

OZONE

mémoire / documentation

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ABOUT THE MÉMOIRE

In the following mémoire each chapter turns around the concept of a word, an image, an association. I wrote the chapters in a non-chronological way. It is up to the reader to go through it chronologically or randomly. For the digital layout I nevertheless played with the concepts by opposing one chapter to another.

As my mother tongue is neither English nor French but German the mémoire might be influenced by all the different languages.

Working together with Elie in a duo meant a lot to me. His presence throughout the process was crucial. That is why not only one, but several chapters in my writing are about „Elie“.

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ELIE

More than one year ago we had a workshop with Kirstie Simson on contact improvisation. The Bachelor projects were still far ahead. We were working with all kinds of sensations, most of the time our eyes were closed. I entered a state where I was just floating around the school exploring and giving in to any sensation I perceived. I randomly pulled and pushed things and checked their weight, their material. I was attracted to all change of shadow and light, inhaled the lunch kitchen's air and carried the vapours in my lungs to the studio, lay by the heating and made the heating's temperature become my own. I felt people appearing and disappearing with giant steps in the corridor and I tasted the cold window glass and felt tiny sweat pearls seeping out of my skin and evaporating.

There were constantly layers of sounds. The sounds in my body became louder as the space became more silent.

I felt like being able to use the space and change it - considering my own body as a measure for relations and being responsible for perfect balances between things.

I also remember a continual change of dimensions, my ear expanding, or my mouth or feet or parts of my skin becoming huge, reacting to the surrounding, without even doing active movements. My tempo was very slow, nearly still, but the blood was running fast. I felt strong and calm.

By the end of the day I almost forgot to open my eyes. It needed quite an effort to do so. It was a strange sensation overwhelming me in such a manner that I had to shake my body and blink and make sounds and talk to somebody to check if the world around me was still the same.

There was one particular exercise which I remember the most. I guess it was the starting point of our Bachelor project:

We had to find a partner, I found Elie. We had to close our eyes. Trying not to name what we sense, we explored the other's body. Elie was just lying there still. Soon I lost any sense of time and the space around Elie just disappeared. His body parts became very big. I felt his skin that had different textures: the skin of his front throat was different from the skin of his belly and his shoulders, his navel very hard and reminding me of cable material, and the skin of his face incredibly soft. It felt like a mass of dough with some extras, wormlike elastic robust things and even softer parts that I couldn't even imagine belonging to a human body. If you would touch Elie's lips, you would never guess that these are lips, they are so fine that you can almost not feel them.

I was excited how many materials and textures came together on his head, like

the crumpled ears and the scratchy hair that felt like paper, and parts of the skin that seemed to be left over where I could just dig my fingers in. The rest of the body was much more similar, but the genitals and the feet and the hand were fascinating as well. In the end I couldn't tell whether I was touching Elie's hand or my own. Even though the situation was so intimate I didn't feel embarrassed. After both having finished the exercise, we opened our eyes and just stared at each other. Then we had to laugh a lot and assured each other that we didn't mind it to become so intimate. We repeated how incredible it was what just had happened!

I wonder if any body is incredible, or if Elie's body is particularly incredible. He said he realized that our body was almost identical and that he thought I was him, that the probe was my armwrist and so on. The situation was quite touching. From that moment on I was very inspired to work together with Elie.

INTUITION / THE RIGHT THING

I wonder what intuition actually is. Elie and I were often stunned how things came together purely intuitive. It certainly cannot just come from heaven. For sure intuition must be connected with the present moment and with a certain physical and mental openness. But I think it is also connected with personal experience, with memory, habit, taste and socio-cultural education and environment.

We never think of wrong intuition. It is always supposed to be the right thing.

INFLUENCE / INSPIRATION

From April 2018 onwards I could trace back some notes I did in my notebook. It's often single words, little descriptions or drawings I scribbled loosely. The notes are influenced by books or exhibitions or interests I was occupied with that time.

Bruce Nauman had a big exhibition at Schaulager in Basel, to which I was looking forward for a long time. He is one of my favorite artists and his work touches me and it encouraged me to be curious with my body and movement. Before studying Arts and Art History at the Art School in Bern and at Bern University, it was Nauman's work which brought my interest towards the body, dance and movement (next to Yvonne Rainer, Francis Alys and Xavier Le Roy).

