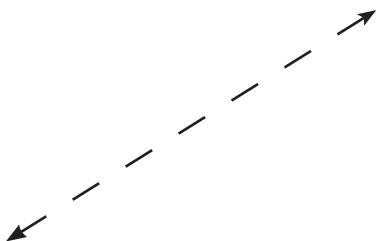
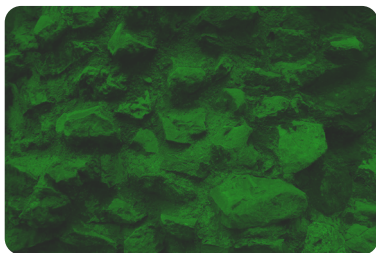
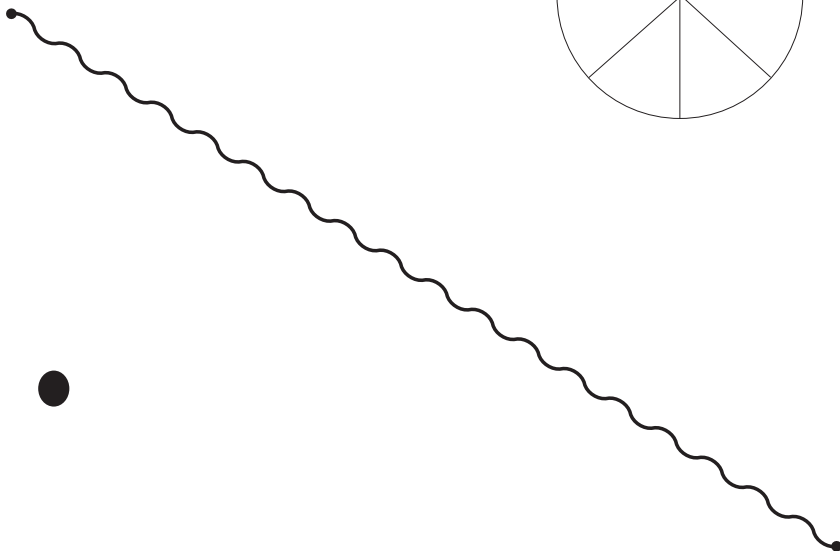
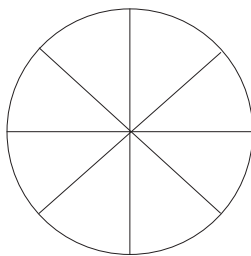


Performance Pedagogy Toolkit

An Approach for the Art School

Richard Allen

Climate Justice Cards
Scene Bank
Collaborative Tutorial Templates
Site-Specific Pedagogy Map
Creative Research Manifesto



The Set-Up



Context and Scope

This toolkit has been developed as part of an Educational Enhancement Award from UAL that emerges from the establishment of a School of Performance at Wimbledon College of Arts. Wimbledon has a long tradition of performance design disciplines and performance art making that has emerged alongside fine art practices since its origins as an art school in 1930. In 2018, the school of performance introduced acting, theatre and performance making into the art school context. What follows is informed by a rethinking of performance pedagogy through this lens, exploring the potential of performance as a concept and action for learning and teaching that can be applied across disciplines and contexts of educational theory and practice.

Art school pedagogy, with an emphasis on finding out through making, offers an ethos and approach that traverses and slips between conventional and well established pedagogical modes of teaching performance. The two most established models are that of the conservatoire, a colonial configuration that seeks to preserve hierarchies and practices (with gestures towards the experimental to keep it othered) and the drama degree, that seeks to study theatre and performance as an object rather than a thing done (with gestures towards practice as illustrations or etudes). In constructing - and thinking through- this tool kit, I intend to circumnavigate these conventional models by centring the art school as the pedagogical ground.

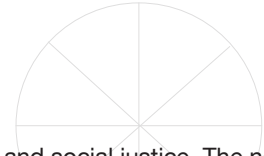
The conceptual and theoretical foundation

of the toolkit is two fold. Firstly, to centre (or introduce) a collaboration with the nonhuman in student practice to enable environmental and climate consciousness to be embedded in curriculum design. Secondly, to deconstruct the existing hierarchies of performance practices and rethink the canon of texts, techniques and practices used in pedagogical structures. It is hoped that these foundations become apparent through encountering and using the tools themselves. The critical frameworks of these positions are unpacked throughout and can be extended further through the bibliography at the end.

Using the Tools

The tools are intended as interventions and enhancements to existing pedagogical and course structures and not a guide or curriculum. The tools are invitations. They are intended for use in the art school, a space that centres studio practice as the core mode of learning and teaching, but can be adapted in any context. The tools are framed around performance as a live action and encounter and not a discipline. In this respect, the tools can be used across disciplinary boundaries. They are for designers, directors, actors, sound artists, painters, writers, sculptors, performance artists and those who reject or embrace disciplinary divides. In this respect, the toolkit is an attempt at a non-hierarchical pedagogy.

The word 'tool' is presented here as a device to apply to something pre-existing. This might be a problem of practice (practical, creative, conceptual) but also ethical, political and questions of climate



and social justice. The notion of the 'tool' in this context is not intended to 'fix' these things but to create a shift in focus and ethos in the way that critical and creative problems are worked on and evolved in student work and subsequently how performance education might be evolved.

Towards a Pedagogy of Educated Hope

The word 'hope' is central to educational philosophy and critical (and post-critical) pedagogy, but its identification in practice is oblique and subjective. The foundation of a politically active and critical pedagogy can still be founded on the intention towards cultivating belief in hope for change and progress, particularly around climate and social justice. Central to realising this is the centering of student agency, not only through what they make and what they choose to make about but also in how their education is structured and evolved. As Henry Giroux states, "any viable politics of educated hope must tap into individual experiences while at the same time linking individual responsibility with a progressive sense of social agency." (2023:143). Art School pedagogies have

long instilled this as a fundamental principle of art education and when successfully implemented through the ethos and pedagogical structures, it can provide the ground for hope. John Smyth goes further by advocating for "students as activists in their own learning" (2011:59) by establishing a process that enables students to name or recognise an issue or injustice and creating space for that to become central to their learning/investigation of that issue. This approach, Smyth claims, leads to enhanced student agency and transforms activism as a verb rather than a gestural noun.

These two fundamental ideas - the creation of student agency and for students as activists in their own learning - provide the foundation of how these tools are structured. They are intended to make space for positions and responses that are unthought at the outset by the tutor and bring viewpoints, ways of looking and diversification of experienced into the pedagogic space, reframing discussions and perspectives, particularly around the challenges and fears of climate breakdown, and the possible futures afforded by hope.

I hope, as an ontological need, demands
an anchoring in practice

Paulo Freire

Aims of the

To encourage reflection on
political and aesthetic theory
particularly around principles of
justice

To propose how adaptations
hope in student practice in
emergent

To think through notions of
to embrace new material
sustainable

The Toolkit

on how practice can enable
thinking in student work,
principles of climate and social
justice.

s to pedagogy might nurture
in the context of the climate
emergency.


of non-human collaboration
abilities of making for more
the practices.

The Tools




Climate Justice Cards

The Climate Justice Cards are short sharp interventions that can be incorporated into studio sessions or attached to more extended project briefs as a way of playfully introducing and engaging with the nonhuman, environments and climate consciousness without climate justice and impact becoming a 'topic' within work. As well as engaging directly with the context and scale of climate, they also encourage positionality relating to a diverse range of perspectives that originate from student agency and viewpoints.




