of co-creation. Those aspects in particular were considered in relation to how the engagement with the material through body-mask making might have the potential to generate an open-ended process of making. Materials' qualities and limitations were also considered with regard to how they would enable my observation of the intersubjectivity of costume-making (page 48). I also took account of and how certain qualities might further my examination of 'the manner in which I am affected' (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.3) by materials.



**Figure 2.** Material self-assemblage using standardised modular 'Y' shapes cut out from varied patterned wallpaper. Photograph by B. Fortin.

### ***Wallpaper***

In selecting materials suitable for repeating actions I chose to begin with cut out wallpaper segments into which I incised tabs and slits (Figure 2). The resistance of this material to wear and tear was demonstrated through practicing repeated actions

of bending and inserting tabs into slits, and pulling out tabs from slits when re-arranging the paper segments. Wallpaper also enabled the construction of sturdy assemblages that could be examined whilst placed on the maker in-movement. Wallpaper segments, both light in weight and semi-rigid, had the potential for withstanding the repetitive actions of putting the assemblage on and off during body-mask making, presented on page 94. I chose this material for the first activity of MWM as it was suitable for introducing participants to the technique.



**Figure 3.** Material self-assemblage using standardised modular 'Y' shapes cut out from 6mm reconstituted foam. Photograph by B. Fortin.

### ***Foam***

I then chose to experiment with 6mm thick reconstituted foam<sup>63</sup> (Figure 3) because as a material of semi-rigid and flexible density, I considered that it would lend itself to making constructions from standardised pre-cut shapes but, due to its softness, it would exhibit different qualities from wallpaper. Foam also enabled the use of larger pre-cut shapes that would intensify the practice of making and moving with the assemblage due to the engagement of the whole body.

Covering large areas of myself with foam, for example, both my torso and arms (Figure 17, p.124) revealed how foam can follow the contours of a wearer in motion, while its elasticity and sponginess also generate tension. The resistance of foam to movement is due to its natural tendency to spring back to its original shape and volume, un-stretched and un-compressed. When assembled, the lightweight and

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<sup>63</sup> Reconstituted foam is made of compressed pieces of leftover polyurethane foam bonded together.

slightly adherent foam segments easily stay on the wearer, thus producing sustained haptic contact. Initially feeling that the foam shape conforms to and comfortably fits around human contours while at the same time resists, is experienced as a dissolving and re-emerging of boundaries between the maker sensing and the foam. Feeling the foam's resistance in this back and forth dynamic actively maintains this experience.



**Figure 4.** Material self-assemblage using standardised modular 'Y' shapes cut out from 3mm industrial felt. Photograph by B. Fortin.

### ***Felt***

I also chose to work with industrial felt<sup>64</sup> to research further the bodily empathy with reconstituted foam used previously (Figure 4). Like the foam, the felt material repeatedly bent and folded has the property of returning to its original form. Similar to foam, the felt segments are durable when using for repeated actions of inserting tabs into slits. Unlike foam, felt is not semi-rigid and its soft texture induces different responses in movement. Flexible and supple, felt contours and coats the wearer in-movement and is therefore suited to examining how the haptic contact affects the experience while constructing forms on the self. At the same time, large felt segments generate ample movements when being assembled on the self where the interlocked shapes have the tendency to come away from the wearer in-movement. This induces tension and prompts intense movements of re-assembling materials. Felt therefore, presented the potential for further investigation of the sensory exploration that began when making with foam.

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<sup>64</sup> Industrial felt is a non-woven material made from pressed wool fibres and used in a variety of sectors i.e., automotive, construction, military applications.

To sum up, all three materials, wallpaper, foam and felt, enable the incremental assimilation of the method. In their specific ways these materials prompt an engagement of the bodily movement that is maintained through their malleability and flexibility as well as through the limitations they impose on movement. The elasticity and sponginess of foam generates movement responses that encompass dualities of compatibility with and resistance to the bodily movement. Common to both foam and felt, the quality of returning to their original form after being repeatedly folded supports a process of making that produces cycles of interactions sustained for extended periods. Due to its yielding accommodating texture, foam's intimate contact with the wearer in-movement can be sustained for longer periods than when felt is used. More intensive contact between the material surface and extended areas of the body is achieved with foam and with felt than with wallpaper. That said, the predisposition of the semi-rigid wallpaper to enter into haptic contact while at the same time creating gaps between movement and materials by not adhering to the human form offers the potential to generate different explorations than with foam and felt. Wallpaper assemblages encountering movement also create sound, a sensory experience different to foam and felt, two 'silent' materials. This aspect is discussed on page 126. With observations of this kind, I achieve the objective of exploring different costume experiences.

Wallpaper was selected for *Laboratoire 1*, to introduce the MWM technique in the first making exercise. Felt was used for the first making exercise in *Laboratoire 2* to explore a different material for introducing the process of co-creation. For both *Laboratoire 1* and *Laboratoire 2* foam was used to expand the practice of MWM.

### **3.5 The three stages of phenomenological costume-making practice research**

This section presents the three development stages of the laboratoire method by research practice and implementation, namely stage 1: Solo practice research and preparation of the laboratoire space; stage 2: *Laboratoire 1*; and stage 3: *Laboratoire 2* (see Table 1 on page 69).

## **Stage 1: Solo practice research and preparation of the laboratoire space**

### ***Preparing my body to lead laboratoire***

Introduced in the previous section, the laboratoire method entails the organisation of the laboratoire space and the practice of MWM for collective making. The spatial and experiential organisation of the laboratoire guides participants through a process of physical actions that enables them to depart from their 'everyday selves' (Barbieri, 2021, p.208), thus leading them to engage with the open-ended process of phenomenological costume-making. To proceed from the intersubjectivity of costume-making (see page 46), the laboratoire space had to generate movement that mirrored my making and that I could observe. In order to do this, my role would have to be as 'researcher-enabler'. From this phenomenological perspective, I identified the need for movement research that would make me the costume movement lead – and by this taking my practitioner researcher's role beyond my existing practice as a costume designer and maker. The preparation of my physicality to lead *Laboratoire 1* was addressed through my participation in costume and movement workshops and with a programme of body-movement training. Before I introduce these practices, I present what my role as researcher-enabler entails and the criteria for recruiting laboratoire participants.

### ***Researcher-enabler***

I have created the term 'researcher-enabler' to describe my role as leader of *Laboratoire 1*. Becoming 'researcher-enabler' involved preparing myself physically to address two objectives. The first was to guide, through my bodily presence, participants in movement and making activities that mirror my actions of costume-making. The second objective was to observe and record bodily engagement between movement and materiality during the laboratoire. I return to the processes and methods used for recording observations later in 3.6, 'Drawing actions' and 3.7, 'Analysis of making'. I anticipated that my bodily presence would generate a reciprocal engagement with participants' bodies and enable them to physically and mentally engage with the movement-oriented space of laboratoire. For both the *Preliminary Laboratoire*, part of the solo practice research (stage 1), and for *Laboratoire 1* (stage 2), I led the physical inquiry into the materiality of costume-making as researcher-enabler. For *Laboratoire 2* (stage 3), the last stage of practice research, my research role in the laboratoire evolved into researcher/co-participant. I present this role later in this section.

### ***Recruiting laboratoire participants***

A laboratoire participant is a movement and/or performance practitioner, in-training or professional, who responds in movement to the work I have prepared during the solo practice research (Stage 1, see Table 1, page 69). Laboratoire participants are also referred to as ‘movement-wearable makers’ in the thesis, which emphasises the movement involved in the method. Each laboratoire practice, the *Preliminary Laboratoire* (stage 1), *Laboratoire 1* (stage 2) and *Laboratoire 2* (stage 3), involved two participants. The overall criteria for recruiting laboratoire participants<sup>65</sup> were: a preoccupation and familiarity with movement practice in the field of performance, dance and theatre; an interest in exploring movement with costume and wearable objects; and no prior training in costume, design or fabrication. These fields of practice offered a predisposition for exploring through movement the space of costume co-creation, the laboratoire space. The recruitment of participants addressed the need to observe costume-making freed from conventional ideas of costume design in order to devise a research method of abstract costume that differentiates this research from representational ideas of costume. In Chapter 4 I discuss in detail how the development of an intuitive technique for performance wearable-making was carried out in relation to the decisions made on laboratoire participation.

For the *Preliminary Laboratoire* and *Laboratoire 1*, I recruited University students from Theatre and Performance programmes<sup>66</sup> who demonstrated an interest in the performativity of costume. Their participation in movement sessions as part of their study programme predisposed them to engage in explorations of costume embodiment from the perspective of taking an open approach to movement<sup>67</sup>.

For *Laboratoire 2*, I recruited an experienced choreographer and movement practitioner (introduced later on page 155). My role in this practice was researcher/co-participant. The recruitment of a movement practitioner experienced in collaborative creation met the research requirement of bringing together my bodily

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<sup>65</sup> A movement and/or performance in-training (*Preliminary Laboratoire*; *Laboratoire 1*) or practitioner (*Laboratoire 2*) who responds in movement to the work I have done during the solo practice research prior to laboratoire iteration.

<sup>66</sup> Students from MA Performance Making and BA Theatre Making, Goldsmiths, University of London, were invited to participate in a specific laboratoire research practice.

<sup>67</sup> As lecturer in costume at Goldsmiths University, London, I had access to students and graduates from BA and MA courses from the Theatre and Performance Department.

experience with that of a co-participant's kinetic and sensory knowledge to study a reciprocating costume-making relationship.

### ***Ethics***

In preparation for each laboratoire, I provided participants with information including the research purpose, session programme, data management and a consent form for their voluntary participation. Each invitation was for a single participation in one laboratoire. Participants had the option to withdraw at any time and without having to provide reasons. Before signing the consent form, participants were given the opportunity to express concerns or ask questions. The form made clear that the information collected during participation could be used for this PhD. Participants were informed regarding the documentation methods that would be used during the research session, namely filming, voice recording and photographs<sup>68</sup>.

Participants were informed that I, the researcher, would own the intellectual property rights of all materials produced during research sessions. This included made objects, notes, drawings, films and recordings of discussions. Laboratoires did not result in the completion of artefacts. Intellectual property was not an issue for the method or the preparation of materials as participants did not contribute to their development.

### **My participation in costume and movement workshops**

(Various locations, 2015 to 2018)

As noted already, I took part in several creative costume and movement workshops. These allowed me to experience movement workshop participation and to document how other performers creatively transform their own body. The objectives were; to develop a step-by-step system for experimenting; to lead participants in specific physical tasks; to create a space and activity structure that gave freedom to explore costume movement and materiality; and to generate movement that mirrored my making and that I could observe.

I participated in costume and movement workshops predominantly devised and led by dance and movement practitioners. Of all participations I discuss in this thesis only one was led by a costume designer: Barbieri's '*Wearing Space*' workshop, which is

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<sup>68</sup> See 'Workshop participation consent form', Appendix C, page 219.

discussed on page 105. Currently movement workshops are rarely created by costume designers (Barbieri, 2021, p.198)<sup>69</sup>. As a costume designer I had not been trained to use my physicality to lead participants to perform making movements (see section 1.1). The gap in the development of costume as a movement practice underpinned the need for participants in my study. This participation informed the organisation of *laboratoire*, which as seen previously (page 33), builds on the studio as a space created from and organised around the people who comprise it (Brown, 2019, p.9). Experiences taken from my participation in these workshops, and discussed further in Chapter 4, demonstrate how my engagement in movement within a space prepared for group exploration of physical expression has supported the method development. This is particularly notable for the organisation of the space for movement and approaches to workshop facilitation and leading movement.

### **Body-movement training**

(LCF, London, April to June 2017)

As the recipient of an LDoc award, I applied for further LDoc funding to devise a bespoke body-movement training programme with performer and physical workshop creator Lily<sup>70</sup>. The objective of the programme was to provide me with techniques to use my bodily presence to lead participants in the physical workshop. This involved training my corporeal self to direct participants in making actions by following my own actions and focused on using my physical presence to engage participants with the method and with the *laboratoire* space. I developed, in collaboration with Lily, ways to guide participants in the continuous activities of making for the duration of the *laboratoire*. The body-movement training programme consisted of seven individual training sessions (and is discussed further in section 4.2) to prepare my bodily movement to lead a two-hour *Preliminary Laboratoire*. During this programme I also developed with Lily bodily techniques to be used to lead workshops.

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<sup>69</sup> Barbieri proposes the adoption of 'approaches such as the LEM in a phenomenology of design' because 'they are transformative of practice itself.' (2021, p.198).

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.petality.com/>

## ***Preliminary Laboratoire***

(LCF, London, May 2017)

The *Preliminary Laboratoire* was the culmination of the body-movement training as outlined in the previous section. I used this to test the workshop leading bodily techniques learned during the training, to evaluate my role as researcher-enabler and to test the organisation of the laboratoire space. In section 4.3 I reflect on the application of bodily techniques during the *Preliminary Laboratoire* and on my physical presence sustaining participants' engagement in continuous actions of body-mask making. I also discuss in the next chapter outcomes of the *Preliminary Laboratoire* that influenced decisions on the preparation of the first MWM laboratoire (stage 2) through the organisation of the space, making actions, materials and activities. As for the *Preliminary Laboratoire*, my role for *Laboratoire 1*, was as researcher-enabler.

### **Stage 2: *Laboratoire 1***

*Laboratoire 1* is the first implementation of the laboratoire method devised during the solo practice research (Table 1, page 69). This four-hour laboratoire took place in April 2018 in a studio space at the Department of Theatre and Performance, Goldsmiths, University of London. The two recruited participants who took part were MA Performance Making students from Goldsmiths<sup>71</sup>. *Laboratoire 1* progressed through a programme of movement and making activities interspersed with periods of reflection.

The preparation of *Laboratoire 1* aimed to facilitate my observation of relationships between participants and the materials of movement-wearables that were outside my bodily self while originating from it, and by this illuminate aspects of my own costume practice unknown to me. This entailed describing from my sensory experience what was taking place 'live' around me as exchanges occurred between participants and the movement-wearable materials. The objective of *Laboratoire 1* was to observe how my solo practice of MWM (stage 1) took on new meanings when transferred to the laboratoire space with other participants carrying out the making.

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<sup>71</sup> *Laboratoire 1* participants Tviberg and Bennett.

Findings from the process of devising the MWM method (stage 1) underpin observations of participants' bodies encountering the environment of MWM and of relationships of reversibility during this research practice. The analysis presented in Chapter 5 examines my experience as researcher-enabler for *Laboratoire 1*.

### **Stage 3: *Laboratoire 2***

This five-hour *laboratoire* took place in September 2019, in a studio space at the Department of Theatre and Performance, Goldsmiths, University of London. My role was as one of two co-participants. A choreographer, movement practitioner and performance maker whose practice involves devising movement work by exploring objects<sup>72</sup> was recruited as my co-participant (see on page 155). Similarly to *Laboratoire 1*, this practice progressed through a programme of making exercises interspersed with periods of reflection.

#### ***Researcher/co-participant***

The decision to re-frame my role as researcher/co-participant for *Laboratoire 2* followed my reflections on the outcomes from *Laboratoire 1*. Involving myself as *laboratoire* co-participant and as co-maker was aimed at facilitating an in-depth examination of my lived entanglement with the materiality of the movement-wearable in-progress by describing its intersubjectivity and reversibility (see section 2.1, 'The phenomenological approach'). Thus, it was from interacting corporeally with the intersubjective costume-making generated from the *laboratoire* space that I aimed to further develop my interpretative approach to MWM as a phenomenological practice. Recruiting an experienced movement-practitioner as my co-participant was suggested by the research requirement to create an environment of making where I could experience MWM outside of my embodied knowledge of costume.

*Laboratoire 2* explored questions raised by *Laboratoire 1* on the three following aspects:

- reciprocal actions between movement-wearable makers
- interference as a body-materiality interchange

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<sup>72</sup> *Laboratoire 2* co-participant Lewis.

- the position of my body of designer in the laboratoire space

These issues were addressed by examining the engagement of my making movement with the time-bound context of making of *Laboratoire 2*, a relationship of my corporeality with the laboratoire space facilitated by my role as researcher/co-participant.

### **Laboratoire activities**

For each laboratoire a programme of movement and making activities was devised. This programme entailed incremental movement and making activities to lead the progressive engagement of laboratoire participants' through actions of making with costume materials in the time-bound laboratoire space of co-creation. Times for participants to reflect by writing and drawing<sup>73</sup> were scheduled between making activities. The laboratoire began with an initial introduction to the session followed by warm-up exercises to engage participants in movement. Warm-ups progressed into bodily explorations of materials. In *Laboratoire 1* for instance, this exploration involved placing a metre long piece of corrugated cardboard and moving in the area dedicated to movement. The material exploration was followed by the sequence of activities of MWM<sup>74</sup> and reflection periods.

The term 'body-mask making' was used as verbal prompts during the *Preliminary Laboratoire* (stage1) and *Laboratoire 1* (stage 2) to initiate the process of bodily covering by assembling materials into a construction. Body-mask making aimed to engage participants in a physical investigation of costume through making, and by this engage them corporeally with the laboratoire space and costume co-creation. Body-mask, in development, and generated for an area of the wearer self or for its entirety, entails constructing a movement-wearable on the self by moving purposefully while being free from limitations dictated by preconceptions of a costume as a finished

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<sup>73</sup> Laboratoire participants' reflections expressed by drawing are distinct from 'drawing actions', the movement-led method I devised to examine my costume process. The topic of 'drawing actions' is presented in section 3.6.

<sup>74</sup> See '*Laboratoire 1* script', Appendix A, page 209.

object. Unbound from the face, body-mask develops from Lecoq's larval mask, the technique of movement by which the mask as performance wearable object placed on the self, rather than prompting characterisation, takes unexpected forms (see page 38).

For *Laboratoire 2*, the term 'body-mask' was replaced by 'movement-wearable' to reflect the progression of the phenomenological costume-making practice research. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

### **3.6 Drawing actions**

Drawing actions is a movement-led research method I devised for the description of primary expressions of relationships that I experienced between movement and materials. Drawing actions developed as movement-led processes which would allow me to revisit and describe the sensations I had during making. Descriptions by drawing are processual and open-ended, recursive and centred on the lived experience rather than on intentions of objectification. My reflections on outcomes from the experiential approach of costume-making included the practice of conducting drawing actions during and following making sessions. Sheets-Johnstone's (2009) work on kinesthetic memory supports drawing actions as methods of reflection through movement. As previously considered, ('Recursive making actions', page 74), kinesthetic memory takes place from moving 'through the dynamic series of coordinated movements that are kinesthetically felt' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.258). Recursive drawing actions enabled me to re-enact dynamic patterns of movement and by these activate kinesthetic memory. The return to a situation of making by drawing enabled me to observe how 'the particular situation at hand' (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009, p.258) is distinct from another similar situation, and by this how each moment of making is different. I describe through drawing actions my embodied making movement in response to materials of movement-wearables.

The characteristics of this descriptive approach were as follows:

- Descriptions of expressions were made as responses to immediate, lived costume-making actions.
- Responses to sensations in movement were described through drawing actions.

Guided by physical sensations, drawing actions entailed engaging my kinesthetic experience with drawing materials and mark-making. Drawing in this way was a sensory-experiential extension of MWM set in motion by tactile engagement with the materiality of drawing. In *Drawn Away from Vision: Encounter with the Unseen* (2017), artists and scholars Sarah Casey and Gerry Davies discuss drawing as experiential practice and note that ‘throughout history, drawing has been used to visualize information at the limits of human vision’ (2017 p.205). I used drawing actions during the research to make successive physical returns to certain sensations and to capture what I felt in my corporeality as I moved in response to the material constructions produced during MWM. The re-enactment of sensations stored in my senses enabled a return to ‘initial activities in graphic form’ through ‘the invention of visual simile’ (Casey & Davies, 2014, p.9). Making marks on paper facilitated a process of identifying and recording information stored in my body, as well as extending vision by making visible the unseen (Casey & Davies, 2017, p.209).

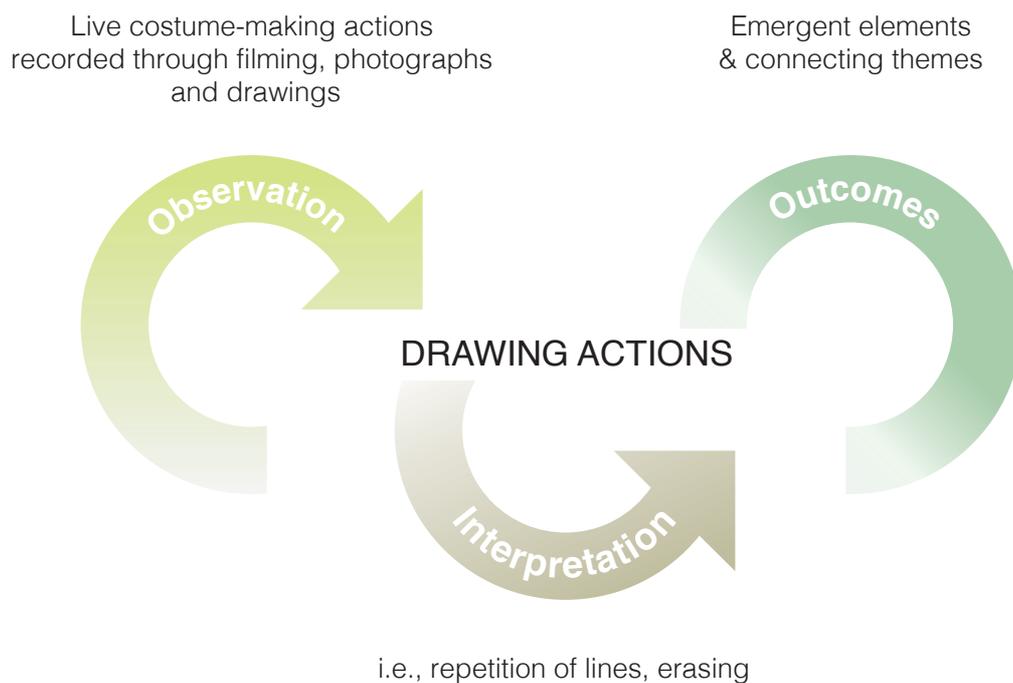
Drawing actions as a sensory practice reconciles my embodied knowledge of the tactile experience of making movement-wearables with the production of visual artworks. The engagement of my corporeality with the materiality of drawing – the media I handle and by which I enter into contact with the drawing surface (i.e., paper) – enables recovery of the haptic experience recorded in me while making a movement-wearable. The return to the haptic experience of MWM through drawing entails actions of making marks on paper that express the range of sensations induced by encountering, in-movement, the materials of movement-wearables. Artist Peter Mathews, who approaches drawing as extension of the body, describes the relationship to the materiality of drawing as ‘a way to remain buoyant and in tune with a physical and visual sensory relationship with body’ (Casey & Davies, 2017, pp.219-20).

The sensory-based approach of drawing complements the phenomenological framework of the research. Actions of encountering the materiality of drawing, by contact with the drawing surface and deployed in succession through the handling of the drawing materials, re-animate the experience of touching while being touched in MWM, both as sensation and as materiality. Touch enables an exploration of reversibility through drawing, from both the subject and from a method originating from touch. The focus on the haptic experience induced by drawing moves beyond vision, the first sense conventionally associated with drawing (Casey & Davies, 2017,

p.205), to describe what is sensed in the body. Extended through senses other than vision, primarily touch, 'drawing enhance[s] the quality of engagement' (Casey & Davies, 2017, p.221), a focus that supports my qualitative research method development.

Drawing entails cyclical procedures of observation, interpretation and reflection. This iterative process of drawing actions is illustrated in Diagram 1: Drawing actions. The iterative process was carried out during each of the three stages of practice-led method development (Table 1, page 69). Some of the drawing actions are discussed in dedicated sections in Chapters 4 and 6.

Diagram 1: Drawing actions

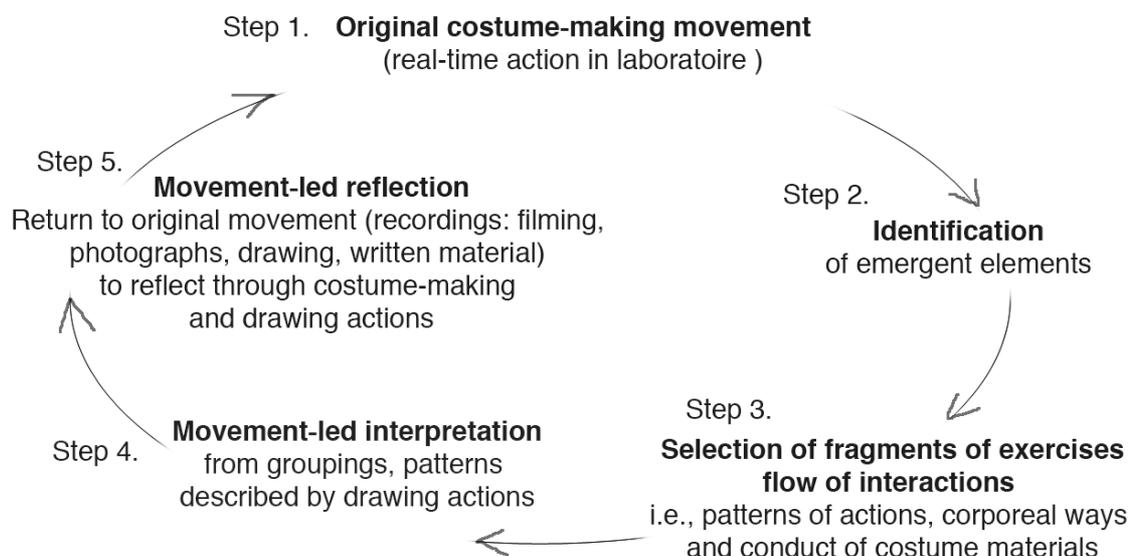


In summary, drawing actions assisted the development of the research method by conveying expressions of the experience of making from the temporality of the lived moment. Drawing actions also enabled my reflection on some of my prior experiences of phenomenological costume-making.