Nauman works a lot with the negative space, making the in-between spaces of so called „concrete things“ visible. What is there disappears, and what I can not see nor touch is suddenly becoming something¹. For the finalising of „Ozone“, the notion of the „space in between“ came back strongly. I was feeling that Elie's and my own body created a third space in between us, which was changing its size constantly and having its own movement, and maybe also its own texture. I'm very intrigued by the negative space-in-between, as a link for two positive bodies/objects. The negative space is many things at a time: Simply air, emptiness, a potential, a border, a bridge, a touch. It manifests not only spatially, but also temporally: as a gap, a blank, a still, a cut, a transition.

Nauman experiments on specific bodyparts which are often recurrent: the knee, the wrist, the hand with its five fingers, the face, the waist, or the „left side of my body“ ... Playing with the dimensions of the body and always opposing it to a counterbody so that it finds itself in relation to something. Showing the functions of the bodyparts, but taking away the functional contexts and using the body as an artistic material²: In Nauman's work the body and movement often become senselessly poetic and purely existential.

In the video *Bouncing Two Balls Between the Floor and Ceiling with Changing Rhythms*³ Nauman throws two tennisballs with all force to the floor, one after each other, perceiving their different rhythms hitting floor and ceiling. His body is constantly in action to never let one ball drop to stillness. The video looks quite randomly and messy, but I loved to watch it for the physicality of Nauman's involved body and the two balls bouncing around almost like him, for its simplicity and playfulness, for the created rhythms and especially for his clear dedication towards the task. The same with *Walking in an exaggerated manner around the perimeter of a square*⁴ where the simple frame of walking a square

becomes a serious necessity, maybe also something meditative and something that questions where our body might take us, and how we may direct it. I had fun to try it out myself, walking in an exaggerated manner and making sharp turns at the edges of the square.

For the project with Elie I was very inspired to observe the body's behaviour, to look closely at impulses to touch or tickle or hold on to another body or whisper into each other's ear. I tried to observe all kinds of communications that may happen in different ways within the body. I think the body, in dancing as in living, is constantly communicating, perceiving and reacting, answering - listening - and speaking, leading and following. Only this creates movement.

Nauman has a very naive and open approach towards his own body. He explores it as a concrete phenomenological material as well as a human being in relation to its surrounding world, as a human being experiencing emotions, desires, impulses, biological needs. To me his work is very honest and playful, even though it sometimes seems very violent. I think he is not concerned about himself as a person, but about the human condition.

Another inspiration was a summer academy called „Determinism and Free Will in physics and philosophy“ I participated with the Swiss Study Foundation for one week. I must say that at school I was exceptionally bad in physics and mathematics and only remember being angry at my physics teacher for forcing me to calculate the rainbow, which I refused. On the other hand there is something that interests me in physics and geometry, knowing that the science of physics turns all around the physical world and its movement in space. My interest for physics opened up since I'm dancing and dealing with my body all the time.

I knew that doing this summer school I had nothing to lose, it was for free and we'd spend a week by the lake in a house in Ticino, so I signed up. It was a very rich experience. I met many students studying at famous universities and they just couldn't comprehend that I was a *dancer* and that it was possible to study *dance*. Surprisingly I could follow the classes in a very logical way, more through observation and experience than through calculating. The mathematics/physics professor was lovely and we became friends, because he shared a big passion for music and explained many things on the example of music (including the waves). He couldn't stop being enthusiastic about Pythagoras and his theory of everything being in relation to something else, having different scales of dimensions but being connected. He said that there might be no beginning or end, but only proportions. He said that this was the most beautiful theory in mathematics ever and I saw his eyes becoming very shiny. He said that every imaginable form could be proved by the Pythagorean Theorem (not only squares!).

The mathematics and physics people talked about their discipline as if it were an art. The professor also pointed out that the chaos was the most complex perfect order in the universe, and that „time“ in physics was an „empty“ term that doesn't have a forward direction. That „progress“ could also go backwards but still: that all was about continuity and movement. He explained that in physics calculations only made sense if you consider the human hand shaking while throwing the coin for a 50/50 probability.

All this spoke to me maybe in a romantic and idealistic way thinking of a perfectly imperfect world where only movement (and dance!) can keep it up.

For the composition of „Ozone“ I often remembered the summer academy and tried to connect it to the „laws of nature“, trusting on the proportions and relations within each thing and connecting the space to the music to the body to the movement.

ELIE

„How can I call what is between us“ is the title of a non-school performance I did with Elie one year ago. We showed it in several spaces, and each time we added or changed little bits and perceived new things during the performance. It was a good basis to continue working together. The title of that performance accompanied me during the process of our Bachelor work. It became more and more a serious question.

