



**UiT** The Arctic University of Norway

Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

**What Makes us Act?**

On the Potentials of Exercises in Live Art Education and Performances.

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen

A dissertation for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor – December 2022





Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

**What Makes us Act?**

On the Potentials of Exercises in Live Art Education and Performances.

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen

A dissertation for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor – December 2022

# Abstract

The research questions addressed in this thesis are as follows: *What are the potentials of exercises in live art, live art education and participatory artworks? What does an exercise consist of? How can the exercises facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not-yet planned to happen?* This thesis consists of four studies within art pedagogy, focusing on *the exercise as an event* in live art, participatory art and live art education. The thesis looks at the potential of exercises to facilitate for the unknown future.

The thesis consists of four peer-reviewed published articles and a summary article (“kappe” in Norwegian). The studies are practice-led research, using a diffractive analysis, based on my own performances, live installations, workshops and teaching within live art, undertaken during the years of my research from 2013 – 2020. This thesis, as well as my artistic practice, is interdisciplinary. It lies at the intersections between artistic practice and research, performance studies, art pedagogy and post qualitative inquiry, drawing from a theoretical framework of posthumanism and new materialism, more specifically agential realism. The special interest here is in what way exercises can be active agents and operate as part of a complex landscape in intra-action with the surroundings to initiate action, meanings, knowledge and questioning.

The thesis shows how the material-discursive exercises are performative agents that are in intra-action with the environment in multiple ways, and that what an exercise can be is manifold. The different studies emphasise performative agents, such as place/site, audience, performer, embodiment, formulation, materiality/performance objects, time, social media, multiplicity and affect.

By being aware of the complex process regarding how the entities are organised, how the exercises are mediated and how they might intra-act, it is possible to accommodate an event, which can lead to a space for participation, inclusion, diversity, and unpredictability. The exercises have potentials for imagining and creating new realities and can contribute to the continuous development of live art and its pedagogy.

Keywords: intra-action, exercises, performance art, live art, pedagogy, participation, artistic research, future practice, unpredictability

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>List of Peer-reviewed Articles</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PART I – Summary Article</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>15</b>
1.1 Research Questions and Themes	16
1.2 Background for my Research	18
1.3 Short Overview of the Thesis	21
<b>2 Live Art, Performance Art, Exercises, Participation, and Pedagogy</b>	<b>25</b>
2.1 What is Live Art and Performance Art?	25
2.2 Exercises in Live Art	29
2.2.1 What is an "Exercise"?	30
2.2.2 On the Potential of Exercises	32
2.3 Participation in Live Art	32
2.4 Pedagogy and Live Art	34
<b>3 Theoretical Framework</b>	<b>39</b>
3.1 Feministic Posthumanism	40
3.1.1 Feministic Posthuman Pedagogy	42
3.1.2 Agential Realism	42
3.2 Exercise and Event	45
3.2.1 Pedagogy of the Event	47
<b>4 Methodological Entanglements</b>	<b>51</b>
4.1 Research Methods	52

4.1.1	Against Method	52
4.1.2	Practice-led, Performative and Artistic research	54
4.2	A Diffractive Analysis	55
4.3	Research Journey	58
4.3.1	Data Gathering Process	58
4.3.2	Writing the Articles	63
4.4	Ethical Considerations	67
4.4.1	Trustworthy Methodology?	67
4.4.2	Collegial Relationship	68
4.4.3	Environment, Ecology	69
4.4.4	Ethics as a Teacher	69
<b>5</b>	<b>Summary of the Articles</b>	<b>73</b>
		<b>73</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Last chapter in PART I</b>	<b>81</b>
		<b>81</b>
6.1	Discussion	81
6.1.1	What does an exercise consist of?	82
6.1.2	What are the potentials of exercises in live art, live art education and participatory artworks?	84
6.1.3	How can the exercises facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not-yet planned to happen?	86
6.2	Discussion in Dialogue with Colleagues	88
6.3	Summary of Findings and Prospects for Future Research	98
<b>7</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>101</b>
		<b>108</b>
	<b>PART II</b>	<b>108</b>
	<b>Full text articles</b>	<b>108</b>

<b>Article I - On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Article II - How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education.</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Article III - A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Article IV - Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>178</b>
Clarification of responsibility for the articles	178
List of performances, installations and workshops mentioned in the thesis:	180
List of conference presentations, related to PhD-project:	181
List of tables, figures and images.	182
List of approved PhD-courses:	183
Appendix for article II	184

# Acknowledgements

**Exercise:**

Make a long list of people, ideas, things, places, books and moments that help you.

This is the page of a thesis that, statistically, most people will read first, so I can start by thanking you for showing interest. My work as an artist is much more than a work. It is a lifestyle and compassion that lures me to say yes to and initiate new performance projects all the time; I promised myself that if I were to do a PhD, the artistic work would still be my priority during the process. On top of my work as an artist, I have been teaching and doing development work at the university, travelling to teach and perform other places, had several positions on boards of art institutions and been a mother for three; all the while, I have been writing this thesis. It is not a work that I would be able to do without the support and help of many human and nonhuman agents. The list of people and things that helped me get the PhD done is long, and this is just a peek into that process.

I would like to thank my patient supervisors throughout the whole period, Professor Hilde Blix and Professor Ray Langenbach. Hilde, I especially thank you for your presence, belief and sharp feedback. Ray, I especially thank you for bringing in challenging and new perspectives.

I have been given economic support and institutional framing by UiT, the Arctic University of Tromsø, where I have been welcomed and affiliated with different communities and colleagues. My studio and working environment have been at the Art Academy, my teaching duty and, later, my part-time employment as associate professor (førsteamanuensis) in the performing arts at the Drama and Theatre department at the Music Conservatory, and my research education has been through the Faculty of Humanities, educational research. I was also grateful to have the

finances to spend a study year in the research department at the Theatre Academy, University of the Arts in Helsinki, Finland. In all these places, I have been given support from my colleagues and have had many important collaborations. Thank you all! Discussions, seminars and space for writing, this latter especially organised by my research group in art pedagogy, has also been important.

My professional life outside the university has essentially supported my PhD, both in the form of belonging to an art community and context, as well as several art projects that are part of this thesis. Without being part of the art world, especially creating new works and collaborating to shape what live art is today, this thesis would not have made sense to do. The art and development of art happens outside the university. The list of colleagues and friends in Norway and Finland I would like to mention is long. You know who you are, and I will continue to collaborate with you!

Thanks to my children: Inkeri, Toivo and Vilja . Life goes on at this very moment, and you remind me daily of what this thesis is about—how to give space for and create the unpredictable and unknown future. And thanks to my parents, Jorid and Olavi, for all their support.

And last but not least, thank you, Stein, for always being there to take care of the family when I am not there. Usually, performance artists and art pedagogues would say that their kids are those who intuitively would understand their work best, but in our family, you are a front figure in living the art and having a playful mind.

*Fragments from the list of people and things that have helped me: (...), Coffee, Walking the dogs, Holidays (for working and for real breaks), Empathy, Ferske Scener, Early mornings, Time, Rebekka, co-writer Liisa, the journals that published my articles (...)*

# List of Peer-reviewed Articles

## Article I – accepted and published 29.11.2021

Junttila, K. (2021) On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy. *RUUKKU Studies in Artistic Research*. Nr 17 “Everyday Utopias”.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22501/ruu> Editors of the special edition: Pilvi Porkola and Suvi Salmenniemi

Direct link to the exposition: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/722219/808598>

## Article II – accepted and published 30.06.2021

Valkoinen, K. J. (2021) How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education. *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, 5(2).

<https://doi.org/10.23865/jased.v5.2649>

## Article III – accepted and published 15.12.2020

Junttila, Kristina (2020) «A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.” *Nordic Journal of Art and Research*. Vol 9 Nr 1. <https://doi.org/10.7577/information.4083>

## Article IV – accepted and published 2019

Jaakonaho, L. & Junttila K. (2019) ”Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy”. Østern A. & Knudsen K. N. (ed.) *Performative Approaches in Arts Education: Artful Teaching, Learning and Research*. London: Routledge.



## **PART I – Summary Article**



# 1 Introduction

**Exercise:**

Turn the alarm on twenty-one minutes and twelve seconds and write nonstop until the alarm goes off.

I turn the alarm on for twenty-one minutes and twelve seconds, and I start to write. I will write nonstop until the alarm sets off. It makes the writing easier and perhaps I can write the first sentences of my thesis. Like a way of just deciding that it will happen, I perform that I write a thesis and at the same time I also do it. This thesis is about exercises, about scores and what happens when we do the exercises. I do not actually want to write a thesis, it is more fun to make performances, to meet the audience in the framing of a performance and to be in the discussion and process, which this mode of being creates. But of course I want to write a thesis. I want to dig deeper, to find new questions and to contribute to the development of the field, and most of all, to make a difference. And to just do it. Like in a Nike commercial from the 90s. There is still seven minutes left of writing and I already checked Facebook once. I like the space of Facebook, to meet and check what is happening in the life of friends. I also like the idea of writing a thesis, to write something that you and my two other colleagues interested in performance art and pedagogy will read. I have read that the right length of an introduction for a thesis is 2500 words, and I google how long a time it takes to write that number of words.

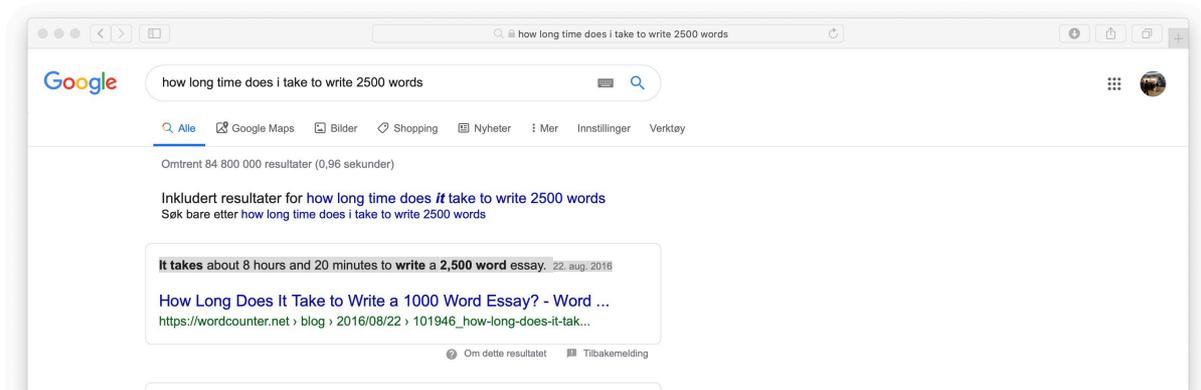


Figure 1 - Google search

The alarm goes off while I am googling, and I have learned that it should take 8 hours and 20 minutes to write this introduction. Most probably I will use more time, especially if I continue to let myself be distracted in all possible ways. You could say that this exercise is also a distraction from writing my thesis. However, the setting of frameworks and exercises, often in a way that make me look at things from a new perspective, has been an important part of my thesis work, as it is interlinked with the theme of this research. This thesis is therefore structured so that each chapter starts with a self-assigned exercise for writing. This performative framework for the thesis might also contribute an insight into my project.

The thesis consists of four peer-reviewed published papers and a summary article (in Norwegian: “kappe”), consisting of this introduction, an introduction to the field, theoretical framework, methodology, discussion, and overall conclusion. In this introduction I will first present the research questions and the overall theme of the thesis. I follow up with the framework for my research: my institutional, scientific, and artistic positioning and a short summary of my research journey, what I have done and introductions to the four peer-reviewed papers.

## 1.1 Research Questions and Themes

My project is an art pedagogical project, focusing on *the exercise as an event* in live art and live art education. I look at the the potential of exercises facilitating the unknown in live art, participatory art, and education within this same field. My

research questions are as follows: *What are the potentials of exercises in live art, live art education and participatory artworks? What does an exercise consist of? How can the exercises facilitate inclusive spaces that gives room for the not-yet planned to happen?*

I am interested in how exercises shape the future and imagination of live art, and how the exercises can facilitate an inclusive and sustainable practice. In this thesis, exercises have a wide definition, meaning anything that initiates action or participation, ranging from the teacher-given exercise to a student, event scores, short performance scripts, and how the performance space matters in a participatory performance.

This thesis:

- Analyse exercises and their impact used in different settings in live art education and artworks (where I act as a teacher or artist) and determining what exercises can do in initiating the becoming of the future in live art and live art pedagogy.
- Discuss in what way exercises can be an active agent and operate as part of a complex landscape intra-acting with the surroundings to initiate action, meanings, knowledge and questioning.

I am looking for the potentials or the possibilities we can create through the exercises. A potential means “that which is possible” (as opposed to *actual*) and “capable of being or becoming” (Harper, 2022). Shortly said, I want to look at the possibilities we can create through the exercises, how the exercises are becoming and creating what is not yet there. Further, potential comes from Latin *potentia*, meaning that there is a “power, force, political power, authority and influence” (Dictionary, 2017; Harper, 2022). I am interested in the power and force or the agency the exercises can have, i.e., how the exercises matter. Through imagining, creating, and executing exercises, I can use them as a method to create new performances, for the audience to participate in my performances and for the students to create their own performance work. I look at

the exercises from an ontological perspective, as an event that is facilitating and initiating the future. The way exercises are facilitated, mediated, and performed in live art, live art education and participatory performances does important work in creating participation, freedom, and political agency.

From a practical point of view, the exercises can work as a methodology to create new performances for me, other performance artists and students. Live art is a multifaceted field, which is in constant development and moving between the borders of various art fields. Exercises are applied as a method to engage and initiate action in both live art works and education. As the field is expanding, many new artists are drawn towards it, including through educational institutions, and it is becoming more accessible for a larger audience, hence there is a risk that the experimental nature of the field will be lost. As the field is becoming more and more institutionalised and standardised, it is important to be conscious of what *tactics* (Certeau, 1984) we apply to support the constant development of live art and create potential spaces for something new to be developed. My claim is that this is best done by not creating standards or prepared study goals or achievements, but rather by being open for action, doing and failing, and the exercises can potentially be an important tool in this.