Research on drawing and costume, which supports the development of this method, includes Katie Barford's (2016) drawing-centred PhD and Hannah Gravestock's (2011) thesis on drawing and re-drawing the performing body in costume design. I also examined recent research on drawing and phenomenology which has attempted to advance the methodology, for example visual artist Eleonor Bowen's (2017) performative drawing, Duncan Bullen's (2019) non-representational drawing practice and mindful awareness and the work of practitioner-researcher Deborah Harty (2012) who investigates through phenomenology repetitive processes of drawing and their effect on the drawer.

### 3.7 Analysis of making

Diagram 2: Observation-based cycle of analysis in five steps



For both *Laboratoire 1* and *Laboratoire 2* observation-based cycles of analysis were carried out as a qualitative method of analysis. In this way, evidence of body-materiality relationships were collected through an observation-based cycle of analysis in five steps that centred on my research experience, see above Diagram 2. Actions unfolding between participants and me were documented through the

following methods: film recordings and photographs; verbal comments (recorded on film); drawings and written material produced by laboratoire participants during periods reserved for reflection scheduled between making exercises; and questionnaires completed by participants, one at the end of the laboratoire and one-to-two weeks following the laboratoire. Questionnaires are presented in Appendices D, E, F, G, H & I. Participants' drawings and written material supplement the film documentation.

The five steps of observation-based cycles of analysis are as follows.

Step 1 of the cycle of analysis is the observation of the original costume movement as laboratoire real-time action recorded using multiple cameras.

Step 2 involves identifying elements of study emerging from actions and connecting themes. This identification is done in particular through the observation of recursive making actions. The identification of elements of study is achieved by examining film recordings of the laboratoire's flow of interactions.

Step 3 is the selection of fragments of exercises that display the flow of interactions between makers and materials. The term 'fragment of exercise' is used in the thesis to indicate an extract from a continuous costume-making process selected for analysis. Such extracts correspond to a flow of interactions between makers and materials that demonstrate, for instance, recursive making actions (see page 74). Fragments of exercises were examined using the filmed documentation of laboratoires. Four fragments from *Laboratoire 1* and three from *Laboratoire 2* demonstrating specific aspects of the phenomenological laboratoire method are analysed in Chapters 5 and 6. They appear in the text in italic.

Step 4 is the movement-led interpretation of the flow of interactions and selected groupings, patterns related to the themes identified at step 2, achieved via drawing actions. As previously mentioned, drawing actions is a movement-led research method I practiced for the duration of the research that supplemented descriptions of costume movement and material relationships.

Step 5, the last step of the cycle of analysis, is a movement-led reflection period on the observational material gathered. It involves a return to the original costume-making movement based on recordings, filming, photographs, drawing, written material, to reflect on costume-making and drawing actions. The production

of observational material provides the evidence of key occurrences and relationships between bodies, as well as recurring actions and material changes and effects.

### **3.8 Summary**

In summary, this chapter has presented the methodology of costume-making as an experiential enquiry that unfolds from the phenomenological approach to my embodied costume design practice as a field of research. The MWM research method and its two core components, the laboratoire space and the MWM technique, have been introduced. I have outlined the empirical development of the laboratoire method in three stages and presented how

making actions and material experimentations enable me to identify the creative potential of relationships between the bodily movement and materials of costume. The movement research that I undertook in readiness for leading participants has been described. I have outlined the structure I employ for the analysis of making, and in connection with this, the reflective method of drawing actions I devised to supplement the laboratoire method has been presented. Supplemented by diagrammatic material, the chapter lays out the mode of analysis as applied to this phenomenological costume-making research.

The next three chapters of analysis, 4 and 5 and 6, build on first-hand experiences and observations from the three stages of empirical development that have been considered in relation to my research aims and objectives. This analytical process was carried out to develop phenomenological costume-making in order to transform my own costume process and at the same time widen understandings of costume.

## **Chapter 4.**

### **Stage 1: Solo practice research and preparation of the laboratoire space**

In this chapter I present the solo practice research of the costume process I embody and on which the laboratoire method builds. Firstly, I consider the research through which I developed the skills needed for me to lead other bodies through my movement. I outline the preparation I undertook for my role as researcher-enabler through participation in costume and movement workshops (4.1), completing a body-movement training programme (4.2) and running a *Preliminary Laboratoire* (4.3). Secondly, I present empirical developments made during the preparation of *Laboratoire 1* from costume processes initiated by my movement that enabled me to establish the grounding principles of the laboratoire method. Developments discussed include: the investigation in movement of particular qualities of materials; exploring the reversibility of making using *enroulement*; practicing observation of intersubjective costume-making using a mirror; and a solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal (4.4). The chapter ends with a summary of findings (4.5).

#### **Solo practice research**

I define solo practice research as the examination of the costume process I embody. This research, concerning my costume practice, informs the phenomenological approach I have taken to develop the laboratoire method and, by this, to generate the knowledge I need to reorientate my costume practice. A question that informs the solo practice research asks, how is costume initiated by my own costume movement? This question frames the approach of researching my own costume designer's movement in group situations of movement workshops. Therefore, the solo practice research for this PhD builds on my participation in movement exercises to devise a laboratoire method by which I can examine the relativity of the costume process I embody. In essence, solo practice research is used to define the processes that allow an examination of my costume designer's body, seen as a generator of movement, in order to prepare a practice of collective costume-making.

#### 4.1 My participation in costume and movement workshops

Between February 2015 and June 2018, I took part in costume and movement workshops devised and led by costume, movement, performance and dance practitioners (introduced in section 3.5). My intention with workshop participation was to acquire a knowledge of workshop methods that would support the preparation of phenomenological costume-making practice research for this PhD. The objectives of this solo research through participation were as follows: to develop a step-by-step system for experimenting; to lead participants in specific physical tasks; to create a space and activity structure that gave freedom to explore costume movement and materiality; and to generate movement that mirrored my making and that I could observe. In this section I present the encounters in workshop settings which assisted me in establishing my own workshop parameters.

The first workshop I took part in was created and led by interdisciplinary performer, somatic performance maker and researcher Sally E. Dean. Titled *Somatic Movement and Costume*<sup>75</sup>, the workshop required no previous experience of movement or costume and I was one of twenty-six adults that took part. The session began with warm-up exercises followed by three activities with costume, each one co-created by Dean with costume designers Sandra Arrònz Lacunza and Carolina Rieckhof. Warm-up exercises involved moving with an object. For instance, I had to move while repeatedly re-placing a stone on me. Paired up with another participant, we took turns to guide and to be guided in movement while exploring the vibration of our own bodies when humming. These warm-ups activated my sensory engagement with the session. They produced an engagement between my corporeal self and the space of the workshop and its contents, creating familiarity with the environment and all other participants. Through movement I could occupy an active place amongst the group.

Dean's workshop practice develops from *soma*. This notion of the body as able to perceive and to feel things (Dean, 2016, p.97) forms the basis of her research and underpins the development of her workshops. Building on this principle, Dean organised the space of the workshop by defining areas in the room for specific exercises and by creating groups of participants. The main area at the centre of the studio space was dedicated to movement. On the edge of the room, a space had

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<sup>75</sup> London, February 2015.

been set aside for costume elements to be laid out in an orderly way. Three groups of participants were then formed and a rotation between costumes and groups in the space for movement took place. Dean's organisation of the space was planned out to enable progress of sensory explorations facilitated by different activities. Being guided in movement by the organisation of the space and of the tasks gave me an understanding of the need to provide participants with a clear system for engaging in specific activities and focusing on a given task. One particular aspect of Dean's organisation I found useful was the device of introducing materials to participants at precise times during a specific activity. With the other materials concealed, this planned procedure was efficient in drawing the group's attention and engagement to one specific task.

A second *Somatic Movement & Costume Workshop*<sup>76</sup> I took part in informed my preparation of experiment periods structured through time and space so as to give freedom to explore movement and materiality. Dean invited people from different practices and with various bodily knowledges of costume and movement to take part: a dance MA student, a costume MA student, a performer and myself as a costume PhD student. The workshop was set up in a small dance studio and began with warm-up exercises involving physical contact between paired participants. This was followed by costume and movement exercises. Also conducted in pairs, the main exercise involved making costumes on our partner's self, whilst in movement, using bin liners and masking tape. Dean's interventions during the workshop, in response to and in anticipation of movement, achieved the objective of engaging participants with the activities and with the physical space designated for collective costume exploration.

Of particular use to me was the way that Dean utilised her physicality to guide participants in collective movement and in the task of making costumes. In close proximity to individual participants, Dean physically demonstrated specific material handlings and also gave verbal guidance. Dean's physical proximity sustained the engagement of participants with the workshop space for the duration of the exercise. While I explored having materials placed onto myself while I moved, as well as placing materials on a partner in movement, I noticed Dean continuously moving amongst and in close proximity to all participants. Her movement between participants

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<sup>76</sup> London, March 2015.

sustained the pace of actions and of changes in the costume configurations. Dean maintained the contact between our bodies and materials by continually repositioning different materials on our bodies while we were in movement. In this way our haptic experience was also maintained for the duration of the exercise and the workshop progressed via a series of practical exercises and empirical processes. Dean's phases of non-verbal guidance of participants highlighted the importance of physicality when aiming for engagement through the senses.

Dean intervened at every stage of the workshop and introduced materials for creating costumes, as a way to sustain engagement with the task and between movement partners. For instance, when the making reached a point of impasse, she introduced a way of using bin liners that consisted in pulling the bags open and, with large expansive movements, filling them with air. This demonstration led onto a path of discovery. With myself surrounded by air bags, and my vision obstructed, I moved around the space using tiny footsteps, not fully visually aware of how the costume was developing on me. This sustained my engagement with the materials and created a situation where I felt my moves expanding. Dean's physical interaction with participants for the duration of the costume and movement tasks provided me with useful insights on utilising the facilitator's physicality to generate the creative space of the collaboration. This contributed to my appreciation of the workshop facilitator's responsibility and the importance of organising the workshop's physical space in a way that would meet the workshop's goal and objectives.

From Dean's workshop, I took certain cues regarding using my physical presence as facilitator by placing myself centrally in the space and in the middle of the moving group of participants. From participating in Dean's workshops I also gained a better understanding of the impact I could have on participants' making by putting myself into close proximity with their bodies. While acknowledging the importance of not intruding into the private space of the participant, Dean's physical proximity and measured interventions provided guidance to help me to prepare ways to use my physicality to guide corporeal explorations during *laboratoire* and to sustain movement in flux and momentum. However, I did not consider the materials used by Dean (i.e., bin liners and masking tape) appropriate for my investigation. The choice of materials for my *laboratoire* method (see 'Materials', page 82) originates in my own sensorial responses to costume as costume designer, my knowledge of costume materials and their different application in costume creation.

To acquire knowledge about the preparation of the costume workshop space grounded in costume practice I participated in *Wearing Space*<sup>77</sup>, a costume and movement workshop devised and led by Donatella Barbieri, in collaboration with costume practitioner Giulia Pecorari and choreographer and dancer Mary Kate Connolly. This workshop addressed specific costume movement objectives through careful organisation of the space of the workshop and the costume-making materials. Twelve people from University of the Arts London were invited to take part: amongst them were scenographers, lecturers, students and performers. The organisation of the workshop's space enabled each exercise to be introduced separately and to be experienced as an intense physical involvement with the materials of costume. The workshop started with a programme of warm-up exercises led by Mary Kate Connolly. These involved moving in the space at varying speeds and controlling the intensity of breathing, a technique intended to bring participants, through their own bodily experience, to suspend their usual association with their 'everyday selves' (Barbieri, 2021, p.208). Doing warm-up exercises engaged me physically with the space and led to the readiness of my senses for exploring pre-prepared costume elements that were introduced with the first costume and movement task. That said, my work differs from Barbieri's in that my aim is to transform my own costume designer's practice by devising a method of workshop where I am leading participants through my bodily movement. Hence, it is not the case that a movement or dance practitioner is involved in leading my phenomenological costume-making laboratoire.

Another participatory event that I found informative for the preparation of *Laboratoire 1*, for co-creation was a workshop led by visual artist and choreographer Cornelia Krafft<sup>78</sup>, supported by UAL Performance Research Network. With the participation of approximately ten MA and PhD students from UAL, this workshop was primed by Krafft's engaging and informative correspondence via emails with participants. This instilled in me both a feeling of excitement and a sense of responsibility towards the workshop. Engaged with both the facilitator and the group I was informed of the contents and purpose ahead of the time of the workshop. This communication enticed me into pre-workshop involvement through requests such as being asked to bring to the session an object for shared physical exploration. While my method does not involve this aspect of Krafft's workshop I did use correspondence

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<sup>77</sup> London College of Fashion, June 2015.

<sup>78</sup> London College of Fashion, December 2015.

with participants. Emails and a consent form were sent out to participants prior to the research workshop to instigate a sense of commitment to the planned session while also communicating that they were free to withdraw at anytime<sup>79</sup>. I use this tactic of prior engagement with participants so that when they enter the laboratoire they are already involved with the research.

Not all the workshops I attended involved interaction with objects. The exploration of individual movement in relation to a group was also useful in developing my workshop leading techniques. Thomas Kampe's movement improvisation workshop<sup>80</sup> contributed valuably to this strand and to the expansion of my practice of moving in a space amongst other moving participants. Kampe, who trained in dance, created a safe space for movement experimentation through an inclusive and welcoming approach towards different bodies and movements. Kampe managed this by leading participants to experiment with their movements in response to verbal prompts that could be explored regardless of an individual's previous experiences of movement. I too employ these elements of inclusivity and safety to prepare activities and a vocabulary of movement intended to enable the realisation of the shared co-creative environment for movement.

To recap, experiences in movement workshop participation enabled me to acquire a corporeal knowledge that would support me in my responsibility to prompt physical participation within the space of movement activities. Key experiences of movement, in particular, Dean's workshops and her implementation of empirical tasks, gave me indications on how to develop a step-by-step system for experimenting, especially regarding topics ranging from the organisation of the space through to the sequencing of usage of materials and the actions I would deploy as facilitator to support the objective to stimulate the participants' physical explorations. Proceeding through empirical tasks gave me an indication of the time-spans required for in-depth physical explorations of freedom of movement within a structured workshop plan. Workshop participation also helped me prepare the space for co-creation by overseeing ethical aspects including voluntary participation<sup>81</sup>.

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<sup>79</sup> See 'Workshop participation consent form', Appendix C, page 219.

<sup>80</sup> London, February 2018.

<sup>81</sup> See 'Workshop participation consent form', Appendix C, page 219.

Through costume and movement workshop participations I became aware of the need to develop and expand my bodily presence. In the next section I present aspects of the programme of body-training I completed for the preparation of physicality to lead making movement in the laboratoire space.

## **4.2 Body-movement training**

As previously introduced, the body-movement training I completed with performer and physical workshop creator Peta Lily involved the learning of specific techniques to prepare me for leading laboratoire participants through my physical presence. This required exercises to develop my physical skill in 'owning' the laboratoire space, that is the physical and temporal space created for participants to engage in movement and material explorations of the process of making costumes.

Learning to lead the making movements of laboratoire participants through my own bodily movement entailed channelling sensations and using them to influence and guide others in their actions. Exercises introduced by Lily were aimed at enhancing my awareness of the position I occupied in the physical space of collaborative costume exploration and by this, my place in the activities as they were in progress. One such exercise involved channelling the physical experience memorised in my body of walking in clay and of making foot imprints with one foot at a time. After exploring this movement, Lily invited me to reflect on the sensation of sinking my foot into the clay to feel the difference this exercise made in my physical self.

My exploration of how clay affected my corporality, brought my attention to the sensations registered within me. How sensing the clay affected my comportment in the room increased my awareness of how my presence can affect other people's experience in the workshop space. This assisted me in connecting myself with the laboratoire space and thus contributed to growing my ability to create a rapport between people and me. During the programme of body-movement training<sup>82</sup>, I returned repeatedly to bodily sensations such as walking in clay, identifying particular sensations and responses through such physical exercises. With Lily's coaching, I practiced channelling these sensations so as to increase my awareness of the effects my movement had on the movements of other people. The preparation for leading

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<sup>82</sup> The programme consisted of seven one-to-one weekly sessions of three hours.

through my physical presence also involved the fine-tuning of my voice. With elocution and speech exercises, and the development of a vocabulary appropriate to workshop settings, I practiced using verbal intervention to direct the progression of the *laboratoire* session. Terms such as ‘enlarging’, ‘expanding’, ‘taking more space’ and ‘stretching’, to name a few, were aimed at eliciting making-actions from the engagement of participants’ bodies within the space of research.



**Figure 5.** Development of activities for the *Preliminary Laboratoire* using polyethylene flexible rods and elastics. London, May 2017. Photograph by B. Fortin.

As the body-movement training progressed, the physical experiences and knowledges I acquired helped to inform the performance wearable making technique in-development. The aspects of the technique that were devised through experimentations with materials and assembling systems ran in parallel and in response to the programme of seven sessions of body-movement training guided by Lily. I developed various movement and material activities for the *Preliminary Laboratoire* (see page 90), run as part of the body-movement training, that aimed to engage participants with the making of performance wearables and with the time-bound space of research. For this exploratory practice I invited two performers

in-training to take part who had no prior training in costume (see 'Recruiting laboratoire participants' page 87). I prepared simple making activities that required no costume design or fabrication skills such as sewing. One such activity involved the use of dressmaking elastics and long rods made of flexible polyethylene foam<sup>83</sup> (Figure 5, page 106). I found that when using these rods to construct on myself, I was able to create a curved structure around me that prompted enlarged movements of bending, of extending my arms and of folding my legs. Making a structure of polyethylene rods generated gestures that led me to take space in the room and that were unlike expected costume gestures, such as those when sewing, for example.

### **The preparation to lead participants**

The body-training preparation I undertook for leading laboratoire participants enabled me to anticipate and address issues that might occur during laboratoire. For instance, I rehearsed using my bodily movement and verbal interventions to lead participants away from preconceived ideas about costume-making activity. I also planned the progression from warm-up exercises to exploring materials through the movement as a way to prepare participants for physical and sensory exploration during the subsequent making activities. I addressed the need for a physical investigation of costume by inviting performers in-training for the *Preliminary Laboratoire*, as they would be predisposed by their personal development to explore through movement. This enabled me to prepare myself to encourage participants to break away from pre-conceived ideas of costume that might dictate their movements. This consideration was at the root of the body-training, and was key to the development of a method of abstract costume that differentiates my research from representational ideas of costume (see 'Abstract costume', page 23). The organisation of the laboratoire space, underpinned by the body-oriented method of LEM, as presented earlier in section 3.4, was part of this preparation.

When organising the *Preliminary Laboratoire* physical space I placed assorted materials including polyethylene rods (50cm and 100cm in length), faux-silk strips, small pieces of foam and fabric, elastic harnesses and dressmaking elastics together on one side of the room. I covered these with cloth and placed them in the sequence

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<sup>83</sup> 'Polyurethane rods' are long rods made of flexible and buoyant foam, which are also known as pool noodles and used while swimming.

in which I planned to reveal them successively task by task. By proceeding in this way, I could predict how I would maintain the participants' engagement with the actions in progress, a technique by which I aimed to avert their reflective process when making. This approach is supported by the phenomenological framing of the research and the focus on pre-reflexive experience (see page 27) on which I build to develop a method of experiential enquiry as well as a new definition of phenomenological costume-making as open-ended process. In the next section I explain how the *Preliminary Laboratoire* enabled me to test my bodily techniques and how it provided me with relevant preparation for guiding the corporeal engagement of participants.

The term 'body-mask making' was applied to the performance wearable in-making for the *Preliminary Laboratoire*. As introduced in the previous chapter (see page 94) 'body-mask making' identified the performance wearable in-making as an activity entailing moving purposefully while being released from limitations dictated by preconceptions of costume as finished object. Use of the term 'body-mask making' was aimed at encouraging extended covering by assembling materials, to generate continuous movement and thus maintaining and prolonging participants' physical engagement with the phase during which the performance wearable in development is unfixed and unfinished. This approach to the materials encompasses the decision to not 'hold' or 'immobilize them [...] but to let them be and to witness their continued being' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.101). I saw in body-mask making an auto-generative process during which evolving configurations of materials could stimulate the deployment of bodily movements that were made in response to the experience of the costume materials changing.

### **4.3 *Preliminary Laboratoire***

The *Preliminary Laboratoire* took place at London College of Fashion (May, 2017) with two participants, Sandra Boom and Holly Causer<sup>84</sup>, and was observed by Lily<sup>85</sup>. The event opened with an introduction to the research and to the space dedicated to

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<sup>84</sup> MA Performance Making student Boom and BA Theatre Making student Causer from Goldsmiths, University of London, were invited to participate. *Preliminary Laboratoire*, 2017.

<sup>85</sup> Lily's observation of the *Preliminary Laboratoire* was part of the programme of body-movement training. Outcomes were examined by Lily and I in relation to the body-movement training objectives. *Preliminary Laboratoire* took place during the sixth programme session.

the creative practice of body-mask making. This was followed by warm-ups and physical exploration of materials. I then delivered a demonstration of the method and gave the verbal prompt for making body-masks. I invited Boom and Causer to wear a flexible harness and elastic bands designed for attaching materials such as polyethylene rods onto the self. The harness was designed to allow 'on the body' construction of a performance wearable whilst simultaneously exploring movement itself. I practiced employing my physical presence and the specialised vocabulary acquired during training in order to sustain the making process in an in-progress state while makers moved within the space. To direct participants into constructing a body-mask from and on them, I used the term 'exoskeleton'<sup>86</sup>. I chose this term because it is evocative of a structure developed on the outside of the body and of wearables progressing as bodily extensions. I tested the techniques of bodily movement's effectiveness in facilitating interaction with materials and how this could assist with sustaining making body-masks on bodies while it concurrently prevented their completion, for the duration of each task. Guiding the development of forms on bodies as a continuous activity, and maintaining the forms as incomplete objects (Lecoq, 2000, p.38), together aimed to create situations where participants responded with their movement to the constantly changing arrangements of the materials on their bodies. As previously discussed ('Recursive making actions', page 74) maintaining the costume in-making as an incomplete entity is important to the aim of inducing an open-ended procedure of co-creation that centres the method on actions rather than on the completion of the performance wearable object in-making.

As the first body-mask exercise progressed, participants became increasingly at ease with making by attaching flexible rods onto themselves. With the second body-mask exercise I again guided participants into constructing an exoskeleton structure on them. This time the activity of making progressed with the addition of new materials, faux-silk strips and supplementary small pieces of sponge and fabric. I chose these materials because they could be easily integrated into the constructions of flexible rods on bodies by using the same actions of attaching materials to the self. Drawing on my costume design knowledge of different materials and their application in the creation of costume I anticipated that this compatibility would help me to guide actions towards expanding arrangements on bodies by adding more materials.

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<sup>86</sup> 'Exoskeleton' was used to guide wearable developments as bodily extensions. This term supported the body-mask making, a reference to Lecoq's LEM, to generate the covering of the whole body.

Sometimes vacant areas were left between the interlinked flexible rods during constructing (Figures 11, page 109, and 12, page 113) so I guided participants to fill these gaps with faux-silk strips and small pieces of sponge and fabric<sup>87</sup>. As bodies became increasingly covered with materials, I noticed how participants deployed more expansive moves within the space and how their bodies were in more sustained contact with materials. With increased haptic contact with the faux-silk strips, it was easier for me to respond to participants' interaction with the space. I practiced moving between participants, and standing close to them, while responding to their movements with mine. For instance, by extending my arms I physically described to Boom an area of the arrangement around her head and back that she could not see. My intention with this intervention was to draw her attention to aspects of the materials on her, and to bring her to expand the body-mask in-development on her. By describing arrangements of materials with my moves while also providing verbal suggestions, my aim was to make participants aware of the extent of the arrangement of materials on them and by this, to maintain their physical engagement with the task.