SOUND / WAVES

In the beginning many different things came together from different angles: Both Elie and I were interested in „dimensions“. Elie kept saying that dimensions concern us in particular, simply because we are both tall and have long limbs. Later we were saying that dimensions could appear in any form. In the following paragraphs I will go through the sounds and their sources used in „Ozone“.

I kept thinking of the movie „Werckmeister Harmonies“⁵ by the Hungarian director Bela Tarr. I thought of the slow and sharp contrasted black and white image of the movie and of the scene at a nightpub where somebody demonstrates the functioning of the solar system on the bodies of drunk men who are put together and turned around each other - one as the „sun“, one as the „earth“, one as the „moon“ and some more planet-bodies. I particularly remember the scene when the „circus“ comes into town: The circus' main and only act consists of a giant dead whale body that is being brought to the city center in a huge truck. The whale fills up all the inside of the truck. Every spectator has to pay a coin and will then be let into the truck and may have a look at the whale. One by one the spectators walk around it. It's impossible to see the entire body of the animal, as the space is so limited. It's only possible to see its sculptural skin, its eye, from a very close distance. The scene is claustrophobic and tragic, yet fascinating and beautiful.

Furthermore I was thrilled by the movie's title: The system of the Werckmeister temperament is a complex mathematical musical system describing a „good temperament“ of a specific tuning, developed in 1691 by Andreas Werckmeister. The Werckmeister temperament distinguishes the music scales in rational and irrational frequency relations which allow more possibilities in composition, but also cause „wrong“ harmonies. It speaks of „pure“ and „impure“ musical harmonies.⁶

Elie and I agreed that music and sound should be crucial in our work, as we both like music and dancing on music and rhythm.

We once said that the music should have it's own body.

I was raised in a musical family, myself playing the clarinet and my father being a composer. My father has shown me so much musics in my life and I guess I'm a bit influenced by his taste and directions. In almost every artistic project I did, music and rhythm has been crucial.

We discussed about dimensions, whales, sounds and waves, water, frequencies, poles, echoes. All these words arose intuitively, but created a universe that



interested us.

Furthermore I was fascinated in the connection between the water waves and the soundwaves as a concrete phenomenon. On my demand my father explained me some links between physics and music, including the observation of Pythagoras: On a single string Pythagoras observed that sound just consists of waves of different scales.

During research of the first movement we only used whale sounds. One specific movement we called „charging“ or „les algues“. As a ritual we always started with the „charging“ with eyes closed to the whale sounds, so to get our bodies and perception ready. On youtube one can find a big number of recordings like „8 hours of whale sounds underwater deep for sleep and relaxation“⁷. In the end we didn't use any whale music in the piece but still felt it resonate in our bodies for the beginning part.

Sometimes we also tried the „charging“ on hardly perceptible infra- and ultrasounds. But these specific sounds would require a much more sensitive sound system to be able to work properly.

Another time Claire was showing us Werner Herzog's movie „Encounters at the end of the world“⁸. In one scene two people descend to the ice floor in the Antarktis to listen to the seal calls under the ice. We copied this movement from the movie and even included the sounds of the seals.

For a while we experimented on different random musics that we liked. Soon we agreed that we wanted to work with a specific music that has a specific structure.

I remembered Morton Feldman's „Three Voices“⁹ composition I once heard. The composition is for one female voice which is split into three voices: Twice the woman's voice as recordings, distributed through speakers, and once the live voice singing over the two recorded voices. It is one of the very few pieces „in which he [Feldman] did not indicate a metronome marking - feeling that one's tone and how one breathes should pace it - it sounds good both „slow“ as well as a „fast“ slowness.“¹⁰ Feldman's score uses a poem written by his friend Frank O'Hara. The poem part is finally not included in „Ozone“ but I was curious about the role of the lyrics which might still give us an additional perspective. The „Performance Instructions“ explain that „the words of Frank O'Hara's poem also suggest an attitude for the singer: A sense of wonder („Who'd have thought that snow falls“ mixed with quiet reflection and introspection [...] as well as the more active whirling of the snowstorm, where ,snow

whirl'd ... nothing ever fell'."10

Feldman's composition has many subtle rhythmical overlaps, layers and shifts and the notes are sober, literally gliding through the partition. I listened through the album and observed some nice echo or „leading/following“ moments. I then asked my singing teacher Anne for the partition and listened to the music many times, comparing it to the score to distinct the pattern for the lower notes and the higher notes. This was the musical scaffolding for a next part in our project:

x yy xx yyy xxx yyy x y x yyyy x yyy x yyyy x yyyy x__yy__yyyy x__yy__yy
 x=low note, y=high note, __ sustain x

Together with Elie we learnt this pattern by heart, by stepping to the voices. We planned to enlarge and enrich the walking movement to a much more complex choreography. In the end we decided to keep the very minimal steps. I liked the fact that the music has three voices. For me it meant either: Elie, me and the music. Or: Elie-music, me-music and a third unknown thing emerging out of that, which is set free in space and takes over.