I also look at how the exercises are creating participatory art projects. I do not see participation as an aim since all performances are participatory to different degrees, but I am interested in what initiates different kinds of participation, especially participation that does not feel forced and that gives room for the unexpected and not-yet planned to happen. The thesis provides insight into what creates participation and how exercises are active agents and operate as part of a complex landscape in intra-action with the surroundings to initiate participation.

## **1.2 Background for my Research**

My professional background is as a performance artist and teacher of live art and contemporary theatre. I am interested in searching for new forms a performance can take, contribute to develop the field and search for ways one can be an active part of society through live art. I come from the field of experimental and devising theatre.

During my bachelor's degree in applied theatre at the arts academy of Turku in 2002 – 2006, I started to explore different aspects of site-specific works. This started with an urge to move out of the theatre and black box and into the everyday life of people. My main theoretical sources concerned site-specific art and locational identity (Kwon, 2002). From there, my interest in working relationally and with different modes of participation emerged. During my master's degree in live art and performance studies at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki from 2007 – 2010, I focused on making performance art and events in the public realm where the audience was in focus. I was then examining Allan Kaprow's Happenings, the Fluxus tradition, as well as the contemporary debate on relational aesthetics (Bishop, 2012; Bourriaud, 2002; Kester, 2004). My artistic practice has since been varied, with many different collaborative art projects, where my focus has been on context-specific works, audience relationship, participation and interdisciplinary works between live art, visual art, theatre, performance art and pedagogy. Alongside my work as an artist, I have been teaching contemporary theatre, live art and performance art at various levels and for multiple groups, ranging from professional artists and art universities to children and groups with special needs.

This research is artistic practice-led research, based on my own performances, live installations, workshops, and teaching within live art, undertaken during the years of my research from 2013 - 2020. The research, as well as my artistic practice, is interdisciplinary. It lies at the intersections between artistic practice and research, performance studies (Schechner, 2006), art pedagogy and post qualitative inquiry (St. Pierre, 2019), drawing from a theoretical framework of posthumanism and new materialism, especially agential realism (Barad, 2003, 2007).

This thesis is affiliated with the Arts Academy, University of Tromsø, Arctic University of Norway, but my doctoral research education is through the Faculty of Humanities, educational research, at the same institution. The Faculty of Humanities has no former tradition of artistic research. Hence, I will position my research in the field of educational science, but I emphasise the role of the art and its ways of thinking and doing. In educational science, there is an increasing amount of research with a

posthumanist theoretical framework and the methods interrelate with methods applied in artistic research (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016; Sandvik, 2015; Snaza & Weaver, 2015). In art-history the focus is researching *on* art, while in artistic research it is *through* art. Being an artist, I experience that my best way to contribute to the field is with research *through* my practice; that is where my knowledge lies.

I have chosen to go into the research through acting within and at the blurred borders of different fields and research traditions. One important way of getting inspiration for writing is to be clear about my reasons for doing this research. In Pilvi Porkolas' doctoral thesis about *Performance as research* where she examines questions on politics, documenting and the personal in live art (Porkola, 2014), she makes a list of different reasons for doing artistic research, referring to several writers about it. Inspired by this, I made my own list of reasons for doing this research: 1) develop pedagogical tools that will keep live art in constant movement; 2) create and formulate knowledge about ways of initiating participation in live art; 3) widen the concept of what a performance can be and what constitutes a performance; 4) develop an equitable and inclusive practice for the future; 5) take part in the public debate on the development of the relationship between live art and society and especially how it can make a difference; and 6) widen my network and ideas to become a better artist.

Throughout the research period I have been upholding my professional practice as a performance artist and have shown works at festivals, galleries, and theatres. I have been doing different art projects — working with film, visual art, performance art, site specific projects, art pedagogical projects, participatory works, and dance, mainly in collaboration with other artists. This has been necessary to keep up-to-date with my practice and the art field, but on the other hand it has also stretched the number of years I have used for my research. In addition, my exchange with the Theatre Academy, University of the Arts in Helsinki for one study year, helped me to contextualise the research more to artistic research. During this year I could be fully integrated into an environment where art and research is in focus and where both fields of my research, live art and art pedagogy, are fully present and active. The courses

provided me with a stronger fundament concerning artistic research, as well as the theoretical frameworks of posthumanism and new materialism.

### **1.3 Short Overview of the Thesis**

My thesis is a collection of articles, consisting of four peer-reviewed and published articles, which all consider the research questions from different perspectives. All four articles are peer reviewed, and they have very different formats. The first article is an exposition of exercises from different participatory workshops, performances and installations. It considers what constitutes an exercise and the potential of exercises to shape the future. This article or exposition is written in the electronic format of the research catalogue and published in *RUUKKU Studies in Artistic Research*. The second article investigates exercises from a university course in performance art that I held and is published in the *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*. The third article examines the participatory performance event *Talk for yourself* and looks at how exercises empower participation. It was published in *Nordic Journal of Art and Research*. Finally, the fourth article explores a performative workshop around the theme of disability and ability and is co-written with my colleague Liisa Jaakonauha. The article is a chapter in the book *Performative approaches in arts education: artful teaching, learning and research*. (Østern & Nødtvedt Knudsen, 2019), part of a Routledge series on education.

All four articles investigate what potentials the exercises have, what they consist of, and how the exercises can create affirmative spaces, a zone of potential and future practices. The illustration below illustrates how the articles are interlinked with the research questions.



In addition to the articles, this thesis consists of this introduction, four framing chapters, a discussion and some conclusive comments. In the first chapter, I give an outline of earlier research on the topic and discuss briefly what live art is and what performance art, exercises, participatory art and pedagogy are in relation to it. In the second chapter, I open up the main theoretical concepts within the theoretical framework of posthumanism and critical pedagogy. In the third chapter, I map my research journey and methods of performative and artistic research, using diffractive analysis. This is followed by a summary of the peer-reviewed articles and a chapter with a discussion and conclusion of the findings of my research. The four articles and the appendix are found in the second part of this thesis.



## 2 Live Art, Performance Art, Exercises, Participation, and Pedagogy

**Exercise:**

Write down five memories of moments that made you realize something about the field, from your own art and art teaching experiences.

This chapter aims to contextualise the research in the field of artistic practice and relate it to earlier relevant research. My exercise in this chapter is to write down memories of moments that made me realise something about the field based on my own experiences as an artist, teacher, and audience. This method of contextualising is done through stories and anecdotes from the relevant field. I have divided the chapter into the following areas: defining live art and performance art, exercises in live art, participatory art, live art, and pedagogy.

### 2.1 What is Live Art and Performance Art?

*Memory I:*

*The year is 2010 and I have been asked to create a performance at the New Art Contact Performance Festival in Suomenlinna, Helsinki. I perform the performance "Exercise of Freedom #25 "Create a personal space - the size of the presidential palace - and spend a night there." The performance was part of a series of performances I did in 2009 - 2010 in different public places. In this*

*performance the audience watched me make a fence of an area equitant of the Finnish presidential palace, set up a tent inside the large area and then sleep there for the night. The action was simple and did not require much performing skill from me, but nevertheless required an understanding of the festival's context, the field of performance art and society. I remember clearly that I felt confident about the work, which is not at all always the case. I think my confidence came from the structure; I was newly graduated with a master's in arts as a performance artist. I was asked to perform at a funded performance art festival, and I felt I was part of an art community.*

When I am asked what I am working with as an artist I might say “I am a performance artist, working in the field of live art, especially engaged with different forms of participation.” In this way of doing an introduction, I mention both performance art and live art, which are two interrelated fields. I have chosen to use the term *live art* in the title of the thesis, but it does not exclude the use of the term performance art or research on performance art. In the articles in this thesis, both terms are used. Since this research is based on my own practice, I have found it more important to use the terms that suit the context best rather than to stick to one term. Generally, the works that are included in this thesis are interdisciplinary and could be described as different art fields: live art, performance art, interdisciplinary art, experimental theatre, participatory art, applied art, site specific performances, community art, socially-engaged art, and action art — to name a few.

The terms we use are also part of a language and culture, and since most of my practical research has been done in Norway and Finland, it is relevant to mention what terms I would use in the respective languages. In Norwegian, there is no equivalent term to live art, while “performancekunst” is widely used. This term is mostly established in the visual art field, while people working in live art coming from the performing arts field will often use the term “scenekunst”, which is commonly translated into *performing arts*. However, performing arts is a very broad term that

includes all the performing arts such as theatre, dance, music, and circus. The word “scene” translates into “stage”, and this indicates that the art form happens on a stage, while very often live artworks can happen anywhere. However, in Norway the term “scenekunst” is often used as an umbrella term to include the experimental and interdisciplinary sides of the performing arts, including performances that happen in the public realm and not on a stage. An example of this is how the Norwegian Art Council, the largest public art funding institution in Norway, describes how they value experimentation and interdisciplinarity within “scenekunst”. (Kulturrådet, 2022)

In Finland, the terms “esitystaide” (directly translated: performance art) and “performanssi” (a neologism from *performance art*) are today both established terms. The term “esitystaide” is “used to designate practices related both to performance art and to Live Art” (Arlander, 2009, p. 16) The two terms link slightly differently to its history and traditions, where the term “esitystaide” is more widely used of artists coming from theatre and dance, while “performanssi” is more linked to the history of visual arts. The British concept “Live Art” is also a constructed term, “created to cover various performance forms and artistic practices that have evolved outside institutions and in-between art forms” (Arlander, 2009, p. 17).

Live art is a multifaceted field, which is not easily defined as it is in a flux between various art fields. The word “live” indicates that the art includes the presence of the artist and/or spectator. Live art is influenced by and refers to performance art, action art, Happenings, participatory art, and body art in fine art history, as well as experimental theatre, dance, and socio-political activism. Live art explores the boundaries of the live action of bodies, time, and space. Often, the core of live art involves disrupting boundaries, resisting definitions, asking awkward questions, taking risks, activating the audience, and being in constant development (Goldberg, 1998; Heathfield, 2004). To define performance art succinctly is to dive into an ongoing discussion, ranging from strict definitions to a more open notion of a diverse field in which various manifestations, aesthetics, and methods are accepted (Nauha, 2017, p. 14).

To question the concept of what a performance is and can be, and to experiment with new forms and working methods, is also something that has been an integral part of my practice. On my webpage I write “Kristina’s definition of what a performance can be, is wide. Her performances can take form as an exercise, conceptual art piece, video work, installation, intervention, full length performance, intimate meeting, quiz or as a relational event. She plays with established conventions, often using documentary material and still evoking imagination.” (Junttila, 2021a)

Linked to the practical field of live art is the interdisciplinary academic field of “performance studies”, which examines the world *as* performance and where the theory of *performativity* is central (Schechner, 2006). In performance studies, performance is used as a tool to study the world and *performance* is understood broadly, basically including anything that can be studied as performance. Due to the broad definition of what a performance can be, the interrelations between performances and society, and the acceptance of a mix of research methods, it is relevant to place this research within this academic field. In the research project *How to do things with performance*, from 2016 - 2021, four researchers address the ontology of performance today through artistic research, performance studies and their own practice as artists. The project asks what can be done with performance, what actualises when a performance takes place, when it is documented, and when it is written about. With a focus on material-discursive practices and agency of matter, the “project seeks to update the theory of performativity vis à vis new materialist theories of agential realism and non-philosophy.” (Arlander, Järvinen, Nauha & Porkola, 2021). Also, Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk (2016) in her Practice-as-Research PhD thesis “Toward a Materialist Practice of Staging Documents” focuses her attention towards a materialist rather than individualist view, questioning notions of authorship, subjectivity, relation, and control in performative practices. The focus on material-discursive practices and performance is in line with my research, and with trends within live art and performance art research today.

## 2.2 Exercises in Live Art

*Memory II:*

*“Drink coffee by tying a thread between the coffee drinkers’ hands.” This exercise or coffee event score was part of the performance art project “Kahviland” by me and Leena Kela from 2010 - 2014. The main artistic tool was to write coffee exercises, or short performance scripts which could be performed by us, audience participants or just work as a performance-aphorism or reflection on something that potentially could be performed. The first time this coffee exercise was performed for the camera by me and Leena, mainly to create visual documentation. Later the same exercise was performed in a board meeting by the board of Korundi, Rovaniemi art museum, while Kahviland had a laboratory at the museum. In the new setting the same exercise got a different meaning, and the relational between the board members, the setting of a board meeting, combined with the unusual task of having their hands tied together, made the whole situation more unpredictable and risky.*

Live art exercises or event scores (short performance scripts) can in themselves be the art product. The project is an example of this, and it was also a key project that functioned as a starting point for the development of my PhD-project. In art history, event scores can be traced back to the Fluxus and Happening traditions in the 1960s and 1970s, where the artists wrote event scores or scripts in which the fusion of art and life was emphasised. The event scores were often marked by simplicity, playfulness and chance, and they could, for example, take form as recipes, action instructions, musical scores, a synopsis or a timeline; they can be concrete or more abstract. Happenings and Fluxus events both point towards what Kaprow calls “the blurring of art and life” (Kaprow, 2003). In both of these art forms, the audience is seen as an integral creating or completing element in the performance, making them participatory. One important way of getting the audience to participate is by giving instructions and performing exercises. The simple and playful form of the event score, the fusion between art and life and participation as an integral part of the performance, are all elements that have inspired me in this research.

There are also other artists and art works within live art referencing exercises that have inspired me. Basically, the published works with exercises can be divided into exercises as artistic works, similar to the Fluxus event scores and exercises used in art pedagogical settings. In my thesis, I analyse both exercises as part of artistic works and art pedagogical settings. Examples of published exercises as art works are the *Oblique strategies*, a card-based method for promoting creativity where each card offers a challenging constraint intended to help artists (Eno & Schmidt, 1975), and *Formulas for Now*, a book of “Imaginative formulas for negotiating contemporary life from an eminent group of artistic and scientific minds.” (Obrist, 2008). Examples of published exercise for an art pedagogical settings are *100 exercises for a Choreographer and Other Survivors* (Lilja, 2012), *Schoolbook 2* (Goat-Island, 2000), *Exercises for rebel artists : radical performance pedagogy* (Gómez-Peña & Sifuentes, 2011) and *Performance artist’s workbook. On teaching and learning performance art - essays and exercises* (Porkola, 2017). In the final book listed here, there is a focus on exercises as a tool in the education of live art, and in this thesis, I reference several of the essays in this anthology.