Scene Bank

A thematic 'Scene Bank' is a tool to tackle the narrow cultural persistence of canonical texts in theatre and performance making. Involving staff and students in its creation, a scene bank (both physical and digital) is built by grouping a taxonomy of thematic materials (ghost scenes, fight scenes, street scenes, love scenes etc.) together, rather than organising it by place of origin, author or cultural context. This reconfiguration flattens the hierarchy and the othering of sources so that texts can be searched by thematic content rather than cultural origin. The intention is to grow a diverse and wide ranging form of texts and sources for students to work with that both recognises the traditional 'canon' of texts, whilst also expanding and contextualising this in relation to other less represented texts and sources. The tool includes an example of one of the scene types - ghost scenes - with how students have used the concept to diversify and create their work and understanding of how scenes function in both dramatic, postdramatic and performance making contexts.



Collaborative Tutorial Templates

The Collaborative Tutorial Templates are ways of facilitating tutorials in collaborative groups, encouraging cross-group dialogue, peer feedback and reflection as a means to nurture an understanding of positionality and diversity when working together. The templates are playful in their approach to alleviate atmospheres of group tension (or to expand group harmony), to sidestep the tutorial as a place of judgement or a context that encourages competitive position. The templates move towards the collaborative tutorial as an inclusive space that builds confidence and an understanding of other disciplines and perspectives.





Site-Specific Pedagogy Map

The Site-Specific Pedagogy Map is a supplementary fold out that offers six pedagogical exercises which can be used as a basis for short tasks or, with adaptation, whole project briefs for larger performances, productions or artworks. The exercises are based on six of Mike Pearson's approaches to the 'visitation' of a site and how that site might be excavated for cultural, political and historical artefacts to be brought back to the studio. The map reanimates ideas and approaches from Pearson's seminal book *Site-Specific Performance* (2010) and considers its after effects and impact in a contemporary context.

Creative Research Manifesto

The toolkit concludes with a Creative Research Manifesto presented as a playful set of provocations that challenges the common separation of theory and practice in student work. Polemics and positions are taken to argue towards an embedded approach of thinking and making that scaffolds rigorous research through a creative process.

This toolkit is the result of many collaborations. The exercises and tasks in have been developed and tested with students and colleagues from Wimbledon College of Art, particularly students and staff on the BA Contemporary Theatre and Performance course. In this respect the authorship is shared with everyone who has engaged with the learning and teaching involved in its development.

The toolkit is part of a process and not an endpoint.

Applying the Tools : Keywords

The tools have been designed and developed to engage with UAL principles of climate, racial and social justice and can be read alongside the framework for embedding the key principles adopted by the University.

Each exercise or tool contains keywords mapped to the principle that it engages with. It is hoped that the keywords can help the selection of tools or exercises that relate to the principle that a course team or tutor wishes to work on.

The tools and exercises engage both directly and indirectly with these principles, both at a macro level in terms of the shift of ethos and perspectives and at a micro level in terms of direct engagement with the themes and ideas that can lead pedagogy and practice.

The keywords are taken from page 25 of the UAL Embedding Climate, Racial and Social Justice Framework for Course Teams.

The principles and keywords are:

1. Move with urgency to become a community that has the capabilities to address the social, racial and environmental injustices of climate emergency using creativity and resourcefulness. We offer hope through action, committing to the decolonisation and decarbonisation of our education and creative practices.

Keywords: decolonisation, decarbonisation

2. Cultivate systems thinking and practices that meaningfully acknowledge the interconnections and complexity of life on earth.

Keywords: systems thinking, complexity

3. Design for human equity, social and racial justice by mobilising critical thinking, humbly questioning the norms, practices and biases embedded in our societies and cultures.

We recognise and reflect on our individual actions and societal values through self-awareness and reflective practice.

Keywords: social justice, racial justice

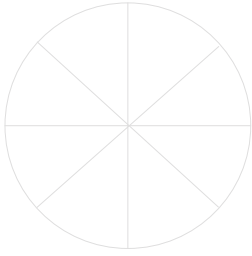
4. Foster futures thinking to design for possible futures that restore and regenerate, unleashing the power of imagination through participatory and speculative methods.

Keywords: futures thinking, participatory methods, speculative methods

5. Accelerate activism and advocacy by participating in co-creation and actions that realise change in solidarity with those within and outside of our community. We advocate for justice for nature and humanity through our creative practices.

Keywords: activism, advocacy, co-creation, nature





Cloudbusting

AIM

This task is designed to encourage deep listening to an environment and how this can be used to make a piece of work.

DURATION

20 Minutes (minimum)
10 minutes of listening and 10 minutes reflection.

INSTRUCTIONS

Find an outside space that has a sonic environment you find engaging. This could be a park, a beach, an urban landscape or so on. Close your eyes and spend at least 10 minutes listening closely to the space.

When you have finished, describe what you have heard. Share with others if you have done the exercise collectively.

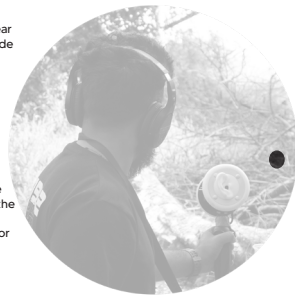
1. What materials could you hear in the space, what was it made out of?
2. What are the material relationships of sound you could hear? (textures, lines, dimensions, scale)?
3. What was the relationship between the sounds?
4. Who was using the space (humans/animals)?
5. How would you describe the atmospheres or climates of the space through sound?
6. How did the sound capture or contain movement?

ADAPTATIONS

This task can be extended in sound/ audio projects through the use of listening with different microphones that extend the reach of the human ear. Contact microphones can amplify the sounds of surfaces or objects, hydrophones can listen underwater, binaural microphones can amplify and mimic the range of the human ear.

QUESTIONS

- Can the observations of the sonic environment instigate a making process of a character, costume, environment design?
- How might an awareness of a changing soundscape or context inform the way performance or art making might happen in relation to the space or context?



speculative methods | nature

AIM

To light a scene, so only using the sun.