### **Drawing actions following the *Preliminary Laboratoire***

Following the *Preliminary Laboratoire*, I practiced drawing actions to supplement the evaluation of outcomes. As previously introduced in section 3.6, drawing actions is a movement-led research method I devised for the description of primary expressions of relationships between movement and materials. Drawing actions involved using drawing materials to re-enact the dynamic patterns of costume-making movements (Sheets-Johnstone, 2009) that I had observed in participants' actions. Through drawing, I explored sensing other bodies as they encountered the feel of new materials on them while taking part in movements within the *Preliminary Laboratoire* space. One example of sensations I described through drawing actions concerned bodies increasingly covered with materials and the movements they made while sustaining contact with materials (Figures 12 and 13). I used drawing actions to re-enact my experience of other people's actions of in-filling any gaps in the wearable construction where parts of the body remained uncovered. Drawings expressed the resonance in me of the oscillation between materials of making and participants' movement. The term 'resonance' is borrowed from Kozel (2015) to frame the use of

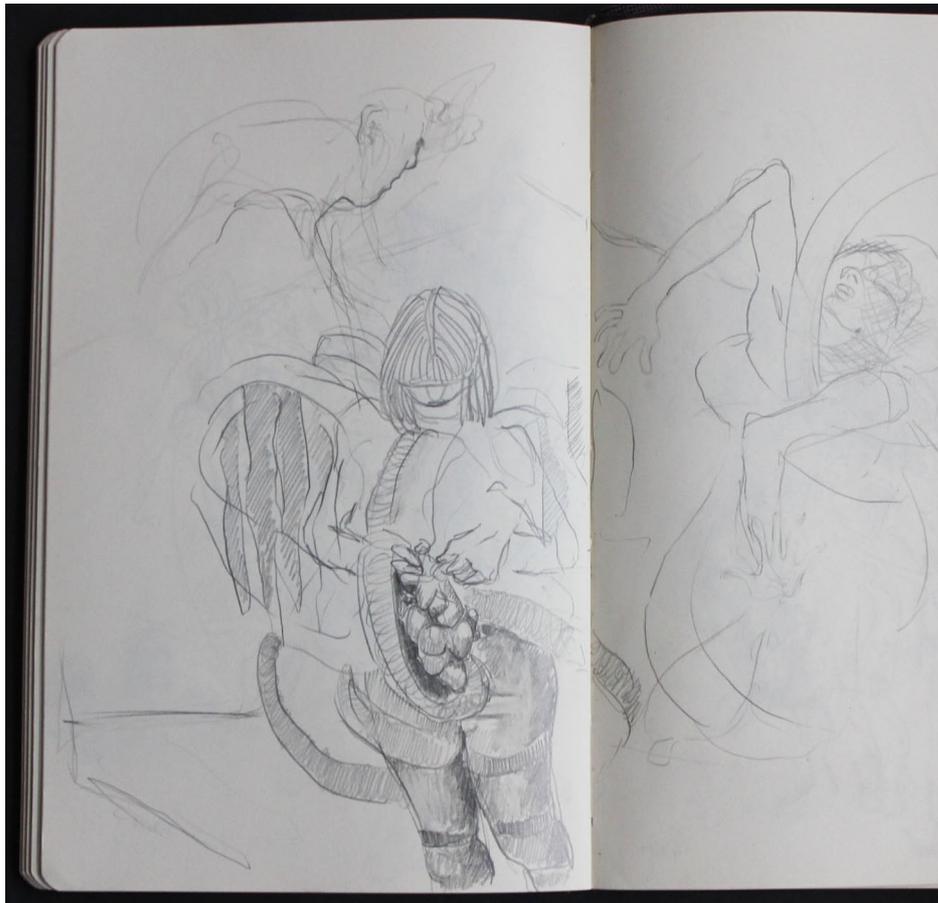
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<sup>87</sup> Empty areas created with flexible rods construction on bodies and populated with faux-silk strips and small pieces of sponge and fabric are shown in my drawings, Figures 6 and 7, pages 111 and 112.

my own experience when describing other people's actions of making that mirror mine. Drawing actions enabled me to describe primary expressions of relationships between movement and materials literally as I sensed them emerging between my movement, participants' actions and the space prepared for co-creation. This movement-led method of reflection informs the development of the method, and the preparation of *Laboratoire 1*.



**Figure 6.** Body-mask making with polyethylene rods, 2017. Drawing actions following the *Preliminary Laboratoire*. Drawing by B. Fortin.



**Figure 7.** Body-mask making using polyethylene rods, sponge and faux-silk strips, 2017. Drawing actions following the *Preliminary Laboratoire*. Drawing by B. Fortin.

Summing up, the body-movement training programme provided me with techniques suitable for sustaining the engagement of participants during body-mask making, and by this, enhancing the engagement between movement and costume materiality. The *Preliminary Laboratoire* practice was instrumental in acquiring these skills. My leading of the two participants provided salient information on the effect of the bodily techniques I developed to engage participants in costume-making. The knowledge I acquired through the body-movement training, notably from rehearsing bodily gestures, the positioning of myself, and use of my voice and verbal prompts, allowed me to test the preparation of my leading actions regarding the direction and expansion of making and wearing movements. By testing how my physical presence in the workshop space was sustaining participants' engagement in continuous actions of body-mask making, I learned, through practicing, how the relationship of my physicality with other's can achieve the creation of the *laboratoire* as space of co-creation.

The *Preliminary Laboratoire* evidenced the importance of testing materials. Each material produced outcomes that I evaluated against the method objective to engage participants with the time-bound space of shared actions of making. The development of a qualitative research method from the observation of the cumulative effect of successive costume-making actions requires materials that can generate sustained and repeated haptic contact with the participant mover-makers and their wearable in-making. Therefore, the principal criteria for evaluating materials were their suitability for enhancing the haptic experience and effectiveness in maintaining the continuity of actions of making and wearing the assemblage in-development. The flexible rods, harness and elastic system was effective for engendering intuitive actions for making on the self. Due to their large size, the flexible rods encouraged ample movements and the construction of large structures. The production of sustained haptic contact with material constructions improved when, for the second task, I introduced faux-silk strips and smaller sponge and fabric pieces to add to the flexible rods. While these materials facilitated the progression of the participants' engagement with the method, making with a variety of materials also led participants to make assemblages that moved towards descriptions and characterisation. This raised questions about the suitability of using a range of materials to support me in directing participants to engage in explorations of costume embodiment and openness to movement. On reflection, I realised that introducing a wide range of materials might distract the maker from exploring the effect materials have on their movement and so impede the focus of the practice which is to observe sensory experience. This presented potential problems concerning my role in leading participants to engage with the method and for facilitating interactions between me and participants during the research session. That said, providing participants with large and abundant pieces of materials helped me to encourage ample movements for the construction of extended wearable structures on bodies. This maintained participants' physical engagement with the task and generated movements that expressed sensory explorations. I used this outcome to prepare sufficient materials for *Laboratoire 1* to support the engagement of participants, through their whole body, with the space of creation.

#### **4.4 The preparation of *Laboratoire 1* from costume processes initiated by my movement**

In this section I present key developments that I carried out in the solo setting and by which I devised MWM. Making movements and material explorations underpinning the making technique are examined here to discuss findings I collected during my solo research and by which MWM enables an investigation of intersubjective costume-making.

Initial research of costume-making processes and materials involved an exploration in movement of phenomenological costume process informed by some of Kozel's phenomenology of lived experience principles. This exploration developed from the objective to observe the 'intuitive corporeal handling' (Kozel, 2010, p.219) of costume-making in the *laboratoire* setting. I approached my costume movement from the proposition that *laboratoire* participants' actions will 'resonate and reverberate' in myself through our interrelated 'bodily existence' (Kozel, 2010, p.219).

This exploration led me to identify the following principles of the phenomenological costume-making process:

- The concern for the sensory experience of the object in-making.
- The need to create a spatial and material environment for passing from actions of making to moving with the wearable in-making on the self in space.
- Wearables are made as a direct response to sensations produced from physical interactions with materials of costume.
- Material responses to the sensory experience are non-figurative: wearable forms do not depict characters, instead the structure of a wearable develops around the bodily coverage.
- The awareness of the open-ended process of making a movement-wearable.
- The need to choose simple materials for constructing wearables that remain rudimentary in their execution.

I now examine initial phenomenology-led making actions and material exploration carried out as physical exploration of materials for the purpose of exposing their effect on the costume-making technique in-development.

### **Investigating materials in-movement**

An important consideration for the exploration of gestures was how each material's qualities would become exposed through my movement. Ingold's (2013a) theory of making and his proposition that materials 'are what they do' (2013b) helps to situate my relationship to costume materials as initiator of movement and my need to be attentive to the agentic effect of materials on my actions. Ingold's (2010) suggestion that it is through intervening 'in the fields of force and currents of material wherein forms are generated' (2010, p.92) that materials reveal their properties supports the framing of my designer's body as a tool of enquiry. This is in line with the proposition that it is through my physical engagement with materials that their agency is revealed.

As previously presented in section 3.4, on page 76, the formulation of making actions and the material selection process took place simultaneously and led to the devising of the MWM technique, a system of material self-assembly using standardised pre-prepared modular shapes with integrated tabs and slits. The standardised shapes induced a process of repeated actions which indicated that the method would divert the mover-maker's attention away from the technicality of the process, and by this, address the objective of eliciting intuitive actions (see 'Recursive making actions', page 74). Through the practice of assembling pre-cut material segments, I explored my own movements and the relationship with the materials of costume in-making surrounding me. 'Making [as] a practice of weaving, in which practitioners bind their own pathways [...] of becoming into the texture of the world' (Ingold, 2010, p.91) guided me in developing the method as a sensory experience that emerged from conceiving my body as phenomenological and in relationship with costume materiality. In inducing actions of making that entail passing from inhabiting the assemblage, by wearing it, to standing outside of it, when taking it off and holding it in front of me, I anticipated the method of self-assembly of similar segments which would generate recursive actions 'initiated corporally in-the-flesh' (Sheet-Johnstone, 2009, p.255) so as to inform the research on the reversibility of the experience of materiality. As presented in section 2.1, the phenomenological framing of my body as



**Figure 8.** Wallpaper assemblage. Video still by B. Fortin.

pre-reflexive underpinned the development of an intuitive self-directed method of costume-making.

Constructing a wearable on me engendered a succession of moves of arranging segments and allowing myself to be guided via the sensory experience induced by the process. I paid attention to how the different properties of the materials I explored prompted intuitive actions of attaching segments to one another. This was also the case when I was devising the system of material self-assemblage using standardised pre-prepared modular shapes using wallpaper (introduced in section 3.4). I observed how the wallpaper segments affected the way I manipulated them into a wearable form. For instance, when I placed an assemblage in-progress on my head (Figure 8), my movement in the space affected by the haptic contact of wallpaper exposed the modules as sharp and sturdy. Making with wallpaper was an ‘immersion into a specific sensory experience’ (Kozel, 2007, p.53). The wallpaper’s qualities guided my movement to adapt to the life of matter as it follows its on-going course of transformation (Ingold, 2010). The schematic ‘Y’ shapes and the prompt of ‘body-mask’, rather than producing descriptive wearables, generated a sensory exploration of various possible wearable developments. I found that the wallpaper affected my costume process and guided my actions in assembling forms that I wanted to retain in an incomplete condition. This experience led to the decision to choose wallpaper for the first making exercise for *Laboratoire 1*. I discuss this in detail in Chapter 5.

In order to achieve an incremental engagement of participants in sensory exploration, the sequence of making exercises was devised to evolve by inducing actions that progressively led towards engagement in the making of extended body-masks. I associated the incremental progression of physical engagement with the strategy of gradually making the body-masks become larger and larger. This approach was based on outcomes from the *Preliminary Laboratoire* where the covering of extended areas of participants' bodies generated physical engagement with the task and so produced movements that exhibited evidence of sensory exploration taking place (see section 4.3, page 113). To support this progression, the material I looked for needed to allow sufficiently structured assemblages to retain their volume when held off the self, but also to allow for close contact between material and body in the making of an extended body-mask. My research led me to explore foam.



**Figure 9.** Material self-assemblage using standardised modular shapes: foam segments interlaced create a pattern of alternating opposite curves. Photograph by B. Fortin.

I chose to work with 6mm thick reconstituted foam (Figure 9), because it lends itself to producing modular 'Y' and 'O' segments in larger sizes. With segments measuring 22cm x 24cm I practiced covering large areas of myself, for example, my head and torso combined, by moving between making on my table and on the floor, and wearing the foam assemblage while assembling it on me. From early on in this exploration, the elasticity, sponginess and plasticity of foam fascinated me with its

dynamics and force. The practice with foam involved continuous movements of re-adjusting my actions to the flow of the materials and increased my understanding of how wearing the large assemblage while in development might enable my costume designer self 'to be guided by the form' (Lecoq, 2000, p.56). The physical exploration of foam while making an extended body-mask closely corresponded to both the larval mask technique and Mummenschanz's practice of finding the middle of the body as the centre of expression (Mummenschanz's Bossard, *cited in* Goldstein, 1978, p.27).

As I continued the actions of making an oversized foam body-mask on me, I practiced being responsive to what materials do. The qualities of foam, in particular its elasticity, sponginess and pliability, made me move 'in anticipation of what might emerge' (Ingold, 2010, p.94). A push and pull exchange occurred as the foam wearable assemblage became larger and heavier. I was led 'to join with and follow the forces and flows of materials' (Ingold, 2010, p.97). Through my expansive movements the tension of materials pulled me into their trajectory and I also moved in response to the foam pushing in resistance against me. Foam, the 'thing' of discovery (see section 2.1), was driving specific actions by bouncing. The incidental detachment of some foam segments prompted my countermovement of pulling the wearable in-making back into closer haptic contact.

Weaving together foam segments on myself enhanced my awareness of the effect of this exchange in making ambiguous the boundaries between myself and the foam. Ingold (2013) describes weaving as an on-going binding together of materials flow and sensory awareness. Foam's qualities of contouring and staying on while being worn sustained my haptic experience and due to this enabled me to explore how it is that I am part of the environment of costume-making, as the costume movement initiator, and at the same time how the environment affects me in ways that I do not have control over. For instance, when weaving materials into an extended foam assemblage (Figure 10, page 122), I experienced foam's weight and its effect on my movements. This physical experience raised my awareness of the agency exerted by material in the costume process. Experiencing the feeling of costume-making affecting my actions offered an understanding of how phenomenological approach could change both my process and its relationship to the hierarchy of production, and thereby re-positioning me to become the costume movement initiator and co-creative.

## **Exploring the reversibility of making using *enroulement***

As introduced previously (see page 55), original French writings of Merleau-Ponty relating to reversibility were explored to connect the method with my innate knowing and awareness as French speaker. In my exploration in-movement of expressing the nuances of the costume in-making experience the French term *enroulement* provided me with a way to examine the sensation maintained through haptic contact by recursive making action, each one ‘a new expression in a new context that catches up with a felt sense that is in the process of emerging’ (Landes, 2013, p.12). As I explored ways to devise the method to entice continuous making, *enroulement* expressed the double sensation when I intermittently moves from responding to material and when materials interfere with my making. Describing my movement with *enroulement* conveyed the circularity of moving *with* and *from* materials moving around me. In addition, the term *enroulement* suggests the active-ness of my body when *it feels* and when materiality enters my senses. In 6.1, ‘Reciprocity of body and materials through *enroulement*’, page 162, I develop further on the term *enroulement* in relation to my bodily movement and material interference and the method generative of creativity. *Enroulement* is particularly suited to express the experience of manipulating foam. The multiplicity of sensations arising from foam’s elasticity and sponginess when experienced in reciprocity with movements is conveyed through this French term. *Enroulement* conveys a doubling of making from the environment of costume-making relationships and indicates an accumulative process deriving from actions and the materiality of making adding to one another. The complexity of the relationship between this flow of interactions and foam making is further examined in my discussion concerning reciprocal making in the *Laboratoire 2*, in Chapter 6.

In the next section I examine an experience of solo practice of *Moment-Wearable Making* which involved using a mirror to prepare for my observation of reversibility in the *laboratoire* space. I discuss how this practice also contributes evidence that the development of the method opened my sensing body to the complex rationality of the costume process.

## **Practicing observation of intersubjective costume-making using a mirror**

During my experiments with making a wearable assemblage of foam, I observed myself in the mirror (Figure 10, page 120). I used the mirror to give me access

to my dual position as both 'laboratoire participant' and 'myself'. With this experiment I aimed to examine how MWM in coexistence could aid my exploration of phenomenological costume-making as a process of reversibility.



**Figure 10.** Solo practice using a mirror. Photograph by B. Fortin.

The mirror enabled me to double myself, thus providing me with a supplementary point of view on MWM. In this dual position I was inside the assemblage, while at the same time 'outside', a movement-wearable maker seeing myself engaged with the materiality of costume-making that surrounded me. By moving with the materials on me while seeing myself in the mirror, I was 'seen' by myself as if I was simultaneously another mover-maker. Making in this way extended my phenomenological approach of costume by enabling me to explore the intersubjectivity of constructing a movement-wearable, thus engaging sensorily in a process of reversibility. I therefore used the mirror to prepare myself for the observation of reversible interactions between costume movement and materiality in the *Laboratoire 1* space.

### ***Circularity of making***

Using a mirror to simulate the space of co-creation in my studio was a way of putting into practice the Merleau-Pontian theory of flesh to explore the reciprocal engagement between movement-of-making and materiality. Making, sustained by continuous

actions of assembling standardised pre-prepared materials, built on my objective to experience sensing while being sensed (Barbaras, 2001, p.181). This circularity of moving with and from materials moving around me is an experience that the term *enroulement* expresses. The laboratoire coexistence that was simulated when using the mirror enabled my exploration of making while being seen and by this of experiencing being affected by both the space of coexistence and my visibility. As introduced in Chapter 2, the Merleau-Pontian theory of flesh frames the materiality of movement-wearables as relation of my body accessible to the seer looking onto me (see section 2.1), and that changes the world that I feel. I examined with the mirror the circular journey of 'reaching outwards to return onto the self' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968) and in so doing directly experienced the reversibility of my making.

### ***What is it that I don't see in my making?***

I proceeded with the exploration of costume-making as a process of reversibility from asking the question: what is it that I don't see in my making? To place myself in the circularity of making, and by this of being looked onto while making, I considered the reflection in the mirror as the seer of my actions that are concealed to me. The mirror enabled me to see me as other participants would see me - something I cannot achieve by being solely situated within my body. From the position of my embodied self as 'seen', I examined my response to the transformations I saw as the seer, in the mirror, in order to acquire evidence on how what I don't see affects me. Being seen while making led me to pay attention to the sensations that the materials induced when I moved. The relationality of my process to the environment of making enhanced my awareness of the emergence of these haptic experiences that I can only observe in coexistence. This occurred when, for instance, I added some segments and the mirror reflected the change taking place in the whole assemblage. My actions reverberated through the materials making them wobble and some of the connected segments came undone. The localised actions taking place on my arm were amplified with a total corporeal response to the shifting assemblage, something that I sensed haptically.

### ***How what I don't see affects my actions of making?***

I also used the mirror to discover how what I don't see affects my actions of making. I examined the experience of foam guiding my interference with it and observed the reversibility of my actions taking place. When I saw in the mirror foam falling off my arm, I reacted promptly with my hand reaching for the materials that were detaching

from me. When my hand touched my arm as it grabbed the foam, this contact on me felt as if my hand was not part of me. My hand touching my arm felt estranged while at the same time it remained familiar to me. As materials contoured my actions, the dual position of my body inside and outside the foam wearable enabled me to feel from two reciprocating positions the arrangement of the foam that was coating me: I was 'seen' sensing the tactile texture covering me. Engaged with the world I am surrounded by and part of, the strangeness of my hand was letting in the pre-reflexive sensory world. This presented me with what Merleau-Ponty might express with the sentence, 'there is an experience of the visible thing as pre-existing my vision' (1968, p.123). The strangeness of my hand made vivid Merleau-Ponty's double sensation which he describes as the 'hand that touches while being touched' (1945). This experience in the exploration of intersubjective costume-making increased my understanding of how the things that I don't see affect my actions of making.

Rehearsing in front of the mirror gave me an understanding of how the preparation of *Laboratoire 1* could enable my explorations of the intersubjectivity of the costume process. Sensing the intertwining of my body and the movement-wearable materials while looking onto my making from a point of view outside of myself enabled me to evaluate the appropriateness of the laboratoire space for observing how 'the visible with itself [...] traverses me and constitutes me as a seer' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.140). By sending my reflection back to me and with it, the material environment surrounding and traversing me, intersubjective costume-making exposed me to sensations on which to base the implementation of a process of reversibility through the costume process. When I felt the touch of the foam assemblage and simultaneously saw in the mirror how my movement 'is entirely woven out of contact with me' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.255), I accessed an alternative perspective on my costume process and an insight on the potential to transform my practice through the laboratoire method. This led me to anticipate that sharing the space for movement-of-making with laboratoire participants would generate the entanglement of their experience with mine. The intersubjectivity of the space initiated by my costume movement informed my bodily understanding that 'the things are the prolongation of my body and my body is the prolongation of the world' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.255). The doubling of touch as multi-sensorial experience 'each the reverse of the other' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.255) produced actions of making and wearing that evidenced the method evolving as a process of reversibility.

In the next section I discuss a solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal in a community hall. This event was organised for practicing the programme of making activities planned for the second stage of practice research (see Table 1, page 69). The solo rehearsal's preparation entailed examining how the relationship between materials and myself is affected by the environment of MWM.

### **Solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal**

The two-hour solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal took place in a community hall in Brighton, January 2018. The space for rehearsal was organised in two areas, one for making and one for movement, as a way of guiding MWM through making and wearing actions. Concealed, materials were positioned in the rehearsal space, on and next to the work table, arranged in the order in which they would be progressively revealed for each task. To assist assembling materials on me during movement I wore an elastic harness and headband and positioned zip ties and safety pins on the table.



**Figure 11.** Wallpaper segments interlocking. Solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal. (Video 1.mp4)

URL: Video 1.mp4

To prepare for *Laboratoire 1*, I fully rehearsed the programme of activities. Taking the role of participant, I centred on the effectiveness of the organisation of the space to encourage those participants new to costume creation to interact with materials of making in the unfamiliar space of the laboratoire. I proceeded with the first making

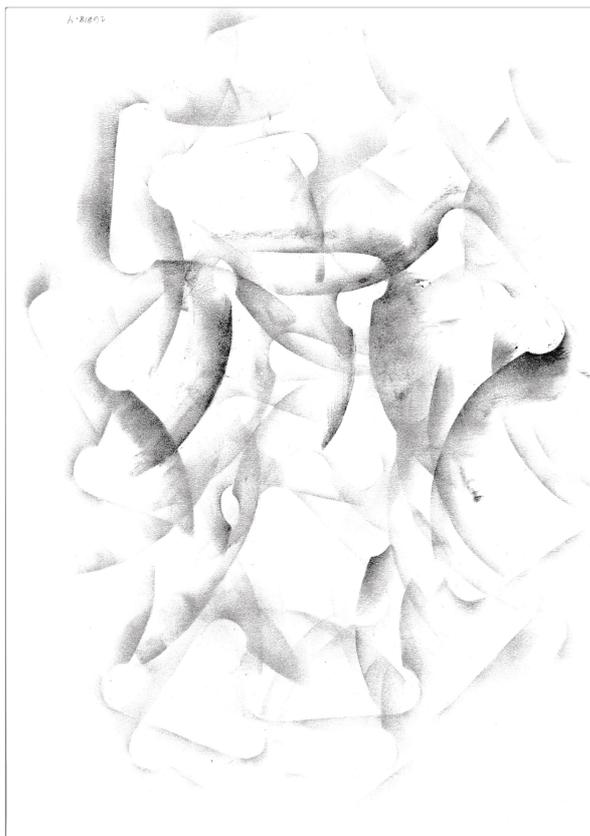
activity using wallpaper 'Y' segments (Figure 11, page 123, Video 1.mp4). My making actions started at the work table on which was placed a pile of wallpaper segments. I constructed a paper cone to wear on my face. I extended this form with garlands assembled on each side of the cone (Figure 12, Video 1.mp4). As I handled segments on the table wallpaper edges perpendicular to the table began to hit the formica surface. This contact produced a sound I had not encountered before, one which cut through my surroundings and altered my experience of the materials by entering my haptic experience. The new experience of what materials 'do' interfered with my recursive actions of inserting tabs into slits. Materials resisted my gestures in a way I had not experienced previously. As I touched and heard the wallpaper assemblage on me, I paid attention to how the arrangement of paper felt different than I had experienced previously in the solo setting of my studio. What my body knew of the process of wallpaper making had been changed by the haptic contact with the materiality of the rehearsal space. The practice session in the community hall was changing the very qualities of the materials as I handled them.



**Figure 12.** Solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal. (Video 1.mp4)

The way that I had noticed the laboratoire space affecting my experience of the costume-making materials prompted me to foresee the potential for conducting MWM in different spaces, an approach which might enrich my description of relationships between costume movement and materials. From examining how the laboratoire space affected my costume process and my experience of the movement-wearable materiality, I gained an understanding of how space itself can induce a

sensory experience that reorients the embodied self in the process of MWM. The overlapping of sensations provided me with an insight on the costume process being transformed by the agency possessed by the physical laboratoire space and physical components that make the environment of phenomenological costume making. For instance, the experience of wallpaper's aural properties impinging on my tactile experience radically increased my repertoire of physical knowledge about making a wallpaper movement-wearable.



**Figure 13.** Wallpaper segment edges hitting the formica table, 2018. Drawing actions following the solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal. Drawing by B. Fortin.

### **Drawing actions following the solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal**

Following the solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal, I used drawing actions to revisit some of the sensory experiences that occurred during MWM. I also returned to the haptic experience of inserting tabs in slits. To proceed from the impetus to keep vibrant the emergent expression I engaged in drawing actions so as to explore the repeated gestures of interlocking and of folding materials into shapes. As 'initial activities

in graphic form' through 'the invention of visual simile' (Casey & Davies, 2017, p.9) I successively applied different drawing materials onto the drawing paper surface. I rubbed charcoal onto the edges of a wallpaper segment placed on the drawing surface (Figure 13, page 125) then repositioned this repeatedly to revisit and re-enact the recursive gestures of inserting tabs into slits while making a wearable. The tactility I felt from my fingertips led me to manipulate intuitively segment around the sheet of paper. The successive marks on paper surfaces varied in quality and nature. These actions informed my research on how the inherent qualities of costume materials affect the haptic experience and movement.

The materiality of drawing enabled further examination of bodily sensations. For instance, I explored interruptions of making recorded in me from directed movement of inserting a segment tab into another segments. Gestures of assembling materials re-enacted through drawing entailed the application of pressure on the drawing surface. Repeating gestures as I marked the paper surface induced the sensing of the density of marks changing from increasing or decreasing pressure on the drawing materials held with my hand. I returned in this way to changing intensity of making movement-wearables recorded in me. As a method of reflection drawing actions enables my examination of the potential of recursive actions to display original relationships.