### **2.2.1 What is an "Exercise"?**

The etymology of the term "exercise" goes all the way back to the “Proto-Indo-European” roots (Harper, 2022) indicating being active, and is about a condition of being in active operation; practice for the sake of training, execution of power, physical or spiritual exercise as in the Old French *exercice*, and from Latin *exercitium* it is “training, physical exercise”. Other related words are play, keep busy, follow, carry into effect, and disturb. The term *exercice* is linked both to assignments, training a skill, and keeping physically active – as well as putting something into active use.

Exercises are applied as a method to engage and initiate action in both live art works and education. The role of the teacher and artist is similar in that they both set the frames for an event that in some way or another engages those that partake in it, whether students, audience, or participant. The process of learning and practicing art

traditionally consists of executing and repeating series of exercises. In live art and performance art, the question of craftsmanship – of what is being rehearsed and repeated until it becomes your craft – has been somewhat different from art forms where the tradition is to train a certain skill, as in, for example, ballet dance or learning to play violin. However, there are skills connected to the practice of live art and performance art as well – and by looking at what repeats, we can also see what the skills are and what has agency.

In the essay “Pedagogy against itself in 20 instruments”, artist and professor of live art Ray Langenbach (2017) uses the term *instrument* rather than *exercises* for “material propositions which, when introduced into receptor sites in an environment, synergistically produce a complex and unpredictable aftermath.” (p. 17). Further, he emphasises that an instrument has value both in its own design and in its effects, having agency and bringing out an event. In this essay, Langenbach divides *instruments* into two main sub-species: the *exercise* that is meant more as an “assignment” and *performance works* that demand longer and deeper commitment (p. 18). In my use of exercise, I also use it in both pedagogical settings and for performance works, but I am not utilising such a division. Perhaps this is because the way I use exercise in the performance works is not mainly to describe one whole performance work, but rather an event score – often part of a larger context, or an audience participatory exercise, which is also part of a larger context.

In live art the exercise can be seen as a restriction that initiates something, that makes something possible, an “enabling constraint” (Manning & Massumi, 2014). “Enabling constraint” is a term developed by Eirin Manning and Briam Massumi for rules that limit an action to enable new actions that appear in physical creative work.

“Performance art is not a skilled technique but takes place in between the one who is doing and the ones who are observing it. (...) The performance is in the relationship, but more significantly it is an action.” (Nauha, 2017, p. 64). It is in this emphasis on action and doing something, not with a skill, that I find the exercises useful. The skill

is perhaps more to design exercises for the specific situations, and to be open for all the different interpretations and doings the exercises are open for. My use of exercises in this thesis is thus how they can be active agents and operate as part of a complex landscape in intra-action with the surroundings to initiate action, meanings, knowledge and questions.

### **2.2.2 On the Potential of Exercises**

The exercises are initiatives for making the future and can serve as a tool to potentially recreate the future. The exercise can at its best be a way of discovering how you can be a part of the political, sensuous and social world. The exercises initiate something that has not happened yet. I am looking for a pedagogy of the event, a pedagogy that is not instrumental but focuses on the potential of what we can become: a messy, unexpected, untamed, complicated space. The exercises can potentially destabilise, queer and decompose the existing.

A potential means “that which is possible”; it is an unrealised ability. Philosopher Giorgio Agamben emphasises that all potentialities also include the potential of *not* being active, and thus we can also think that new ideas that might just as well come out of being passive, of not performing the exercise. In that way there is a potential also in imagining and creating the exercises (Agamben & Heller-Roazen, 1999).

## **2.3 Participation in Live Art**

*Memory III:*

*In 2007, I was visiting the site-specific art festival Anti in Kuopio, Finland. The Artist and Activist group The Vacuum Cleaner performed a work called “One Hundred Thousand Pieces of Possibility”, which was supposed to happen outside the bank in the middle of the city centre. The work was that 1000 Euros, the same amount as the artist fee, would at an announced time be left in a big*

*pile of one cent coins outside the bank, for the audience to take as much money as they wished. The moment the work opened, half of the audience ran towards the pile of money and filled their bags, while the other half of the audience was observing the situation. The situation accelerated when a few members of the audience started a fight for the last money, while many of us were still just watching. I have heard that this same work has been put up in galleries and that then the pile of money has hardly been touched. As an introduction to “participation in live art”, I find it an interesting example of how much the context matters on how the audience will participate and how comfortable they feel about their way of participating.*

Today, many artists and researchers are exploring the notion of participation in the arts and performance (Bala, 2018; Berg, 2017; Bishop, 2012; Jackson, 2011; Kester, 2004). I have been working with different modes of participation in my art works for twenty years. My contribution to this field is through developing methods for participation. My point of departure is that all live performances are participatory, with participants producing their own experience in relation to their personal backgrounds: ‘Every spectator is already an actor in her story; every actor, every man of action, is the spectator of the same story’ (Rancière, 2009, p. 17). However, different disciplines have distinct notions of participation, depending on their aesthetic and political history, and conventions of the art form (Bala, 2018). This focus on how “competing ideas on participation are embedded in aesthetic models and concepts, cultural political goals and hierarchies and power structures that artists and institutions in the performing arts field must negotiate”, is also pointed out in the Norwegian thesis “Negotiating the Participatory Turn: Audience Participation in Contemporary Theatre and Performance” by Ine Therese Berg (2020). In this multifarious discussion, we need to be aware of what kind of competence is required to work in a participatory manner. The present study is in line with the notion that both artistic and pedagogical competence are needed, as addressed by Lisa Nagel and Lise Hovik (2014). These researchers have carried out studies of participation in children’s performances in particular, and they have discussed what is required to produce *deep participation*,

where the participants are dedicated to the experience. Nagel (2013) mentions the need for knowledge about children's reality and experience as a necessary competence.

In the artistic research project *Baby Body*, Tone Pernille Østern and Lise Hovik (2017) use agential realism and new materialism to look at how *co-creation* functions as a methodological agent in a creative research project. They discuss how co-working on the material and co-creation are *performative agents* and drive the creative process. My study is also informed by the theoretical framework of agential realism and new materialism, where the focus is on how the agency is not only about how we, as humans, act upon each other, but also how the material-discursive practice has a constitutive power (Barad, 2003). I frame audience participation as a complex and time-consuming practice with a focus on how the material-discursive practice also produces participation. In many ways, this interdependence and how the whole environment influences the learning experience is transferable to the performance situation.

## 2.4 Pedagogy and Live Art

*Memory IV:*

*One course during my first years of being an art student that had an important impact for me later was called "dream course", which lasted for a couple of months. During the course we read theatre history while our most important task was to remember those things that interested us, and to take this as inspiration to create concepts, ideas and working methods for own performances. Every week we realised our ideas through directing and doing all kinds of demos together with and for the fellow students. To base our future ideas on history, to practise creating concepts, realise ideas and get feedback. First of all, practising that anything is possible.*

This above example from my own experience as a student is a pedagogy based on students' own experience and an open definition of an art form, which is essential to teach live art. Venke Aure (2013) point to how different art didactic traditions are connected to similar views on art and epistemology. Aure classifies different art

didactic traditions, where the three first have similarities to a modernistic art view. These traditions are based on the idea that it is possible to determine what is beautiful, what is good and what is the truth. The two last ones, which she calls *relational pluralistic-* and *performative art didactics*, are based on the idea that art is in constant change; it can be multiple things, and it is redefined according to the context (Aure, 2013, p. 14). It is in this *performative art didactics*, where we can redefine and recreate what live art can be, that I situate this work.

In this thesis, including the four articles, the term *pedagogy* is repeatedly used. Pedagogy relates syntactically and etymologically to the education of very young children, while *andragogy* is the term used to facilitate learning situations for adults and self-directed learners. Moreover, the term *heutagogy* is the management for self-managed learners. (Center for online learning, 2022) However, the exercises and the theories in this thesis can be applied to a wide spectrum of ages and they will mostly be used for self-directed and self-managed learners. Even though the use of the term pedagogy therefore might be misleading I will still use it here. Pedagogy has become the generalised term and most of the bibliographical sources in this thesis uses this term.

In live art there are parallels between the actual art form and how it is taught. Since one of the prerequisites for live art is *liveness*, which often involves intersubjective exchange, the connection to pedagogy is direct. Both live art and pedagogy strive for different forms and levels of participation. It is important to note, however, that the motivation behind the intersubjective exchange and participation is often fundamentally different in artworks and pedagogy. This research aims nevertheless to contribute to the methodology of the practicing performance artist, the educational field of live art, *as well* as methods used to initiate participation. The reason for this broad aim comes from the focus on the *potential of exercises* and the focus on developing methods.

Live art pedagogy is still a marginal field, but lately there has been a rise in the number of institutions offering education in live art and research in the field. I belong

to a generation that is educated into the field, with a MA in live art and performance studies. One of the first studies connected to live art and performance art pedagogy is the book “Performing Pedagogy: Toward an Art of Politics” by Charles Garoian (1999). The study is about the potential of performance art in the educational process and links education to Austin’s performative utterances by pointing out that what we say represents an act of doing. In this way what we say and do affects both teaching and learning (Garoian, 1999, p. 3). If we look at the exercises also as performative, this point is relevant to the research of exercises in teaching and how they are mediated and passed on. Garoian refers to Paulo Freire, an influential theorist in critical pedagogy, when he suggests that teaching performance art is about attaining political agency because the art form uses personal history, identity politics, critique of dominant cultural assumptions, and participatory democracy in the works and processes (Garoian, 1999).

Freire takes up the question of the autonomy of the student and argues for an education that goes beyond merely giving the students tools for technical training. The teacher facilitates an environment where the student can develop an independent and critical understanding of the subject in the power and economic matrix and the world. This is taught by encouraging the students to be curious and ask questions. By creating a subjective and not objective relationship to knowledge, the students learn to develop critical reflection and become active participants in society. Freire emphasises that teaching is above all a human act, where the students learn to become free (Freire, 1996). In live art, one’s personal, social and economic history is an integral part of the art form and in line with Freire’s ideas. I aim to develop methods that allow each student to use their own personal history and knowledge.

In later studies, Garoian (2014) calls for a pedagogy that is exploratory, experimental and improvisational and that can embrace unanticipated crises and events: “An untamed messy pedagogy” (p. 384). For Garoian, performance art pedagogy is the praxis of postmodern theory: it creates discourses and practices that resist cultural conformity through multi-centric, participatory, indeterminate, and reflexive strategies. It abandons the dominant, cultural mainstream and aims to reposition the marginalised

body. Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005) argues that pedagogy must be “in the making” and that the design of mediated learning environments and the embodied experience is essential in facilitating a “space of continuing experience”. According to Ellsworth, “It must do this so that those who have not participated in its history — in making the knowledges already arrived at — may participate in making its future” (2005, p. 166). This is in line with how I, in the present study, investigate how exercises and an embodied and exploratory pedagogy can serve as a tool in performance art education to recreate the potential future of performance art.

There are a few studies and books written or edited by live art and performance art practitioners related to pedagogy and live art and performance art. One of the books that I was introduced to during my master’s studies was “The Analysis of Performance Art” (Howell, 1999). This book presents a method or *grammar* on how to teach performance art with examples from the field and with practical exercises, based on a psychoanalytic critique. Another practical handbook written by two performance artists is “Exercises for rebel artists. Radical Performance Pedagogy” (Gómez-Peña & Sifuentes, 2011). This book also offers practical exercises and tools for teaching and self-training. The book advocates teaching as an important form of activism and as an extension of the performance aesthetic. “Education for Socially Engaged Art. A Materials and Techniques Handbook” (Helguera, 2011) is another small handbook of exercises and examples on how to teach socially engaged art. In the edited book, “How we teach performance art. University courses and workshop syllabus”, there are also examples on how different performance artists teach their subject. Another source, the “Performance Artist’s Workbook. On teaching and learning performance art – essays and exercises” (Porkola, 2017) contains two sections – the first part is a collection of practical exercises from performance artists, where I have also made a contribution, and another consists of a section with essays.

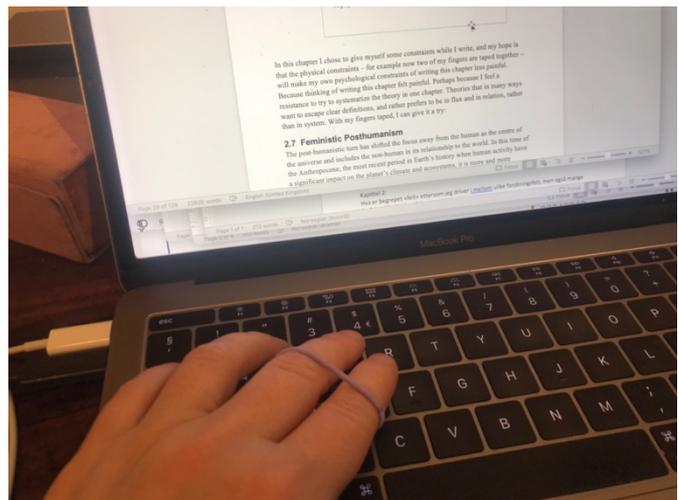


### 3 Theoretical Framework

**Exercise:**  
A physical constraint

In this chapter, I chose to give myself some constraints while I write, and I hope that the physical constraints – for example, now I write with a rubber band around two of my fingers on both hands – will make my own psychological constraints of writing this chapter less painful.

Thinking of writing this chapter felt painful, perhaps because I feel a resistance to try to systematise theory in one chapter, theories that in many ways want to escape clear definitions, and prefer to be in flux and in relation,



rather than in systems. Another reason for this exercise concerns the theories and how the physical also matters. I start by placing my work in feministic posthumanism, and especially explain agential realism. As an entrance into understanding the concept of exercise, I am also entering into the concept of event.