What we called „the machine“ is a recording my father once made in San Francisco at a port by the Pacific ocean. We hear the metal sounds of different cranes in different rhythms plus their multiple echoes resulting in randomly coincidental loops. With this comes a slight manipulation in the editing. These random changes and off-beats made it very challenging for Elie and me, but of course this was the exciting thing. It was a listening-and-following situation where our bodies had to react immediately to the beat. We never tried to learn the score by heart but repeated and rehearsed it many times until we embodied the rhythms almost automatically. We also had to find strategies to deal with surprises and wrong timings. We played with catching every note, or just every second or third, trying to fit to the other's choices. Sometimes we laid on the floor and just listened to the beats, trying to imagine ourselves in space. Our bodies should become like the sound: Speaking and responding to each other, echoing or reacting to the other's voice, coming together in harmony and eventually moving on their own track, without ever losing the connection. Elie and I also considered these sounds as something which appears just next to the ocean's surface, at a place that connects industrial labor work and the beginning of a hidden underwater universe. Would the world underneath hear what was going on above?

The last music which appears is a song by Radiohead.¹¹

We happen to rehearse our choreography on this music, just because we were in the mood for something easy-listening. So at first the song was purely provisional and its title coincidental. Only much later I read the lyrics:

„Weird fishes/arpeggi“

*In the deepest ocean
 The bottom of the sea
 Your eyes
 They turn me
 Why should I stay here?
 Why should I stay?
 I'd be crazy not to follow
 Follow where you lead
 Your eyes
 They turn me
 Turn me on to phantoms
 I follow to the edge of the earth
 And fall off
 Everybody leaves
 If they get the chance
 And this is my chance
 I get eaten by the worms
 Weird fishes
 Get towed by the worms
 Weird fishes
 Weird fishes
 Weird fishes*



DESERT OF SONORA

Throughout all the process I was reading novels and stories by the Chilean writer Roberto Bolano. His writing is full of enigmas, presentiments, thrilling dark-nesses, elastic dimensions in time and scanty fantastic landscapes.

THE TRIP

On a sunny sunday Elie and me spontaneously decided to leave Lausanne behind and head off to the Swiss mountains. We prepared lunch boxes and put our walking shoes on. After the train ride to La Barboleuse via Bex we managed to hitchhike up the hills with an old couple to the point we decided to start our hiking tour. There was a lot of sun and a strong cold wind. Nobody crossed our way, as it was already off season and autumn almost past. We didn't really talk about the project during the whole day and we didn't dance or research on movement or something. It was just about spending time together in a different context, in the middle of an overwhelming nature. I feel that the trip was still a significant and very intense experience of our Bachelor work.



THE CHORÉO

With Elie we developed a little choreography in the very beginning of the process. There was the need to have something „concrete“. We agreed about being open to drop the set material again if it wouldn't make any sense. It was more for fun, or maybe for security reasons, to not feel lost.

We applied the following rules: Both of us have to propose five movements in a row - five movements? Then we will put them together - put them together how?

As an additional help we just set the topic of the „underwaterworld“.

The movements which came out were quite static and slow.

Throughout the whole process we unpacked our little choreo again and again, sometimes just to ventilate our bodies, or to settle on something we already knew. Repeating this easy choreography, it gradually gained on importance. We played with simple shifts to make it more interesting, added some details and experimented on the positions of our bodies.

For me it's difficult to write about „movement“/“dancing“ in a technical way. Where should I start? Where does the „movement“ actually start? Where does it come from? I'm sure that movement can only happen *in relation* to something. Starting maybe with the constitution of the body - the two bodies - itself.

COLORS / HISTORY OF COLORS

Blue, green, red, brown, pinkish - these are the colors I see when I look closely at my skin.

There are many nuances.

I find it nice to have a „dark but light“ skin color and to work with Elie who's skin color is different. To me it's a particular combination that is purely coincidental (I think) but rises up many references and questions. Many other body combinations would have a different „effect“, or no effect. But Elie and I are not friends because we have the same skin color (the same???) and we don't make a project together because of the match of our skin colors (the match!!!). We sometimes talked about our skin, agreeing that we don't want to make a piece about *that*.