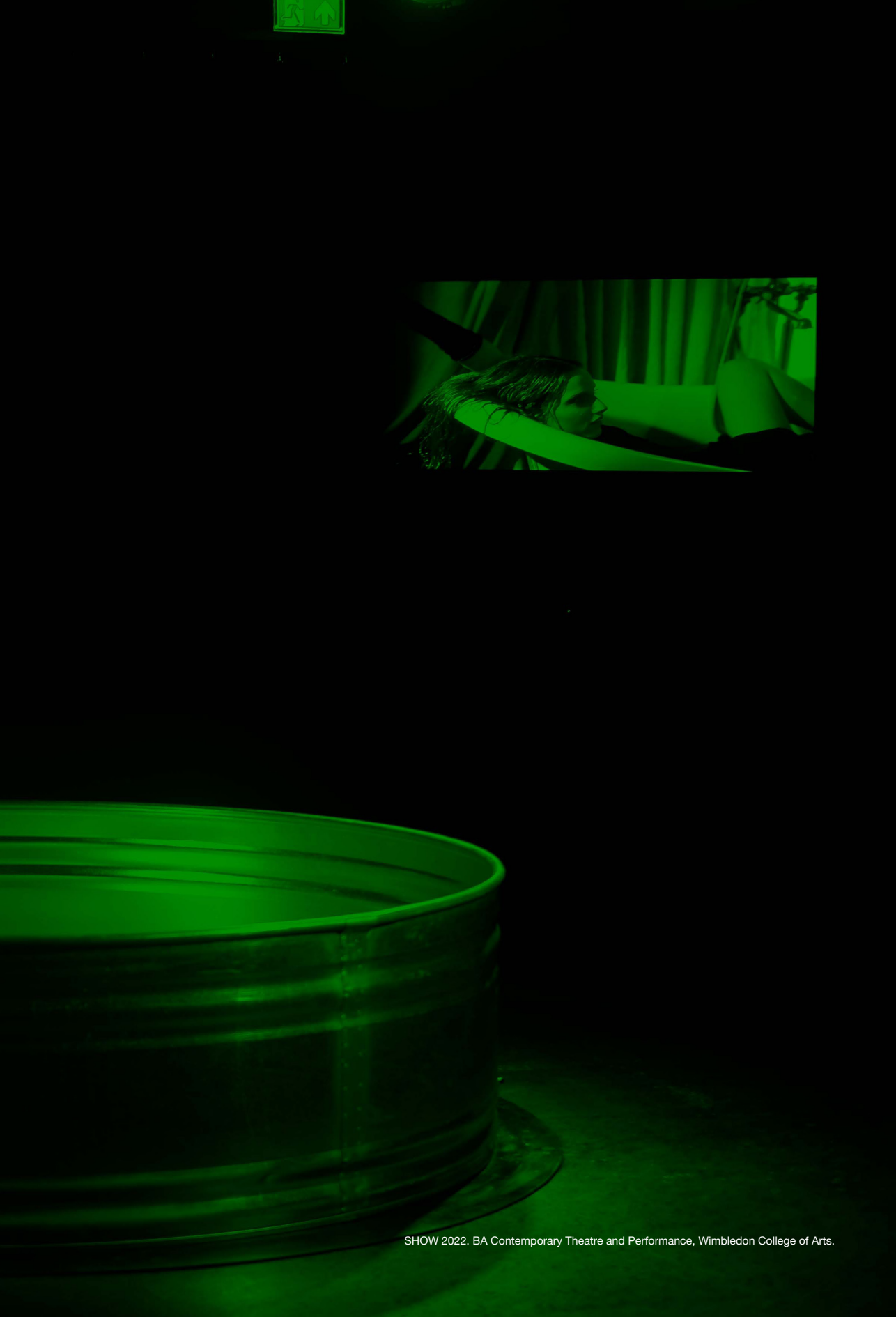
DURATION

Variable. Suggested week long task or structured within a

INSTRUCTIONS

Select a scene, scene from your current project might be an image, text, a set of movement choreographies, a costume is placed, a figure you are performing must be a sequence you select. Plan out how to light using the sun. This at a certain time of outside. Consider the quality of light, refractions, heat, fr Respond to these choreography of the Film or photograph sequence (use time phone if necessary to your peers.





The Girl Chewing Gum

AIM

To develop awareness and practices of looking in relation to a landscape, environment or community.

DURATION

1 week (set tasks for outside of studio time)

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1

Watch: The Girl Chewing Gum (1979) by John Smith.

Read: Quotes concerning The Girl Chewing Gum (1979) on johnsmithfilms.com

Watch: The Man Phoning Mum (Extract) 2011 by John Smith.

Read: Quotes concerning The Man Phoning Mum (2011) on johnsmithfilms.com

Listen: The Digital Human podcast episode 'On Illusion'.

Make notes on the key points and your observations made in relation to place and representation in these materials.

Step 2:

Select a location of your choosing. This could be a digital webcam or a 'real' location.

Observe it for 10 minutes and write down everything that happens as if it is a stage direction. Include animals, weather as well as people, things and texts. Take those stage directions and rewrite them so that you

interweave the real and the fictitious, create a story for your place based on those stage directions. How can you create a new sense of place?

Capture your new text/place and be ready to share with the group for a tutorial and feedback. This could be a film, a live reading (without image), sound or any other way you want to present the encounter.

ADAPTATIONS

This task can be directly related to a project, a character or figure study, or the basis of a piece of costume or theatre and performance design. A key element to this task is to explore the relationship between reality, representation, fictioning and the real.

QUESTIONS

- How might an environment or a site be animated, transformed or presented in your practice?
- What are the political and cultural potentials in working in this way?
- How might you use a process of close looking at an environment to inform the way you make your work?



The Gift

AIM

To consider and respect positionality and perspectives from within a peer group through an exchanging of gifts.

DURATION

Variable. This exercise could work as a single studio session (3 hours) or as a longer project if expanded.

INSTRUCTIONS

When you make a piece of theatre or performance you are engaged in an act of exchange: an exchange with collaborators, objects, environments and audiences. These exchanges take many forms, as invitations, provocations, texts, stories, and as gifts.

Select a gift that you would like to give to somebody in your group. You will not know who you are giving the gift to, so it should be something that means something to you. The gift can take any form, an object, a story, a song, a meal, a dance move, a playlist, a text. Can you teach someone to cook a recipe? or to play an instrument? Is there a special object or item of clothing that is significant to you?

Exchange the gifts between members of the group.

Using the gift you are given, make a performance/object/costume/drawing that responds to it to share with the group.

ADAPTATIONS

This exercise can be made specifically about perspectives on the climate emergency by relating the gift as a way of introducing a position, idea or question around the context. Like all of the exercises and tasks in the tool kit, this perspective is to be adapted and configured to the context and student group.

This initial task and sharing can be built upon and extended through the combining of gifts and perspectives to make a more expansive piece of work.

QUESTIONS

- How might the gesture and structure of gift giving enable and guide an ethos of practice within a course/group/project?
- How can a shared understanding of positions and foundations guide how individual and collaborative principles of making can be established?

A dramatic text	A collection	A found text
A memory/dream	A costume	A dance
A food	An object	A song/playlist

Cloudbusting

AIM

This task is designed to encourage deep listening to an environment and how this can be used to make a piece of work.

DURATION

20 Minutes (minimum)
10 minutes of listening and 10 minutes of reflection.

INSTRUCTIONS

Find an outside space that has a sonic environment you find engaging. This could be a park, a beach, an urban landscape or so on. Close your eyes and spend at least 10 minutes listening closely to the space.

When you have finished, describe what you have heard. Share this with the group.

1. What materials could you hear in the space, what was it made out of?
2. What were the material relationships of sound you could hear? (textures, lines, dimensions, scale)?
3. What was the relationship between the sounds?
4. Who was using the space (humans/animals)?
5. How would you describe the atmospheres or climates of the space through sound?
6. How did the sound capture or contain movement?

ADAPTATIONS

This task can be extended in sound/ audio projects through the use of listening with different microphones that extend the reach of the human ear. Contact microphones can amplify the sounds of surfaces or objects, hydrophones can listen underwater, binaural microphones can amplify and mimic the range of the human ear.

QUESTIONS

- Can the observations of the sonic environment instigate a making process of a character, costume, or environment design?
- How might an awareness of a changing soundscape or context inform the way performance or art making might happen in relation to the space or context?