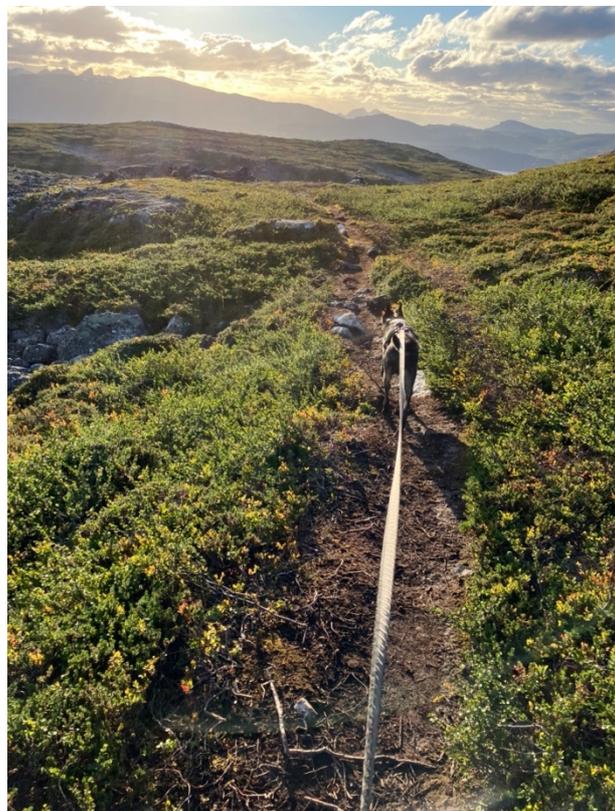
With my fingers entangled together, I can give it a try:

### 3.1 Feministic Posthumanism

**Exercise:**  
Walk and write

In the beginning of my PhD-journey in 2013, I was not so acquainted with posthumanism. During my master's I had familiarised myself mainly with poststructuralism, and I was also acquainted with phenomenology. However, it was when I became more familiar with feministic posthumanism, and especially agential realism, that I felt I had “found” the theoretical framework that suited my research, as well as my interest and way of working as a performance artist. The reason these theories felt right was that they provided me with a framework of looking at how the different components in a creative process and performance are tangled and in interaction. To find theories that took into consideration the hierarchy of a performance process, a teaching situation, performance and how everything influences the others felt important.

The posthumanistic turn has shifted the focus away from the human as the centre of the universe and includes the non-human in its relationship to the world. In this time of the anthropocene, the most recent period in earth's history when human activity is acknowledged to have the most significant impact on the planet's climate and ecosystems, it is more and more apparent how humans are “entangled in co-constitutive



relationships with nature and the environment, with other animals and organisms, with medicine and technology, with science and epistemic politics.” (Åsberg & Braidotti, 2018, p. 1). There are several directions within posthumanism, but a common point of view is that non-humans also have agency, allowing them to create the future and what is *becoming* in the world. Posthumanism fights the dichotomies or modern divisions between human and non-human, culture and nature, body and brain, and theory and praxis. You could rather say that there is a continuum between the so-called dichotomies and that they are in relation to each other and influencing each other. Nature and culture, for example, are not two opposites, but they are interrelated, and have also come to depend on each other. Posthumanism draws on multiple sources of thought, creative practice, art, science, and various minoritarian areas of study (2018).

Bringing in the ‘feminist’ perspective on the posthuman entails even more inclusive and non-reductive practices, drawing on equality between different genders and species. Feministic posthumanism moves away from white patriarchal centrism and into the margins, decentring, deconstructing, queering, and decolonising, moving away from normative assumptions and embracing the unknown. Feministic posthumanism has no firm identity. Rather, it acknowledges diverse practices and theories that claim the existence of the excluded others of the humanities, such as “human-animal studies, plant theory, corporealities, cultural studies, science and technology studies, medical humanities, media studies and digital humanities, educational sciences, child studies, post-Derridean or post-Foucauldian studies, art and crafts, gender studies, cultural geography, vegan philosophy, queer theory and unnatural sexuality studies, environmental humanities, heritage studies, and much more.” (Åsberg & Braidotti, 2018, p. 16).

Posthumanist feminist theorists see the subject as interdependent, relational, vulnerable, and entangled with social and material structures. Already in the early 1990s, in the groundbreaking essay ‘Cyborg Manifesto’, Donna Haraway (1991) pointed at how humans are entangled with technology and science, other non-human animals and the environment. It is not only humans who are creating the world, but we

are *becoming with* all that surrounds us. Human imagination is not something external, but actively producing the reality we are part of.

### **3.1.1 Feministic Posthuman Pedagogy**

The shift to decentre humans within education is a shift towards greater attention towards how everything, also the material, matters in the learning process. Teaching is a complex practice that is interdependent with the entire teaching environment, including the structure, theme, facilities, and practical exercises of the course (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016; Lenz Taguchi, 2011).

The intra-active pedagogy does not deal with what the learner is, but what emerges in that newly created assemblage, as the focus is on doing and becoming, rather than being. Learning is co-created and not passed down, learning *with* rather than *about*. Individuals cannot be perceived without their environments, as they are in intra-action. In the intra-active pedagogy, we as humans are relational and mutually agentic beings (Lenz Taguchi, 2011).

### **3.1.2 Agential Realism**

This thesis draw especially on theories from the feminist register of science studies, from the philosophy of Donna Haraway through the work of physician and feminist theorist Karen Barad of agential realism and new materialism. Barad's theories are interdisciplinary and developed in relation to quantum physics, poststructuralism, feminism, and queer theories, among others (Juelskjær, 2019).

Agential realism is seen as part of feminist relational materialism. Central to agential realism and new materialism is a focus on how material-discursive practices also produce knowledge (Barad, 2003). Barad's understanding of performativity is useful for understanding how material is an active agent in performance. Language has had too much power, while matter appears to be the only thing that has not been given importance. Materiality has a constitutive power as well, and it is an active agent in creating the world. Materiality is not important as such, but it gains meaning through its interfaces with other phenomena.

Barad (2007) uses the term *performative agents* to describe active agents with the capacity to change a situation. This way of thinking, that everything matters and has agency, is in many ways implemented in how artists think and work when we create new performances, i.e., the performance objects, the energy level and how we use technology create the performance experience. This notion is one reason why the theoretical framework of agential realism and new materialism is increasingly used as an inspiration by artists and artistic researchers.

Barad also writes about how we are interconnected. She introduces the concept of *intra-action* as an alternative to interactivity, where the different components, such as the material, body and space are separated from each other from the start. In intra-action, no components or performative agents act separately; the borders are fluid and indistinct. Our actions and encounters are part of a complex network of active and equal agents. In this material-discursive performativity, the agency is not only about how we, as humans, act upon each other, but also how the material has constitutive power (Barad, 2003).

According to Barad (2003, 2007), the moments in which the intra-action between the performative agents changes something and takes new forms are called *agential cuts*. The distinct agencies do not precede but rather emerge through their entanglements and intra-actions with other agents. The agent is not a fixed essence but is produced and productive, generated and generative (Barad, 2007).

In agential realism, the focus is not on understanding what something is, but, rather, on *how* it comes into being. The world is being created or becoming through intra-action. The act of being in relation is what creates the future world. The question is not *if* the materials matter but *how* the materiality matters. The performative agents are not something that is constant but something created in the process, continuously becoming and being created anew (Juelskjær, 2019). Further, in agential realism, how the world comes to *be* and how it comes to be *known* are not separate but entangled processes (Barad, 2007). In this entanglement, we cannot fully plan the future. The performative agents shape each other and take responsibility for the event and what it

will become: ‘Intra-actions are constraining but not determining. That is, intra-activity is neither a matter of strict determinism nor unconstrained freedom. The future is radically open at every turn’ (Barad, 2003, p. 826).

Although Barad states that the future is radically open, this does not mean that we should neglect taking responsibility for it. Rather, we can conclude that any performative engagement in the world entails intimate responsibility. There is no content or intention without an ethics or responsibility, and Barad calls this ethico-onto-epistemology (Boyd, 2015, p. 11). All the performative agents that are at play have an ethical dimension and responsibility tied to them, and this needs to be continuously considered.

In this thesis, the concept of intra-action is central, and it is especially used to understand the complexity of what an exercise can be. The focus on how all the components have agency and affect each other relates to the importance of the whole complex landscape of creating change (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016). The knowledge lies in the intertwining of – and relationships between – many components, all of which affect each other and, thus, can potentially disturb dominant practices and create new constellations. In studying how exercises can become performative agents, I study *what has agency* or, in general terms, what has the ‘ability to cause some kind of change’ (Tillman, 2015, p. 32).

## 3.2 Exercise and Event

**Exercise:**  
Writing event

The same time I start to write this, at 6 a.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2022, China is conducting a military “exercise” (the word *exercise* is used in the news) and are practising the invasion of Taiwan. I started to write early after I drove my family to the airport, and now I have two weeks without kids. Before I started writing I walked the dog and ate cloudberry while picking them. Cloudberry are considered a delicacy and hard to find. This morning can potentially become a productive *Writing event*.

The theoretical starting point for the research was an interest in *event* and *the unpredictable*. The nature of an exercise is similar to an event, in the sense that the outcome cannot be fully controlled; it can be something not-yet planned. “Event” comes from the Latin *eventus*, which means “occurrence”, and from the French verb *evenire* which means to come out or happen (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2022). In probability theories and quantum physics, an event is a possible outcome of different probabilities. An event is built upon a process of chance, and it can only be predicted. An event is a result of “restored behaviour”, but what makes it unique is its recombination of the restored behaviour, which is always rebuilt in a new way (Schechner, 2006). Events are particular as they only happen once. The singular event contains the potential of what might happen. According to philosopher Alain Badiou, who wrote the book “Being and Event”, an event is built through the structural relations of the multiplicity. In order for there to be an event, there has to be some kind of “intervention” that changes the rules of the situation and makes it into an event (Badiou, 2005).

In Article III in the thesis (“A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.”), I introduce the concept *zone of potential*. I am suggesting a framed temporary space or site where

there is room for a plurality of potentials and ways of being. I regard the zone of potential as an *event* where something new can take place – both the planned and the unforeseen. Using this perspective, I discuss what needs to be considered by artists, teachers and others who wish to facilitate inclusive situations that allow for a *zone of potential*. In this study, the zone is produced by the performance, and the focus is on what kind of temporary potentials the performance can produce. The zone of potential is created by the framing of the performance, and how the actions and encounters intra-act with each other. The zone of potential includes multiple ways of being in the space; it is a temporary, diverse, and inclusive zone that can potentially produce new beginnings. In all the studies there is a focus on exercises and events, and especially on how an exercise or event can lead to the unpredictable, and new potential life.

It is, however, not my intention to conclude with what an event is, as the meaning of the concept is varied and unstable. For philosopher Alfred Whitehead, events are spatiotemporal happenings and they constitute everything.

“Events are lived through, they extend around us. They are the medium within which our physical experience develops, or, rather, they are themselves the development of that experience.” (Whitehead, 1955, p. 63)

In my thesis I relate event to an ontological tradition – the study of being, becoming and existence. Philosopher Gilles Deleuze is situated in this tradition, and according to him the concept of the event is related to the concept of *becoming*. An event is “becoming of another event and the subject of its own becoming” (Deleuze, 1992, p. 78). The future is constantly being reshaped through actions and encounters, and it is *becoming* through events (Deleuze, 1992). It is through the recombination of our actions and encounters that we are created once again and that something new can occur. A transformation happens within the event; they become different in the process during the event.

Contemporary philosopher Brian Massumi, who collaborates with SenseLab, founded by Eirin Manning, an experimental “laboratory for thought in motion”, relates the event in philosophy to what he calls the *occurrent arts*, meaning interactive art,

performance art, ephemeral art and art intervention. He situates his work in process philosophy and the tradition of Whitehead, as well as Deleuze, among others. He asks “how do we perceive an experience that encompasses the just-was and the is-about-to-be as much as what is actually present?” Massumi argues that by looking at the *situation* as the “object” in interactive arts, it is a technical question to create an event that has a potential of change. He says that at its best art has *event-value*. In such cases the art also becomes aesthetically political in the way that it invents new potential for life. The quality of the experience “can potentially lead to thoughts, sensations and further perceptions that might fold out, toward follow-on in other situations that neither the participants nor the artists can foresee” (Massumi, 2011, pp. 52-54).

### **3.2.1 Pedagogy of the Event**

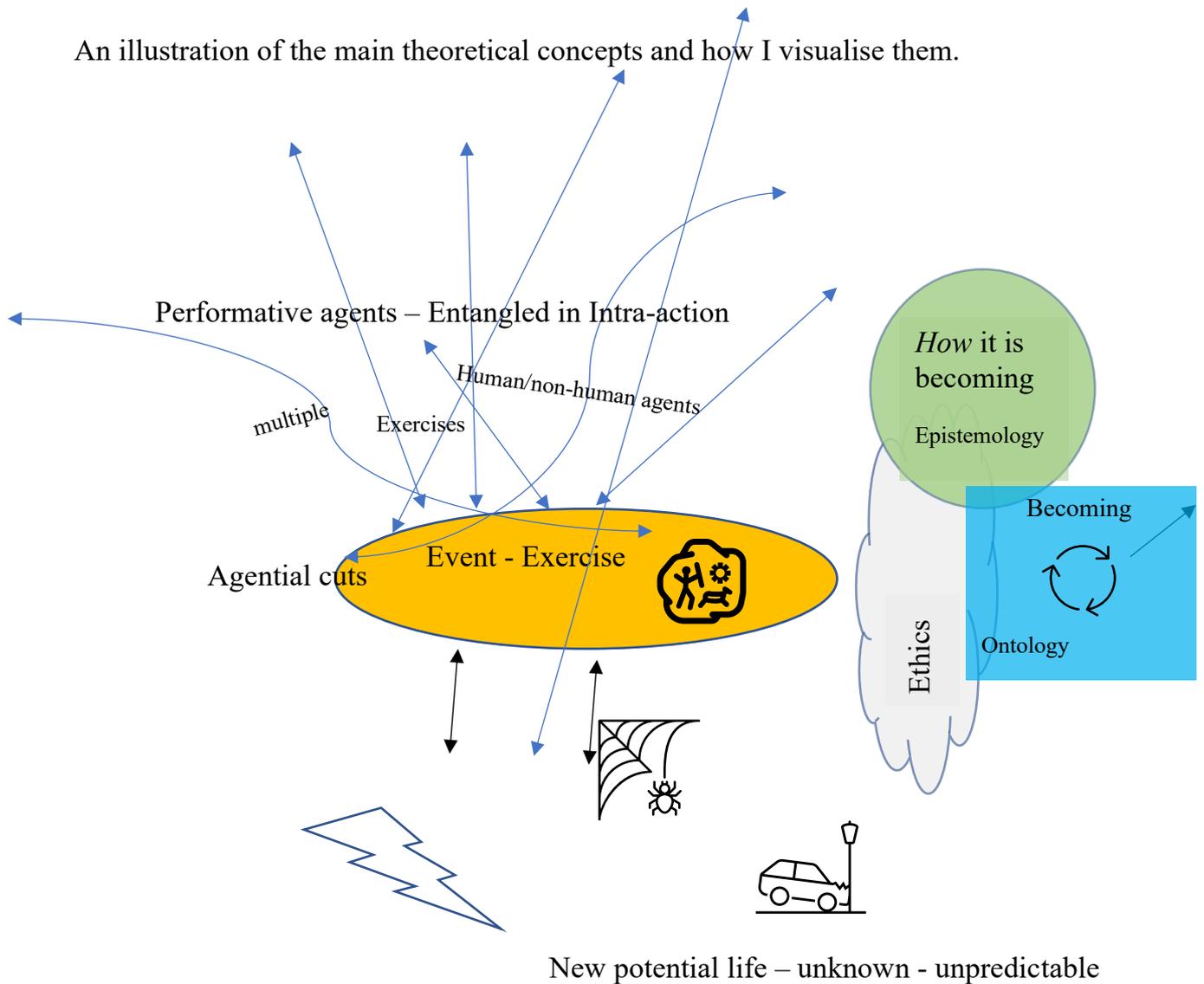
Professor of Educational Studies at the Centre for the Arts and Learning at Goldsmiths University Dennis Atkinson writes about the “Pedagogy of the Event”. According to him, true learning arises through an event “which involves a movement into a new or changed ontological state” (Atkinson, 2009, p. 3). Atkinson refers to the notion of risk taking as a way to promote creative and individual approaches to learning. The idea of risk-taking applies to both teachers and students, and it suggests an educational situation that can accommodate unpredictable forces. Atkinson asserts that learning involves a disruption of established states of pedagogical knowledge and practice. To become something new or learn is always an unpredictable event, and the emphasis in learning does not focus on what we are and should be, but on the potentiality of what we can become (Atkinson, 2011).