It's strange to decide to make a project which should not be about skin colors, knowing that it automatically will be about skin colors. The history of colors is very visible and very present.

Honestly I see our situation as a big privilege and I felt very free in it. We wanted to open up new perspectives and create nuances within a serious discourse. The linguist and critical theorist Homi Bhabha calls it the potential of the Third Space:

„It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew.“¹²

To me working with Elie almost felt like a little extra candy with a new flavor. We wanted to give people a taste of it, but first tasted it ourselves.

Of course we always had to pay attention not to naively *represent* things we weren't aware of.

After having no clue how the costumes could look like, we decided to focus on colors which couldn't be clearly defined. „Changeant“, „moiré“, silver, or light and dark grey, rose-brown, yellowish. We also gave different color directions to our dance parts. We decided not to have anything black or white in our costumes. We wanted to show colors in relative terms and as something purely aesthetical.

SURFACE / SKIN

The skin is the big thing. It's the biggest organ of a human's body and holds together all the materials: bones, blood, fascia, muscles, other organs,.... Its elasticity and texture allow to adapt to forms and movements coming from one or the other side of the skin. For its hybridity and permeability it is not only a surface. The skin is the border and the bridge, the connection and the separation of the outer and inner physical world.

We were interested in opposing the skin to the ocean. Both lie in between two universes, one being more the inferior gloomy zone whereas the other more (or less) bright and familiar.

We liked the idea of the ocean as an enormous body containing tons of unknown movements and streams, very dark on its ground and mainly consisting of liquid. The water's laws of gravity are inversed. There is a video installation by Hito Steyerl called „Liquidity Inc.“¹³ where she shows the water, the weather and the wavy ocean as a metaphorical link to the neoliberal system and its market. I didn't think of the ocean as a metaphor for capital flows but as something much more concrete.

Elie and I watched the „Blue Planet“¹⁴ series commented by the famous David Attenborough. In these films we discovered incredibly weird and absurd creatures who live in different zones, such as the so called „twilight zone“ or the „midnight zone“. The midnight zone has never known sunlight. The creatures who live there don't use their eyes for orientation. Some of them might not even possess eyes. Apparently more than 90% of the ocean is undiscovered, like most of the midnight zone. Elie and I shivered when we saw the scene of eels diving and disappearing into a *foggy lake* on the ground of the ocean. Also when we saw giant whales sleeping in a vertical position underneath the water's surface, as if hanging on a laundry line. The whales particularly fascinate me for their dimensions, for the forms of their bodies and for their massive thick skin serving almost as an architectural structure to other animals like a rock or a house or even a city. Or for their way of communicating through singing in complex melodies. The whale is such a stranger to me in all perspectives but still living on the same planet and *breathing* the same air.

In the very beginning of the project I wanted to bring whale's attributes on stage as a scenography: a little fountain, one of these thread-curtains which remind me of the whales' beard, maybe an eye painted on a stone and a huge tail behind the door to the back stage, like the opening of the truck in the „Werck-

meister harmonies“ movie by Bela Tarr. As we didn't have enough time to build sculptures and technically work with it, these remained just ideas.

There is a video work by Harun Farocki with the title „Parallel I-IV“¹⁵, consisting of four parts. The videos show the development of animated virtual worlds in computer games. Farocki mainly focuses on „nature“ with its movement, such as the grass swaying in the wind, the clouds travelling through the sky, the fire burning, the water and waves covering quietly the lands or becoming wild and virtuous in a storm. In the game „Super Mario“ from the 90ies „fire“ was just made out of a few regularly moving pixels and the image was more like a sign than an organic vivid element. Thanks to technical development the virtual world becomes more and more real, even though it's only a programmer's hand designing virtual realities by complicated logarithms. The programmer is only in touch with the sensual physical world through the computer mouse and the sleek display in front of his eyes. „Parallel I-IV“ emphasises on the limitations and the superficiality of the two-dimensional virtuality. My favorite scene is when the camera point of view (a purely illusorical camera perspective, for the worlds of computer games are not filmed with cameras but programmed): The „camera“ travels just above the gentle water's surface shimmering beautifully in the sun. Suddenly it dives through the surface into the ocean. As there is nothing to do or find under the surface in that video game, the underwater world doesn't really exist. It turns out to be just an empty white space. So it is for human skin: you can zoom in closely but at one point the skin doesn't get any more detailed, and certainly you cannot pass the border to „the other side“ where you would find tissues, fascia, blood etc. The virtual world has nothing beyond.