#### **4.5 Summary of findings**

In this chapter I have presented the solo practice research that I used to develop the MWM laboratoire method in preparation for *Laboratoire 1*. I have outlined the movement research I carried out through my participation in costume and movement workshops and group situations, which enabled me to document through my physicality how performers creatively transform their practice. By highlighting aspects of my body-movement training that intensified my awareness of the effect of my physical presence on other people's movement, I have demonstrated how it supported the objective to prepare my role as researcher-enabler. I explained how the MWM technique emerged from my sensory experimentations with different costume materials. I have discussed how I use *enroulement* to investigate the reversibility, circularity and reciprocity in relationships induced by the MWM.

MWM in coexistence simulated in the solo practice with using a mirror has shown how the laboratoire method can assist me to explore, through phenomenology, the intersubjectivity of costume-making. This exploration produced evidence of the suitability of the laboratoire space for my observation of reversibility as 'this circle which I do not form, which forms me', and how the movement-wearable materiality 'can traverse, animate other bodies as well as my own' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.140). The dual sensation of the costume undergoing changes while the material environment changed around me was an indicator that the phenomenological method would progress from the collective engagement with the *Laboratoire 1* space. I have explained that the solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal increased my awareness of the importance of the haptic experience when observing the engagement of participants with costume-making and the laboratoire space. My experience of this environment has guided how I changed my process for preparing the laboratoire space. Importantly, the *Laboratoire 1* rehearsals increased my understanding of evaluating how different environments might affect the phenomenological costume-making process.

## Chapter 5.

### Stage 2: *Laboratoire 1*, haptic experience and reversibility

This chapter examines the second stage of development of the MWM *laboratoire* method, which is *Laboratoire 1* (see Table 1, page 69). This followed the solo practice research, which prepared the *laboratoire* space and is outlined in the previous chapter. The three objectives set for *Laboratoire 1* were as follows. Firstly, to examine my making actions mirrored in *laboratoire* participants' movement, thus providing a point-of-view outside of myself. Secondly, to outline the role of the haptic experience in the engagement with the environment of phenomenological costume-making. And thirdly, to observe processes of reversibility taking place from the intersubjectivity of MWM in the space of collective practice. The first part of this chapter, section 5.1, examines how the environment of phenomenological costume-making affects the participation in MWM and the role of the haptic experience in this engagement. Section 5.2 examines cycles of reciprocity between *laboratoire* participants and materials and how these enable the observation of reversibility. This is followed in section 5.3 with an examination of the reciprocity between two participants engaged in making. Section 5.4 provides an evaluation of the materials' individual qualities affect on the relationship between two participants making and the environment of phenomenological costume-making. Section 5.5 is a reflection on *Laboratoire 1* and on my role as researcher-enabler. Section 5.6 is a summary of findings.

As previously introduced in section 3.5, the role I took as researcher-enabler in *Laboratoire 1* had two aims. Firstly, to guide through my physical presence participants in movement and making activities that mirror my actions of costume-making and secondly, to observe and record bodily engagement between movement and materiality. For the purpose of the phenomenological research, the interpretative approach I adopt for the description of relationships in the space of co-creation centres on the analysis of my experience of the costume-making process. Participants Helle Tviberg's and Crystal Bennett's<sup>88</sup> exploration through movement of the space of costume co-creation is therefore discussed from the perspective of the costume process I embody, thus, as demonstrations of pre-reflexive engagement with the environment of phenomenological costume-making related to my costume

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<sup>88</sup> MA Performance Making students Tviberg and Bennett from Goldsmiths, University of London, were invited to participate. *Laboratoire 1*, April 2018.

embodiment. To carry out the phenomenological enquiry, comments, descriptions and reflections, verbal and written, produced by participants and mentioned in the thesis are utilised only to support specific aspects of my first-hand experience that I describe from my research position as phenomenologist.

I led *Laboratoire 1* through the application of techniques I prepared during the solo practice research (see Chapter 4). This entailed my physical proximity to participants' movement in the laboratoire space, as well as giving verbal prompts to guide and sustain the MWM flow of interactions between movement and materials that I wanted to observe. I discuss later in this chapter details of prompts I used that were included in the script I prepared to lead the laboratoire<sup>89</sup>. My leading permitted spontaneous verbal responses from participants and, consequently, reflections concerning the physical experiences of the materiality of movement-wearables were verbalised sporadically. Actions unfolding between participants and me were documented (see section 3.7) through film recording and photographs, verbal comments (recorded on film), drawings and written material produced by participants and me during the reflection periods that were scheduled between making exercises. Participants' reflections and comments on their experience were also collected using two questionnaires<sup>90</sup>, one completed at the end of the laboratoire and one two weeks after the event. The second questionnaire aimed to allow for further reflection on experiences, sensations and/or issues participants might have encountered, to be expressed. This information supplemented my evaluation of the development of the laboratoire method. I discuss the outcomes of my leading of *Laboratoire 1* later in this chapter.

The *Laboratoire 1* space (see section 3.3) was organised to enable the observation of phenomenological costume-making from actions produced by participants when mirroring mine. With the gestures of costume construction developed during the solo practice research (stage 1) and rehearsed by me in preparation for their transfer, I anticipated that participants' actions would inform my description of the relationships by which the costume comes to exist. Flows of interactions between *Laboratoire 1* participants and the materials of movement-wearables were examined to evaluate the creative and transformative potential of my embodied costume process on this

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<sup>89</sup> See '*Laboratoire 1* script', Appendix A.

<sup>90</sup> See Appendices D, E, F and G.

development. As previously presented (section 3.1), phenomenological costume-making developing from my costume process taking place ‘outside of my body’ (Barbaras, 2001, pp.38-39) is a critical costume approach within the development of phenomenological costume-making that aims to demonstrate the significance of the research on the designer’s bodily experience to changing the understanding of costume. A critical phenomenology, as McKinney writes, ‘palpates the edges of what exists and the categories already in place to understand the matter of experience’ (2015, p.56). A new costume method, in developing from an on-going phenomenological investigation of my own costume process as it transforms my practice, also expands the role of the designer by re-focussing my role in the costume process. It is in this way that this research on my experience contributes a new definition of costume to the field of critical costume and, moreover, to the development of costume studies and practice in the field of collaborative and interdisciplinary research and practice.

Fragments of exercises discussed in this chapter were examined using extracts from the filming of *Laboratoire 1*<sup>91</sup>. As mentioned previously (‘Observation-based cycle of analysis’, page 98) a ‘fragment of exercise’ is a segment of continuous costume-making process selected for analysis. Such extracts involve a flow of interactions between makers and materials that demonstrate, for instance, recursive making actions. Written descriptions of fragments were produced following the *laboratoire* events. Extracts from these descriptions are in italic in the text in sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4.

## **5.1 The environment of phenomenological costume making**

The first MWM exercise used pre-cut wallpaper segments prepared in the same way as for the solo *Laboratoire 1* rehearsal (see page 123). Participants wearing harnesses and elastic bands were seated at individual tables that I had prepared for each of them with materials for activities, including wallpaper segments<sup>92</sup>. I gave participants the verbal prompt of ‘body-mask’, explaining the making activity this

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<sup>91</sup> See section 3.7, ‘Observation-based cycle of analysis in five steps’.

<sup>92</sup> As well as wallpaper ‘Y’ shapes for the first making exercise, safety pins were prepared to support placing materials on body. Pens, pencils and sheets of paper were provided for periods of reflection (see 3.5, ‘Laboratoire activities’).

entails. Body-mask making, as previously explained (see page 94), was used as a verbal prompt to encourage extensive covering of the self by assembling materials. Tested during *Preliminary Laboratoire*, the 'body-mask' prompt engages participants in a physical investigation of costume through making, and by this engages them corporeally with the laboratoire space and costume co-creation. 'Body-mask making' was explained to Tviberg and Bennett as a process intended to shift the focus from the mind onto the body and to give way to the creative process of movement with materials. After a period of assembling wallpaper segments on tables, participants began to place body-mask assemblages on themselves and proceeded to move in the space. To guide with my corporeal presence the two participants in the space, my position was in the movement-dedicated area of the room. To direct developments and to stay connected with participants' explorations in-movement of the materiality of MWM, I used a prepared set of verbal prompts. These included 'move in the space', 'make bigger movement', 'extend', and 'expand'<sup>93</sup>. I centred my observation of *Laboratoire 1* on how the environment of intersubjective costume-making affected the corporeal engagement of participants with the materiality of MWM and with other people, participants and me as researcher-enabler. The first examination of a fragment of making exercise is on the emergence of making movement and material relationships when participant Tviberg encountered the materiality of MWM, which was new to her.

### **Fragment 1: Wearing materials and intersubjectivity**

Participant Tviberg had been making in front of her an elongated assemblage of red wallpaper segments. When she transformed this assemblage into the shape of a ring by joining together its two ends, Tviberg placed the assemblage over her head and passed her right arm through it. With the assemblage positioned diagonally across her torso, Tviberg began to move in the space.

*Tviberg adjusts the paper arrangement by pulling out the sides and placing them against her ears.*

*Tviberg places the bottom part on top of her shoulders.*

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<sup>93</sup> See '*Laboratoire 1* script', Appendix A.

*Holding the assemblage with her left hand, Tviberg puts her right arm through the ring-shaped assemblage surrounding her.*

*The ring-shaped assemblage is tight on Tviberg. She holds her right arm up in front of her and pushes her shoulder inside the assemblage.*

*Tviberg partially inserted through the rounded shape is contracted.*

*Tviberg's head is tilted towards her raised right arm, her sight is partially obstructed, her legs are slightly bent and her back is slightly curved.*

*Tviberg's upper torso is constricted by the form on one side.*

*Tviberg moves sideways.*



**Figure 14.** Constricted, Tviberg moulds herself to the movement-wearable.  
*Laboratoire 1. Video stills by B. Fortin.*

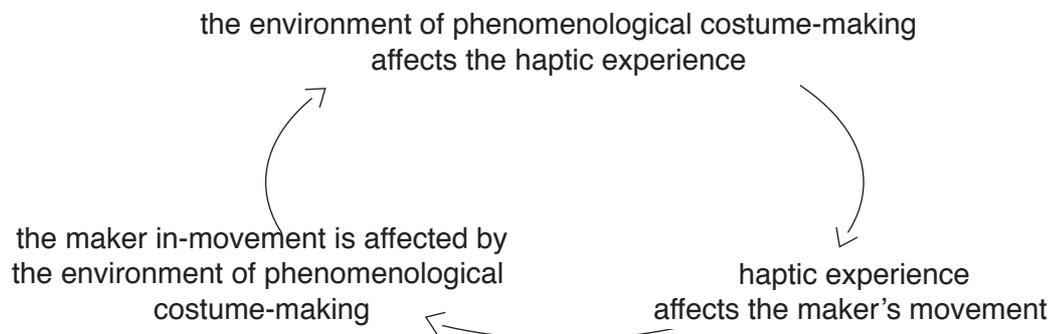
My observation of Tviberg and the ring-shaped form on her centres on two aspects. Firstly, the corporeal familiarisation with the new situation taking place in the space of MWM. Secondly, the effect of the environment of experiential costume-making on the haptic experience and how it is that this environment is phenomenological. The expressive movements that Tviberg made as she engaged with the materials on her indicated that she moved by sensing not only the materials on her but also the surroundings of making around her. With her back rounded and one arm constricted

inside the paper assemblage, Tviberg was entwined with the ring-shaped form on her. At the same time as her upper body was twisted inside the wearable, her arm passed through the assemblage and her legs stretched out ahead of her (Figure 14, page 132). The tight fitting of the assemblage was sustained by physical re-adjustments to the material that was in contact with her. This took place while moving around the room. Tviberg's movement engaged with the force that the wallpaper assemblage placed on her. The haptic contact maintained the engagement between sensing and materiality. Engaged haptically with the wallpaper wearable, Tviberg's movement was reoriented. Pushing herself inside the narrow wallpaper assemblage, Tviberg moved diagonally within the space. Her sideways movement was extending the wallpaper assemblage within the external space of the room.

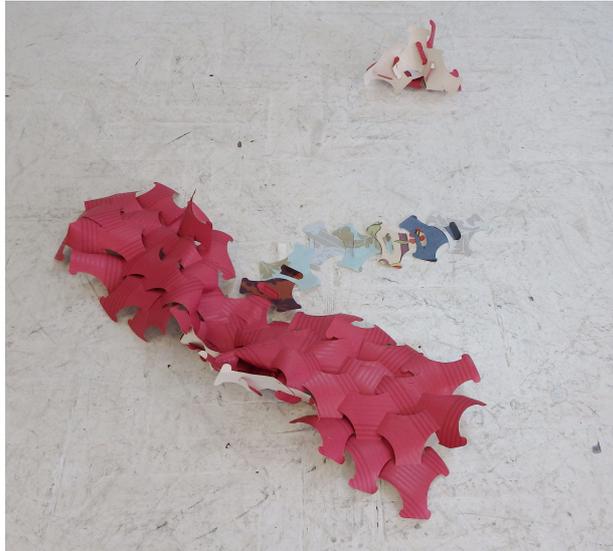
The environment of experiential costume-making as phenomenological was further examined when Tviberg's constricted self was caught in an exchange with the wallpaper assemblage. Through her stepping forwards and backwards, Tviberg maintained a tension between her and the tight-fitting assemblage. This interaction made the two surfaces of body and paper rub against one another. From this tension, the ring-shaped wearable stretched and pulled through the interlocked segments. As it pulled, the assemblage brushed against Tviberg. The to-and-fro generated a sensory experience that was expressed through Tviberg's progressive physical transformation. Any movement was touch and, on encountering interlocked wallpaper segments, generated a sound. When Tviberg's back became increasingly curved and her steps sideways became larger, I identified these repeated actions as her sensory exploration of being affected by the sound of the wallpaper assemblage. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2009) explains that it is by repetition of actions that the body learns kinetic dynamics. 'When enacted', she writes, 'a kinetic dynamic is at once familiar and tailored distinctively to the particular situation at hand' (2009, p.258). I interpret the flow of interactions between Tviberg and the ring-shaped assemblage as kinetic dynamics. The repeated gestures sustained Tviberg's haptic contact and with it the relationship with the arrangement of materials as the movement-wearable continued to change.

## 5.2 Cycles of reciprocity

Diagram 3: Cycle of reciprocity



From observing the flow of interactions that developed between Tviberg and the wallpaper wearable, I identified the cycle of reciprocity as a means to observe relationships between body in-movement, haptic experience of MWM and the environment of phenomenological costume-making. A cycle of reciprocity entails the mover-maker's movement being affected by the environment of phenomenological costume-making, as it in turn affects the haptic experience. This is presented in Diagram 3 above. I anticipated that the circularity of MWM would support the development of the method by enabling the identification of reversibility in phenomenological costume-making. As I will present in the coming sections, observations of cycles of reciprocity led to findings on the role of materials in engaging reciprocal relationships, and by a procedure of reversibility, on bodily empathy with materials unleashing their performativity. McKinney's notion of reciprocal exchange and the theorisation of the body as sensible matter informs my investigation of phenomenological costume-making due to the sensing of the materiality and the movement-wearable maker 'acting on each other and in combination' (2015, p.123). With a second fragment of a making exercise, I examine a cycle of reciprocity so as to demonstrate the role that interchangeability of body and materials in MWM plays in inducing a process of reversibility.



**Figure 15.** Wallpaper assemblage made from rows of segments.  
Photograph by B. Fortin.

## **Fragment 2: Movement-wearable reversed out**

This fragment of a making exercise took place when Tviberg was more familiar with the making method and had proceeded to transform the ring-shaped form into different arrangements of wallpaper segments. I gave Tviberg the prompts, 'how would you move in the space?' and 'how could you extend 'this'?' to entice more exploration of costume embodiment. After a period of making on her table, Tviberg placed across her shoulders and back a symmetrical assemblage of red wallpaper segments adorned with a perpendicular row of multi-coloured segments (Figure 15).

*Tviberg moves in the space on her hands and feet.*

*An exchange between Tviberg and the chain of wallpaper following her spine takes place.*

*In a prompt action Tviberg stands up and changes her posture.*

*The red paper assemblage across her shoulders swings outwards, opens and transforms into a fan.*

*Spread out over Tviberg's shoulders and curving outwards, the paper assemblage is hovering.*

*The assemblage reveals its white interior.*



**Figure 16.** Movement-wearable and Tviberg on her hands and feet. *Laboratoire 1*. Bennett and Fortin. Video stills by B. Fortin.

A cycle of reciprocity developed when Tviberg moved in the space on her hands and feet (Figure 16). The paper assemblage, reminiscent of a spine and vertebrae, became animated on Tviberg. Her movements made the line of multi-coloured 'Y' segments bend and slide. A continuum of reciprocal interactions developed and Tviberg's movements around the room were maintained as she engaged with the swaying of the paper articulation. In reciprocating with Tviberg's moves, the paper

chain contracted and expanded slipping from one side of Tviberg's back to the other. The interaction between Tviberg and the paper assemblage took a new turn when Tviberg abruptly stood up and the exchange reversed (Figure 17). The assemblage that had been contouring Tviberg, and mirroring her anatomical form, had now turned inside out and opened like a fan. At this point Tviberg's movement trajectory was momentarily paused.



**Figure 17.** Movement-wearable reversed out. *Laboratoire 1*. Tviberg and Bennett. Video stills by B. Fortin.

### **Interchangeability of body and materials**

Tviberg's pause allowed for a transfer of position in her relationship with materials. Her movement of standing up had caused the materials on her to turn inside out and with this, the movement and material relationship changed. Until then concealed, the inner wallpaper surface that had been in haptic contact with Tviberg was now the exterior of the movement-wearable. Tviberg's movement and her posture changed again as she followed the wallpaper assemblage's trajectory. The wearable assemblage's outward direction, moving away from Tviberg, led her to arch her back, and by this she replicated the assemblage's action of spreading out like a fan (Figure 18, page 138).



**Figure 18.** Movement-wearable reversed out. *Laboratoire 1*. Tviberg, Bennett and Fortin. Video still by B. Fortin.

Building on McKinney's notion of reciprocal exchange (2015), the wearable assemblage's outward direction and changing in reaction to Tviberg's movement, transformed her into a reciprocating materiality. Through haptic contact, movement-wearable materials and Tviberg were 'acting on each other and in combination' (McKinney, 2015, p.123). Tviberg's moves embodied the materials' performance. Her reciprocal responses to the materials changed the quality of her movement. What had been sinuous and swaying while reciprocating with the smooth arrangement of red curved wallpaper segments, had now changed into a corporeal expression of the reverse surface of the interlaced wallpaper segments, with their sharp paper edges sticking outwards. The theoretical framing of the body as sensible matter, and by this reciprocal to the materiality it interacts with (McKinney, 2015, p.123), situates this mutuality as the passing from one materiality to the other. In the exploration of the pre-reflexive experience, anticipating the materials' conduct is a process of returning onto the self, thus experiencing the original creative expression. Anticipating material changes, the movement-wearable maker moves towards the costume in-making's materiality from a place of 'premonition' whereby it feels able to touch itself touching (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.249). Next I examine further the reversibility of the interchangeability of movement and materials with an investigation of their interference with each other and how this generates a creative exchange.

## The generative effect of reversible interference

When after moving on her hands and feet Tviberg stood up, the interference of the wallpaper assemblage everted in her momentum made her pause her movement. Simultaneously, her posture interfered with the wallpaper assemblage's trajectory. As seen with interchangeability, moving in anticipation of what the materials might do, and therefore how they change, comes from a corporeal opening to materials. The fluctuation in the pace and intensity of actions was generated by the tension passing between movement and materials interfering. When unexpectedly, the materials took a new direction, flaring outwards away from Tviberg, the interference with the materials had made their articulation of interlocked segments behave in unexpected ways. The structure being everted, stimulated the performance of material qualities, which exceeded what the movement-wearable maker 'knew' of them. The interference of materials affecting Tviberg prompted her to move creatively at the same time as it allowed the display of different qualities of the wallpaper material. A reflection by Tviberg on the experience of materials' weight where she says it 'does not necessarily match "weight" (heaviness or lightness) of movement'<sup>94</sup> is indicative of materials prompting an adjustment of movement. Seeing the 'open fan' reciprocated in Tviberg's posture, indicated that the design of the system of self-assemblage by interlocking segments enabled the reversible interference to take place as a generator of creativity because of the flexibility it gave to the wallpaper's rigid texture and the capacity to change through movement.

From my observation of Tviberg and the wallpaper assemblage's interchangeability, I found that as Tviberg opened herself to the materiality of costume, a reversible interference of body and materials was exposed, and from this a creative exploration of movement and materials evolved. The observation of reversible interference supports the development of the method as phenomenological because it provides evidence that the movement-wearable maker is led by what is changing her. A pre-reflexive framing of being active in perception means that what surrounds the self also traverses the self and by this, the experience of one thing points to its reverse (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). The reversible interference allowed me to see the relationship between the MWM and the performativity of materials as generator of change. Tviberg's animating of the materials on her back by moving on the floor,

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<sup>94</sup> See '*Laboratoire 1* questionnaire, participant Tviberg', Appendix D, page 222.

prompted the materials in this interference to deploy their performativity. In turning into a fan, the materials prompted bodily empathy. I further examine such generative reversible interference through the observation of the two laboratoire participants engaged with each other in reciprocal making and I show how the reciprocity between their making informs the development of the method of collaborative phenomenological costume exploration.

### **5.3 Reciprocity between two bodies engaged in making**

In this section my account draws from the observation of the reciprocity between Tviberg and Bennett's making. With the participants having largely assimilated the technique for assembling standardised units of materials, I observed an engagement in explorations of costume embodiment which corresponded to my introduction of the laboratoire as having the purpose of providing a space to interact with the movements of mask-making and the materiality of costume<sup>95</sup>. I will discuss the intersubjectivity of making through the description of Tviberg and Bennett entering into each other's making process. Their movement mirroring each other's sensory engagement with their performance wearable in-making presented a situation where two embodied relationships with materiality overlapped.

#### **Fragment 3: Wallpaper and reciprocal making**

Participants Tviberg and Bennett were mutually making a body-mask on their respective selves. Both wore a large assemblage extended with a smaller assemblage on one limb, Tviberg had one on her foot and Bennett has one on her right hand.

*Tviberg and Bennett are standing facing each other.*

*Tviberg slowly moving her head, torso and arms.*

*Bennett sways forwards and backwards.*

*The wearable covers Bennett's face down from below her eyes.*

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<sup>95</sup> See 'Laboratoire 1 script', Appendix A, page 209.

*Bennett follows the paper assemblage she wears on her hand in front of her.*

*Tviberg's head movements alternate between peaking over the jagged edge of the assemblage surrounding her and tilting her head inwards.*

*Tviberg's pushes herself inside the paper assemblage.*



**Figure 19.** Wallpaper reciprocal making, *Laboratoire 1*. Tviberg and Bennett. (Video 2.mp4)

URL: Video 2.mp4

The laboratoire progressed from participants demonstrating by their recursive making actions that they were becoming more familiar with the laboratoire space. Corporeal explorations of the creative possibilities presented by wallpaper segments led Tviberg and Bennett's interactions to become progressively more collaborative. Tviberg and Bennett's reciprocal making evolved by entering into an engagement with each other's bodily spaces (Figure 19, Video 2.mp4). Facing each other, Tviberg and Bennett moved according to their anticipation of what the assemblage of materials would make the other maker do. The reciprocal making between participants evolved from actions of entering each other's physical space, a mutual interference that re-directed movement and materials. The reciprocity between Tviberg's and Bennett's making informed my observations on reversibility. The two laboratoire participants,

in mutually seeing on each other the making 'that they touched on them', indicated that the intersubjectivity of MWM generates a process of interrogation. This resonated with an experience I had observed in my solo practice research when I practiced making in front of the mirror (4.4, page 119) and thereby accessed an alternative perspective on my costume process. My dual position of being both inside and outside the wearable had given me access to feeling, from two reciprocating positions, how the materials were touching me. Bennett, in repeating the gesture of extending her arm and pointing it in the direction of Tviberg while moving through successive actions of swaying forwards and backwards prompted an exchange in-movement with Tviberg (Figure 20, Video 2.mp4). Reciprocating Bennett, Tviberg simultaneously turned her body in Bennett's direction while brushing against the wallpaper assemblage on her. Relating this to my experience, I would suggest that by bodily empathy, Tviberg simultaneously experienced the smooth curvy interlacing on Bennett, while sensing its reverse side, that is the spikey ends of the material interlocked and touching her own self.



**Figure 20.** Wallpaper reciprocal making, *Laboratoire 1*. Tviberg and Bennett. (Video 2.mp4)

## Wallpaper making and a gap in the method

While the wallpaper segments which were arranged in similar ways on both Tviberg and Bennett denoted the physical understanding of each makers' engagement with the materials, they also led me to examine potential limitations imposed by the wallpaper. While the engagement with the method of making with wallpaper took place as an assiduous practice of assembling actions, verbal exchanges between participants might have, in some instances, inhibited the flow of interactions. As previously mentioned (page 130), my leading involved use of verbal prompts to encourage sustained actions of making and corporeal exploration. While I observed the corporeal and material developments that verbal prompts stimulated, the assemble flaring out on Tviberg being one (see section 5.2), verbal exchanges might have limited the scope of spontaneous and undirected actions responsive to the material environment.