In the middle of my research period, I was honoured to have artist and Professor of Arts Education Charles Garoian visit me in Tromsø, and in relation to that I hosted a seminar called “Performance art, Exercises and Untamed Education”. I called it a messy seminar that had space for theory, performative exercises, side-tracks and discussions. There was a special focus on the role of the educational institutions in art education, particularly the degrading of the art faculty at the University of Tromsø, which was happening at that time. On the reading list for the seminar was the article

by Garoian (2014) “In *the Event* that Art and Teaching encounter”. Teaching and art is an imperceptive, immanent event. The learning happens in the messiness and exploration of the event, similar to art-in-the-making.

”The untamed messiness of such an exploratory, experimental, and improvisational ontology is easily perceived as a threat to curricular and pedagogical systems that desire to clean up, manage complexity and contradiction, and prevent any potential unanticipated crisis from emerging in classrooms” (Garoian, 2014, p. 384)

An illustration of the main theoretical concepts and how I visualise them.



**Article I** –Junttila, Kristina “On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art.” Research catalogue. RUUKKU – Studies in Artistic Research. 2021.



**Article II** – Valkoinen, K. J. (2021). How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education. *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, 5(2).



**Article III** – Junttila, Kristina 2020 «A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.” *Nordic Journal of Art and Research*. Vol 9 Nr 1.



**Article IV** - Jaakonaho, L. & Junttila K. 2019. “Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy” London: Routledge.



## 4 Methodological Entanglements

**Exercise:**

Write wherever you are, in the middle of everything.

*Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 – in the middle of the day, at home. Stolen work time. Kids are playing. House remains dirty. Porridge making itself on the stove. I am in isolation due to a positive corona test.*

*Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> of January – feeling not so well today due to corona. The kids went out to play and ski, so I could rest. I decide to write from my bed – with the dog by my side.*

*Monday 31<sup>st</sup> of January – 5 am. Best time to write while everyone is sleeping. One and half hour.*

*Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> of February. Shut up and write on Zoom 9.30 – 12.30 with a colleague. Just so I force myself to write in the middle of all other tasks. If it wasn't for this appointment, I wouldn't have written today.*

*Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of February. Airport Helsinki and plane. On my way home to Tromsø after teaching at the documentary film school. Time is slipping into all other tasks. Write in the middle of it.*

*Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> of February. 5 a.m. Just pretend you have a deadline coming up this week.*

*Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> of July. On a 9-hour bus-ride through Finnish Lapland, together with three impatient kids. It was supposed to be a writing week alone at home, but due to*

*airline strike we had to change the plans, and I have the three kids alone on holiday. Plan is to write in between.*

*Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. And so on... - it seems like the writing always happens in between anyway.*

To write a thesis feels like an eternity, I am in the middle of it for very long. I perform my research while I make art, while I teach, while I write, while I talk about it. The exercise for me is to write whenever and wherever to consciously accept that the writing is happening in the middle of everything, and that is when the research is becoming, in the middle of everything. The research and this text are all the time in relation to something that has been written before, something that has been done before and the situation I am in while I am writing it.

## **4.1 Research Methods**

### **4.1.1 Against Method**

In 1975, philosopher of science Paul Feyerabend wrote the book “Against Method: Outline of an Anarchist Theory of Knowledge” where he argues that science should not build evidence based on a single methodology. He says that you should not fix yourself to one tradition of thinking, but rather have an “anything goes” attitude towards methods (Feyerabend, 1993). His ideas of epistemological anarchy have similarities to research methodologies, which are becoming more common in poststructuralistic research in arts, as well as in pedagogy.

My practical experience of being an artist and teacher in live art for many years is the core of my knowledge. I shift between having distance to the material, by reading my own texts with an analytical eye, and by being in the middle of it and not knowing what my next step should be. I am in between, jumping from role to role; I am in a mess, and I stack the cards to create a new logic, only to stack them once again. It is in the dialogue between all my roles as an artist, teacher, and researcher, with my colleagues, and with theory, that the research takes form. My role as a researcher is

based on my action; it is subjective and embodied. I bring in my experience as an artist and teacher in the research. This can be called ARTography (Springgay et al., 2008). In the end, it is a political choice; it is a question of how I choose to argue for my view on education, participation, and live art. The research questions are always connected to specific cases, and it is important to describe the studies as detailed as possible. Since art-based research is so subjective, transparency is extra important.

The borders between what is evidence, data, fiction or personal story is a blur (Koro-Ljungberg, Löytänen & Tesar, 2017). In my notes from a lecture about philosophy of science, starting with Wittgenstein and ending with Posthumanism, the sentence “posthumanistic thinking cannot be academic” was proposed by the lecturer. Nevertheless, I choose to contextualise the research and my methods within the emerging landscape of posthumanistic and artistic research methods. I follow the logic of Feyerabend’s “anything goes” and will bring in an epistemological plurality.

In this chapter, I will contextualise my research in the wide categories of performative, practice-based- and artistic research. My research process can be understood as rhizomatic, considering the complexity, the diversity, and exploratory nature of the research process. This process is like my process as an artist. Instead of suggesting one method for artistic research, Annette Arlander (2014, p. 38) recommends that an artistic researcher should hold on to at least one of the following during the research process: the question, the method or the material. It is possible to try to fixate them all before the research process starts, but Arlander points out that this is usually idealism and perhaps not preferable either, as it is good to keep the research process as a creative process. Arlander also refers to Feyerabend: “If we agree with Feyerabend that all methods that lead to knowledge are allowed, it is clear that artistic working methods can be as good as any other methods, as long as they are articulated sufficiently clearly” (p. 39). I have held on to the research question throughout the process. The question of the potential of exercises in live art has followed me through the many years of varied processes, art works and workshops. It is only now, in retrospect, that I can thoroughly describe the materials and the method.

### 4.1.2 Practice-led, Performative and Artistic research

Practice-led and artistic research is not an established method for conducting research, but rather a research field and an area for knowledge production (Arlander, 2014). According to Brad Haseman (2006), practice-led and artistic research is not only a shift within the qualitative research paradigm, it belongs to an entirely new research paradigm – performative research. Performative research is the third research paradigm after qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. The performative research paradigm insists on new approaches to designing, conducting, and reporting research. The quantitative paradigm uses a deductive approach, eliminating the individual perspective by analysing statistical data. Moreover, the research result is also presented in the form of numbers, graphs, and data. The qualitative paradigm aims to understand the meaning of human action, and the result is presented through text. These different paradigms result in very different research practices, but they do not necessarily cover the needs for practice-led researchers. One main argument that supports Haseman calling performative research a new paradigm is how it chooses to express its findings. The findings are expressed in nonnumeric data, but in forms of symbolic data other than words in discursive text. These can include still and moving images, sound, and live action. It is possible to use conventional methods such as interviews to complement the research, but all in all new methods and strategies have to be invented, dictated by the phenomena being investigated (Haseman, 2006).

It is, however, not possible to say that there is one method within practice-led, artistic, or performative research. It is rather an entanglement of methods, with different ontologies and scientific backgrounds. As an artist, I am not only informed by the performative turn of qualitative research; more specifically, I am informed by the discourses and practices of artistic research. In artistic research the research happens *through* the arts rather than *on* the arts: knowledge emerges from, and is articulated through, artistic practices that are embodied, experimental, and performative (e.g., Borgdorff, 2012; Hannula, Suoranta & Vadén, 2005; Kirkkopelto, 2008; Porkola, 2014).

As a researcher coming from arts pedagogy, I am also aware of the discourses of post-qualitative research, which have been influential in contemporary educational research. St. Pierre argues that qualitative research has become method-driven, and as such does not do justice to post-structuralist philosophy. She introduces the concept *post qualitative inquiry* to destabilise what she calls the ‘conventional humanist qualitative inquiry’. She recommends researchers to shift the focus from methodology to onto-epistemology by starting with the theory and concepts (St. Pierre, 2011, pp. 613-623). According to St. Pierre, the method and design in qualitative research have become more important than epistemology and ontology. The problem is that rigid, pre-determined methodology can make the research conventional, reductionist, and hegemonic, missing its radical possibility “to produce different knowledge and produce knowledge differently” (St. Pierre, 1997, as cited in St. Pierre 2011, p. 613).

## 4.2 A Diffractive Analysis

The method of analysing the research data has been through a ‘diffractive’ analysis, which is in line with Barad’s agential realism. In diffractive analysis the analysis is done from within, and it looks at the research data through an embodied engagement. I, as a researcher, intra-act and intertwine with the material. *What* we research is entangled with the *way* we research it.

“Practices of knowing and being are not isolable; they are mutually implicated. We don’t obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world. We are part of the world in its differential becoming. The separation of epistemology from ontology is a reverberation of metaphysics that assumes an inherent difference between human and nonhuman, subject and object, mind and body, matter and discourse.” (Barad, 2007, p. 381)

There are no clear borders between the theoretical framework and practice. The practice of diffraction is at the centre, and Barad (2007) defines it as ‘accounting for how practices matter’ (Barad, 2007, p. 88). Diffraction is a concept borrowed from physics that describes how waves change direction as they pass through openings or around a corner (Classroom, 2020). As opposed to being *reflective*, which involves

looking back and reflecting the same image as the original, diffraction is to look forward to what differences it produces. It highlights different possibilities and potentials that depend on how the phenomena considered intra-act with other agents (Østern & Hovik, 2017).

The focus is on the material *effects* of difference and how to study the relationship and co-creation between humans and non-humans. In the diffractive analysis I look for moments in which the exercises have the agency to cut as they intra-act with a constraint, and becomes something new. This is a specific intra-action in which a *diffractive cut* is enacted. In the research, I try to bring to light the moments when the intra-action between agents changes something and takes new forms. The distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through their entanglements and intra-action with other agents. The agent is not a fixed essence but is produced and productive, generated and generative (Barad, 2007). Diffraction happens when different performative agents intra-act. I look for moments of diffraction and agential cuts; what the exercises do as agents and how they create possibilities, rather than their meaning (Scott, 2015).

The artist researcher Annette Arlander (2018) uses Barad to argue that it is important for the artist-researcher to “focus on articulating the apparatus used, the specific agential cuts enacted, and especially the marks on the bodies generated” (Arlander, 2018, p. 144). This can change within a specific case. According to Arlander, I must not only acknowledge my subjectivity and entanglement with the object of research as a researcher “but also account for the agential cuts within the phenomena at hand — that is, what is included and what is excluded from mattering” (Arlander, 2018, p. 144).