We wanted to explore these other sides.

We were fascinated by the layers of the zones, and it was amazing not to travel through them horizontally (as we usually perceive landscapes) but vertically, from the inside to the periphery: midnight zone, twilight zone, colorful coral reefs, water surface, lands, atmosphere, stratosphere, ozone... Travelling vertically, we encounter all stages of matter: there is liquid, solid, gas, plasma. For our movement research they were very inspiring.

It is Elie who proposed the title „Ozone“. Ozone is a gas that has a pale blue color and a distinctively pungent smell. It can irritate humans' and animals' eyes and respiratory tracts but also protects them from ultraviolet solar radiation.¹⁶ The vertical movement appears in „Ozone“ when we descend to the floor to listen to the seal calls or when we dive and take a deep breath or in the begin-

ning when we float while imagining our bodies at 300m under waters where the laws of gravity make us rise up instead of fall down. Or when the „Three Voices“⁹ may become the whale gliding under our feet and emerging to the surface where we observe it taking a big breath.



VERTIGO

In dance shows I'm always impressed by dancers who manage to turn around themselves for a long time and then stand still all of a sudden. For me personally the vertigo is a horrible feeling and I immediately get dizzy when I turn. On a boat I quickly feel like throwing up and even the trainride makes me a bit ill when I sit backwards. The Derwish dance would possibly be the biggest challenge of my life. Is there a trick?

In „Ozone“ towards the end of the piece there is a scene where I spin around Elie's eyes for a while, getting faster and closer to Elie. Then I eventually stop without trying to stand perfectly still, but with completely giving in to the dizziness, walking snake lines on stage. I find it quite amazing to see how the body naturally reacts to dizziness caused by wild turning.

Sadly that effect didn't come out properly at the premiere because of a wrong timing.

If ever we have the chance to show the piece again I would wish that Elie and I would both turn and then both give in to dizziness. We would lurch on stage like two drunken bodies on the music of Radiohead. Fade out lights, music continues. End.

ce qui se cache sous la peau

EMPTY GAPS / STILLS / TRANSITIONS

Some things are very clear. They go organically and you can just follow them naturally. Elie and I sometimes even refused to put words on something that just happened. Of course in the aftermaths and also for the composition of the piece I like to question and find out what something is, at least for myself, and then continue from a possible sense. I like to link things for myself, even in a very abstract way.

There were also gaps or blanks we had no idea how to „fill“ but felt that they were calling for something - something tiny, or something really big? Honestly I loved this: knowing that anything might come into being, talking with Elie about „the thing we don't know yet“, taking it as seriously as any other material. The gaps even became part of our rehearsals. We refused to „fill the empty parts“ just because. Marco Berrettini kept saying that we should just continue listening to what feels right.

In the end we had many parts and many gaps, so our material became like a pattern of little pieces. Some gaps had found their movement, some became still or silent, some even stayed empty and some were about to turn into transitions. Transitions are so tricky. As soon as I consider something as a transition, it just becomes the smooth-but-almost-invisible-thing-in-between. I tried to inverse the piece by considering our concrete parts as transitions - to what? Now I realize that this was maybe the most difficult part but great to work on. Cuts, fade ins and -outs, overlaps, gaps, stills, silence - isn't in the end all about the timing that lets some thing lead to another?

POLES / ECHO

The echoes and poles were recurrent themes in our process, coming from the ocean's world but also from the question of dimension, from speaking and listening and being two connected bodies dancing together. Elie and I tried to find movement and echo-qualities playing with exercises we knew from Thomas Hauert such as the „complementary movement“, „swarm“, „the car“, „simultaneous copying“ etc. We also tried exercises from a workshop I once did in Brussels with Mark Lorimer on „rhythm and time“. Space was conceived in „poles“, whereas the „Plus-pole“ demands opposite movements/tempi/levels from the „Minus-pole“. We started using these parameters within the spatial composition. For a while we experimented on poles and echoes, figuring out what would happen if we approached towards almost 0 (neutral). What would happen at 0 where we would eventually meet? Would it be „stillness“, or „dropping out of the dance task and just have a casual conversation“ or „total synchronicity in movement“, or a touch? And vice versa: The further our bodies moved away from each other in space, the more eclectic and chaotic became our movements. It was very hard to figure out good tasks to generate clear relating movement, even though it made a lot of sense as an idea in my head, thinking back of theories of balance and disorder.

At some point we dropped the echo and pole topic.