Tviberg's and Bennett's successive actions of assembling segments and of wearing assemblages highlighted their intuitive reaction of trying to avoid creasing the wallpaper segments. Limited additions of materials and discrete actions of making and of wearing suggested a weakness in the method's ability to generate an open-ended practice of assembling and wearing through use of the wallpaper material. Participants appeared at times to be reluctant to enact expansive movements. I considered the possibility that the wallpaper's rigidity and the common knowledge that it creases were causing this reluctance and therefore, tempering their engagement with MWM. This resulted in assemblages remaining almost unchanged for long periods of time. Bennett, for instance, attached segments to the extremities of her assemblage to create a long trail that she pulled behind her instead of transforming the assemblage on herself. With this approach, Bennett avoided crushing the paper segments. It could also be that paper assemblages were hindering the wearing. On reflection, the size of the wallpaper segments might have contributed to making their assembling difficult. That said, the participants' reluctance to alter the paper arrangements gave way to more movement-wearable development through sustained wearing and by this, an intensity of physical engagement that derived from the participants' training in body movement (see 'Recruiting laboratoire participant's', page 87). The recruitment of Tviberg and Bennett, who were both trained movement practitioners enabled the observation of an engagement with MWM from an open physical approach to movement.

The regular patterns created from interlacing standardised wallpaper segments, a triangular form on Bennett and a rectangular one on Tviberg, (Figure 20, page 142) that I observed in both participants' movement-wearables, prompted me to investigate the dissimilarity between their process of making and that of mine. The influence of the smooth texture of the wallpaper and the small size of segments led participants to produce geometrical and symmetrical assemblages. This indicated that while the preparation of wallpaper was influencing an orderly system of making, it was also restricting the scope for random or irregular patterns of interwoven segments and, because of this, not fully addressing the laboratoire objectives to maintain a continuous practice of costume-making processes free from pre-conceived ideas of costume design. The small scale of the segments also prevented sustained engagement with the materials.

In the next section I examine the progression of laboratoire that took place from the first task of making using cut-out wallpaper segments to the second task with foam segments. My discussion will centre on how the qualities of foam contributed to the incremental progression in collaborative corporeal explorations through the increase of intensity of movement-of-making.

#### **5.4 MWM and the materiality of foam**

The observation of MWM using foam centres on the progression of the intimate relationships between individual participants' bodies and their movement-wearables. I examine the role that the properties of foam, in particular elasticity and sponginess, played in inducing a process of reversibility. A shift in the sensory engagement with MWM took place when, instead of the rigidity of wallpaper, participants' bodies encountered the 'fleshy' texture of foam. For both Tviberg and Bennett, the foam exercise was their first experience of movement exploration with this spongy material. With the next fragment of a making exercise, I will examine how foam's different qualities of materiality, when compared to wallpaper, enabled further observations of the reversibility of the laboratoire method and co-creation.

#### **Fragment 4: Foam and reciprocal making extended**

This fragment of making is from an early stage in the foam exercise. Both participants had positioned an assemblage of foam on their bodies. Tviberg's surrounded her upper torso while Bennett sat on the floor, enveloped in a large circular assemblage of 'Y' and 'O' foam segments, attached to her wrists and ankles.

*A chain of foam pieces extends behind Bennett on the floor. At her ankles and on her legs sits another part of the large circular assemblage.*

*On her head is a crown of foam, covering her ears and forehead.*

*Bennett is adding more pieces by assembling on her legs, a few steps away from Tviberg.*

*Tviberg is assembling foam segments at her table, facing Bennett and me.*

*Tviberg wears on her head an assemblage of triangular shapes.*

*The foam assemblage surrounds Tviberg at the waist and extends up and across, diagonally, covering her left shoulder.*

*Bennett rolls around the room with the foam assemblage coiling around her.*

*Bennett stops rolling and while continuing to lay on the floor, begins exploring the weight of the arrangement on her by lifting, folding and unfolding her legs.*

From the first physical contact with foam, Tviberg and Bennett engaged in spontaneous actions of entering into a sensory exploration of the newly encountered texture (Figure 21, Video 3.mp4, page 146) with all her body. The participants were soon compulsively making large foam segments constructions. The urge to wrap bodies in foam indicated that the foam enticed an energised sensory exploration, by movement, of touching and of being touched. A bodily empathy with the materiality of making became much more apparent than with wallpaper.



**Figure 21.** Foam and reversible *Movement-Wearable Making. Laboratoire 1.* Tviberg and Bennett. (Video 3.mp4)

URL: Video 3.mp4

Using foam for MWM developed from my experimentations with materials when preparing for this stage of the research. During my own explorations of moving and wearing (see page 118), foam induced a sensory exploration because of its predisposition to return to its original shape after it has been stretched, folded or compressed. Covering large areas of myself with foam showed how, as I moved, the foam's performativity, in particular wobbling and bouncing, became emphasised. When I touched and pressed onto the exterior of the foam assemblage on me, I felt it resisting my actions. When I reduced the pressure, the foam reacted by bouncing off me to return to its original un-compressed state. The bounciness and elasticity of foam led me to move towards it, thus keeping me engaged with its performativity. The foam's elasticity elicited an exchange between actions and sensations. My explorations of foam making showed me that the elasticity and sponginess of foam engages in an interplay with my movement. The way the foam affected my making, in particular by experiencing it wobbling on me, indicated the potential of this material for revealing relationships between repeated making actions and reversibility. This led me to decide on using a larger size of foam segment than wallpaper segment in order to implement the progression of *Laboratoire 1* through the intensity of corporeal exploration.

## **Foam and reversible MWM**

Elastic and spongy foam made the actions of wearing the assemblage in-progress spontaneous. It appeared that bodies tacitly 'understood' foam as a material to wear and to move with. The spontaneity of movement with foam that I observed indicated an on-going relationship between movement and materials evolving through participants was taking a new turn since the wallpaper exercise. By sensory engagement with the foam texture, large areas of bodies were in contact with the material. This haptic experience initiated detailed explorations of the texture of foam. While making on the floor, Bennett rolled herself in foam, and when rolled up in the foam assemblage (Figure 27, page 148), the experience prompted Bennett to audibly express her wonder at how 'almost human' foam was. The adhering foam led her to compare this materiality to skin, and to allude to an ambiguous sensation by saying that 'it plays a trick on you' (Bennett, April 2018). Kozel writes that our skin is not a boundary, it is instead what makes our body extend beyond ourselves (Kozel, 2007, p.33). With Bennett experiencing the foam wrapped around her, I noticed how its texture aided the spontaneous haptic explorations and the manifestation of off-guard movements that were impulsive and bold. The elasticity of foam, as well as its ability to adhere to three-dimensional shapes, are in tune with the human form. The foam invites sustained haptic contact, by which boundaries between surfaces and senses dissolve. In this exploration the body is made porous and is 'part of flesh as well as being flesh' (Kozel, 2007, p.33).

## **Folding onto foam and reversibility**

Amongst actions reciprocated between participants, I was drawn to recurring actions of folding the body onto the foam assemblage; I saw in folding a process of reversibility. Folding actions enable the dual sensation of being inside the foam while touching the external texture and simultaneously feeling the reverse. I base this interpretation of laboratory participants' entwinement with foam on my experience of a dual sensation during the solo practice research (stage 1, page 119). When I pushed my hand on the exterior of the foam on my arm, I sensed the foam pressing on me from inside the assemblage (Figure 22, page 148). The material, being spongy and stretchy, enabled me to feel my arm through its texture. In this 'blurring of



**Figure 22.** Folding my arm onto foam. Photograph by B. Fortin.

boundaries' I passed from one side of the surface to the other and from being a body to being a 'thing' (see 2.1, 'The phenomenological approach', page 44). An observation during *Laboratoire 1* that resonates with the dual sensation of foam on my arm is of Tviberg's actions of folding herself onto foam (Figure 23, Video 4.mp4, page 149). With materials on her head and torso, Tviberg's movements exchanged with the foam's sponginess. The performativity of the materials made Tviberg slow down her actions. An exchange with the foam surrounding and touching her sporadically engaged her repeated action of pulling her arms towards her body and bending over onto the foam wearable on her. In her 'pulling in' movement, that was prolonged by pushing herself further inside the foam, Tviberg exclaimed: 'I am a clay man, I am made of one thing, I have no arms' (Tviberg, April 2018). Tviberg's comments mirrored both the flow of interactions taking place as a succession of sketchy movements and the foam configurations that dissolved into abstract wearables before re-emerging transformed. Her movements of passing through the openings in the assemblage and of pushing herself inside it indicated that by way of bodily empathy, MWM was progressing as an exploration of costume embodiment. With her interactions becoming more subtle and intense, Tviberg's movement echoed the

shape of the spongy form. I consider the foam wearable on Tviberg as an extension of her body which resonates with Merleau-Ponty's reflection:

'The blind man's cane has ceased to be an object for him, it is no longer perceived for itself; rather, the cane's furthest point is transformed into a sensitive zone, it increases the scope and the radius of the act of touching'

(Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.144)



**Figure 23.** Folding and feeling the body through the foam. *Laboratoire 1.* Tviberg and Bennett. (Video 4.mp4)

URL: Video 4.mp4

Tviberg's 'one thing' comment described a rounded form made of herself and of the foam wrapped around her. The two of them 'merging' resonated in me as a development in the movement and foam phenomenological relationship where touch is extended through materials. The foam was 'no longer perceived for itself', rather its sponginess had become an area of Tviberg's sensing, and by this was 'increas[ing] the scope and the radius of the act of touching', (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.144).



**Figure 24.** Extension of touch through materials. *Laboratoire 1*. Bennett. Video still by B. Fortin.

### **Extension of touch through materials**

Between Tviberg and Bennett, there developed an intense tactile exploration of the foam assemblage on them. Their making movements involved subtle pressing actions onto the spongy texture of foam and paying attention to its changes. Through recursive acts, a pace of actions emerged between the participants and this maintained their engagement with the foam materials. The haptic experience of the foam compressing and expanding, wobbling and bouncing entered and touched one another's experience. The swaying and twisting actions of folding onto foam while also attaching new segments overlapped and the wearable arrangements on each participant became less distinct from one another. With the scrutiny of material affects, wearables progressed through intimate explorations reciprocated between Tviberg and Bennett. The tendency to assemble segments in geometrical and symmetrical patterned assemblages observed previously with wallpaper (Figure 20, page 142) had been surpassed. Wearable assemblages of foam were non-uniform and open-ended (Figure 24) thus denoting a progression with the experiential method through sensory interactions, spontaneous making and a bodily correspondence between participants. Relationships between individual actions and the environment

of phenomenological costume-making appeared more embodied than previously observed when the participants had been involved in reciprocal wallpaper making (section 5.3). The reciprocity between making occurred less often as a direct mirroring of actions and configuration of wearables, as was observed with wallpaper making. Instead, the reciprocity of the sensory experience between participants was driven more by movement, and less by verbal exchange. I observe as phenomenology such intensity of sensory exploration and as an engagement with the origins of the costume experience.

### **5.5 Reflection on *Laboratoire 1* and on my role as researcher-enabler**

The engagement of Tviberg and Bennett with MWM revealed aspects of the method that resonated with my experience of making in a solo setting, in particular the ways in which the environment of phenomenological costume-making affected the haptic experience. At the same time, the *laboratoire* that evolved through making and through reciprocating physical involvements with different materials of movement-wearables exposed a gap between *laboratoire* participants' mutual engagement and my position in the *laboratoire* space as researcher-enabler. While participants shared a common spatio-temporality and used similar actions and materials for making, my position in the *Laboratoire 1* space as researcher-enabler prevented me from accessing some aspects of their engagement. I found in particular that as researcher-enabler being excluded from entering into haptic contact with the materiality of making in the 'here and now' with participants, prevented my personal experiencing of the reciprocity of movement and my bodily understanding of the relationship that developed between participants.

Tviberg and Bennett's reciprocal making compelled me to reflect on the effect of the temporality of the *laboratoire* space and on bodily empathy. As I was not participating, there was too much of a distance to fully empathise with what the participants experienced. This prompted questions on the viability of sharing the space for MWM as a researcher-enabler and I wondered to what extent my presence generated the entanglement of the *laboratoire* participants' experience with mine. In my role of researcher-enabler, the corporeal guidance I provided was aimed at ensuring participants engaged physically with the method of open-ended making, such as my physical proximity to participants' movement and verbal prompts. At the same time, however, I was conscious of the need to keep some distance to allow participants

freedom to explore costume-making through movement and for me to remain open to their process. This led me to reflect on what a costume designer becomes within a phenomenological *laboratoire* setting of movement and material practice. I considered the repositioning of my body in the live actions of MWM to be the way forward to develop MWM as method of co-creation. This would enable me to acquire further understanding of the relationality of the sensory experience of costume and to investigate my embodiment of costume as the initiator of corporeal interactions between me and another movement-wearable maker. My overarching aim with this is to re-define my role of costume designer by extending it to that of initiator of creative costume and performance development.

## **5.6 Summary of Findings**

The exchange between two *laboratoire* participants making in reciprocity demonstrated how, through using more than one participant, the method of MWM achieves the objective of generating sustained making actions. Encouraging a cycle of reciprocity as a means to observe relationships between movement, haptic experience and the environment of phenomenological costume-making enabled me to observe reversibility through the following interactions: interchangeability of body and materials, generative reversible interference and reciprocity between two bodies engaged in making. Flows of interactions, evolving through movement and materials interchanging, enabled the observation of individuals opening up to the materials' qualities and their performativity. This was demonstrated, for example, with Tviberg's movement when the wallpaper assemblage reversed out, thus setting off an interchange that transformed her into a reciprocating sensing materiality. By such reciprocal exchange, the performativity of materials was revealed and the role of materials in prompting bodily empathy demonstrated. Interchangeability exposed the reversible interference of body and materials. The tension generated between materials and movement as they interfered with one another was sustained through the sensory exploration of the change in the materiality. The overlapping of the two participants' actions enabled the demonstration of phenomenological costume-making as it evolved and changed via engagement with the interferences of body and materials.

The role of materials was exposed through the movement and materials interchangeability and reversible interference. The wallpaper assemblage flaring out, and then reversing out, exposed aspects of this familiar material I had not encountered previously, for instance, the wallpaper assemblage, when stretched, pulling through the interlocked segments. Materials, by their individual properties, generated different intensities of interactions. The specific properties of the materials prompted variations in pace of movement and transition between actions of assembling and wearing. Movement engaged with the materiality of the space denoted the haptic engagement. Participants, in-movement, opened onto the materials via senses rather than thought actions. Through responding to and anticipating what the materials might do, the bodily engagement with the haptic experience of MWM enabled my observations of the progressive intensity generated through the different materials. The progression from wallpaper making to foam making illustrated how each material affected movement and body in different ways. Developing tactile relationships between *laboratoire* participants while reciprocating making and wearing exposed touch as the sense leading experiential explorations of costume-making. Touch produced findings on how the environment of phenomenological costume-making generates sensory engagement with costume materiality. This evidenced that the movements of MWM generated a sensory exploration of the changes in materiality.

The immediacy of *laboratoire* participants' mirroring actions enabled my observation of costume and movement exploration progressing through reversibility. Bodily empathy with materials and with another movement-wearable maker dissolved boundaries between individual MWM experiences. For instance, Bennett and Tviberg's reciprocating wallpaper making was a process of reversibility evolving from exploring mutually two perspectives on the entanglement with the materials, as both touched and as they were touched. The corporeal engagement with the materiality of movement-wearable exposed aspects of the method that resonated with my experience of making in the individual setting. At the same time, the intimate relationship between participants that evolved through making and engaging with different materials of movement-wearables exposed a gap between *laboratoire* participants' mutual engagement and my position in the *Laboratoire* space as researcher-enabler. Participants simultaneously making from and within the same environment evidenced the limitations of my position as researcher-enabler.

I felt at a distance and could not 'feel' what the participants were feeling, and so could not fully describe the relationship. The interchangeability of body and materials that highlighted the two-way interference prompted reflections on my own embodied process and challenged my perceptions of what the position of my researcher's and maker's body is in relation to the intersubjectivity of MWM for the participants. To develop the method fully through my own bodily participation, I identified the need to remove further boundaries between me and the making process.

The reciprocity between participants' making from the temporality of *Laboratoire 1*, highlighted the potential of developing the method from the investigation of the temporal space of *laboratoire*. To progress with the development of the phenomenological costume-making method and to reposition the costume designer as the initiator of phenomenological costume movement, the necessary step forward was to engage in live action within the space of co-creation during costume-making. I identified the need to re-assess my role in the *laboratoire* space so as to be in a position to proceed more intensively from the costume process I embody and from bodily empathy within the space of co-creation. This led to my decision to act as researcher/co-participant in *Laboratoire 2*.

In the next chapter I discuss *Laboratoire 2* where I made observations of live interactions between me and one other co-participant during collaborative MWM.

## Chapter 6.

### Stage 3: *Laboratoire 2*, co-participation and bodily empathy

‘The things— here, there, now, then— are no longer in themselves, in their own place, in their own time; they exist only at the end of those rays of spatiality and of temporality emitted in the secrecy of my flesh.’

(Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p.114)

This chapter presents an examination of my experience as *Laboratoire 2* researcher/co-participant. My main objective with this third and last stage<sup>96</sup> of the practice research was to examine how my live actions of making in coexistence with one other co-participant could further my exploration of the phenomenological costume process. I was seeking to discover if I would gain increased bodily empathy and in-depth understanding of the costume-making process by being part of the live interactions of co-creation. I also aimed to explore in more detail relationships between my movement and the propensities of materials as revealed through cycles of reciprocity between me, one co-participant and the *laboratoire* space. The first part of this chapter, section 6.1, outlines the sequence of actions that occurred at the beginning of *Laboratoire 2* and from which a circularity of interactions developed between co-participants and movement-wearables in-making. Section 6.2 centres on specific recursive actions that induced reversibility in the space of coexistence and my engagement with co-making through bodily empathy. Section 6.3 describes my experience of immersive MWM and the deepening of my costume movement investigation as I became more entangled with materials and the co-making process. I then present in section 6.4 a study of my drawing actions during and after *Laboratoire 2*, which formed part of my process of reflection and analysis. This is followed by a consideration of the positive transformation of my costume design process in section 6.5. The chapter ends with a summary of findings in section 6.6.

The recruitment of an experienced movement-practitioner<sup>97</sup> to take part in this final stage of the research as co-participant was based on the aim of *Laboratoire 2* to create an environment of phenomenological costume-making where I could

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<sup>96</sup> See Table 1, ‘The three stages of phenomenological costume-making practice research’, page 69.

<sup>97</sup> See ‘Recruiting *laboratoire* participants’, page 87.

experience making a performance wearable through reciprocities between my costume-making movements and the movements of another body. Choreographer and movement-practitioner Elinor Lewis was experienced in-movement with objects primarily from a movement perspective, whereas my experience was from a making and materials perspective. In order to focus on this project's physical inquiry into the materiality of MWM by prioritising actions while remaining silent, Lewis needed to have a prior understanding of movement. By working with an experienced movement-practitioner I also aimed to keep verbal expressions to a minimum during the making exercises. This requirement was informed by the outcomes of *Laboratoire 1* where verbal exchanges between participants compromised the flow of interactions (see page 143). To supplement observations gathered through the research and to give Lewis a voice, her reflections on the *laboratoire* experience were collected using two questionnaires, one immediately after *Laboratoire 2* and one two weeks later. The gap between questionnaires was to allow for further reflection on experiences, sensations and issues to contribute to the description of her experience<sup>98</sup>.

Outcomes from *Laboratoire 1* evidenced that the phenomenological research had progressed from the corporeal engagement with the materials' unfolding and changing to a stage where the materiality of MWM was actively enabling the development of a new definition of costume as a movement method. To reflect this progression, the prompt 'body-mask making', notwithstanding its origins in body-oriented work (see 1.1, 'Larval mask'), was not used for *Laboratoire 2*. As for Chapter 5, fragments of exercises discussed in this chapter are introduced through an extract of description in italics in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.

## 6.1 MWM interrupted

I chose industrial felt for introducing the method of MWM to my co-participant, Lewis. From experimentation with felt in my studio<sup>99</sup>, in preparation for *Laboratoire 2*, I found that the woolly texture and thickness of the chosen felt<sup>100</sup> encouraged spontaneous actions of placing the assemblage onto myself, just as a garment would. By its density

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<sup>98</sup> See participant Lewis' *Laboratoire 2* questionnaire and *Post-Laboratoire 2* questionnaire, Appendices H & I.

<sup>99</sup> When I prepared materials in the solo setting of my studio, in readiness for *Laboratoire 2*.

<sup>100</sup> Industrial felt, 3mm thickness.

and weight, the industrial felt had a pre-disposition for following the contours of body surfaces (see page 86). In preparation for *Laboratoire 2* my practice of making by placing felt onto my body led to observations regarding the effect of its dense woolly texture on my experience of what surrounded and touched me. The felt's thickness enhanced my experience of wearing and I anticipated that felt would also facilitate sustained haptic contact on large areas of the body<sup>101</sup>. Knowing this, I wanted to encourage and to observe in detail the engagement of Lewis' body with felt.

As in the *Preliminary Laboratoire* and *Laboratoire 1*, harnesses and elastic bands were provided to support the construction of large assemblages. The decision to use felt for the first two *Laboratoire 2* making exercises (see sections 6.1 & 6.2) – and foam for the third exercise (see section 6.3) – was based on evidence from *Laboratoire 1* concerning the relationship between the introduction of different materials and the incremental progression in corporeal explorations through the increased intensity of movement-of-making. I had seen how the body as a whole, as 'an organ of sense' (Paterson, 2012, p.477), was transformed through this progression. The role in this progression of the choice and order in which materials are introduced was also demonstrated with *Laboratoire 1* with the transition from working with wallpaper to working with foam (see section 5.4). *Laboratoire 1* revealed how making movements are affected in different ways by the different qualities of each material. I also realised that making is also affected by the size of segments and by the thickness of the materials<sup>102</sup>. The difficulty I observed when *Laboratoire 1* participants assembled wallpaper segments indicated that their small size<sup>103</sup> put limitations on making movements (see on page 145). Interlocking tabs and slits, and the rigidity of the wallpaper, made for a demanding level of manipulation that hindered the flow of intuitive actions. For *Laboratoire 2*, all the standardised shapes that I prepared for self-assembling were cut to larger dimensions than for the previous practice. This was decided on because I wanted to encourage the fluent progression of sensory exploration through ample bodily covering when using felt.

The first felt exercise began with my demonstration of the making technique.

To facilitate the adjustment of Lewis to the *Laboratoire* method, I guided her bodily

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<sup>101</sup> From solo practice research with felt and the previous *laboratoire* iterations, safety pins were provided to support placement of materials on the body during making activities.

<sup>102</sup> The thickness of the foam used was 6mm.

<sup>103</sup> Wallpaper 'Y' shapes, 16mm x 17mm.

engagement with the method of assembling through my own making movements, rather than offering her verbal prompts. I assembled felt segments on myself at a scale large enough to show, by example and in silence, the task that I had previously practiced. Lewis' initial encounter with this method of assembling standardised pre-prepared modular shapes was also the first time she had engaged in a movement exploration using felt. The fragment from this exercise that I now examine is a sequence of making that took place after Lewis had assembled felt segments while sitting on the floor before standing up with the materials in place on her body. Her exploration in-movement was interrupted when segments began to fall off her. I will discuss the interruptions in Lewis' actions that were caused by the felt on her changing and show how this exposed a process of enquiry through recursive haptic contact. I then examine the way in which the materials affecting Lewis' movement came to prompt a transformation of my MWM process.

### **Fragment 1: Felt and actions interrupted**

*Lewis is standing. The felt is on her shoulder's and arms.*

*As Lewis assembles felt she moves gently.*

*She places felt on her head, the assemblage begins to travel away from her.*

*Lewis' moves slow down, she follows with her gaze the materials in their trajectory.*

*Lewis takes the direction of the assemblage and lies on the floor.*

I prepared the dance studio<sup>104</sup> for *Laboratoire 2* as a bare environment. Felt segments ready for immediate use were stacked on tables while the materials for subsequent exercises were set out in a different dedicated area of the studio and concealed with white fabric. At the beginning my attention was on Lewis' actions. After Lewis assembled several felt segments on herself, she stood up and some felt segments began to fall off (Figure 25, page 159, Video 5.mp4). This led Lewis to pause her actions.

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<sup>104</sup> Dance studio at Goldsmiths, University of London.

For a brief instant Lewis took in what had just happened. The felt had spontaneously reconfigured itself, and by its unexpected re-configuration demonstrated its own material agency. I sensed by bodily empathy the fragility of what was left of the weighty assemblage on Lewis; this sensation of fragility filled the space. The momentary stillness of our bodies made real the looming prospect that in reaction to moves, the assemblage could disintegrate at any moment.



**Figure 25.** Felt and actions interrupted. *Laboratoire 2*. Lewis and Fortin. (Video 5.mp4)

URL: Video 5.mp4

When Lewis moved again, more materials fell off her. Lewis, interrupted in the course of her movement, was making sense of the materiality of felt. The large felt assemblage was shapeless and heavy, and prone to coming undone. Lewis moved in response to sensing the material's pre-disposition to come undone and fall off the body onto the floor. The felt falling off Lewis generated a flow of interactions. The felt moving away from Lewis made her repeat a sequence of bending down, retrieving and bringing materials back into contact with her. By recursive haptic contact the exploration of materials and movement continued. From the moment when Lewis began to interfere with the movement-wearable on her, she moved as if the wearable in-making was a cavity to fill or a recess to enter into; a cycle of reciprocity was engaged (see Video 5.mp4).