LIGHTS!

AIM

To light a scene, scenario, or action only using the sun.

DURATION

Variable. Suggested as an overnight/ week long task or could be structured within a session.

INSTRUCTIONS

Select a scene, scenario or action from your current practice. This might be an image from a play text, a set of movements or choreographies, a scene in which a costume is based or a character/ figure you are performing.

There must be a sequence involved in what you select.

Plan out how to light your sequence using the sun. This can be durational, at a certain time of day, inside or outside.

Consider the qualities of light: refractions, heat, framing, reflections.

Respond to these elements in your choreography of the work.

Film or photograph the lighting or sequence (use time lapse on your phone if necessary) for presentation to your peers.

ADAPTATIONS

For the Actor: Do you proclaim a speech staring directly into the sun? Eyes closed or open? Are sunglasses required? Is the speech performed in the dark?

For the Designer: How are the materials or objects of your set design/costume impacted by the qualities of the light?

QUESTIONS

- What do you learn about your scene or action by doing this?
- How does it affect the materials you are using in your making (body, set, costume, technology)?

CAMERA!

AIM

To encourage ways of looking from different perspectives and viewpoints.

DURATION

1 Week

INSTRUCTIONS

Ask each member of the group to write down an instruction for making a photograph.

- A car park at night
- Something red
- A smile
- A disrupted landscape
- A bad smell
- Things in a line
- Making a meal
- A relative
- Time
- An animal in action
- A political argument

Make as many instructions as there are members of the group. Each student should create all of the images and bring them to the session the following week.

Print the images out, post them on the wall and spend some time looking at the outcomes. Each set is a portrait of looking, both through other's perspectives (what they have chosen to instruct the others to look at) and to see how each member of the group has chosen to interpret the instructions.

Use the images to create performances or making processes. These could be through grouping sets of instructions together (animals

in action or smiles for example) or by using the images as a sequence of storytelling. The nature of the exercises with the images can be based on the group or what project is being worked on. The mode of performance making with the images can also be dependent on the disciplinary perspectives of the group (as the basis of design, of character or figure work, or the basis of paintings or sculptures).

ADAPTATIONS

The instructions could be based on the materials the group are already studying, based on characters, scenarios, locations, or political or historical contexts so that the subsequent tasks can be used for scene development or conversations about characters or actions within the work.

The exercise can use phone cameras or be extended to use DSLR cameras and think about the specific potential of visual research and qualities of image making in a performance process.

QUESTIONS

- How can the discussions of the images be used to think about positionality and viewpoints?
- What role might visual research play in the students' making process?
- Can this exercise help a group to refocus or expand their work when they hit a creative or critical issue?

ACTION!

AIM

To identify an issue (climate, ecological, political) of personal significance and create a speculative project that addresses it.

DURATION

30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS

Ask students to identify something that is personally significant to them in terms of a wider issue relating to climate, politics, ecology, sustainability or framing that is something beyond themselves as individuals.

Ask them to work on designing a short speculative project that directly addresses the issue. The project only needs to be a 'set up' not the project itself. The project can be based on their disciplinary or aesthetic perspective. For example:

- To convince of a stage design that is completely regenerative and contains no waste.
- To write a performance text that is set at a political rally.

- To research a historical town that has disappeared into the ocean as the beginning of a work of theatre making.
- To create costumes that engage with a specific ecology of birdlife.

The project should address what would be made and how it engages with the issue politically and conceptually.

ADAPTATIONS

This exercise is intended to be rapid, reflective and playful but could be extended into a wider project or a basis of further practice. The issue can be tangential to a direct concern and engage with wider consciousness around ecology, politics and environment.



Invisible Ink

AIM

A collective writing exercise that disappears, encouraging free writing and reflection.

DURATION

Variable. 20 minute writing and 20 minute reflection is a good starting point.

INSTRUCTIONS

Set up a group text document (such as google docs or an online MS word document), padlet or miro page.

Identify an image relating to an immediate pretext or context of climate impact or context as a stimulus for writing. This can be found in a newspaper or news website and should be either identified by students or related in some way to the project or work they are currently working on.

The image could be direct (for example a particular political frame or landscape/population impact) or indirect (for example a wider context of climate impact).

The group must write a creative text (dialogue, poetry, word associations), relating to this material for 20 minutes. When this time is up the document will be deleted.

ADAPTATIONS

Could this task be a character study, a scene/ scenario, a score for movement or reflections on a critical task (such as a performance analysis or a response to a text, image or other stimulus?

Player-Cam

AIM

To follow and trace an object/subject through your practice and describe what impact it has on your making and thinking process.

DURATION

30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS

Follow a single object in your project and describe what you see.

This strategy asks you to follow the life of a single object/subject (character/figure/idea/concept) through a text, a play, a film, or an archive and describe what you see. By doing this exercise, you can reveal actions and alliances of how the 'object' interacts with other parts within the context that are normally invisible.

Ask the question: if the object/subject were absent from the context, what would be left? What effect would it have on how the whole concept/context operates?

ADAPTATIONS

This task can also work with the tracing of concepts, theory and politics in your work. How might you trace a cultural or historical context in what you are making? How does a critical frame transform and evolve through what you are making and why?

QUESTIONS

How does focusing on a single object or subject in your practice chart the impact that it is having on your work?

What does this reveal conceptually and aesthetically about your practice?

What does this reveal about the relationships and impacts of the wider work and practice in which it is implicated?



Material Biography

AIM

To trace the impact of a material in your practice by writing its biography.

DURATION

Variable

INSTRUCTIONS

Select a material from your work (this could be something like cardboard, fabric, meat, gravel, latex etc).

Write a biography of the material. The biography can take the form of a text or a set of visual pages.

Consider the following:

- What has been its career so far, and what are the recognised 'ages' or periods within the materials 'life'?
- Where does the material come from and where does it end up?
- What are the cultural markers of the material, where is it used and by whom?
- How does the materials' use change with age, and what happens to it when it reaches its usefulness?
- Does the material degrade or can it be reformed and reused?
- What are the biographical possibilities inherent in the materials 'status'?
- What is the 'local' use of the material in your work and what relation does this have to the wider context and use of the material?

You might consider the following biographical strands:

- Economic
- Historical
- Cultural
- Personal
- Sociological
- Chemical

ADAPTATIONS

This exercise can be adapted into a group exercise when using a specific material for a project or practice (such as paper or plywood) and should be done playfully to connect with questions of concept and material use.

QUESTIONS

- How does the writing of the biography alter your perspective of the materials you are using? Does the biography change your perspective on how you might appropriate or situate the material in your work?

Library Drift

AIM

To encounter unexpected texts and sources and draw connections between them.

DURATION

2 hours

INSTRUCTIONS

Select a book in a library as a starting point that engages with climate, ecology, sustainability or a relationship of these aspects to performance or art practices.

Step 1.

Start at this book: _____ in the Library. Let your eyes scan the shelves around it. Look for titles, names, images that attract you. Select a book or resource you want to look at. Start drifting more widely around the shelves and select 4 more books or resources that attract you. Take your time. Read blurbs, abstracts and sections of texts. Select books that you are unsure of or unfamiliar to you. Select books that intrigue you. Trust your instincts.

Step 2.