They later came back in different ways: More organically just listening to Elie's movements and letting it influence my own movement as a wave of reaction. Spatially when we decided to play with distance, proximity and designed patterns in space, being very close or the furthest possible away from each other.

I had a lot of fun drawing scores and plans for the spacings of our piece, observing diagonal patterns and specific places we chose. The echo appeared also musically, working with the „Three Voices“ where we have an echo (or responding) situation between Elie and me. The little conversation we kept, not as a point zero but just as a little pause we needed from dancing.

THE JOKE

In the beginning we both agreed on having at least one joke in the piece. Sometimes we played with very silly material and jokes popped up but we didn't dare to put them in the piece.

In the end of the creation we realized that we still didn't have our joke, which was ok. When people from the public were laughing at the general rehearsal, we got a bit upset thinking IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY.

But why do we want the result to be so serious?

1+1= 3 / WORKING TOGETHER

Claire pointed out Deleuze's concept of „becoming(-animal)“, where he uses Melville's „Moby Dick“ as an example for the alliance between human and animal through fascination. Deleuze talks of the *borderline* of another world order touching to our own. „Becoming the other“ doesn't happen through mimetizing (copy or representation of the other), but by contagion and making an alliance with the other on a „molecular level“. „Becoming“ is based on a constant repetition of difference, which is the constant changement from one moment to the other. Deleuze mentions Herman Melville's Moby Dick (the parallel with the whale here is coincidental) and writes about Capitain Achab „becoming the whale“:

„Le capitaine Achab a un devenir-baleine irrésistible, mais justement qui contourne la meute ou le banc, et passe directement par une alliance monstrueuse avec L'Unique, avec le Léviathan, Moby Dick. Il y a toujours pacte avec un démon, et le démon apparaît tantôt comme chef de la bande, tantôt comme Solitaire à côté de la bande, tantôt comme Puissance supérieure de la bande. L'individu exceptionnel a beaucoup de positions possibles“¹⁷

With Elie I had a very physical alliance. There was an intriguing triangle between Elie, our common material and me. It was often based on gradual transformation through repetition, generating a new situation in each moment. I felt like becoming the material, but only in connection with Elie. „I am many“ and „Elie is many“ consisting of specificities through all layers: the physical and biological body, the thoughts, the emotions, the state etc. Many specificities bring many possibilities in their multiple combinations. How would our piece look like if we would have made it one week before, or only now? Or in another building? Or having been to a different place before? There might be hundreds of possible projects by Elie and me as a duo.

For me it is not about „speaking the same language“, but more about listening and being concerned by the other's language and responding or reacting through a common place of communication. This creates a bondage which is based on interplay and which is constantly changing dynamics within the present moment. For me it means: following and leading at the same time. „Becoming the other“ happens from all sides.

TWINS / FAMILY



Having a twin sister surely influences every work I do. For my sister and I have a very strong connection. There is a part in the piece we called „danse télépathique“ coming from an exercise I did at the dance festival Camping in Lyon with Jennifer Lacey. With my twin sister we often experienced telepathic moments, or at least very astonishing coincidences so I could really relate to this exercise. Having a twin sister must also influence how I work in a duo. When working with Elie I often got aware of patterns I usually have with my twin sister. Elie often felt like a brother or sister to me. Sometimes even like a mother or father, bringing me tea and taking care of technical things when I was sick at the end of the rehearsal process. Elie lately asked me: Remember when David Zambrano asked us if we were siblings?

PATTERNS / PARTS



As „Ozone“ consists of many very different parts we didn't follow the classical dramaturgical concept considering a beginning, a climax and an ending. All the parts - „Charging“, „Banquise“, „Machine“, „Choréo“, „Three voices“, „Telepathie/Vertiges/Radiohead“ - are non hierarchical in their order of appearance. Their order might also be different.

The duration of each part is an important aspect of the dramaturgy. The length of a single piece could often varie from very short to very long. We sometimes rehearsed the „machine“ for almost twenty minutes and the „charging“ for almost half an hour. Many of those patterns are based on repetitive movements. The descending of the „banquise“ could as well be prolonged and its floor shifting lasting for another while. So the dramaturgical questions and the timing were crucial in our work and besides the transitions one of the most difficult things to work on.

The endurance of each part brought a certain internal physical state. Changing from one part to another we had to find strategies to enter this physical state within a short moment. For me the most important thing was the gaze: either my eyes were closed, or my gaze was internal, or directed towards Elie's eyes, or towards Elie's concrete movement, or towards the public, or towards something imagined, or it was just following my surrounding. The focus of my eyes brought much more clarity within my body.

ce qui se cache sous l'eau





WHAT THE FUCK / PERCEPTION

There is something extremely unlogical to me in Elie's way of communication. I often hated and loved it at the same time.