## Reciprocity of body and materials through *enroulement*

I identified this cycle of reciprocity as *enroulement*, where Lewis was interrupted in her movement and then continued moving through reciprocating with the changing materiality of her making. The spiralling progression of this relationship of movement, within the environment of phenomenological costume-making and haptic experience is presented with Diagram 3: 'Cycle of reciprocity' on page 136. As previously discussed (section 4.4, page 119), I examine the French term *enroulement* through the research practice in order to supplement my physical exploration of the pre-reflexive experience. I characterise this cycle of reciprocity as *enroulement* because it encapsulates the progression of my phenomenological process from participating in live actions within the space of collective and co-creative making. I build on my engagement in-movement with *enroulement* to analyse *Laboratoire 2. Enroulement* as the French translation of 'coiling' resonates in a more accurate way with the expressions of the reversibility of active and reciprocal participation that were generated in me. That said, I discuss the sense *enroulement* makes in me, through an expansive English description of coiling. This twirling movement suggested that Lewis engaged with interruptions precisely as a mode of inquiry and that, by her bodily empathy, she came to proceed with making by anticipating the conducts of materials. A particular example was when, as she started to stand up, Lewis interacted with the wearable in-process by encircling the heap of detaching felt with her whole body. Reciprocating the changes as interlocked felt segments slowly came apart, Lewis moulded herself onto the materials by following the pace and direction of the felt that was interacting with her. This interaction led her to move sinuously in the space (Video 5.mp4). *Enroulement* as a pattern of movement thus figured as a sensory exploration through successive actions to acquire new knowledge of the relationship with materials that pertained whilst making was in progress.

Lewis' movements with the felt movement-wearable became increasingly intense, albeit slow-paced (Figure 26, Video 6.mp4, page 161). These effects were in response to the materials pulling away from her. *Enroulement* sustained the exchange between Lewis and materials, which remained in flux. In adjusting to the shifting materials, Lewis was opening to their trajectory. Coiling the self with materials while they also twisted onto her evolved as a process of actions that were inclined to return to haptic contact in succession. 'As a sum of things or of processes tied together through causal relations – "in [the self]"' (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p.xxvii), Lewis'

*enroulement* was a continuum of re-arrangements of movements and materiality. With an arm stretching out to reach the materials, for instance, the felt interfering with her movement continuously altered the arm's direction. The cycle of twisting an arm around the felt in free-fall, developed from the change of direction that the materials were taking. As materials kept moving away from Lewis's body, the action of encircling the materials in succession became more accentuated.



**Figure 26.** Reciprocity of body and materials. *Laboratoire 2*. Participant Lewis. (Video 6.mp4)

URL: Video 6.mp4

The felt's qualities revealed through *enroulement* were guiding the opening up to the materials. Gestures embraced the heaviness of felt. The weight of the felt assemblage, for instance, as it made the materials stretch at the fastening points, engendered movement that accommodated this change, such as the bending of knees and rounding of the back. The interruption of the flow of movements worked as a generator of creative development. In the engagement of Lewis with the materials falling and interrupting her movement, a realisation of Lewis's body as choreographer took place. The variation of moves that Lewis deployed in her twisting exhibited her training in movement and her practice as a choreographer. Her trained movement permeated the environment of MWM. The quality of Lewis' corporeality was also indicative of the process by which she passed from being interfered with to exploring ways of interacting with the materials and movement which could reflect the fragility of the felt assemblages. In the questionnaire completed following *Laboratoire 2* (see Appendix I, page 228), Lewis commented on the encounter with movement-wearable materials at the beginning of the laboratoire:

'I felt engaged and quietly industrious. Consumed by trying to achieve the design I had in my head. This gave way to moments of frustration, when the pieces failed to stay knitted together. After a while I came to enjoy the fragility of designs I made. The way that my designs spontaneously fell apart inspired me to move in different ways.'

The transition from costume as a pre-conceived idea through to its physical correspondence with the creative process of making is demonstrated in Lewis' acknowledgement of 'the fragility' of her designs. A physical receptiveness to the movement-wearable as an on-going reconfiguration enables creative interplay to emerge from a physical empathy with the unpredictability of felt. Lewis' moves successively reciprocated with the felt surrounding her and evolved through allowing the materials to interrupt her movement. Notwithstanding the predisposition of her trained body to respond creatively to an environment that stimulated corporeal expressions, MWM was altering her trained movements. Lewis' *enroulement* indicated that felt prepared for MWM was not only interfering with the understanding of costume, but also generating in the body an articulation of costume as physical resilience, ingenuity and imagination. The mover-maker's haptic encounter with felt exposed the generative effect of interruptions of making. I examine in the next section how the progression of Lewis' *enroulement* affected my MWM.



**Figure 27.** Co-making and physical empathy. *Laboratoire 2*. (Video 7.mp4)

URL: Video 7.mp4

### **Co-making and physical empathy**

As with Lewis's making, my actions of assembling a movement-wearable on myself were affected by the felt's tendency to fall off (Figure 27, Video 7.mp4). Processes of making costume embedded in me from previous experiences were being extended through Lewis's entwinement with materials. By physical empathy I engaged with Lewis' interruptions in making, although my response was also informed by my existing knowledge: for example, felt's reactions to certain manipulations, such as its limitation in stretching and its smooth texture that does not adhere to other smooth surfaces such as the epidermis. However, gradually, the direction known to me of arranging materials into a movement-wearable was being shifted by my newly acquired kinetic knowledge. The interference with my making from the woollen felt's reactions and from Lewis' movement was opening me up to new relationships with the making process that I learned corporeally and through physical reciprocity. In the Table 2: *Laboratoire 2*, Fragment 1 (see Appendix B, page 218), I present an overview of the change in my process resulting from co-creating with Lewis and engaging by physical empathy with the flow of interactions between her movement and the felt.

The physical empathy I experienced with Lewis' making prompted me to examine my *enroulement* with felt. By *enroulement* towards and around the felt, I reciprocated Lewis's engagement with the environment of actions of making and materials of movement-wearable in coexistence, thus taking a direction in making I had not known previously. With felt covering my arms, head and most of my upper body, I assembled segments while standing up. A section of the assemblage secured to my headband fell in front of me (see Video 7.mp4). This large and dangling assemblage of interlacing felt pulled on me with its weight. Soft and thick, the felt made me bend and, on me, the felt curled. My body and the felt were mutually sinuous and empathetic. Felt and I travelled by circling one another. As I inserted and pulled segment tabs through slits, I held my arms up and away from my body. My posture was instinctively in tune with the felt assemblage that was precariously contouring my upper body. This contact made me feel that materials coiled themselves around me and that I too was 'twisted onto' them.

Moving in reaction to actions taking place around me, felt affected my movement in ways I had not yet encountered. I followed the felt that contoured me and when it moved away from me. By retrieving the felt and repositioning it on me, I experienced a series of soft contacts between the surface of my body and the felt on and around me. With this came an experience of the malleability of felt I had not encountered before. The sensations traced out my moves in space. The felt contouring my body and head produced edges that flapped against me. The shape the movement-wearable took unexpectedly interfered with my touch and my other senses, vision and hearing in particular. I came to make some moves that resulted from interfering with the material and from the coexistence with Lewis, and conversely, other moves arose from being interfered with by the environment of costume making. Making in the same spatio-temporality as Lewis induced a different experience of the dynamic exchange with the materiality of MWM than I had previously experienced in the solo setting. During the research I developed a phenomenological style of writing to describe my experience, which was informed by Kozel's phenomenological writing approach (2007; 2015). I practiced writing by placing myself at the centre of the description of my making of a movement-wearable and adopting a way of describing by using a sensory language to record and define my haptic experiences. The following extracts are based on my recollections of co-making in the laboratoire space.

'I am in proximity to Lewis, the room is warm, my face is covered in felt. I see the felt in front and over my face. Close up, the surface of felt is out of focus. An assemblage sits on my head and pushes against it. The tingling contact of the woollen texture on me is constant. My hearing is muffled. My breathing fills with warm air the space between my face and the felt assemblage; I feel warmth on all my face.

As I sway slowly the felt flaps gently on me. The felt assemblage moving away from me is letting me see where the felt stretches out in front of me. I see through interstices that are letting in the light that is in the room. The light enters intermittently the space between my face and the felt. All moves while I assemble. As the assemblage moves back and fore onto my legs its unevenness is exposed. As I turn on myself, I sense the felt assemblage coming undone in places. I catch a glimpse of Lewis making. I recognise in what surrounds her the interlacing of grey segments I can touch on my own body. The interlacing of segments creates a relief of shadows and light. This interlacing of felt traces the volume wrapping Lewis and interacting with me.'

With my vision obstructed, touching the felt while being in tune with another moving body induced an ambiguity regarding the boundaries between my senses. In proximity, I could not see the pattern the interlocked felt segments created on and around my body. The following extract describes this sense-making:

'I forget where my feet are, where my arms are, until I return to the tingling contact of the wool my body is touching.

'Materials suspended in the space around me give me indications of distance between my arms and my body.

In the space surrounding me the wearable assemblage suspended on me extends my body.'<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Descriptions of my first-hand experience are extracts from written notes (B. Fortin, 2019) supplemented by film recordings of *Laboratoire 2*.

From this first encounter with co-making I have identified the interruption of making as the means by which Lewis became open to the materiality of costume as process. Interruption has also enabled me to identify *enroulement* as a cycle of reciprocity by which I can progress with the exploration of my phenomenological development.

## **6.2 Coexistence, reciprocating actions and material surroundings**

The cycle of reciprocity of *enroulement* exposed the interference occurring between me, the *Laboratoire* space, Lewis' body and the woollen felt. Interferences that were generated by making in coexistence induced a new sensory relationship with my costume-making process. The processual nature of the *laboratoire*, and the direct reciprocity with a co-participant in her discovery of a new materiality, produced a coexistence that engaged me with the issue of what activates another body's movement and experience. This coexistence prompted me to make new costume-making movements that I had not made before. I will now consider the progression of my process from engaging with interruptions of making by examining a fragment of a *laboratoire* exercise conducted during the second exercise of felt making. This exercise involved the addition of flexible rods<sup>106</sup> to the felt to make larger movement-wearables. I examine how the making of ample wearables using the flexible rods and felt contributed to an increased intensity in the flow of interactions and how this led to further instance of interruption of making.

### **Fragment 2: The resonance of co-making in my body**

*I feel the materials protruding from my back.*

*Materials circle Lewis and follow her moves as she assembles on her lap.*

*Picking up, standing, movement in space while wearing, with legs apart;  
mine and Lewis's actions are simultaneous.*

*Lewis cannot see my actions, nor the pattern in the assemblage on her body.*

*As Lewis is swaying, materials on her approach me, then move away.*

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<sup>106</sup> 'Polyethylene flexible rods' are named 'flexible rods' in the text. See description on pages 106-107.

The use of flexible rods in *Laboratoire 2* was due to findings from *Preliminary Laboratoire* and *Laboratoire 1*. In the *Preliminary Laboratoire* the use of these long rods encouraged ample movements and the construction of large structures (see section 4.3, page 115). Observations of how the *Laboratoire 1* participants' movement mutually entered into each other's space and process of making suggested that by increasing the size of gestures, reciprocal making might be enhanced, and that would inform the development of the phenomenological costume-making method. Therefore, for the second making exercise of *Laboratoire 2*, the use of flexible rods and felt was to encourage constructions of oversized wearables that would stimulate the deployment of ample movements to engage Lewis and myself in reciprocal wearable-making (Figure 28, Video 8.mp4). I anticipated a direct reciprocity of making with a co-participant when using large pieces of material would entice expanded and demonstrative movements. With this expansion of mutual movements, I aimed to increase my awareness of my bodily empathy with another movement-wearable maker and contribute to my in-depth understanding of the making process. The long flexible rods were secured on our bodies using the prepared harnesses. Maintaining the materials' contact with Lewis and me for longer periods aimed to enable further observations of the haptic experience during prolonged wearing.



**Figure 28.** Co-making with Lewis. *Laboratoire 2*. Photograph by Rachael Champion. (Video 8.mp4)

URL: Video 8.mp4

The malleable felt and the curved rods expanded my movement by engaging my physical empathy with their contrasting behaviour. I followed the flow of materials by bending onto them. As the felt attached to me sagged it pulled away in the direction of the floor (Figure 28, page 167). I interfered in their trajectory by parting and bending my legs. In this movement I empathised corporally with the materials by adopting a posture that responded to the 'heaviness' of the felt layered on my legs. As I attended to the materials surrounding me, sensations prompted my stretching and folding over them. Folding myself onto the felt and curved rods induced a haptic experience that maintained the engagement of my sensing with the materials. The cumbersome wearable constricted my movement. Folded onto my movement-wearable, the abundant materials interfered with me. I experienced multiple sensations when moving with the felt precariously attached to me, while at the same time sensing the semi-rigid rods alter my movement. The materials taking space around me led my bodily expansion in the room.



**Figure 29.** Drawing actions: *Movement-Wearable Making* with felt and flexible rods. September 2019. Drawing by B. Fortin during *Laboratoire 2*.

Following this exercise and during a period of reflection<sup>107</sup>, I expressed through drawing actions movements prompted by the experience of taking space in the room while wearing an assemblage of felt and flexible rods (Figure 29, page 168). My expression by drawing centred on the dual sensory experience of constriction when rods entered my movement at the same time as the intuitive actions of attending to the materials precariously layered on me, and by which I was prompted to move.



**Figure 30.** Interplay between Lewis and the movement-wearable. *Laboratoire 2*. Photograph by Rachael Champion. (Video 9.mp4)

URL: Video 9.mp4

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<sup>107</sup> Laboratoire iterations progressed through a programme of making exercises interspersed with periods of reflection (see 'Laboratoire activities', section 3.5).

The haptic contact of the materials on me brought me to observe how materials I saw outside of me, on Lewis, simultaneously touched me by reciprocity. I moved by physical empathy with Lewis in the space of costume-making relationships. The cumbersome wearable's interference with my movement brought me closer to Lewis' haptic exploration of the weight of the materials. Seeing the interplay between Lewis and the wearable in-making on her (Figure 30, Video 9.mp4, page 169), I experienced the malleable felt laid over the curved rods affixed to both our bodies extending. In this corporeal extension, our gestures synchronised when reaching out to the extremities of our wearables enabled me to 'touch' Lewis' entwinement in materials, by touching the materials on me.

The dual sensation of touch that made me further examine my physical empathy with Lewis, deepened my understanding of how costume can be a shared and collaborative process. When the making from flexible rods and felt reached a point of extensive coverage, my movement became increasingly pre-reflexive. I moved in response to sensing the qualities of the materials heightened by the reciprocity between me and Lewis' making. Multiple sensations took place at once, the woollen material touching my epidermis, the segments partially obstructing my vision and the dust of felt in suspension in the air around me entering my nostrils. I felt increasingly immersed in the materials while making. This experience was enhanced by my movement reciprocated by Lewis' entanglement with the same materials. The rhythm of our actions and of the configurations of bodies and the materials on us, blurred the origins of individual movements. A silent reciprocity emerged out of the industrious making of the large wearables.

In the next section I explore in more depth MWM and material immersion via an examination of foam co-making that brought Lewis' sensing and my own into closer proximity.

### **6.3 Immersive MWM**

This section centres on the final making exercise of *Laboratoire 2* when Lewis and I engaged in co-making a single movement-wearable with foam. The topics of foam's role in the progression of the method, the juxtaposing Lewis' movements with mine, and the proximity of physical making in-movement will be examined to discern

how co-making a single movement-wearable with foam induced an enrichment of experience and produced meaning.

### **Fragment 3: Co-making a single movement-wearable with foam**

Using my observations of a third fragment of exercise, I examine the flow of immersive MWM between Lewis and I when we sat on the floor in a head to tail position while we assembled foam segments. Making actions continued until the assemblage filled the space between us and covered our bodies.

*Lewis and I are assembling foam, sat down and facing each other.*

*I turn and pull myself towards Lewis.*

*Lewis spins, we are now closer to one another and in contact.*

*Lewis lies on her back. Her legs stretch out and straighten up in the air.*

*Lewis pushes up the materials with her feet.*

*I attach on Lewis' legs a section of our assemblage.*



**Figure 31.** Co-making a single movement-wearable with foam. *Laboratoire 2.* (Video 10.mp4)

URL: Video 10.mp4

I prepared in advance large amounts of foam segments to enable myself and Lewis to participate in making a single movement-wearable together. My choice of foam for this exercise was based on observations of their inherent qualities, in particular the spongy texture (*Laboratoire 1*, section 5.4) and how by its texture foam stimulated gestures of making on the body while wearing, thus enabling prolonged sustainment of sensory explorations. As I was making on the floor with Lewis, the foam wobbling had induced a tension while making. The wearable assemblage's continuous rippling kept me aware of its precariousness so I adjusted my movement to sense its elasticity. I sought a physical position by which I could remain in contact with the wobbling shared with Lewis as our movement overlapped (Figures 31, Video 10.mp4, page 171). For this I kept my seated position with my legs and arms held away from the floor. The rippling material guided me to sustain this precarity by holding it off the floor. The foam performing was reciprocated in my unstable, in some measure performative movement. The spongy material sent reverberations through me as I was unbalanced and moving on the floor. My wobbling was also multiplied by Lewis' actions that I sensed reverberating in my touch. The movement-wearable, positioned on my legs and arms held away from the floor, maintained vividly nuanced



**Figure 32.** Lewis interlocks foam segments on me. *Laboratoire 2*. (Video 11.mp4)

URL: Video 11.mp4

sensations arising from the continuous haptic contact with foam. As I repeated the actions of interlocking foam segments, Lewis' position was also partially off the floor. The tension between us and the foam was maintained through our reciprocating making. When Lewis interlocked foam segments on me (Figure 32, Video 11.mp4, page 172), her actions made the materials reverberate in me, hence making me 'the receptive sensitive flesh that perceives it.' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, xlix).

### **The agency of foam**

In co-making a single movement-wearable the materiality took precedence over my making. I felt overtaken by gestures that seemed to be other than mine interfering with my movement and the materials shifting around me. The merging of Lewis' and my making made the boundaries between our bodies ambiguous. Limbs and heads made their way across the interlacing of foam and passed through our collective movement-wearable. Relationships between our movement and materiality simultaneously changed. The inside and the outside of the movement-wearable dissolved. Movement and materials interchanged. With the passing of limbs and head through the foam assemblage, I saw the reversibility of our making.

Sensing how the environment of collaborative making was created from the fluidity and responsiveness between me, Lewis and the foam immersing us, brought me to examine my body sensing foam as reciprocal materiality acting on other materiality (McKinney, 2015). Recursive haptic contact with foam, maintained by the large assemblage surrounding and moving on me, allowed me to observe how my physical responses acted as the instigator for materials to deploy their performativity. For example, when I moved towards a section of the assemblage in front of me to interlock two segments, and in doing so sensed the foam rearrangement bouncing off my folding self, the foam deployed its performativity by sending undulations through its texture. I sensed the foam ripples interfering with Lewis. The interruption in her making as the foam pulled away from her grip resonated in me. Sensing materials doing what they do whilst they immersed both Lewis and me caused interruptions in my making. My limbs were being re-directed by the reconfiguration of foam, which was also enhancing the dual sensation of touching while being touched (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). The transforming experience of MWM immersing us, and blurring boundaries, was akin to materials taking the role of another body (McKinney, 2019).

In an article on the agency of scenographic materiality, McKinney examines the work of scenographer Katrin Brack and notes that by using a single material to fill a performance stage area, (i.e., artificial fog, wind machines and confetti) Brack achieves the creation of a space of transformation where materiality takes on a life of its own. While I see how the scenographic materiality can lead to an analogy of 'other body', my experience of being immersed in the over-sized foam movement-wearable in-progress heightened my sensing of being interfered with by the performativity of a single and abundant costume material.

### **My body in the midst of an abundance of foam**

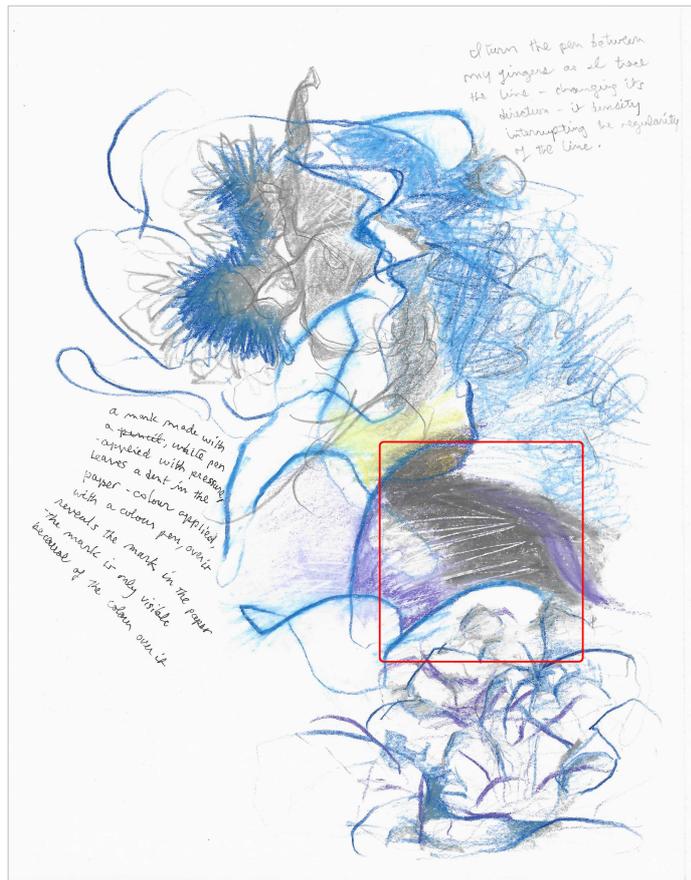
Making in the midst of an abundance of foam produced new evidence of the relationality of my making and that my practice was changing through the phenomenological process of costume-making. Making jointly with one co-participant and using large amounts of foam brought to light how the inherent qualities of materials 'not limited to intentions invested in them by humans' (McKinney, 2019) are unleashed because the self, immersed in a reciprocating materiality, is made to respond from a place of resonance. This is the costume design process that I embody. My process was expanded through the performativity of the foam. The foam's wobbles and bounces during co-making induced spontaneous actions of assembling that exceeded what I knew of relationships with the materiality of movement-wearables. Through foam co-making I have also gained more understanding of how to use my body to transform costume materials. The interchangeability of my body and foam exposed me to how materials, by disrupting the course of my process of making, transform my costume process. By interfering with my making, the movement-wearable process allows my sensing self to take precedence over things and deliberate actions to allow successive pre-reflexive movements by which my practice is transformed. From co-making and foam I gained the understanding that costume can become the initiator for re-connecting with pre-reflexive embodied costume movement and be changed by this.

#### **6.4 Drawing actions following *Laboratoire 2***

Following *Laboratoire 2* I practiced drawing actions to examine experiences of phenomenological costume making. I produced drawing actions as a continuation of my movement-of-making. I explored in particular the re-enactment by drawing of folding the body onto materials. By repeating the actions of making marks on paper, I explored how sensations were multiplied by the 'thing' encountered by my entering in contact with felt and foam. Considered in this way, the materiality of drawing actions includes not only the materials employed for graphic expression (i.e., graphite, pastel, paper surface), but also the dynamic process, the expression itself. However, if the movement was considered as part of the materiality of drawing, my being as costume designer was enriched by drawing actions seen as a continuum of a pre-reflexive mode of doing. Hence, the act of drawing provided a space for feeling within me the sensations of materials that 'do not have yet the formal structures of language' (Kozel, 2015, p. 56).

#### **Phenomenological costume drawing**

I used drawing materials to revisit the sensations of movement-wearables in-creation that I had memorised in my movement. For instance, drawing by erasing and re-drawing marks in succession, and on the same surface, involved altering marks and rubbing them off, partially or entirely. A mark made over an erased one attempted to repeat a mark but the effect was that relationships between all the marks on the paper kept changing. At the same time, making a mark where a previous mark has been erased interferes with its physical memory. Applying colour over erased marks gradually exposed dents in the paper. The detail of a drawing shows how actions of mark-making evolved from putting pressure on a surface with colour pastel pencils (Figures 33 and 34, page 176). This drawing action repeated is a re-enactment of the experience when a MWM action is repeated and the materiality of costume-making is thus experienced differently.



**Figure 33.** Putting pressure on a surface with colour pastel pencils and making dents. Autumn 2019. Drawing by B. Fortin.



**Figure 34.** Detail of drawing: erased marks reveal dents in the paper surface. Autumn 2019. Drawing by B. Fortin.

Drawing enabled me to add nuance to my descriptions of the feelings of change when folding myself onto felt assemblages. The lines I traced on paper in succession channelled my physical memory of folding, bending, pleating and overlapping

materials (Figures 35 below, and 36 & 37, page 178). Material shapes, their folds and the bodily movement, were contoured through my drawn lines. Letting sensations of materiality guide my drawing enabled me to relive the circumstances of my making and my perspective on them, such as the feeling of folding while sensing the materials in contact with me changing. Drawing a detail of felt folding was a way to examine the dual sensation of *enroulement* as materials coiled themselves around me and I around them (Figure 38, page 179).



**Figure 35.** Folding materials: bending, pleating and overlapping felt; the movement of inserting a segment tab into another re-enacted, Autumn 2019. Drawing by B. Fortin.





**Figure 38.** *Enroulement*: materials coiled themselves around me and I around them. Autumn 2019. Drawing by B. Fortin.