Take your 5 books and/or resources and read chapters/sections/images. Allow yourself to drift through the texts like you did through the shelves. Trust yourself to select the aspects of the texts that you find engaging. Make notes.

Step 3.

Write 500 words or create 4 sketchbook pages on the connections you can find between the books/resources. Connections might include subjects/contradictions/images/themes/words. If you cannot find connections then write about that.

Share your findings with the group.

ADAPTATIONS

This exercise can be used to start a research process as part of a project or to start a new phase of practice as well as exploring how connections can be made between sources based on intuition and ways of looking.

Climate Skills Audit

AIM

To enable students to reflect on their current making skills and interests and how they can map these to the UAL Climate, Racial and Social Justice Framework.

DURATION

3 hours (group discussion) or 1 hour set up and 20 minute 1-to-1 tutorials.

INSTRUCTIONS

Introduce the group to the climate skills audit template. The principles will need to be unpacked and understood as part of this session which can be done as part of a wider process or as a presentation and question and answers.

Ask the students to complete the audit, this can be done individually or in groups.

Use the responses to help the students construct a 'future thinking plan' for their practice by mapping their skills and interests together. The plan might be simple such as changing materials that they use, incorporating methods of co-creation in their work or it might be more involved with students shifting the conceptual content of their work to engage with a principle or approach. The aim is that the student has the control and agency in how the plan is formed.

The skills examples can be changed for the course or context. This following template is for the BA Contemporary Theatre and Performance as an example.

The audit can be photocopied from the following pages or digital versions can be accessed online.

Climate Skills Audit

Name:

This skills audit is intended to be playful, open and reflective. It can be used as the basis of a tutorial/group conversation around your perspectives and position as a maker in relation to climate justice and climate impact.

It can help you understand the impact of your work as a maker and also identify particular focuses that you want to adopt in the future.

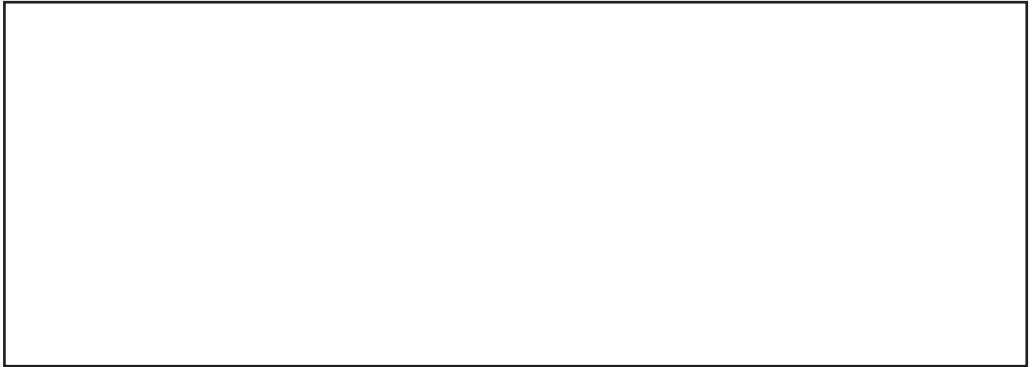
If you disagree with the questions, don't know an answer or there is a gap in your perception of the question or area, then add this to your comments.

1. What principles of climate justice and climate impact are you interested in in relation to your practice?

Rate the following areas from 1-10 in terms of your interest at this stage of the course (you can add others). 1 being less interested and 10 being most interested

Principles	Level of Interest (1-10)
Future Thinking	
Speculative Methods	
Activism	
Advocacy	
Co-creation	
Nature	
Decarbonisation	
Other (Please Specify):	

2. What conceptual ideas and materials have most engaged you in your work so far? (these do not need to be directly related to climate and can be based on politics, philosophy, cultural theory etc.)



3. Do any of these ideas and materials relate to the principles in question 1? Reflect briefly on this.



4. List your top 5 performance making skills and rate how good you are these skills from 1-10 and reflect on why this is important to you.

Examples of skills:

Working with actors/performers
Conceptual dramaturgy
Structural Dramaturgy
Communication
Movement

Filmmaking/editing
Writing
Lighting
Sound Design
Objects: Scenography
Technology/mediation
Audience engagement

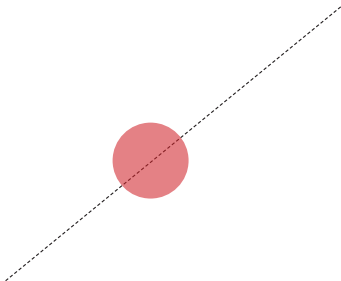
Skill	Score (1- 10)	Reflection
Skill1:		
Skill 2:		
Skill 3:		
Skill 4:		
Skill 5:		

5. Your answers and reflections of the audit will now be used as a basis of a conversation that will look to map your principles, conceptual interests and making skills together to create a **future thinking plan** for moving your practice forward and embedding climate justice and impact into your work.

Future Thinking Plan



A dramatic text	A collection	A found text
A memory/dream	A costume	A dance
A food	An object	A song/playlist



Scene



The Scene Bank and Non-hierarchical Practice

The Scene Bank tool is a guide for tutors and students to collectively assemble sources and materials for the making of performance projects. The sources and materials are individual scenes or scenarios in the form of texts, scores, images, songs or any material that might be considered as a 'unit' of action or storytelling rather than a full play text or source. The potential use of the scenes can therefore be used for small group tasks, workshops or the basis of full productions and projects. The scene bank is built by grouping the materials thematically by scene type (ghost scenes, fight scenes, street scenes, love scenes etc.), rather than organising it by author, place of origin, or cultural context.

The thematic grouping dissolves the traditional hierarchy of text that solidifies the canon of specific writers and artists at the forefront of work that is made and the stories that are told. This non-hierarchical approach to builds upon B. Ananthakrishnan and Jane Collin's work *Against a hierarchy of expressive means; arguments for new pedagogies in performer education in India and the UK* (2019) that expands "Heiner Goebbels' challenge to the conventional hierarchies in performance and his call for 'a division of presence amongst all the elements' " (2019:115). The division of elements in the making of theatre and performance seeks to flatten the hierarchical structures that prioritises the performer and text to embrace the potential of performance technologies and scenographic

elements to operate within a distributed network of stage presences. The Scene Bank can therefore be integrated into a non-hierarchical practice based pedagogy to enable the genesis of work to also adopt this ethos.

The creation of a scene bank can be framed and adapted by the specific pedagogical context in which it emerges. It should be shaped by the staff and students of the institution and operate vertically as well as horizontally in that it can be accessed across year groups and built year on year. It does not need to be attached to a particular year level or group (although parameters can be added if required for specific learning outcomes or contexts). A key aspect of the bank is that sources or materials are discovered through moments of connection or revelation between thematic ideas.



Bank

Structure and Methodology

The scene bank structure is presented as a simple grid describing the scene types. Students are invited to select the type of scene they would like to work on (rather than the author or ‘text’). Once selected, the scenes matching the type (or genre) can be accessed and the scenes are encountered alongside each other.

The scenes have two forms. The first are dramatic or post dramatic texts in the form of scenes from plays or performances that are part of a larger stage work (or complete works in some cases). The second is scenarios, these are paintings, poems, drawings, postcards, objects or contexts that meet the genre type of the scene. The scenario opens up the potential for the ‘scene’ to be non-linguistic, or to offer alternative perspectives or frames to the understanding of materials that can be used.