I not only observe but also produce phenomena and knowledge. In a similar way, I not only observe what is happening when I teach or make art, but also create the knowledge through the intra-action with the students, audience, and material-discursive environment. My knowledge as an artist, teacher, and researcher is produced in *the making*. All materials ‘have a performative dimension, and are

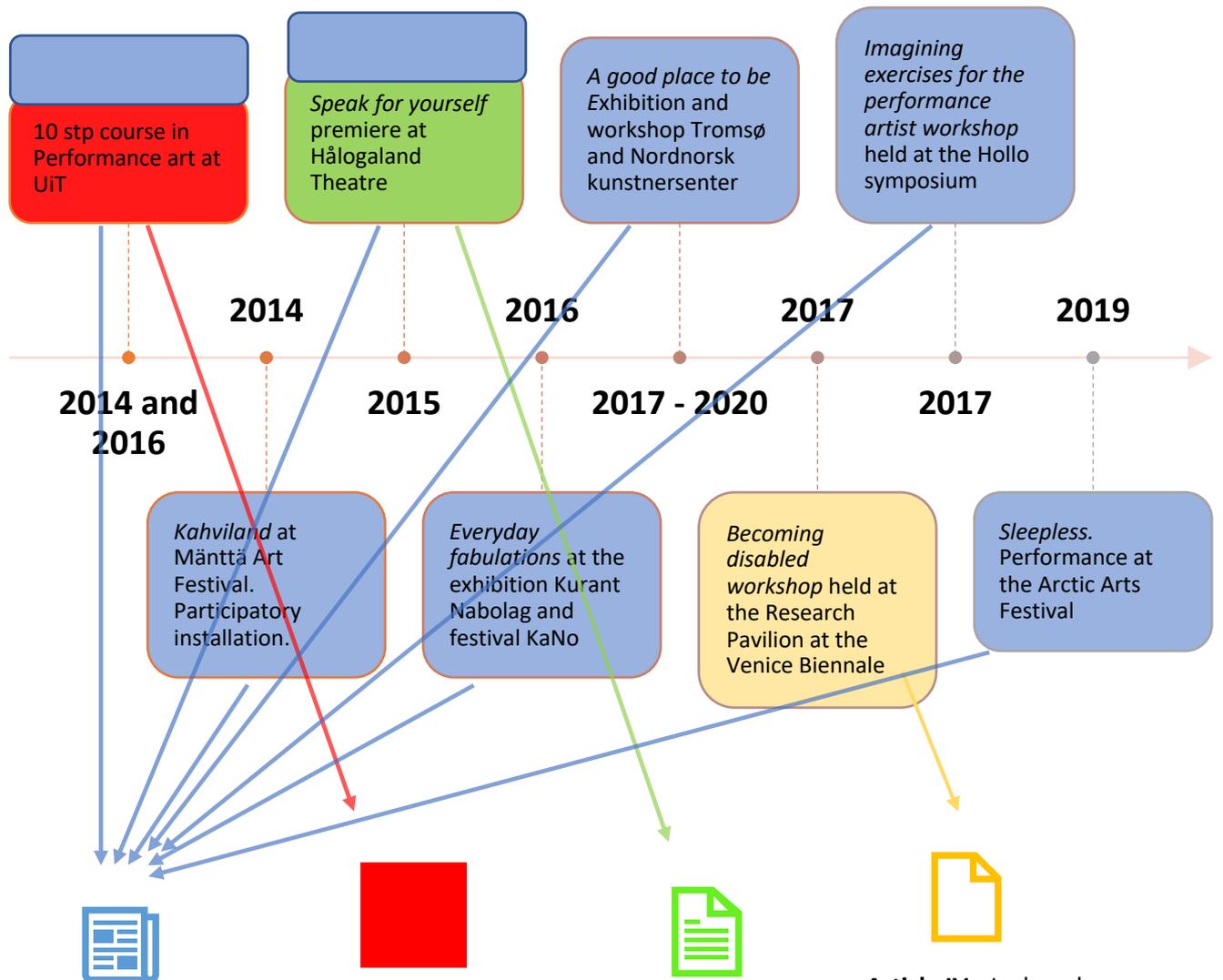
involved in the production of the world rather than offering a neutral and objective description of it' (Sayal-Bennett, 2018, paragraph 10).

Using a diffractive analysis, I identify the potential of the material and its differences, as well as the effect it produces. I am oriented towards what the agents *do*, how they create possibilities, rather than meaning (Scott, 2015). This gives me an opportunity to become attuned to how differences are being created.

## **4.3 Research Journey**

### **4.3.1 Data Gathering Process**

The first data gathering process for this thesis was done during a performance art workshop I held for students at the university in the spring of 2014. Moreover, the last published article, which also included this first workshop as material, was published in November 2021. All in all, the data gathering process has been similar to what I do as an artist and teacher; I planned and executed several workshops and performances. The workshops and performances were done independently from the research in the sense that they were not created merely as research but were in most cases part of a public festival, a curriculum, or an exhibition. However, this does not take away from the process and the product, which also are data for this research, and feed the research as the research feeds them. The illustration is a timeline of the workshops and performances that are part of the studies and how they relate to the four articles. The colour-coding and the arrows show which projects are being studied in which article.



**Article I** –Junttila, Kristina “On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art.” Research catalogue. RUUKKU – Studies in Artistic Research. 2021.

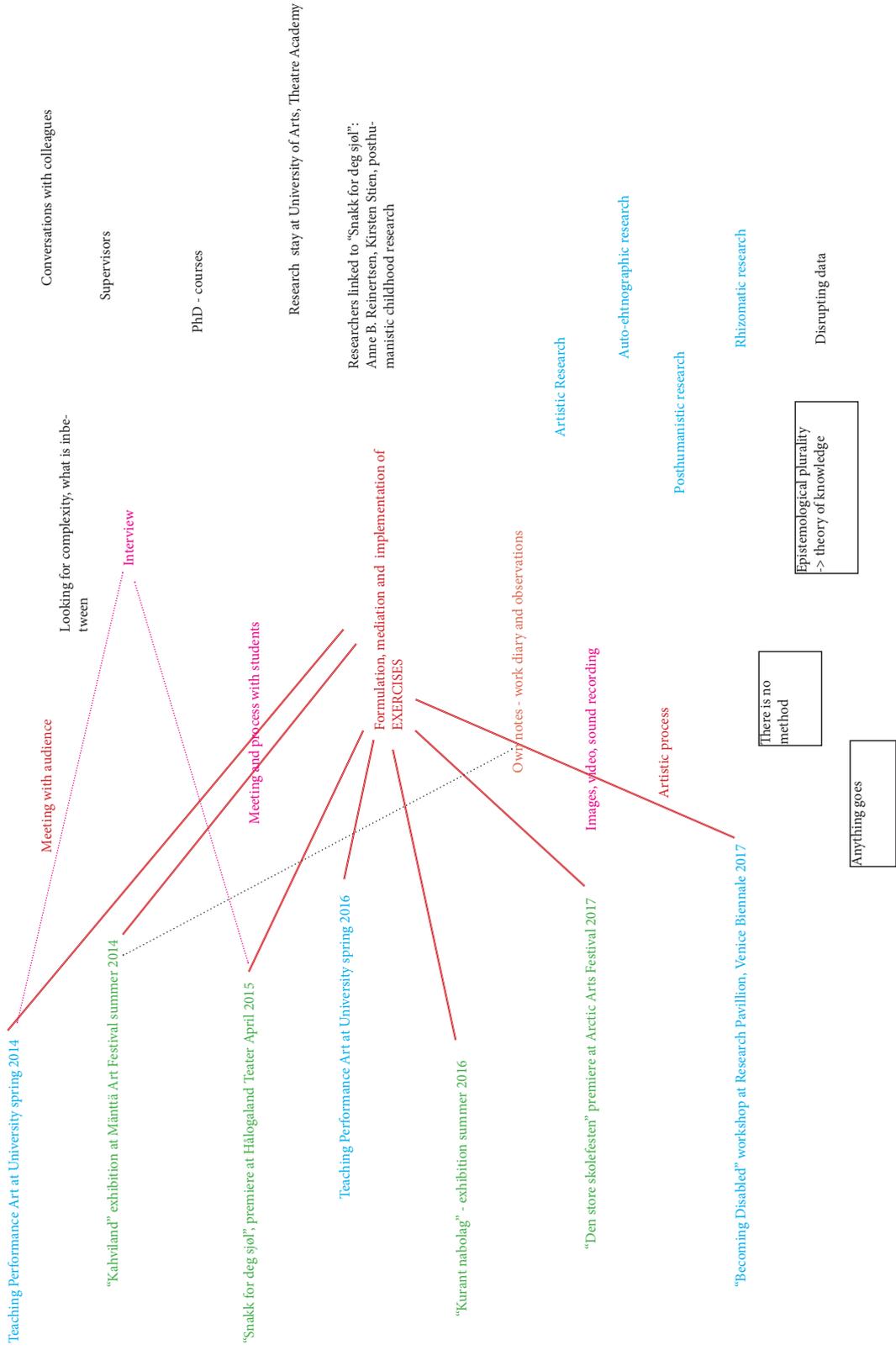
**Article II** – Valkoinen, K. J. (2021). How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education. *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, 5(2).

**Article III** – Junttila, Kristina 2020 «A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.” *Nordic Journal of Art and Research*. Vol 9 Nr 1.

**Article IV** - Jaakonaho, L. & Junttila K. 2019. “Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy”. Østern A. & Knudsen K. N. (ed.) *Performative Approaches in Arts Education: Artful Teaching, Learning and Research*. London: Routledge.

In the previous illustration my research journey seems quite linear, while the next illustration from 2018, when I tried to map my research journey at that moment, show otherwise. In this map I also included art projects and workshops that were related to the research, but which are not mentioned in any of the articles. These have also been part of the research journey.

# (IM) POSSIBLE MAPPING OF RESEARCH DATA AND METHODS



As is visible in the map, I have in addition to having the role of an artist or teacher in the different projects, also used different established qualitative research methods, such as interviewing, observing, and collecting data through documentation. Examples includes *Kahviland*, where I came back to the participatory installation and took the role of an observer in my own artwork, making journal notes on what happened. Another example is that I interviewed my students during and after I had taught performance art, and a third example is that I interviewed my colleagues after we had performed the performance *Snakk for deg sjøl* several times. In the beginning, I had the idea that this material would be more “true” or important as research material than my hands-on experience obtained through the practical work as an artist and teacher. I tried to convert the work I had done into established forms of collecting and analysing data.

For my first attempt to write an article of my research material, I wrote about the performance art course and that my core material was the interviews with the students. I started writing this article as soon as the course was over, in the summer 2014. There were 11 students, and I interviewed 8 of them. Further, I read about several qualitative research methodologies (Creswell, 2013; Kvale et al., 2009) and how to use this in the analysing process of the interviews. The transcription and analysis of these interviews were a time-consuming process. However, my findings took me further away from my embodied knowledge and what I wanted the research to do. I started to question whether this was the right method for me. I concluded that the interviews were useful as part of a larger and complex data material. My role as their teacher, and not only a researcher, obviously affected how they answered. In fact, I would say that my role as the creator, facilitator and observer of the exercises has been more important than the interviews as a way into the material. In practice-led research or artistic based research, the researcher is no longer on the outside. I put myself in the field of research where I am both the creator of meaning and the researcher (Hannula, 2005). In the research, I use my knowledge as an artist and teacher, which is subjective, embodied and tacit (Barrett & Bolt, 2007).

### 4.3.2 Writing the Articles

My first attempt at writing an article based merely on the student interviews was put aside for some years, and slowly I developed the research method that was true to my background and practice as an artist and teacher, and which included my practical and embodied knowledge. The first article I wrote, together with my colleague Liisa Jaakonaho, was published as part of an anthology on “Performative Approaches in Arts Education” (Østern & Nødtvedt Knudsen, 2019). This focus on performative research methods as a prerequisite for our research and writing of this article gave a necessary assurance that the practice was the core data for my research.

For this article, the planning and the doing of the workshop *Becoming disabled*, held at the Research Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, was our main data. Since we were two art pedagogues and researchers, the dialogue between us, and the writing, was an important performative step in the research process. Also, the intertwining with theories and concepts informed the practice and again the research. In the foreword of the book, Brad Haseman writes

“the performative is always movement in the making. Following Deleuze and Guattari, the world is an ongoing process of continual transformation. The performative, through its processual and participatory politics, requires us to switch between different stances and knowledge positions. We have a pedagogy and methodology that is experimental and improvisatory and able to tolerate the various performative agents which operate simultaneously on the human and material circumstances of a situation. This is the strength of the performative; it is adroit enough to flow from making in the middle, or the future behind us, to generate intertextual richness and complexity.” (Østern & Nødtvedt Knudsen, 2019, pp. xii-xiii)

The second study resulted in the article: “A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.”, which was published in the *Nordic Journal of Art and Research* (Junttila, 2020). This

study was based on the process of making and performing a performance and the lived experience of that. In addition, I used a journal written after the performing of the performances, the recorded interviews with two of the co-creators and the manuscript, video and images of the performance event. I read this data as elements in intra-action with each other and me. The roles and ways of influencing the project were fluid, and the performing teenagers played an essential part in making the project what it was. As I was part of the artistic team, this study was conducted from within the performance, and my embodied practice is part of the apparatus I am researching (Barad, 2007; Sayal-Bennett, 2018; Østern & Moxness, 2017; Østern & Hovik, 2017). The peer-review process with this article took 16 months from when I delivered the first version, which was accepted for peer review, until it was published. It went through major revisions after feedback from the peer reviewers, and this dialogue became part of the methodology. In some aspects, writing this article was a learning process in writing academic articles.

The third study resulted in the article “How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education” in the *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education* (Valkoinen, 2021). Five years after I had put away the attempt to write an article based on the student interviews from the performance art course, I came back to the material. Earlier I had systematised the interviews in different themes, using the application NVIVO. I used this, as well as my prewritten plan for the teaching and exercises applied during the course, my own notes, a first draft of the article, a tumblr blog where we published material during the course, as well as images and videos from the course. When I first started writing this article, I had taught the performance art course once, but the second time, when I wrote the final article, I had also taught the same course two years later. Since these courses were constructed based on the same curriculum, and the planning of the teaching was in many ways similar, I also used my lived experience from this latter course. In the reading of the material, the data did not represent stable knowledge but elements that intra-act with one another, the theory and with me (Koro-Ljungberg, Löytänen & Tesar, 2017). The fact that I was the one that had written the curriculum for the

course, the main teacher of the course, as well as the researcher of the article made it important to also include awareness that my own experience cannot be separated from the data material, the research, and its findings. “Methodological knowledge circles around seeing the researcher, the data material, participant, place, field, discourses, values and thoughts as intra-active affective processes that mutually influence each other” (Otterstad & Reinertsen, 2015, p. 26).

Since the core of this thesis concerns exercises, but the practice I write about is quite varied, I chose to do the fourth study based on many different art- and art pedagogical projects and pull out the actual exercises from the different projects and use them as my core data. This is the first article in the illustration above, “On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art”, and it was published in *RUUKKU. Studies of Artistic Research*. (Junttila, 2021b) Writing this article also stretched out over a longer period. First, the projects that are part of the research material are from the years 2013 - 2019, and they are all projects that I have designed. Each of the projects is large, and for this article I have extracted the exercises used directly by the audience or the students. In addition, I have used material that documents the use of these exercises, such as images, notes, and videos.

In the exposition I looked broadly on what an exercise in the different projects can be; sometimes they can take the A-Z form of an object, affect or action, but most often they are written formulations. It was not my intention to detach the exercises from their context, as they always act in intra-action and relation to the surroundings. Nevertheless, by taking out all the exercises from different projects and putting them in a larger map, I wanted to see what they do and let them act once again. I did not try to control the exercises or data as such, and even though the exercises play a core role, I chose to maintain the complexity of the process. I chose to look at all these exercises and what happened as data – putting them on a big map to see what happened. I needed to look creatively at the research data as the data are not only something that have already happened before the writing but reactivated during the writing. Research data can have numerous forms and can manifest themselves as an

event, performing their own subjectives (Koro-Ljungberg, Löytänen & Tesar, 2017). In writing this article in the format of a research catalogue, it became more visible how the actual writing and designing of the article was also part of the methodology.