## 6.5 Phenomenological costume and the designer's body

My physical engagement with the temporal space of co-creation has demonstrated that the method of shared practice of abstract costume-making in an environment of coexistence provides me with the possibility of experiencing new interactions with the materiality of making notwithstanding the sensory and kinetic costume and material knowledge I had already acquired through the actions of preparing *laboratoire* making activities materials (Stage 1: Solo research practice, Chapter 4). Participating in actions of MWM with a non-costume practitioner simultaneously engaged in making evidenced that this phenomenological costume making research is changing my costume design process. The environment of *Laboratoire 2* has demonstrated costume as a sensory process of enquiry. Moving by sensing the space of relationships I further explored my designer's relationship with the creation of costume. By opening myself sensorily to different explorations of costume creation, I let the environment of the *laboratoire* affect my movement. It enabled me to move with the materials of costume in ways I had not experienced previously. This has enabled me to encounter qualities of costume materials new to me. The corporeal exploration

of costume-making by a performer affecting my designer's movement was evidence that letting the environment of making in coexistence interfere with my actions changes my position in the costume process. Developing a new relationship of collaborative creation with a trained movement practitioner and performer revealed the creative agency of costume to develop collaborative performance and to change my position in the costume process and in this way contribute to my costume movement-led expansion.

## **6.6 Summary of findings**

In this chapter I have presented how I consolidated my findings from previous *laboratoire* research (Chapters 4 and 5) by taking part in *Laboratoire 2* as researcher/co-participant. *Laboratoire 2* included the choosing of materials, the recruitment of a choreographer and planning live actions of making to address questions previously raised on my role in the *laboratoire* space. These questions concerned techniques for encouraging corporeal exploration and my previous position outside live actions of making, which put too much distance between me and participants to fully empathise corporeally with what participants experienced (see Chapter 5). The *Laboratoire 2* making activity programme further strengthened the MWM *laboratoire* method. This was due to the order in which materials were introduced and the role each material played in inducing an empirical development of relationships by stimulating corporeal explorations through making and wearing actions while remaining in silence.

Cycles of reversibility and generative reversible interference between movement and materials, previously identified during *Laboratoire 1* (Chapter 5), were extended through co-making. The interference of another movement-wearable maker with my costume process, prompted by materials falling off and by this interrupting movement, guided me to open sensorily to the costume's materiality. My costume process was changed due to reciprocating with another embodied costume in-making using the same materials that I was touching. My bodily empathy was enhanced by my haptic experience. Coiling and folding while entangled with a movement-wearable in-development induced progressive intensification of my bodily empathy with the co-making. This led me to reciprocate my co-participant's movement, and by this to experience certain qualities of the costume materials that I had not known previously and to move in ways new to me. This expanded my knowledge of costume by enabling my detailed description of my bodily experience of costume creation.

Such physical experience of costume exposed the creative potential in increasing my bodily empathy by scrutinising my movement within the phenomenological research process.

With immersive MWM, my haptic experience of foam expanded my in-depth sensory and kinetic understanding of the effect the temporal space of co-creation exerts on my costume design process. When co-making a single movement-wearable, being interfered with to a great extent by the performativity of foam and by the movement of another co-maker illuminated how the constituents of the space of co-creation affect my process by changing my relationship with costume materials. I gained the physical understanding of how letting in new influences on my movement enriches my creative practice. The immersive MWM further confirmed the potential of the costume-making method of co-creation to expand the practice of costume.

The research concerning my pre-reflexive movement was integrated further in the method when I identified *enroulement* as cycles of reciprocity. From experiencing the dual sensations of materials on me while sensing in me the entwinement of another movement-wearable maker with the same materials confirmed the power of my embodied design process for re-connecting with the pre-reflexive costume movement and being changed by it. Such experience of the materiality of costume repositions me as initiator in developments of costume and performance making processes.

Drawing actions, as a reflective process, returned me to the movements of my body that were prompted by the materials I wore. Drawing actions of re-enacting folding onto felt contributed to my physical understanding of the effect of materials on movement. The reversible interference, in particular, was scrutinised with the re-enactment of folding onto the felt wearable that was on me through drawing actions. This contributed to my in-depth understanding of the relationality of my costume process and exposed the potential of integrating drawing actions with live costume actions, an area of investigation I intend to develop in future research.

In the conclusion, I summarise the research findings presented within this thesis.

## Conclusion

This research project has scrutinised and extended my costume practice from an embodied and phenomenological perspective, placing my own body at the centre of the research. The project was motivated by the lack of investigation of the designer's body in-movement and the agency of costume. I have challenged the definition of costume as a purely representational practice within traditional costume process with the objective of devising an open-ended, phenomenology-led costume practice. My exploration of body and material relationships through phenomenological costume-making processes has examined my position as designer in the process of performance making. Centring on my experience of creating performance wearables, I problematised costume by foregrounding movement and thereby framing my practice within Merleau-Pontian theories of embodiment. This approach enabled me to critique the definition of costume in the expanded field of performance making as a product pre-determined by pervasive theatre production traditions. With phenomenological awareness, the examination of costume making and moving processes in this research was fuelled by a desire for the recognition of the designer's embodied knowledge of costume creation. In addition, my own embodied, kinetic and sensory costume designer's knowledge was expanded during this research.

This exploration was carried out through the development of a new practice-based research method of co-creation between myself, materials and others. In the course of the research, I devised an original method that I termed MWM. Carried out in *laboratoire*, MWM generated empirically determined descriptions of the relationship between bodies and materiality that can expand the role of the costume designer through paying close attention to the following aspects: body and costume in-making reciprocity; responsive bodily movement; physical empathy; and generative reversible interference. The phenomenological approach of the costume process as embodied demonstrates that researching costume practices without considering the contribution of the designer's own body only serves to maintain the reductive description of costume as subordinate to other aspects of performance making. This restricts the expansion of costume as a sensory bodily experience and an embodied method of enquiry. The phenomenological approach of costume attends to the value of costume as process lying at the core of performance making and creativity. Recognising and valuing the embodied knowledge of the costume designer enables opportunities for

the expansion of performance making through costume. This perspective on the costume process gives agency and value to designer, performer and materials alike within the creative process, thus challenging traditional linear models of design and creative hierarchies within costume creation. This research contributes a methodology for the advancement of research in costume design as phenomenological practice.

### **Aims and objectives**

I reconsider the two main aims and objectives of the research. One aim was to systematically apply Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology to transform my own costume process, thus expanding the role of the designer. Another aim was to develop a new method of costume as movement practice that questions the nature of costume. The findings on the original objectives, which underlie the aims, can be summarised as follows:

#### ***To formulate a methodology of costume-making as experiential enquiry developed from the costume designer's own bodily engagement and responses in-movement.***

I have formulated a methodology based on in-depth exploration of the costume process I embody. Framed through phenomenology, my costume process enabled me to consider costume as relational, and thus to develop processes to access new knowledge through relationships. Using Merleau-Ponty's concept of bodily experience as relational to the sensible world (1945), my exploration of the interrelatedness of the body and the materiality of costume came from the research in-movement on my embodied costume process. In Chapter 4 I present how by posing the question: 'How is costume initiated by my own costume movement?' I established a framework suitable for considering my movement so as to gain physical knowledge. This was then used to develop a movement-led costume method of research, namely MWM. The ways in which I am affected by the costume were made accessible to me from the self-observation of the different temporal spaces that I prepared – the spaces for solo practice research and the laboratoire spaces intended for practicing the actions of making a movement-wearable.

***To explore, through phenomenology, costume as a processual, open-ended, co-creative and collaborative practice.***

Approaching my body from the perspectives of the Merleau-Pontian theory of flesh and the phenomenological pre-reflexive body has given me the means to use my costume embodied movement to create iterations of *laboratoire* as physical environments of co-making for researching relationships between me as designer, *laboratoire* participants' engaged corporally with my process of costume and the materiality of phenomenological costume-making. In Chapter 5, I demonstrate that the development of the MWM method progresses through the organisation of invited participants, costume-making movement and selected materials prepared for open-ended, co-creative and collaborative practice. Exploring costume as processual and thus in continuous change, I found that the actions of MWM and the materials I prepared through my phenomenological explorations of costume-making enabled collective costume-making and that costume relationships, in being affected by the *laboratoire* space, exposed the process of MWM as exceeding its parts. I discovered that by affect the *laboratoire* space generates cycles of reciprocity between body in-movement, haptic experience of MWM and the environment of phenomenological costume-making. This on-going creative process (see section 5.2) being open-ended, rather than leading to the realisation of a representational costume, instead exposes recurring themes developing from the interrelatedness of all components of the time-bound *laboratoire*.

***To investigate the relationships between bodily movement and materiality in the process of phenomenological costume-making.***

The investigation of the relationship between bodily movement and materiality in the process of phenomenological costume-making was conducted in three incremental stages of development.

During stage 1, the solo practice research as set out in Chapter 4, I scrutinised through my sensory experimentations my costume process actions. I used different materials and evaluated their potential to induce sensory exploration. I carried out an investigation of my movement through participation in costume and movement workshops and a body-movement training programme. From this movement research, I devised my role as researcher-enabler to lead costume and movement explorations in the group setting of *Laboratoire 1*. My solo practice research was critical for the

organisation of the *laboratoire* space to induce the bodily engagement of participants and enabled me to progress the development of phenomenological costume-making.

Stage 2 of development, *Laboratoire 1*, evidenced what different materials do and how they change the costume research process. In Chapter 5, this investigation of body and material interrelatedness is presented in relation to the key emerging theme of cycles of reciprocity, specifically interchangeability of body and materials, and generative reversible interference. These are indications of how the method encourages movement-wearable makers' recursive making actions that generate relationships of costume co-creation. *Laboratoire 1* produced evidence that suggested I transform my role in the *laboratoire* space from researcher-enabler to research/co-participant to be able to progress the development of phenomenological costume-making in order to reorient my role of costume designer.

With *Laboratoire 2*, stage 3 of the development, my exploration of the relationality of the costume practice progressed by placing myself within costume-making actions undertaken in the temporality of MWM. In Chapter 6, I demonstrate that the real-time situation of my process of MWM in coexistence, and experiencing a bodily empathy with one co-participant, extended my physical engagement with the environment of phenomenological costume-making and further evidenced costume as a sensory process.

***To define the role of materials within the relationship between making movement and collaborative phenomenological costume exploration.***

The role and specific agency of materials in the relationship between making movement and collaborative phenomenological costume exploration was exposed through the use of different materials and the order in which materials were utilised for empirical making activities. The materials, by their specific qualities, enabled reciprocity in making between participants engaged in collaborative phenomenological costume exploration. This collaboration is demonstrated in Chapter 5 with the tactile relationships that developed between *laboratoire* participants during reciprocal making and wearing. The materials deploying their qualities in these relationships exposed touch as the primary sense by which the process of reversibility takes place. For instance, Tviberg's and Bennett's mirroring assemblages (section 5.3) when in their reciprocating positions, experienced mutual interference where the materials re-directed their movements. The mirroring of their making gave each one access

to other perspectives on the material that touched them, pointing to a collaborative phenomenological costume exploration evolving from physical understanding of each other's engagement with the materials.

The introduction of different materials supported an interactive practice of costume movement and evidenced how the method of phenomenological costume-making is suited to generate different relationships with materials. The elasticity and sponginess of foam encouraged its sustained haptic contact with large areas of the body and in this way supported a development of the phenomenological costume exploration. In section 5.4, page 148, Tviberg's sustained haptic contact with foam is shown to have led to a process of reversibility taking place where touch was extended through the foam materials. This evidenced the role of materials in enabling MWM to progress as an exploration of costume embodiment.

***To develop a workshop practice that repositions the costume designer as the initiator in the development of collaborative performance and creative research practice.***

The MWM laboratoire research method that I have developed through this research has the two components of laboratoire space and the MWM technique. Together these components form the laboratoire research method and provide a potential framework for my own and other researchers' future work within the fields of costume practice and beyond.

The laboratoire space is the physical space of MWM organised spatially and temporally to generate co-creative costume movement and material exploration between participants. The organisation of the space involves dedicated areas within the room for movement-led costume-making activities and separate areas for the positioning of equipment and materials. At the core of this organisation are the following principles: to enhance the haptic experience in order to foster the participants' engagement with the research procedure; to enable the making of performance wearables freed from conventional ideas of costume design; and to sustain the engagement, in movement, of participants with the materials so as to facilitate observation of the reciprocal transformation of bodies and materials. The physical and temporal organisation is specific to each individual laboratoire and is carried out for the people who will occupy the space.

The MWM technique entails a system of material self-assembly using standardised modular shapes for making movement-wearables. This technique generates

iterative processes of constructing and of putting a performance wearable in-progress onto the body in movement-of-making. The MWM technique engages laboratoire participants with the practice of recursive making actions that prolong the stage when costume is being made, before reaching completion.

### **Personal reflection on my own transformation from designer to costume designer-initiator of creative exploration made through movement**

Questioning the definition of costume as representational through the development of the MWM, the phenomenological costume-making method, was at the core of the research endeavour of transforming my costume practice that is rooted in the system of creation where costume is pre-determined through accepted and delimited roles and procedure. The evolution of the phenomenological costume-making method through the progression of the practical research on the embodied costume process, supported with reflections on what happened during this engagement of my body, reflects the incremental journey of transforming my costume designer's body.

I found that the phenomenological framing of my body as the costume experience at the centre of the research enriched my costume process because it placed my physical and sensory experience in a context of relationships. As researcher-enabler for *Laboratoire 1*, my actions, when performed by participants, enabled me to identify cycles of reciprocity between bodies and materials that revealed aspects of the materiality of costume that were unknown to me. Notwithstanding the need for the reassessment of my position in the experience of MWM, observations of materials affecting participants' movement showed how the reciprocity between two bodies making sustains the engagement with the material environment. However, there was a paradox with *Laboratoire 1* regarding participants' making actions originating from my movement and my own exclusion from their physical reciprocity brought about by my non-participation in the making. This suggested that an effective way to describe my experience of the intersubjectivity of MWM would be to partake in the live activity of the laboratoire. For *Laboratoire 2*, as researcher/co-participant with one other co-participant, I found that the interference of materials on my body led me to return to sensations felt within me by making actions: I also found that similar gestures repeated between me and a co-participant and with different materials became increasingly expressive. The recursive action of folding the self during felt making, for instance, was a response in-movement to the inherent quality of the material

to regain its primary form. Folding became a sensory-based action central to my reflection on the reversibility of the method, notably through drawing actions (section 6.4). The phenomenological costume-making method I devised was consolidated with *Laboratoire 2* and my engagement in-movement made with a co-practitioner. Through this I gained an in-depth understanding of the costume-making process by being part of the live interactions of co-creation.

My research journey supports the shift in my role of costume designer to one of initiator of creative exploration made through movement. The knowledge that I have acquired by researching my embodied costume process enables me to refocus my role as an initiator of creative development, a role that I can further develop in the field of collaborative performance and creative research practice. For future research, I am considering developing my costume and art practice through drawing and movement. The practice of using drawing actions during this research (sections 4.4 and 6.4) has exposed me to expressions of embodiments of costume and creative expansions through my haptic interaction with the materiality of drawing. This has evidenced the potential for developing new fields of research on embodied costume and phenomenology-led processes through drawing as a means of sensing, and more broadly the development of embodied research methods.

From approaching my costume designer's body as an area of research, my journey in devising an embodied process-based method of collaborative costume creation has opened new ways of thinking and engaging with the costume process and the agency of the costume designer's body. The expansion of the costume designer's role as initiator of creative exploration made through movement has the potential to impact on costume practice and its role and status within performance and the creative process, for everyone in the field.

### **Contribution and potential future applications of findings**

This thesis foregrounds a new way of thinking about costume beyond conventions delineated by traditional theatre and performance and expands approaches to devised performance making. A space has been created with this thesis for collaborative exploration of costume movement and materiality. This space of costume research is separate from the performance space and is located instead in the pre-performance rehearsal space as the creative movement space that sits within

the field of phenomenology-led movement practice and research. By undertaking the journey of transforming my practice through this research, I have questioned the process of designing costumes and contributed a new definition of costume, namely phenomenological costume-making, to the field of critical and nascent costume and embodiment. This has been achieved by acquiring an understanding of costume from undertaking a process of transforming my design practice through a phenomenological methodology and from channelling this development into devising a method of experiential costume laboratoire, a costume practice research contribution that surpasses the limits imposed by pre-determined performance intentions and representation.

This research is part of an investigation of co-creation and co-authorship between costume designer-initiator, performer and material in creative performance research practice. Researching performance through costume processes involves the development of collaborations between makers and performers that incorporate perspectives from the different parties. Findings from the practice of MWM involving actions by laboratoire participants from physical performance-based backgrounds indicated that it is an empowering method that has the potential to benefit fields of creative practice including performance, although not restricted to this alone. With the recruitment of movement and/or performance practitioners, in-training or professional, my expectation was that their tacit body knowledge and disposition to explore through movement would elicit bodily engagement with materiality. This was achieved through the development of the costume method and the preparation of the laboratoire space for movement exploration. The pre-prepared materials with their self-explanatory system of assemblage stimulated participants to engage in industrious physical activity of costume-making. Due to the requirement to make on them, this activity engaged participants in sensory exploration in-movement. MWM, by being an open-ended experiential costume process, stimulated progressive developments of inventive bodily movements.

The embodied method of designing costume that involves the return in-movement to the experience of the nascent costume by seeking what is essential in the experience has exposed themes of embodiment of practice: body and costume in-making reciprocity; responsive bodily movement; and physical empathy. These findings demonstrate that costume as process is a driver of gestures and that as a creative movement and material laboratoire method it stimulates interactions between

participants. Given the rich and detailed observations captured by this study, there is potential to disseminate the information collected on the practice of embodying costume-making in laboratoire space and to adapt this methodology to a range of artistic practices, communities and collectives. These include design, art and movement practitioners who collaborate with individuals or in a group setting to develop their work through sensory explorations and interacting with materials or those practitioners who devise and run material and movement workshops. Dance, movement, art and design educators who use movement and workshops in a learning context, such as college, university or private settings may also apply these findings. As well as these examples, the methodology of phenomenological costume-making could be adapted to specific research on material and sensory embodiment through movement.

This thesis advances the discourse on the application of phenomenological principles in costume, performance, design and art practices. This contributes to studies that investigate and describe the inherent qualities of movement and considers the implications of embodied knowledge on the development of theory through movement-led practices. The increasing interest in the embodied meaning of the experience is reflected in the growing number of phenomenological and empirical research methods, such as in fashion and dress studies. The senses and embodiment in fashion is a field in which my research can expand. My findings on the practice of phenomenological costume-making prompting movements as expressions of sensation could impact the development of embodied methods of enquiry for research on fashion, dress and the sensory bodily experience. As a next step following this thesis, my research could feature in the scholarly journals *Studies in Costume and Performance* and *Theatre and Performance Design*. I would also consider writing an article on costume material performativity and phenomenology for the interdisciplinary refereed journal *The Senses and Society* to contribute to the field of sensory scholarship.

Findings on MWM laboratoire heightening bodily awareness and physical sensations could be applied in the future development of embodied research methods to deepen existing knowledge and practice in developmental movement, for instance, for professionals and personal experiential explorations of creative and well-being processes. The methodology of phenomenological costume-making allows for adapting its principles to embodiment workshop settings whereby learning takes place

amid people researching their own movement from sharing space with others. The principles used to devise MWM laboratoire through the temporal and physical organisation of space (this through the preparation of materials and activities) and the practice of moving by way of reciprocal body and material explorations, freed from conventional ideas of costume design, are transferable. They can be adapted to existing movement-led creative practices to support the creation of safe space for the exploration of personal processes and of human movement patterns. This is accessible to diverse bodies researching their individual movement in workshop settings to develop approaches, processes and practices through materiality and to target specific sensory experiences. The diversity of bodies ranges from trained dancers and movement practitioners to non-trained movers and people exploring their personal process through movement. The laboratoire method could be adapted to movers with mild to moderate visual, physical or intellectual impairment and to neurodiverse movers. Within the appropriate ethical and expert collaborative structures, the laboratoire should be adapted by workshop facilitators trained and experienced in those specific fields.

As post-doctoral projects, I will consider developing the research on phenomenological costume-making in the field of neurodiversity. This would build on scholar Melissa Trimmingham's research on scenography and practice as research in connection with autism and applied theatre. The aging body is also a field of research in which I foresee my research expanding, in areas such as experiential explorations and creative embodiment workshop.

The method of MWM devised during this research provides a model on which other costume movement-based methods for interdisciplinary creative practices can be built. The method of experiential costume-making offers the opportunity to integrate all sensations and expressions of the body in relationship with materiality into the performance making process. The practice of MWM laboratoire would benefit costume designers and practitioners involved with movement, dance, theatre, design and performance art. The method could be further developed to support collaboration between maker and performer in performance creation. It is my hope that providing a framework for the implementation of phenomenological principles of intersubjectivity and reversibility through costume processes will assist designers and artists to investigate the sensory knowledge in their bodies and to seek and nurture new relationships with material and corporeal environments of co-creation. A potential

outcome of this development would be published articles in scholarly journals on performance art, material and movement research, such as *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*.

The benefit of working with a small number of participants was the depth and quality of the observations gathered, and therefore the extent of detail I have been able to present. The documentation of conversations pre and post laboratoires, comments, drawings and questionnaires provide invaluable information for the analysis of the multiple implications and causal effects of the MWM laboratoire method. That said, the phenomenology-based methodology for devising embodied costume process-based methods of creation has not yet been tested with groups of more than two participants. It is at present unknown how larger groups would connect with the environment of MWM, and if the purpose of the research is to produce in-depth and nuanced descriptions of relationships, this aim could be undermined by expanded group sizes. Nevertheless, I found that from each iteration, *Preliminary Laboratoire*, *Laboratoire 1* and *Laboratoire 2*, the engagement with the method improved as subtle and intimate rapports between bodies and materials developed during movement. Foam making during both *Laboratoire 1* and *Laboratoire 2*, for instance, brought quiet moments during which intense scrutiny of materiality occurred by letting materials enter movement; corporeal expressions during foam making were intensified through the silence of the material. My research in this sense can be seen as a starting point for other costume researchers and I to develop and test in future research. I have already shared my research during CC2020, as part of the on-line Costume Agency Artistic Research Project. I intend to propose costume movement-led workshops in future Critical Costume events.

The laboratoire film recordings provided indispensable insights into the relationships between participants and me as they provide an abundance of detail that I could not have noted during the sessions. For example, gestural communication between participants and non-verbal responses to the space, to materials and to actions taking place simultaneously. Film recordings enabled me to observe the dual position of my body that at the same time figured as observer and observed during the costume process: filming thus supported the research objective to observe the reversibility of the research method. The use of multiple cameras was successful in providing several viewpoints of the same activity. Filming was an efficient way to identify the chronology of actions by which I could trace the progression induced by the method.

Though some details were hidden due to the position of cameras and of participants, multiple cameras proved a useful approach to the recording of phenomenology-based laboratories. I foresee using multiple cameras again in future externally funded and longer term research projects that allow more preparation time to test and verify framing so as to maximize the detail captured.

The methodology of phenomenological costume-making method would benefit artists and creative practitioners keen to explore from a different standpoint their individual inventive process. The overlap of costume, design, movement and artistic actions enables the exploration of new relationships to re-consider the materiality of artistic processes through interdisciplinary practices. Exploring one's own creative undertakings from MWM co-creative exploration has the potential to prompt questioning, re-assessment and expansion of art practices. Given that it prompts movements as interpretations of sensation, MWM can facilitate explorations of different art media and materiality in physical ways, for instance, drawing materials. The drawing practice I developed during the research and presented in this thesis is an example of a creative outcome of movement-led descriptions of expressions generated through MWM. Outcomes for art practices could be, for instance, phenomenology-led and costume-led art performances and creation of artefacts for exhibition. I envisage this to be achieved through future participation in *Prague Quadrennial* or *World Stage Design (WSD)* events.

Conducting drawing actions during and following phenomenological costume-making practice to describe the lived experience of costume-making and as a response to sensations in-movement evolved into an original phenomenological drawing practice. For future research, I intend to continue the practice of costume-led drawing to develop an individual sensory embodied drawing research and practice. My aim with this extension of my practice is to produce a body of research-based drawing work and related material to prepare for an exhibition. I will seek to exhibit at University of the Arts London, and nationally in higher education institutions.

As the phenomenological costume-making research progressed, the role of materiality on the development of embodied costume-making was evidenced. This indicated the potential for expanding this research via further investigation into the effects of costume materiality in co-creative engagement. I foresee the possibility of examining the interdisciplinarity of costume from the perspective of material agency,

production and ethics. New materialism presents the opportunity for the expansion of costume studies from both theoretical and practical perspectives. I consider art-based and sensory embodied research and practice as possible areas for future new materialist research to further my examination of relationships between costume materiality, experience, collaboration and creativity.

The research on the costume designer's body in-movement is only the beginning of innovative thought on costume design, experience, process and agency. Costume and performance research augmented through phenomenology and through costume-practice-led methodologies supports the proposition that expanded costume praxis could be achieved by combining costume practice, movement and interdisciplinary methodology. While existing costume and movement practice-led research engaged with phenomenology has exposed the contribution of pre-reflexive phenomenological bodies to critical costume, the in-depth auto-scrutiny of my experience of designing costume as both phenomenological research process and as a procedure transformative of my costume and art practitioner's body, repositions the body of the designer as a field of research. In this way, it builds on, contributes to and expands the discipline. Collaborative phenomenological costume exploration can generate original approaches of co-creation. It is hoped that this research will generate further original approaches to costume co-creation in the future and as a result contribute to a shift in the perception of what costume is, what it can be and what it can do.

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## Costume events

*Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition 2018 (CC2018)*, University of Surrey, Guildford, September 2018.

*Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (PQ19)*. Prague, June 2019.

*Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition 2020 (CC2020)*, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, August 2020. [online] Available at: [www.costumeagency.com](http://www.costumeagency.com)

## Participation in conferences and exhibition

*Thinking Costume Lab*, PQ19, presentation of my project and group discussion. *Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (PQ19)*, Prague, June 2019.