The bank can be constructed in whatever way is most accessible to staff and students, so it can exist within a VLE or as part of a shared online drive. There is also the potential to expand it physically, in analogue form, so it can be explored in person. This should enable students to search through the bank is important to its conception so that texts and materials might be chanced upon and compared against each other so that the connecting strands of the thematic offer new connections and relationships between cultural forms, historical contexts and perspectives of artists and writers.

Love Scenes	Ghost Scenes	Domestic Scenes
Fight Scenes	Teaching Scenes	Crime Scenes
Street Scenes	Dream Scenes	Revenge Scenes
Recognition Scenes	Rivarly Scenes	End Scenes

Selecting Scenes

- The key ethos of the scene bank is collaborative development between staff and students and to be expanded year on year.
- The discussion and selection of scenes can be done through workshop sessions if required where participants bring examples and discuss potential entries. This process can be incorporated into the learning outcomes of units.
- Some scenes might not fall neatly into a theme or genre, for example a scene might be both a love scene and a fight scene. In these instances, the scene can be added to both scene banks with contextualisation.
- The discussion of scene thematics and genres can be used as a learning moment for students.
- Contextualising material can be added to the resource pack for each scene or scenario with additional images, texts or production examples so that the bank grows as a research tool as well as an instigator of practical work.

Questions for Teams

- How can the scene bank be built to recognise a diverse and wide ranging form of dramatic and postdramatic texts and sources for students to work with?
- How can the team recognise the traditional 'canon' of texts and sources, whilst also expanding and contextualising this in relation to other less represented texts and sources?
- How can students be involved in suggesting texts and sources to work with to represent their perspectives?
- What are the learning and teaching implications of this?




Ghost Scenes

What follows is an example of how a scene bank has been introduced to students at Wimbledon College of Arts on the BA Contemporary Theatre and Performance Course, which encourages students to develop a practice rather than a discipline, so that briefs and tasks can be approached from the perspective of performing, directing, writing, dramaturgy, sound, light, design, installation or theatre making.

In this example, the students have selected 'ghost scenes' to work with.

In a workshop session that begins with a performance lecture on theatrical ghosts, the following brief is given to students. They are then led through a sharing workshop to explore the scene bank and select material to work on that begins with 'Group Task 1'.



Introduction

From the warrior ghosts of Japanese Noh theatre to the haunting of Hamlet by his father, from the sleight of hand trickery of The Woman in Black to the smoke and mirrors of Tupac's Coachella hologram, theatrical performance has historically been fascinated by the representation of ghosts.

To engage this fascination, theatre makers and production designers have constructed machines and apparatus to make the illusion of ghosts, both on stage and screen, attempting to solve the challenge for the actor of performing a character or persona that is undead.

Ghost Scenes will investigate the ghost as a theatrical challenge: How do you make something that is both present and absent, something that appears and disappears at will? How do you act with/as a ghost? How do you direct a ghost? How do you make a ghost?

The project brief will invite you to work in small project teams to create a live or recorded ghost scene and to design a ghost machine to stage it.

Making a Ghost Machine

This project will ask you to consider the materiality of a 'ghost object' and how this might be staged. Your ghost machine can be made of any medium or approach, including:

- Costume
- Light
- Sound and Music (Ambisonics and Binaural Sound design)
- Virtual Reality
- Augmented Reality
- Animation
- A Haunted Set
- Projection Mapping
- Analogue Stage Effects (Pepper's Ghost, Trap doors, Smoke machines etc.)

Critical and Contextual Framing

The making process will be underpinned with some of the following critical and contextual provocations based on the scene you select:

1. The relationship between the ghost and technology: unpacking the ghost in the machine.
2. The problem of acting with absence: How can you act as a ghost or with a ghost on stage or screen?
3. Stage Fright and the investigation of theatrical problems.
4. Ghost stories as part of a wider culture of storytelling.
For example the shapeshifting spirits of Japanese Yokai, to the Ghost stories of M.R James and the production designs of Netflix's *The Haunting of Hill House*.
5. Traditions of Horror theatre and film: the fearful pleasure of animation and affect.
6. The history of the ghost light: notions of ghosting,
7. Death's double the haunted stage as a theory of theatrical presentation.
8. The ghosting of history and memory including the political stakes of the spectre.
9. The cultural stakes of hauntology: the regurgitation of the same cultural tropes and ideas.

Group Task 1

Read the scenes. Select a scene to work on collectively (you might need to hold a vote).

Take your scene and start an analysis of two things: The Context and the Ghost. Make two lists for each:

The Context: Where? When? Time? Characters? Figures? Atmospheres?

The Ghost: What is its form? Materiality? Voice? Sound? Movement? What does the ghost want? What are the ghosts' desires?

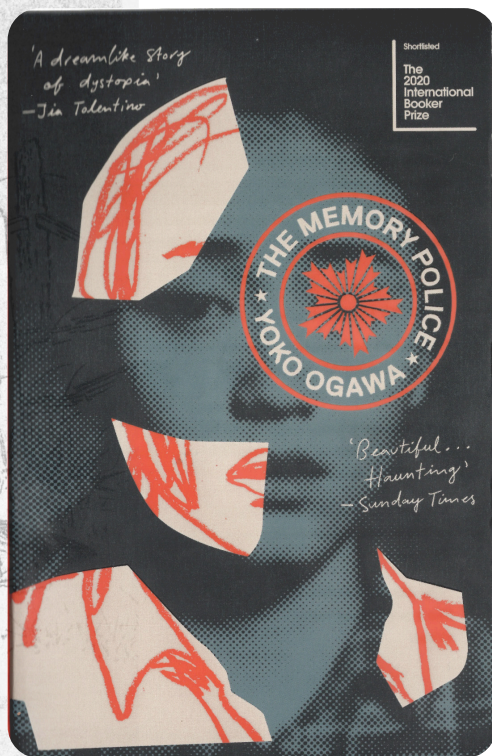
What do you not know from the text? What is missing?

Reading List

- Carlson, Marvin (2001) *The Haunted Stage: Theatre as Memory Machine*.
- Clarke, Rodger (2013) *A Natural History of Ghosts*.
- Dylan Foster, Michael (2015) *The Book of Yokai: Mysterious Creature of Japanese Folklore*.
- Owens, Susan (2017) *The Ghost: A Cultural History*.
- Rayner, Alice (2006) *Ghosts: Death's Double and the Phenomena of the Theatre*.
- Ridout, Nicholas (2006) *Stage Fright, Animals and Other Theatrical Problems*.