This image was taken off the TV-screen from when I participated in the national Norwegian competition in research presentation. I was chosen to represent Northern Norway in the final, and I used performative and unconventional methods in the presentation compared to researchers from other disciplines. During my entire research period, I participated in different settings where I had the possibility to experiment with how to present the ongoing research. This also became part of my embodied methodology.

## 4.4 Ethical Considerations

Barad uses the term ethico-onto-epistemology of knowing in being. Ethics is about being response-able to the way we make the world and considering the effects our knowledge-making processes have on the world (Barad, 2007, p. 381). Since an important part of conducting research is to be conscious about how we act and create knowledge, we have a special duty to develop the research and the field ethically, as well as reconsider continuously what is the most ethically sustainable way of acting, since there is not one correct answer to that. The different studies in this thesis have all had specific ethical considerations, and my relations to all humans and non-humans in my being and doing during the research are ethical acts. General research ethics concerns both the moral of the individual and the institutional moral. There are guidelines for the different research areas on how to relate to the research ethics, and I mainly refer to the Guidelines for Research Ethics in the social sciences, law and the humanities (NESH, 2006)

### 4.4.1 Trustworthy Methodology?

One evident ethical question is whether the research is trustworthy and objective enough when it is based on one's own practice. This question is part of a larger discussion concerning artistic and qualitative research methods, in which the subjective voice provides knowledge about something that can be applied to a wider phenomenon. In the Singapore Statement on Research Integrity (2018), which was the statement referred to in the ethical research PhD-course at the University of Tromsø, it is emphasised that the research should be trustworthy and that the research methods should “employ appropriate research methods, base conclusions on critical analysis of the evidence and report findings and interpretations fully and objectively.” (*Singapore Statement on Research Integrity, 2018*). In qualitative research, it is an accepted norm that the subjective voice can give knowledge about something that applies to a wider phenomenon. It is therefore important that I avoid basing the research on just my own opinion, but rather base it on knowledge and experience obtained through practice.

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, it is vital that I take particular care to be transparent in my descriptions. The mastering of art has similarities to other practical fields in the sense that the knowledge is tacit or intuitive. The knowledge is applied even though it is not always possible to express with words what is about to happen and why (Josefson, 1998).

Another ethical challenge about practise-based research that has a written outcome is that it can have opposite effect to what was intended. The reason for wanting to base research on practice is that it can find new knowledge that can only be found through doing. However, since the research should be expressed in words and evidence based, there is a danger that the knowledge, which is easy to express in a written, evidence-based matter, is favoured over more tacit knowledge. The aim with my research is not to develop a right method for teaching live art, but since the written word has authority, it is likely that the research can be read that way. It is also important to maintain that the research is a continuous process. One way I have tried to deal with this is to include the multimedia exposition “On the potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy” as one of the peer reviewed articles. This article expresses the findings with other means than just words. If it was within the requirement for my thesis, it would have also been best to include the performances and workshops to be disseminated, which is, for example, done in the programme for artistic research.

#### **4.4.2 Collegial Relationship**

Research ethics applies to collegial relationships. Alver and Øyen say that we have a responsibility “in relation to our colleagues, to our disciplines, to our institutions – and to the source of funding.” (Alver & Øyen, 2007, p. 17). I am at the crossroads between artistic practice, artistic-based research and traditional academic research, and I need to consider all these traditions and balance between them accordingly. I therefore need to show respect for all the traditions, the practical and the academic. There is a certain obligation when different traditions of knowledges meet. However, even though I relate to many different discourses, they are not opposite to each other. I have continuously through the research process been in formal and informal dialogue and

relations with my different colleagues, inviting in students, artists, researchers, and teachers to discuss, read and comment during the research, and in this way I am also able to contribute to the discussion with new knowledge, which is anchored in the field.

#### **4.4.3 Environment, Ecology**

“Ethics is about mattering, about taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are part, including new configurations, new subjectivities, new possibilities – even the smallest cuts matter” (Barad 2007, p. 384).

This thesis has not been explicit about how to create an environmental art pedagogy, but the emphasis on material and materiality, and how practices matter, has an implicit environmental focus within it. Being ethically responsible today is also to think about how the research and practice leads to a more sustainable future. By not placing the humans over the environment, but rather see how everything is entangled, is a way to have ecological awareness in everything you do. In these studies, it has been important to listen to what is already there, to create site sensitive or material sensitive exercises. The exercises can be a means of initiating actions, performances and teaching that take into consideration what is already there and to express through that. Our current climate demands a different kind of aesthetic and sensorial attention (Davis & Turpin, 2015 p. 11) – so there is an ecological value to trying out different forms.

#### **4.4.4 Ethics as a Teacher**

In the study “How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education”, I have used my own teaching, students, and workshop as my research material, and I will here give a description on the ethical considerations I took in this study. Some of the considerations also apply to the rest of my research. In my double role as a teacher and researcher, I emphasised to the students that participating in the study was voluntarily. I reported the study to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data

(NSD) and followed the Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences (NESH, 2006). The approval of this is attached in the Appendix. All the students participating in the performance art course gave their written consent regarding the material, including photos of students and situations, to be used in this study. In addition to this, the students who are identifiable in the pictures approved of such prior to the publication of the article. The interview guide, which is attached in the Appendix, did not contain private issues. It all centred on the teaching and the students' experience of the exercises. However, performance art requires that the students reflect upon identity-related questions. Some of the students worked with personal material during the course, such as relationships and expectations held for their own bodies, and processing transsexual identity. It was not necessarily important for the research that I wrote directly about these themes, but on the other hand, there was a danger that I would start to generalise if I avoided writing about the concrete examples. Since the students and my informants are relatively few, only ten people, it would be relatively easy for those involved to know who has done and said what. I was therefore very careful to not reveal any sensitive information.

The other ethical issue I have been concerned with, when it comes to having the students as informants, is that my authority as their teacher can affect what they say during the interviews. When I taught this course, I had been the teacher for the same students in several other courses, so my role as a teacher was established. There is a danger, however, that the students will try to answer "correctly" according to what they think the teacher expects. It is not enough to only say that now I have a different role. I also did my best to create the setting of when I was conducting research differently from the course setting. The main difference concerns me being clear for myself, and hopefully also for the students, which role I had in which situation. While teaching or planning the teaching activity I had no focus on my role as a researcher.

It was also a danger that the quality of the teaching was suppressed by the research, due to this double role. Furman (2009) describes how social workers doing research on their own practice may achieve their stated aim in the research, but the social work practice may lose its "depth". The fact that research is being focused on practice can

mean that the researcher “pushes certain approaches” in front of others while doing their practice (Furman, 2009, p. 2). In my case, where I specifically looked at the exercises I initiated as a teacher, there could have been a danger that I became more interested in obtaining material for my research, instead of really looking at what was happening during the course. In a “normal teaching situation”, I might, for example, have planned certain exercises, but while I am teaching, I change them or might not use them at all, if my intuition indicates that the students might need something else. Due to this, I try to avoid directing the teaching and the practice toward some interesting research rather than concentrating on doing what I am doing the best I can when I am doing it.



## 5 Summary of the Articles

**Exercise:**  
Start at the end.

My exercise for this summary chapter is also the title of three different books, all emerging from the business world, which explains the power of reverse-engineering to gain success in business. Reverse engineering is a process or method where one uses deductive reasoning to understand how a process, system or piece of software accomplishes a task even when you have very little insight into how it does so. The intention of reverse engineering is to determine from the finished product the process by which it is made and what goes into that process (Lutkevich, 2021).

In this thesis, I have decided to reverse the order of the articles, in the way that I start presenting the article that was published last and present the article that was published first at the end. The main reason for presenting the papers in the following order concerns their content and what structure supports the research and the presentation of the research best. Another reason is to emphasise that the process of earning my PhD has been nonlinear, as described in the method chapter. A third reason is that to reverse the order can also be seen as an exercise and event score, and to perform an exercise might give me new insight.

In the following I will give a summary of each research article. My focus in this summary is to point at the main findings related to my research questions: *What are the potentials of exercises in live art, live art education and participatory artworks? What does an exercise consist of? How can the exercises facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not-yet planned to happen?* In the discussion and the

conclusion, I will come closer to how the articles interrelate and what new perspectives they give.

## **Article I**

### **On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy**

This article is only available online and must be read online! Even though this is “Article I” in the thesis, I will use the term *exposition* when I address it here. The exposition is published in “RUUKKU Studies in Artistic Research”, a Finnish multidisciplinary, multilingual, peer-reviewed journal based on artistic research. It is based on the Research Catalogue, an international artistic research platform and database that enables multimedia publication. The multimedia publication is often called *exposition* rather than *paper* or *article*, as the visual exposition is an integral part of the work. This visual exposition and map does important work in presenting the results through means other than the traditional academic text, moving into ways of presenting that are more common in artistic research.

This exposition addresses the following questions: “what are the potentials of exercises in live art pedagogy to imagine and create new realities?” and “what are the performative agents in these exercises?” The analysis happens through a diffractive analysis, extricating exercises from their original context and placing them in a rhizomatic map alongside other exercises. I have then investigated which performative agents dominate in the exercises. In the map, I have colour-coded those exercises that have similar performative agents, and the findings or agents that were the most prominent were place, audience, performer, formulation, materiality, and time. In each of these agents there are different approaches to how the certain agent can be active in the exercise.

This exposition is a web of exercises that have been part of different participatory performances, installations and workshops, such as following:

- the participatory installation *Kahviland* (2014) shown at the Mänttä Art Festival, Finland.
- two courses in performance art at a university (2014/16), held at UiT, Arctic University of Norway.
- the participatory performance *Speak for yourself* (2015) premiered at Hålogaland Teater in Tromsø, Norway.
- a site-specific exhibition *Everyday Fabulations* (2016) organised by the artist-run gallery Kurant in Tromsø, Norway.
- several site-specific workshops *A Good Place to be* (2017 – 2020) at Nord-Norsk Kunstnersenter, Svolvær, Norway.
- the participatory performance *Sleepless* (2019), which premiered at the Arctic Art Festival, Harstad, Norway.
- two exercises that are made especially for this exposition.

On the first page of the exposition, there is a video of me performing “An exercise in not quitting” where I am entangling my whole workspace with different coloured tape. On the last page, I also perform “An Exercise in quitting” in my workplace, but here I am applying the coloured tape around my mouth while I am reading a conclusive text for the exposition. In between the two pages with the video-exercises there are three pages. One page has a contextualising text about exercises in live art and pedagogy. A second page contains a map of exercises from the above-mentioned projects. The exercises that come from a specific project are clustered together. By cross-contextualising the exercises, I look at the similarities and differences of these exercises – and what the dominant performative agents are. The third page is also a different kind of map of the performative agents that have been dominant in the exercises. The multimedia layout and the performative and visual relation between the different components in the exposition is important, especially to grasp the complexity of the content. Therefore, to comprehend the exposition, it must be done online.

The exposition can work as a practical inspiration for teachers and artists working with exercises, or more broadly with what are potential agents in live art. The exercises in

the map can be used directly by the teacher or artist as they have been developed, or the performative agents can work as tools in developing new exercises and live art works. In this way, the analysis suggests a method for devising new exercises rather than presenting a set of already developed ones.

Each exercise is an entanglement and intra-action between different entities and performative agents, producing new potentials. By being aware of how the entities are organised and how they interrelate, it is possible to accommodate for the unknown. The way exercises are mediated and performed does important work in creating freedom and political agency. Strategies, material, places, words, situations and relations can open up for being creative and open new ways of being in the future. Live art, and especially live art pedagogy, are relevant spaces to practise and experiment with new ways of being in relation to and encountering multiple realities and accepting differences. The exercises in live art pedagogy have potentials for imagining and creating new realities.

## **Article II**

### **How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education**

The second article is published by the *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education* and is part of the special issue “Dramaturgical perspectives on didactical contexts.” The aim of this special issue was to strengthen research on dramaturgy linked to the classroom and other didactical settings. My contribution, the second article in this thesis, examines a university course in performance art at UiT, The Arctic University of Norway.

The research question for this study was the following: *How can exercises in performance art education matter as a dramaturgical approach for them to become active agents in the re-creation of performance art?* Here I discuss how the *exercises* and the dramaturgy of the exercises in the course matters in producing an embodied and exploratory pedagogy, which can contribute to the continuous

development of the field. The study investigates how the exercises become agents and acquire constitutive power. The exercises are material-discursive, in *intra-action*, and entangled with the entire teaching environment. Moreover, they compose a dramaturgical structure that allows the unpredictable to happen. The diffractive analysis describes three examples of exercises from the course and highlights three aspects that matter in the mediation of the exercises – embodiment, materiality, and site.

In this study, the focus is on the educational setting, and how we through our educational setting also create the future of performance art or live art. The findings show that we need to be aware of what constitutes an exercise and to be open to how the exercises are active agents in creating change. The exercises are interdependent of the whole context, especially how they intra-act with what is already there concerning the personal history of the students and the context of the teaching. Each exercise will be different for each student and each context it is taught in. It is thus important to sustain performance art and its teaching methods as a field with multiple methods, aesthetic complexity, and important subjective knowledge.

The article points toward the importance of mediating exercises that activate the student-participants to experiment and redefine what the ever-changing field of performance art can be. Through facilitating carefully planned exercises and the dramaturgy of these exercises, a teacher can potentially initiate the revival of performance art. This article argues that learning happens in the making and that all exercises, also small exercises, matter and produce the performance art pedagogy. We need to facilitate exercises that potentially can produce movement, destabilisation, reactions, and actions, which again produce the future of performance art.

### Article III

#### **A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.**

This article was published in the *Nordic Journal of Art and Research*, “an interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal aimed at disseminating knowledge and experience from research and development projects based on artistic practice and reflection, art education, art theory and cultural theory.” The article is about the participatory performance event *Speak for yourself (Snakk for deg sjøl)* performed for teenagers at schools through the Norwegian Cultural Schoolbag programme (*Den kulturelle skolesekken*), and for an open audience at Hålogaland Theatre and the Arctic Arts Festival.