*Laboratory of Dance / Dance as a Vintage Point*, symposium on dance. July 2020. Centre for Philosophical Research, University of Łódź and Institute of Music and Dance. [online] Available at <https://sites.google.com/view/labofdance/2020-Online>

*Guided by Material, Critical Costume Conference and Exhibition 2020 (CC2020)*, August 2020. Oslo. [online] Available at: [www.costumeagency.com](http://www.costumeagency.com)

## **Selection of costume and performance collaborations**

*Before I Sleep*, 2010. Brighton Festival, Brighton. dreamthinkspeak.

*Before I Sleep*, 2011. Brighton Festival / Holland Theatre Festival. Amsterdam. dreamthinkspeak.

*The Booger Dance*, 2011. Guest Projects Gallery, London. Adam James.

*Trial of the Mariner*, 2011. Hoxton Hall, London. LOTOS Collective.

*The Rest Is Silence*, 2012, Brighton Festival / LIFT / The Royal Shakespeare Company. Brighton and London. dreamthinkspeak.

*Mudhead Dance*, 2013. Performance and film. V22's Summer Club. Adam James.

*Ravens*, 2013. Touring theatre production, Kent. Sabotage Theatre Company.

*Oller Oller*, 2014. Open Forest, Jerwood Gallery. Adam James.

*Owlers*, 2014. Church of St Mary, Lydden. Sabotage Theatre Company.

*Montfort's March*, 2014. Site-specific theatre production, Lewes. The Company.

*Wasteland Rituals*, 2014. Performances, London. Adam James.

*Cyrano*, 2015. Weald & Downland Museum. The Company.

## **Participation in costume and movement workshops**

*Somatic Movement & Costume Workshops*, 2015. Sally E. Dean conceived in collaboration with costume designers Sandra Arrònz Lacunza and Carolina Rieckhof. Siobhan Davies Studio and Clarence Mews Studio, London.

*Objects and movement physical workshop*, 2015. Cornelia Krafft. London College of Fashion.

*Wearing Space*, June 2015. Donatella Barbieri in collaboration with Giulia Pecorari and Mary Kate Connolly, London College of Fashion.

*Somatic Movement & Costume Workshop*, 2017. Sally E. Dean. Wellcome Trust, London.

*Improvisation and movement workshop*, 2018. Thomas Kampe. Siobhan Davies Studio, London.

*Imaginative Embodiment: Michael Chekhov and Jacques Lecoq*, 2018. Cass Fleming and Amy Russell. Goldsmiths University, London.

*BETWIXT Duo, costume and movement project, 2018.* Sally E. Dean and Charlotte Østergaard. Goldsmiths University, London.

28 April 2018

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1.00 Welcome

1.20 Thank you for coming to this afternoon's session,

Reminder:

Consent forms

We will be up and do things in a moment

But first, I would like to introduce today's Costume Process and Movement Workshop and to give you some background.

You know me as costume tutor. I will tell you a bit more about my practice;

I did my MA in Costume for performance at London College of Fashion;

That is where I first experience using the body and the interaction with material, object and space, in the shared space of the workshop, to develop costume design.

This has shaped my practice as costume designer, and now I am doing a research on body movement and costume design.

As part of this, I have been developing a creative method based on body movement of making costume; The method is for creative practitioners and performance artists like yourselves.

Today is an opportunity to experiment with the method I am developing and to give you a space to interact with movement of mask-making and with the materiality of costume.

I will get you to do the first exercise in a moment but first, in order to connect as a group, I will ask you to do 2 things:

No1, I will ask you to give us a sentence on your background, what you are interested in at the moment;

No2, if you can imagine, what is it that you would like to have at the end of the costume process and movement workshop, something that would benefit you and your practice;

Great thank you.

1<sup>st</sup> participant...

over to 2nd participant...

.....

On body-mask

I use body-mask as a prompt:

To shift the focus from the interior and from the individual onto the body (as a kind of process of anonymity);

To give way to the creative process of the body with materials.

The body-mask gives permission to play and to experiment

.....

The workshop will be filmed – start time and kew (clap)

I might also draw in the course of the session

Carry on with what you are doing as much as possible.

.....

Now, to introduce the 1<sup>st</sup> task, which we will do in a moment,

Susan Kozel

I will tell you a bit about a practitioner that I find inspiring, Susan Kozel, dance practitioner who writes about her experiences in a way that focuses on her body sensations.

To do this she places herself at the centre of the experience, of a place, for example, a stage, a park, workshop.

What inspires me in her practice particularly:

*using my hand and fingers: 1, 2*

The first thing is, the way she places herself at the centre of the description of her experience;

the second thing is, the way her approach means that she talks about her experiences in a sensory way;

Her use of a sensory language to record and define tactile and haptic physical experiences

She actively describes what she feels in a very verbal and creative and sensory way, through writing.

for example, listing words that come to her, instead of formulating a text.

.....

Show set-up of the workshop

A table each to make

The space for movement – tapes on the floor for filming

The table is also where you can come to write and draw.

.....

1.20 Automatic Writing

1.30 In a moment I will invite you to write and I will give you a starting point to begin your writing.

Find a space to write, to sit and get ready;

Automatic writing;

What I mean by that is the action of putting a pen on a page and start writing, whatever comes to your heart and mind;

Continuously write, don't stop;

If you feel like stopping, you write 'I feel like stopping' and you carry on writing. You will write for about 2 or 3 minutes.

Here is what I will use to indicate that the writing is finished.

You can change to something else once you have started, it is up to you, what come to you, you write: imagery, creative ideas, memories, impulses, what comes to you, you write.

You can now start with '*When I create...*'

2/3 minutes later:

Take a moment to complete you sentence.

*'Rattle'*

Great thank you.

Now turn your page over, ready for the next time.

.....

1.30 Warm-ups

1.45 Lets put the chairs away and make maximum room in the centre;

Please come to the centre;

*After people have got ready and join the centre:*

Are you ready to move?

Lets start with some breathing;

Move your shoulders, one at the time, roll, change direction,  
Soften your neck;

Shrug – and let it all go, *repeat..*

Great thank you,

Now I am going to ask you to walk in the space, any direction,  
for no good reason;

Keep breathing  
Great, thank you;

And now allow yourselves to find a space to stop

Now let me invite you to stretch into the space following the contours of the room, the walls, floor ceiling, corners,

Follow lines, shapes, planes, contours, in the room;

Well done, thank you,

We are a little bit warmed up?

Next I would like to invite you to explore directions,

Explore the horizontal in the space;

Move through the room;

Now the vertical, move in the space

Now for the diagonal;

upwards diagonal;

the diagonal that goes downwards

Move everywhere you like exploring the diagonal;

Great thank you everyone.

Do you feel connected enough?

.....

1.45 Task: Material experience

2.10 And now we are going to explore material; cardboard

*Guide them to the materials and reveal*

Choose a piece;

First explore your object;

Just take a moment to feel its weight, shape;

Good.

Now start exploring with your touch;

Great.

Now do the same with your eyes close;

Now walk to each other and tell each other about your experience;

Thank you,

*Saying 'excuse me if I interrupt'.*

What happens if you move your object on your body?

Curves follow the contours of your body with the object,

Follow the direction of your object.

Great.

And lets have a little look at this now.

(Name1), come to the centre, I am now inviting you to explore the material in the space, using the space, close your eyes,

We will create a safe space around you;

(Name1), do movements.

Bring it to stillness, breath, and open your eyes.

Great.

Now (Name2),, come to the centre; we will create a safe space around you, for you to do the same as before, exploring your movement, this time with your eyes close

*Encourage them to take more space;*

Any other move you want to make?

Complete your movement; blink; open your eyes;

just bring this to completion, for now.

Great thank you.

Lets take the cardboard back.

.....

2.10 Task: Body-mask making – wallpaper

2.40 Next we are going to explore movements of making a body-mask and materials

*Guide them to the materials*

Demonstrate parts: ‘Y’, and assembling

Demonstrate volume making

Demonstrate how to insert and take out

*Use of safety pins and zip ties to secure to body –  
Me to help*

*Ask: more explanation?*

Give them wallpaper pieces

Explore positioning, re-positioning ‘Y’ shapes  
Place and move elements on your body

Between movement of making  
Experience the object in making on the body and in the space

Carry on adding and expanding

*Key words: making, un-making, assembling, putting on and wearing the object in making*

*Materials – elements – components – parts*

*Connectors –*

*Frame – structure – skeleton – exoskeleton*

*Inner – outer – skin – detailing – clay*

HEALTH and SAFETY

Move in the space with object, in a way to feels right and safe for you.

.....

2.40 Automatic Writing

2.45 Invite to write in automatic writing on their experience, a phrase, a paragraph a story

You can draw as well if you want;

Any imagery, creative ideas, memories, impulses, what comes to you, you write.

For 2 or 3 minutes.

Thank you.

.....

2.45 Break

3.00

.....

3.00 Task: Costume making – Foam 1

3.45 Next we are going to explore movements of making and materials  
*Guide them to the materials*

This exercise is about exploring making movement through the bodily engagement with materials in the space;

Demonstrate parts: 'Y', 'O' and assembling  
Demonstrate volume making

Thank you, *get back, pass on*

Demonstrate the elastic harnesses  
Thank you, *get back, pass on*

*Use of safety pins and zip ties to secure to body –  
Me to help*

*Ask: more explanation?*

Invite participants to put elastics on their body

*Harnesses will get used in this exercise and the following one*

Give them foam pieces

HEALTH and SAFETY

Move in the space with object, in a way to feels right and safe for you.

*Key words: making, un-making, assembling, putting on and wearing the object in making*

*Materials – elements – components – parts*

*Connectors –*

*Frame – structure – skeleton – exoskeleton*

*Inner – outer – skin – detailing – clay*

With your body,  
Explore positioning, re-positioning foam shapes  
Place and move elements on your body

*Use of safety pins and zip ties to secure to body –  
Me to help*

Between movement of making  
Experience the object in making on the body and in the space

Carry on adding and expanding

Explore positioning, re-positioning,

*Ask questions to participants:*

*On the from in development and movement*

*On materials: resistance of materials, force, how is the body reacting to the materials*

*Repeat what the say*

*Invite to enlarge – go larger – move in the space – make bigger movement – extend – expand*

*Take more space – move – stretch – bend – grow*

*Replace – discard*

*Engage a verbal exchange*

*Sustain the flow throughout*

Bring to an end by asking participants to complete their development

Invite participant to take off their costume - keep elastics on

Recap

.....

3.45 Task: Costume making – Foam 2

4.45 Do again the construction;

bring the experimentation to another level;

Once participants have constructed a new structure:

Introduce participants to more materials and tools i.e. wool, silk, hook, scissor

Demonstrate how to attach materials to foam structure

Invite participants to help each other

*Key words: making, un-making, assembling, putting on and wearing the object in making*

*Materials – elements – components – parts*

*Connectors –*

*Frame – structure – skeleton – exoskeleton*

*Inner – outer – skin – detailing – clay*

With your body, explore positioning, re-positioning,  
Place and move elements on your body, between movement of making  
Experience the object in making on the body

Carry on adding and expanding

Explore positioning, re-positioning,

*ask questions to participants:*

*On the form in development and movement*

*On materials: resistance of materials, force, how is the body reacting to the materials*

*repeat what they say*

*Invite to enlarge – go larger – move in the space – make bigger movement – extend – expand*

*Take more space – move – stretch – bend – grow*

*Replace – discard*

*Verbal exchange*

*Sustain the flow*

Bring to an end by asking participants to complete their development

Invite participants to take off their costume

Recap,

Thank you,

Invite to take all parts off.

.....

4.45 Wrap up –

Exchange on the experience,

*Verbal open questions:*

Might you see this experience helping your practice?

How?

What difficulties, if any, did you encounter?

What would encourage you to attempt to incorporate movement of costume-making into your current artistic practice?

Hand out questionnaire

Thank you

5.00 End.

Appendix B Table 2: *Laboratoire 2*, Fragment 1

E. Lewis's Movement-Wearable Making		B. Fortin's Movement-Wearable Making	
Step 1	Enters the space; First experience of <i>Movement-Wearable Making</i> ;	First experience of industrial felt and of making movement-wearables in a <i>laboratoire</i> setting;	I enter the space; First experience of <i>Movement-Wearable Making</i> in a <i>laboratoire</i> setting with one co-participant;
Step 2	Starts to make from felt segments;	Assembles with care; does not anticipate felt materiality and how it changes;	I start to make from felt segments;
Step 3	Interruption of movement when materials fall off the body;	Introduces a pause in actions;	Interruption of my movement when materials fall off Lewis's body.
Step 4	Actions prompted by interruption of movement;	Picks up segments; Attaches to same segment as before or to different parts of the assemblage on her body;	My actions are prompted by interruption in Lewis's actions;
Step 5	Moves from the bodily experience of making with felt;	Material changes exposed from interaction with the body, i.e. material weighs on, stretches and slides down and off the body.	Enhancement of my bodily experience of felt;
Step 6	Moves in response to the assemblage on the body;	Bends and twists around felt assemblage; moves to experience changes of felt until assemblage comes apart and segments fall off;	Flow of interactions: I move from the impulse to interfere with felt;
Step 7	Repetition of movement;	Responds to interaction/experience of felt assemblage, i.e. response to the material movement, behavior and change.	Reciprocity of my body to Lewis's repeated movement is sustained as I repeat movement;
Step 8	Body expansion and extended movement through recursive making actions;	Prompts felt material to display new arrangements in succession;	My movements expand and extend through recursive making actions;
Step 9	Increases pace of extended movement.	Expansion of actions by, i.e. picking up felt, bending down and twisting the body around materials – sustains wearing of felt arrangement.	Increased pace of my movements engenders the expansion of my actions, i.e. picking up felt, bending down and twisting my body around materials: Movement originates from the impulse to maintain haptic contact with felt by wearing.
			First experience of simultaneously making movement-wearables with a movement-practitioner choreographer;
			Instinctive assembling movement: My body anticipates felt materiality and how it changes;
			Initiation of new body movement with felt.
			Change in flow of making from felt materials; I attach materials to different parts of assemblage on my body; I make new sections of assemblage on my body; I move with the assemblage in the space;
			Enhanced engagement with material change exposed from interaction: My movement opens to felt; how felt changing, i.e. felt weighs on, stretches and slides down and off the body;
			I use my whole body to maintain the physical contact with felt;
			Expansion of my movement; New experience of felt;
			I experience the performative quality of felt;
			From the increased pace of movement, more bending with felt arrangement on my body occurred; sensations prompt my actions – sustain the haptic experience of felt.

Research working title: Material embodiment: The centrality of moving body in performance

Researcher: Berthe Fortin, London College of Fashion  
[b.fortin1@fashion.arts.ac.uk](mailto:b.fortin1@fashion.arts.ac.uk)

Supervisors: Donatella Barbieri, Ian King, London College of Fashion

Point of contact: Donatella Barbieri, Director of studies

You are invited to take part in a research study on the creative agency of costume making in performance. Please take time to read the following information on why the research is being done and what it will involve before you decide whether or not to take part.

The study:

This study focuses on the process of making costume-based artefacts using bodily movement and materiality as originator for performance creation. The aims of this study are to advance the centrality of costume in performance creation and to create a material-based costume devising method for the development of performance practice.

The research study I am carrying out will include participatory workshops for the making of artefacts, which will be filmed and photographed, and with my thesis will form a final presentation. Workshops will take place at UAL.

You will be involved through active participation in the creative process of making wearable artefacts during a workshop session. As part of the process you will be asked to try out the artefact you will be making and to perform simple movements. The process that will take place will not result in the completion of artefacts. The session you are invited to participate on will last 4 hours. During the sessions you will be invited to comment on your experience of the process.

As researcher, conservator and guardian, I will be responsible for all material that will be produced during workshops including made objects, notes, drawings and recordings of discussions. I, the researcher, will own the IP of all materials produced during workshops. All material will be kept in a secure place provided by me and accompanied with documentation on their confidentiality. After the final presentation of the research project, artefacts and hard copies will be digitally photographed or scanned. The digital versions will be stored and their access limited by encryption to ensure that their confidentiality is maintained. I will dispose of all hard copies personally.

I will have use of all the material produced in the workshops for research purposes during this research project and beyond. In the eventuality that any artefacts or related artworks could be used by me for events or exhibitions other than the research final presentation, the permission will be required from the researcher.

The session will be recorded by filming, voice recording and/or photographs for the use of this research project. Participants will be recognised on film and photographs. Any artefacts and related artworks will be produced for the purpose of this research and be the researcher's property. Participants will be credited in the research.

#### Your voluntary participation

As student/practitioner from outside UAL, you have been invited to take part in this study on costume design and performance. 2 to 3 people will be asked to participate. To take part you need to be 18 years of age or over.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be asked to keep a copy of this information sheet and to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

As a student, by choosing to either take part or not take part in this study will have no impact on your marks, assessments or future studies.

**To be completed by the participant (participant must be 18 years of age or over).**

Please cross out as necessary

- I have read and understood the participant information YES / NO
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study YES / NO
- All my questions have been answered satisfactorily YES / NO
- I have received enough information about the study YES / NO
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study:
  - at any time YES / NO
  - without having to give a reason YES / NO
- I agree to take part in the study YES / NO

Signature of the Participant:

Date:

Name (in block capitals)

I have explained the study to the above participant and he/she has agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher

Date:

Workshop 28.4.18 – Thoughts written during workshop with Helle Tviberg

After the introduction, before the first making task – a short automatic writing task was given:

When I create I feel that something is bleeding all over the earth and sky and I want to feel what's under growing in the rocks and dirty fingernails like crescent moons pointing up shouting 'IT'S OK!' and 'CAN YOU HEAR IT?' like the roaring of a waterfall it comes closer now with breath on tiny frond-like flowers in white is this what we take ourselves away from? So small and so delicate with little fangs.

After wallpaper task:

One shape =nucleus for these: (*Helle's pencil outline drawing of a triangle segments*)

Costume:

Messy knotty centre. Something being protected, but is the 'armour' unsure of its function?

The tail, since so long, must be for balance.

At the end of the workshop, after last task with foam:

Weight of fabric does not necessarily match 'weight' (heaviness or lightness) of movement.

Foam: cocoon-like; reminded me of a Venus flytrap, drilling me into submission /disintegration into the material.

Adding multiple materials brought me back a sense of self; perhaps because the extra materials felt and looked more 'other', less skin-like?

Workshop 28.4.18 – Thoughts written during workshop with Crystal Bennett

After the introduction, before the first making task – a short automatic writing task was given:

When I create, I look I feel, I see things in a way that makes me pay attention. I pay attention, to objects, to feelings. I look. I smell. I create from a body, my body. I move as I feel, as I look. Things come to mind – things I didn't know I thought about, an idea that has been there since childhood. I am a child in creation.

After wallpaper task:

'A bird – lizard – bug from outer space; she is a predator who can twist her exoskeletal (sync) body in multiple directions at the same time.

At the end of the workshop, after last task with foam:

'Playing, exploring, moving. How does foam move? What is its sound? How can I translate its softness, its 'foamness'?

Challenging the body, forcing it into a relationship with the material. Placing paper on my body and seeing how it moves. Do I move the paper? Does the paper move me?

Lastly, finding shapes. Circular movement versus linear /straight movement. A circle on my body tells my body to move accordingly. A line on my body constricts my movement. I am no longer human body, I am material.

Costume Process and Movement Workshop with Helle Tviberg  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2018, 1pm to 5pm, Goldsmiths University

### **Questionnaire**

#### 1. The introduction: was it clear? was it helpful? Please expand

It was made clear from the outset what the workshop would involve and that we were free to experiment and interpret within the task /materials.

#### 2. 'Costume making and movement with materials' task: please expand on the following 2 questions

##### a. Was the setting of the task clear?

Very clear. I understood what the task was, yet felt supported and encouraged to incorporate ideas on the making of the costumes without impediment. The result was that it felt very imagination-led, which was great.

##### b. Was the task of interest to you as a practitioner?

Very much so – it gave me ideas on the 'characters' that costume materials might embody, that the costume takes on an identity of its own, distinct from the wearer.

#### 3. What difficulties, if any, did you encounter?

Finding variations in movement – I think I allowed myself to sometimes become stuck in one movement or idea.

#### 4. What addition might you suggest I make?

Maybe an element that focuses on sound and texture with a microphone, to see what effects/ ideas might come up? But overall the workshop experience was varied and enjoyable.

#### 5. Anything else you would like to add

I really liked how each set of materials remained covered up until we came to use them. It added an element of intrigue and kept us focused on one task at a time.

Costume Process and Movement Workshop with Crystal Bennett  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2018, 1pm to 5pm, Goldsmiths University

### **Questionnaire**

1. The introduction: was it clear? was it helpful? Please expand

Very clear and concise. An introduction by the researcher on the background and interests, and detailed description on what we were meant to explore in the workshop.

2. 'Costume making and movement with materials' task: please expand on the following 2 questions

a. Was the setting of the task clear?

Very clear. Objects facilitated the understanding and execution of the tasks.

b. Was the task of interest to you as a practitioner?

Yes absolutely. Materiality and movement are two things that interest me artistically.

3. What difficulties, if any, did you encounter?

No difficulties, other than handling the objects, which was part of the task anyway.

4. What addition might you suggest I make?

Maybe try and further investigate how a material might sound, see how that can be investigated through costume making, if possible /relevant.

5. Anything else you would like to add

This was a very well structured and executed workshop, and the duration was fitting. It was very physical, which I loved, and it facilitated practitioners whose skills in costume making might not be as developed. Costume making and crafting seems fun and perfectly possible for me to have a go at after completing this workshop. Good use of time, I didn't feel rushed, nor bored.

Costume Process and Movement Workshop with Elinor Lewis  
13<sup>rd</sup> September 2019, 10am to 4pm, Goldsmiths University

### **Questionnaire**

#### 1. The introduction: was it clear? was it helpful?

Yes, quite clear but still preserved an element of mystery surrounding exactly what form of movement experiment would be taking place. Definitely piqued my curiosity.

#### 2. 'Costume making and movement with materials' task: please expand on the following 4 questions

##### a. Was the setting of the task clear?

Yes, really clear without giving away everything that was going to happen – which I think was an important balance to maintain.

##### b. Was the task of interest to you as a practitioner?

Yes, I work almost exclusively with unanimate objects. I found working with the material really creatively stimulating – especially for generating new movement.

##### c. How did you find the experience of engaging in movement of costume making with materials

Really interesting, I liked the functionality of movement when weaving out costumes – functional and industrious – I also liked the switch in focus when we fully inhabited our creations – how characters started to bloom from the way our bodies moved and adjusted within the physical limitations of the costumes.

##### d. Might you see this experience helping your practice? How?

This research definitely peaked my interest and made me want to work with stiff fabric in the future.

##### e. What would encourage you to attempt to incorporate movement of costume making into your current artistic practice?

Definitely actively liked this workshop. It highlighted to me the elaborate functionality of our movements whilst making.

#### 3. What difficulties, if any, did you encounter?

At first I found it slightly frustrating that my creation would slowly melt off my body. But soon came to appreciate the beauty of the fragility of the textile we wove.

4. What addition might you suggest I make?

As discussed, I would suggest maybe stitching some of the fabric building bracket to the undergarments – so there is a base to build the creations from.

5. Anything else you would like to add

Genuinely a pleasure working with you so creatively stimulating. I would love more time to delve deeper into this with. Thank you for sharing your creative practice with me. You've created something genuinely innovative and the delicacy of your work is beautiful to witness.

23.9.19

Elinor

Lewis

Questions following the costume movement workshop (13.9.19)

1. On engaging in movement of costume making with materials:

a. What does the assembling of felt parts on the body (first and second exercises) feel like?

-I felt engaged and quietly industrious. Consumed by trying to achieve the design I had in my head.

-This gave way to moments of frustration, when the pieces failed to stay knitted together.

-After a while I came to enjoy the fragility of designs I made. The way that my designs spontaneously fell apart inspired me to move in different ways.

-Overall I felt inspired to make & explore how my creations made me move.

b. What does the assembling of foam parts on the body (last of 3 exercises) feel like?

-There was something very flesh-like about the material which I found interesting. This influenced the way I moved- I enjoyed doing small vibratory movements that made the material quiver.

-Because my creations were more sturdy with this material, I was way more confident and ambitious with my designs.

-Overall I felt inspired to design, make & move in new ways to see how the material reacted to my movements.

2. How did you experience the transition in the actions of costume making and wearing from using felt parts to using foam parts for the last exercise?

The transition felt like a natural evolution. I was interested in the different qualities of the material & the different ways they influenced my body to move.

3. On the response of your actions to the materials (for example, slowing down your displacement), how did materials affect your movement? How did you experience the encounter of materials in your body? Can you develop on what made you do the movement you did?

-The woollen material was heavy and bulky. Because of this, at some points I felt like I had an exoskeleton or was a player from a Kabuki production. It made me walk with a wide-legged gait.

-Working with the woollen material also made my movement considered and quite gentle at first. I was conscious on not destroying my creations which made me careful in my actions.

-There was something about the weight of the woollen material that influenced me to sink low to the floor. I was imagining being coated by layers of algae & tried to reflect this by rippling the material from a laying down position.

-The foam material was bizarre, flesh-like, almost like thick ham and when you moved it, it jiggled pleasingly. The way it reacted like this influenced the way I moved greatly. I was interested in seeing/feeling what happened to the material when it was vibrated.  
-As I responded to the material, I came to think of myself as a fleshy, half-formed microorganism or one of the aliens from the 1980s film 'The Thing'. This influenced my movement, making it more stilted and lumbering with prolonged periods of twitches.

4. What did the activities of costume making with materials made you do that you don't do when you explore materials through movement?

-It made me fully engage with the materiality of the object, so that the material became an extension of my own body, rather than something I was using.