Scene Bank Examples

- *End Matter* (2015) by Katrinia Palmer.
- Banquo's ghost scene from *Macbeth* (Act 3, Scene 4) by William Shakespeare
- Selected scenes from *Ghost Stories* (2010) by Jeremy Dyson and Andy Nyman
- *The Corpse-Rider* (1900) Japanese Ghost Story.
- *Rough Seas* (1982 - Ongoing) by Susan Hiller.
- Hamlet's Father ghost scene in *Hamlet* (Act 1, Scene 5) by William Shakespeare.
- *Ghost Opera* (1997) Act V Song of Paper by Tan Dun
- *Rockabye* (1980) and *That Time* (1975) by Samuel Beckett.
- *Book of Indian Ghosts* (2021) by Riksundar Banerjee.
- *The Memory Police* (2023) Opening chapters 1-4 by Yoko Ogawa.
- The haunted painting from *The Mezzotint* (1904) by M.R James.
- *Built in Firmest Hope* (2010) Short story by Goncalo M.Tavares.
- *The Mirror Maiden* (1904) Japanese Ghost Story.
- *Event for a Stage* (2015) by Tacita Dean.
- Extracts from *Shiver* (2017) graphic novel by Junji Ito.
- Selected scenes from *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959) by Shirley Jackson.
- The grave digger scene from *The Body Snatcher* by Robert Louis Stevenson.
- *Quick shift of the head leaves glowing stool aftermath on pedestal* (1978) image by Robert Cumming.



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THE COMPLETE DRAMAT



at her window
 quiet at her window
 only window
 facing other windows
 other only windows
 all eyes
 all sides
 high and low
 for another
 another like herself
 a little like
 another living soul
 one other living soul

[Together: echo of 'living soul', con
 faint fade of light.

Long pause.]



'Rockaby' Ghost Scenes Project. BA Contemporary Theatre and Performance, Wimbledon College of Arts.











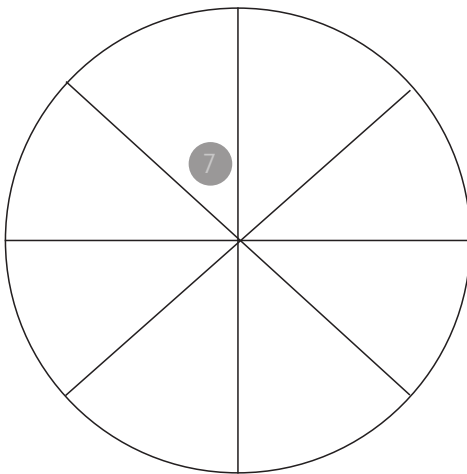
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Collaborative Tutorial Templates

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The ‘Chance Operations’ Tutorial

Photocopy/print/make three copies of the choice wheels and make a simple wheel spinner with a piece of card and a pin. Place them on the floor of the studio and agree with the group what should be contained on the spokes of the wheels.

When you have completed the wheels get different tutorial participants to spin each wheel to create a focus for a discussion on the group’s work. These can last any length but the intention is to be quick fired (approx 5/10 minutes for each configuration depending on group size).

- Select a viewpoint.
- Select a critical question.
- Include a random factor.

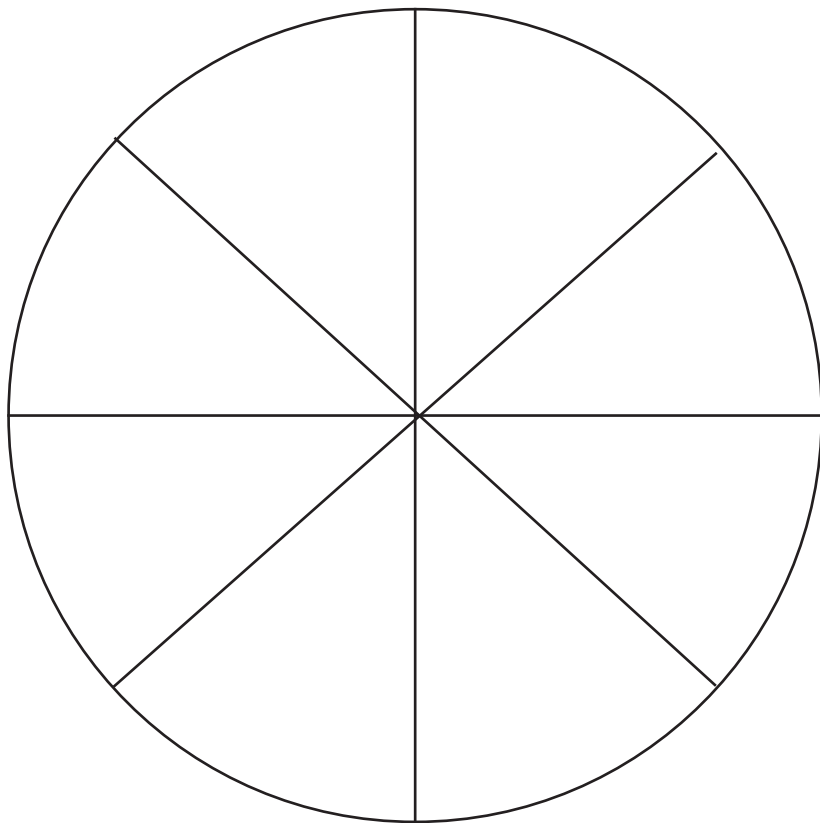


Wheel 1: Viewpoints

- Audience
- Lighting
- Sound
- Acting
- Community
- Space
- Participation

Wheel 3: Random Factor

- You can only answer in single sentences.
- You must be eating ice cream.
- You must discuss it blindfolded
- You must discuss it while walking.



Wheel 2: Critical Questions

- What is unresolved about this viewpoint?
- What is working well about this viewpoint?
- How does this viewpoint contribute to the atmosphere of the work?
- What could be transformed about this viewpoint?

The 'Janus' Tutorial

Each student writes a question or a 'what if we...' anonymously on a piece of paper that they would like to ask the group to consider.

The tutor then selects questions and 'what if we...' pieces of text at random to lead the discussion.

Examples of 'what if we' questions:

- 'What if we...stretched the duration?'
- 'What if we...started with the last image of the performance first?'
- 'What if we...reimagined the opening from the perspective of another character?'

The framing of the 'what if we' questions needs careful set up so they do not become overtly impossible. It can offer a space for things that have not been said. Grounding the questions in the reality of what the group is making (what they have rather than think they have) can enable students to become more focused in how they question the possibilities of their work.



The 'What's love got to do with it?' Tutorial

Ask a member of the group to select a location, site or context that brings them joy or that they love. Meet the group at this location (or encounter it online - see adaptations) and use it as the basis for a tutorial starting from the positive, affirmative position of joy and love for a place/context/condition.

Give guidance on the kinds of places that the students might pick. It is best to avoid overly personal or challenging places for students but this could also be helpful in the right context so some explanation and discussion is required to set up the tutorial. For example, it might be a museum, gallery, park, a favourite cafe or it could be a view or journey.

The key to this tutorial is to get the group talking about passions and joy for places/sites and contexts that can form a language and relation of affirmation in the group.

The locations or contexts can be used to make short works or collaborative exchanges in the group for the project they are working on, or it can be used as the location of where you then conduct a tutorial on an aspect of the project they are creating. See the Site-Specific Pedagogy Map for exercise ideas based around locations.

Adaptations:

If you cannot travel to a location, this can be done via google maps and street view or location websites. In this instance you could ask the students to prepare a short guide to the space and why it brings them joy.

This tutorial mode was originally done online and then shared via google earth. The impact allowed the students to teleport around the world.

This tutorial can also be conducted as a tour of joyful locations so that conversations, narratives and perspectives are encouraged and established within the group.

The 'Group Chat' Tutorial

Send the group to different locations on campus.

Get them to discuss their work via their group chat for a set period of time as an experiment. This is particularly helpful if the group has hit a creative problem (not an interpersonal one).