SHADOW PLAY / LETTER ON THE BLIND

In my room hangs a big poster from the exhibition „Shadow Play“ by Javier Téllez which was shown at Kunsthaus Zurich in 2015.

The poster shows an image of Téllez' video work titled „Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who See“¹⁸

I loved the entire exhibition and particularly the „letter on the Blind“.

The video is set in a large open concrete space, apparently a former swimming pool in Brooklyn, New York, which is now empty. There are six persons, men and women, sitting on six chairs. All of them are blind. At a distance of approximately 10 meters, there is an elephant standing in front of them. One by one of the blind get up and direct themselves towards the elephant, they reach the animal. Each person gets in touch with the furrowed skin, the big leathery ears, the trunk... The camera shots are close-ups and black and white. We can see the hands of the blind touching the elephant's skin and the different reactions on their faces. A personal voice-over comments on their perceptions.

The work is inspired by an Indian proverb of the „Blind men and an elephant“. The earliest versions of the parable of blind men and an elephant is found in Buddhist, Hindu and Jain texts, as they discuss the limits of perception and the importance of complete context. This is the most common version:

A group of blind men heard that a strange animal, called an elephant, had been brought to the town, but none of them were aware of its shape and form. Out of curiosity, they said: „We must inspect and know it by touch, of which we are capable“. So, they sought it out, and when they found it they groped about it. In the case of the first person, whose hand landed on the trunk, said „This being is like a thick snake“. For another one whose hand reached its ear, it seemed like a kind of fan. As for another person, whose hand was upon its leg, said, the elephant is a pillar like a tree-trunk. The blind man who placed his hand upon its side said the elephant, „is a wall“. Another who felt its tail, described it as a rope. The last felt its tusk, stating the elephant is that which is hard, smooth and like a spear.“¹⁹

ELIE / EASY IS TRICKY

The working process was surprisingly easy at the beginning. Quickly we had a lot of clear material to work on. We had no confrontations and the way we proceeded felt free and intuitive. I even began to worry we might not be precise enough or maybe not listen to each other closely. It was almost too easy.

Later in the process I told Elie that he was allowed to say „no“ to something, because I was scared of imposing myself too much. This created a slightly suspicious atmosphere and things became a little more complicated. Elie started to often counterdict what I proposed in a very absolute way. I asked him to bring alternative propositions, if not we won't be constructive. Maybe I didn't give him enough time. I know that I can be quite impatient. Only later I realized that I also said „no“ to many of his concrete suggestions and not even realized this, because some things were very fixed in my head.

At one point we got stuck.

We didn't know how to continue, what to rely on, how to make movement and how to go for something concrete. We decided to separate in order to open up again and try out things in the studio without the other's gaze and opinion, which was a great idea. There I found the „Three Voices“ music and the „machine“ tape. Coming together again we shared our discoveries and showed to the other new materials we encountered, both being very willing to accept proposals or doubts.

For me the preparation and postprocessing were very important. It gave me more clarity and less getting lost during the rehearsal sessions. Sometimes I wished Elie had more prepared, planned or structured the sessions beforehand or afterwards, to feel less responsible on my side for everything. At the same time I needed to question my feeling of being responsible for everything. I started to force myself to just hook on Elie and follow his instant planning and ideas. This generated a little nice irritation in both of us, making us aware of our roles. Giving up responsibility once in a while helped me. It was always revealing and leading to unexpected places.

By the end of the process we both became extremely critical and picky. On every suggested detail our answer was something like „ah bon? pourquoi?“ or „à voir...“ or directly „franchement j'aime pas du tout cette proposition“. It was annoying and stressing me. But we didn't have much time left! Eventually we had a real fight. We knew that we would have to start making compromises and be

open. It shouldn't be about our ego, but about the piece. We also realized that most of our fighting was not about movement or aesthetics, but more about language or music issues. I had to persuade myself to give in to the title „Ozone“ because I didn't like it at all. I had great titles in mind which Elie didn't like. Now I like „Ozone“. Elie made a compromise on the Radiohead music where I was very stubborn. After every fight we felt a bit worried and called each other in the evening pointing out that in any case we were super happy to work with each other and that everything was great and fine anyways.

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH to Rolf, to Mimi, to my father, to Mira, to Claire, for your support