Return to the studio to discuss the experiment.

Guidelines:

Frame the questions or ideas to be explored before starting so they have a guide for the discussion.

Allow the group to establish and sign up to guidelines of behaviour and approach to the chat and how they should approach it (this can be adapted from group manifestos or codes of conduct drawn up at the start of a project).

Encourage a range of responses (visual, audio, film, links etc.) for the chat so that a range of ways of responding can be developed.

Make clear that aspects of the chat might be shared to the tutor and the group following the exercise to help unpack ideas, suggestions and resources.





The 'Gift Shop' Tutorial

Select a performance, exhibition, gallery or museum context that relates to the project/unit/learning outcomes or course the students are exploring.

Visit the context with students but don't talk about the work seen/explored in the space itself, allow the group to take notes and experience the work in their own time and space. Arrange to meet the students in the gift shop afterwards. Use the objects and contexts from the gift shop to frame and lead the discussion of the work.

- What souvenirs are on offer for the work? What does this say about the work and about institutions and the framing of performance/art works?
- What objects/books would the students buy (if any) from the gift shop and why?
- What books, critical texts and peripheral contexts have been selected to frame the work? How are the critical texts helpful for understanding perceptions of the work or practice?

Adaptations:

The gift shop might not allow the tutorial to happen within it so there might need to be an additional stage to discuss. In this context the gift shop can be explored like the exhibition or performance.

A performance merch stand or book shop can also work in this context, although the exercise works best in exhibition settings, when performance art documentation is displayed this form of tutorial is particularly revealing.

The 'Playlist' Tutorial

This is a good starting tutorial for a group at the beginning of a project, or it can be used to create tones/textures or atmospheres within a performance making context.

Version 1

Ask students to construct a playlist for the scene/performance/work they are making. This could be a playlist of moods or atmospheres, it might underscore movement or action or it might be a tonal mix for a warm up or for when the audience is entering or leaving the performance.

Use the playlist for the basis of a tutorial of the project, this can be done through a listening session or to set the playlist to shuffle.

Tutorial questions:

- Why have they chosen these songs? What does it reveal about the project and their perception of it?
- Did they agree about the tone/order and artists of the playlist? What is missing? What makes sense?
- What textures/instruments/sounds/voices make sense for the work and how might this inform and structure the next phase of the making project?
- What is the relationship between the music/ sounds and the body? How might this impact on the performance making and/or the audience engage with the work?

Version 2 (Introductions)

Ask each member of the group to offer a song for a collective playlist. The song should be something that they like/enjoy or their favourite song.

Build a playlist of these on a music/YouTube platform.

Set the playlist to random and use it to frame introductions/discussions around what that student needs to collaborate:

- What feedback do they respond to?
- How do they see themselves as a collaborator?
- What do they need from others to help them progress?



Headphone Theatre Workshop with Students from the University of Calicut, India.

The 'Crime Scene' Tutorial

This tutorial can be used as an introduction to Dramaturgy and how it can be revealed and worked upon within a piece of collaborative performance making.

The tutorial takes the format of the film/television crime scene as a place in which the codification of meaning is made apparent through an investigation of the languages, objects and after effects of action that happen on stage or within a space.

Tutorial Structure:

12

Ask the students to make a short performance with objects/ actions/space etc. This can work with a scene or section of the work they are making or as an exercise/workshop in its own right.

14

Ask them to perform the scene/sequence they have been making and stop it at an appropriate place (this can be done as many times as needed). Get some of the group (directors/observers or peers) to place crime scene markers at certain points around the scene 1 - 25 etc.

6

Get the group to leave the scene (or you might choose for some of the performers to stay in place) and then interrogate the work from this moment based on the arrangement of markers.

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3

Tutorial Questions:

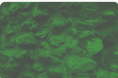
- At marker 1 there is a gun on the table. Why is this here? How does it connect to the scene? What does it tell us about what has happened or what will happen next?
- At marker 6 there is a shadow cast by a lighting effect. What does this shadow say about the action happening in space or what meaning or connections might be inferred from this?
- At marker 15 there is a pork pie cut open. Has this been done recently? As part of an action? Does it smell? What are the implications aesthetically and conceptually for having a pork pie here?
- There is an apparent sequence of movement between markers 20 - 25. What does this sequence reveal about the overall structure of the performance or the work? How might this be extended?
- What does the overall composition of markers tell us about the performance work and intentions for the dramaturgy of action, objects, light, sound and sequence in the performance?
- This can also be done with a freeze frame from a recorded performance - what are the 'clues' to meaning or ideas in the performance?

This technique can also be used in relation to an art work, a space or in architecture as well (installation etc.)

This mode of theatricalised investigation can also be used to introduce the framing of semiotics as a mode of interpretation and the interplay of signs, symbols and phenomenology as part of a making process.

Our lived experience of pedagogy is what makes its features as pedagogy visible and remarkable.

Elizabeth Ellsworth



context. They also do not prescribe a but allow for conceptual adaptation, practical and institutional frameworks time. Each proposition could become the basis of a full scale multi-modal production, an intimate piece of mail or a design centred imagining exercise or the creation of short performances or provocations.

The Site-Specific Pedagogy Map is a supplementary fold out that offers six pedagogical exercises based on Mike Pearson's approaches to the 'visitation' of a site in his book *Site-Specific Performance* (2010).



Creative Research Manifesto



1

The separation of practice and theory is artificial.

2

Practice is a way of 'doing' theoretical work.

3

Practice enables other forms of thinking materially than reading and writing, it articulates discoveries differently and can be reflected upon like anything else.

4

Reading and writing is as much a form of practice as painting and performing. The materiality of these practices is the only difference, hence why a researcher finds out different things by doing them.

5

Not all practice is research in the same way that not all reading is research.

6

The quality and success of practice-based research is, like any other research, based on rigour (artistic, scholarly and conceptually). The more rigour, the more there is to unpack and thus the more pleasurable it is to engage with.

7

The terms 'practice-based research', 'practice-led research', 'practice research' etc. is for the forms of the academy. They are meaningless for the researcher who can just think of what they are doing as 'research'. Nevertheless, they are needed in the same way that the terms 'investigation' 'enquiry' and 'fieldwork' are useful because they borrow from scientific language (social and otherwise) which have familiarity and comfort.

8

The unease felt at accepting practice-based research in the academy comes from the perceived attempt to quantify poetics. Poetic discoveries make speculation possible (if it is found in a painting, sculpture, written philosophy etc). A continued process of speculation upon speculation is what 'knowledge' looks like in the arts and humanities.

9

Not all speculation is good speculation. There are qualities of speculation (see point 6) so it cannot be claimed that practice-based research is hermetically sealed.

10

Practice is a system of codes, an apparatus through which thinking (affect) is made possible. The apparatuses of painting, sculpture, drawing, performance etc just look different to the apparatus of writing (philosophy, history, ecology etc.).

11

Devise a question/area around an affect of practice: an unknowable consequence of encountering the work.

12

There are no templates for methodology. Each practice-based project must construct its own based on the nature of the practice itself.

13

The Artist in the academy is a smuggler.

14

The Artist in the academy draws on the devices and actions of art making to commit acts of smuggling.

15

The Artist in the academy smuggles ideas that critiques the established forms of the academy.

16

Smuggling offers hope.

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