The research question for this study was as follows: *How can agency initiate various ways of participation and produce a zone of potential in this performance event?* In this article, the perspective of audience participation has been given a greater focus than the educational setting. Instead of asking how the given exercises had agency and what they consist of, I ask which performative agents in the whole performance event produce participation and change. So, rather than looking at what was defined as exercises prior to the events taking place, I defined in the analysis of the event what functioned as exercises or performative agents.

The diffractive analysis suggests that the initiation of participation is a complex process influenced by both human and non-human performative agents in intra-action with each other. This article focuses on the formulation of exercises, performance objects, social media, multiplicity and affect as *performative agents*. The findings of the study indicate that being attentive to the performative agents at play, and the kind of participation they produce, can potentially create a space where there is room for inclusion, diversity, and unpredictability. This kind of zone of potential also has value for other participatory projects in the intersection between pedagogy and art.

The article emphasises how we need to be aware of how the exercises and everything is organised, or facilitated, to produce participation. Despite this, we are not able to fully control what the outcome will be, as it is a complex system of intra-action. Through the initiation of the exercises and performative agents, we need to imagine what kinds of intra-actions might arise, while at the same time maintaining an attentive and welcoming attitude to what *does* emerge. Through the exercises and facilitation, we need to create a space where there is room to include everyone. Audience participants are in constant intra-action with the disturbances, opening a space for the unpredictable and a *zone of potential*. A place to practice and experiment with new ways of being together and encountering multiple realities and accepting differences.

#### **Article IV**

##### **Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy**

This article is a book chapter in the anthology *Performative Approaches in Arts Education*, published by Routledge. In the description of the book, it says that the book will “elaborate on what performative approaches can contribute to 21<sup>st</sup> century arts education. Introducing new perspectives on learning, the contributors provide a central international perspective, developing a paradigm in which the artist, teacher and researcher’s form of teaching is enmeshed with content, and human agency is entangled with non-human matter.” (Østern & Nødtvedt Knudsen, 2019). This chapter is co-written with another author, my colleague Liisa Jaakonaho, who is also doing a PhD in art pedagogy through artistic research. The study explores a performative workshop held by both authors that took place at the Research Pavilion at Venice Biennale in 2017.

The book chapter explores questions around disability and ability in arts education and artistic-pedagogic research. As cited from the article: “we did not formulate a research question or a particular problem to address in advance.” Related to my research, the study especially investigates how one can apply performance exercises to explore

questions surrounding disability and ability, and what these exercises can facilitate. Findings from this study focus on how the environment is in intra-action with the exercises, conscious facilitation of the pedagogical space and its appertaining exercises can contribute to embracing differences and destabilising fixed identity categories, in this case ability and disability. Through the pedagogic choices and exercises, you can encounter otherness within yourself, rather than othering people that are different from you. The exercises that challenge us and push us out of our comfort zones are also relevant.

It uses the means of performance art to facilitate an experimental, artistic-pedagogic process. Drawing from contemporary disability studies, as well as feminist and posthumanist theories, the article investigates disability as a complex, material-discursive phenomenon. The authors argue that regardless of whether we are disabled, we are all vulnerable, interdependent, and entangled in socio-material structures. Disability can inform our understanding of this vulnerability and relationality and help to destabilise dominant and normative notions of subjectivity and agency. Jaakonaho is the main author of this article, and thus the focus on disability and ability in arts education regard mainly her PhD-project. The book chapter uses considerable space to explain basic theory around disability studies. However, the methods and the practical workshop the book chapter emerges from is cocreated (See also the attachment letter concerning the co-authorship).

This book chapter broadens the perspective on how my research on the potential of performance exercises is relevant in a wider art pedagogical context. It proposes disability as a transformative force, and the exercises are the agents for this force, which can challenge and push further neo-liberal notions of diversity. The aim is to move towards more equitable practices and affirmative spaces in and through arts pedagogy.

## 6 Last chapter in PART I

**Exercise:**

Put a timer on, always when you have written nonstop for 120 minutes, eat something sweet. When you have written four full days, minimum 10 hours a day, open a bottle of champagne.

When you are done, book a holiday .....

This last exercise uses reward pedagogy, which I am usually critical of, but at this moment, it has helped me. My reason for being critical of it is that it can produce normative ways of learning and behaving. However, for this last chapter, I have tried it as my exercise because there are certain norms and frames that need to be fulfilled in a PhD. I have downloaded a readymade template from the university web page, filled it with words—made sure to have the standard font and line spacing—and then, I reward myself when I have done what I am asked to do. In this last chapter of the summary article, I first discuss the findings in the peer-reviewed articles and the relationship between them, and then, I include parts of a dialogue from a seminar with artist and art-teacher colleagues where the question was how my research is relevant for other artists and teachers working with performance; this is followed by a summary of the findings and prospects for future research.

### 6.1 Discussion

The basis for this discussion is the results of the four published studies. The four articles differ from each other; they all belong to certain discursive contexts and perform in various way. Each article follows the standard format of the journals in which they have been published. The articles are singular and free standing in the sense that they can be understood independently. Still, they are part of the present

dissertation, and in this setting, they should be understood through the overall research questions:

*What are the potentials of exercises in live art, live art education and participatory artworks? What does an exercise consist of? How can the exercises facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not yet planned to happen?*

I start with the second question: ‘What is the agency of an exercise and what does an exercise consist of?’ This is the most technical question and is the basis for how the present research defines exercises. I follow up by discussing the potential of exercises, and as a continuation of this, I explore how the exercises have the potential for creating an inclusive future.

### **6.1.1 What does an exercise consist of?**

The thesis does not formulate one exact definition of what an exercise is, but instead, it links exercises to performative agents. The theoretical framework of agential realism, which uses the concept *performative agents* to describe active agents with the capacity to change a situation, together with the concept *intra-action* (Barad, 2007), is important in how exercise is defined in the thesis. I have analysed how exercises in live art are performative agents and how they are not separate from each other but instead are a part of a complex network of active and equal material-discursive agents intra-acting. Exercises are active agents in creating change. The exercises are dependent of the whole context, and how they intra-act with what is already there is crucial. Therefore, an exercise will always work differently in each context of which it is a part. An exercise does not *work* as an exercise if it does not have or is given agency in the situation. This knowledge is useful for how we create exercises in future works, but it is also a way of practising being attentive to what has agency. Here, it is important to become aware of what the agents or components are at play in the performance and how they possibly intra-act.

In Article I, ‘On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy’, I have made two maps; one map showing various exercises used in multiple art works and art pedagogical workshops. The second map is a map of what has agency in the exercises, what performative agents that have been the most dominant in the exercises. An example of this is the exercise “walk for an hour with no purpose. Let yourself be disturbed.” The frame of doing this exercise within a certain *time* is important here and sets the premisses for the experience. Similar there are several other exercises where *time* has agency in the exercises and time is thus one of the performative agents. In other words, one ingredient or performative agent in an exercise can be *time*. Other performative agents that have been found in this study are place, audience, performer, formulation, and materiality. However, one exercise does not include all the performative agents; sometimes, only one agent can be very dominant, and sometimes, there are several agents intra-acting. By recomposing how we let different performative agents intra-act we can create endlessly new exercises.

In Article II, ‘How Exercises Matter as a Dramaturgical Approach in Performance Art Education’, I examine a few selected exercises from a performance art workshop. In this article, I have analysed three exercises, and each of them found aspects that matter in the mediation of the exercises: embodiment, materiality, and site. This can be compared with what in the exercises has agency. Two of these performative agents—materiality and site—are also present in the first article, even though one is formulated differently and has slightly different connotations. I use the term place in the first article, while, in the second article, I refer to site. The new performative agent ‘embodiment’ is part of the description of both the audience and performer, but it is still an important addition to mention embodiment as an independent performative agent.

In Article III, ‘A Performance as an Exercise in Initiating a Zone of Potential and an Exercise in Not Quitting. Tape Yourself to a Green Chair’, I am analysing which performative agents produce participation. This analysis is not based on exercises, but rather, the focus is on what in the whole performance event produces participation. The formulation of exercises, performance objects, social media, multiplicity and

affect are the performative agents the article found as agents that produce participation. This list of performative agents differs from the two previous ones, which shows how the performative agents and what an exercise consists of is always specifically connected to the performance or teaching situation.

It is not possible to reduce the conclusion of what an exercise consists of to the performative agents of place/site, audience, performer, embodiment, formulation, materiality/performance objects, time, social media, multiplicity and affect, but these have been prevalent in this thesis. Because many of these agents are at the core of what a performance is, the agents will also be ubiquitous in other exercises in live art. In the development of exercises and performances, it is important to be aware of what an exercise can consist of, of both human and nonhuman agents and how they intra-act and create new situations. One important reason for me to analyse what an exercise consists of and what has agency and how the exercises intra-act is to point at the complexity of how an exercise—a performance, participation and teaching situation—is built up. In this complexity, there is a focus on how everything matters, along with how we need to practice being aware of these agents and their affects. An important aspect of this is that, when everything matters, we also need to practice giving space for all the agents and trust that it produces content and learn to read or listen to this content that it produces.

### **6.1.2 What are the potentials of exercises in live art, live art education and participatory artworks?**

The research method of diffractive analysis, where the research data are looked at through an embodied engagement, can be linked to my practice as an artist and researcher. The *way* I researched, the projects that are included in this thesis and my background are all entangled and create potentials. The exercises do not have a fixed essence, but instead, they are produced by me while also being productive (Barad, 2007). In the present thesis, I have been looking for moments of diffraction and agential cuts, what the exercises *do* as performative agents and how they create possibilities and potentials. An exercise initiates an action that has a lot of potential.

Therefore, there can be a lot of potential when it comes to exercises in live art and pedagogy that the present thesis does not address. In this discussion, I will include the main potentials of the exercises analysed in the articles: the potential of creating participation, developing live art pedagogy, developing new formats of live art and creating new power relations.

### **6.1.2.1 Create participation**

One of my reasons for carrying out this PhD was to develop knowledge on how to produce participatory artworks from a practical point of view. Creating participation is, of course, also closely embedded in the act of teaching, while there are also differences. In Article III, the analysis focuses on how to produce participation in artworks, emphasising the complexity of how the different performative agents intra-act with each other. The study emphasises how different performative agents, both human and nonhuman, and exercises have agency and produce different kinds of participation and action. The audience participants are in a situation where they are in constant intra-action with the disturbances of the space and the performative agents that are at play. This initiates participation, but also opens up a space for the unpredictable.

### **6.1.2.2 Develop live art pedagogy**

The link between exercises and pedagogy is explicit because exercises are used as a tool in most student active learning situations. In the present thesis, I have aimed to investigate how we can develop a pedagogy for live art that is open to the unpredictable and future of live art. In Article I, the exposition ‘On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy’, there is an emphasis on how the exercises I have developed can work as a tool in devising new exercises. I do not suggest a set of exercises to be used in live art pedagogy. Instead, I suggest to use the concept of performative agents to constantly redevelop exercises, which again intra-act and produce new potentials. In Article II, ‘How Exercises Matter as a Dramaturgical Approach in Performance Art Education’, I especially study how the exercises initiated by the teacher matter in producing a pedagogy that happens in the making (Ellsworth, 2005). If the teacher facilitates exercises and designs the curriculum so that

it engages the students to take responsibility for their own creativity, the exercises can contribute to the development of the field.

### **6.1.2.3 Develop new formats of live art**

To use exercises and the consciousness of how performative agents intra-act to develop new formats of live art is a continuation of how they can be used to develop live art pedagogy. The reason I still want to include this as one of the main potentials is to underline that the way I analyse the exercises and their potentials is to look at how the entities intra-act and create a holistic experience. The performance is also composed of performative agents and to practice awareness of how different performative agents intra-act can be a way to develop new formats of live art.

### **6.1.2.4 Create new power relations**

The power relations between the teacher and student, performer and participant, and the artists involved in creating a performance is at the core of how the pedagogy or how a performance is made. By proposing to rethink how the different entities have agency in a performance or a teaching situation, there is also the potential to create new power relations. The exercises can destabilise and can queer normative assumptions on how a pedagogy and performance are structured, as well as who or what has agency to make decisions. This is in line with the theoretical framework of feminist posthumanism, where the subject is interdependent, relational, vulnerable and entangled with social and material structures.

### **6.1.3 How can the exercises facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not-yet planned to happen?**

This question assume that the exercises can facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not-yet planned to happen. As discussed earlier, I have been looking for what the exercises do and how the exercises can be used in multiple ways. The exercises are in constant relation to the surroundings, transforming and creating new ways of being. To be inclusive is also an ongoing phenomenon where the relational and intra-action is constantly renegotiating how we are together and the performative.

In each study of the thesis, the notion of how to facilitate an inclusive space that gives room for the not-yet planned has been addressed in one way or another. As discussed earlier, an important part of the theoretical framework and methodology concerns *how* we do what we do. In the section about ethical considerations, I point at how ‘ethics is about being response-able to the way we make the world and considering the effects our knowledge-making processes have on the world’ (Barad, 2007, p. 381). For me, an essential part of ethics is inclusiveness in all forms. In the current thesis, inclusiveness has to do with plurality in the form of artistic formats, audience groups, forms of how the teaching happens, artistic methods, power relations, ways of being together and participants. This is a complex matter, and it is not about a set of just the right exercises, but rather, it is about a constant recreation and change of perspective. Destabilising, queering, decolonising, giving space for disabilities, embodied and ecological awareness, where agencies are constantly renegotiated and in relation.

In the different studies, I have also written about the ‘room for the not-yet planned to happen’ in various ways. A citation I use in several of the studies is as follows: ‘The future is radically open at every turn’ (Barad, 2003, p. 826). Each exercise is an entanglement and intra-action between different entities, producing new potentials. All the exercises that we initiate and performative engagements have an ethical dimension and responsibility tied to them, which produces the future.

In analysing how to initiate participation, I introduce the concept of the ‘zone of potential’. By being aware of how the performative agents intra-act, we can facilitate a framed temporary space where there is room for a plurality of potentials and ways of being. This includes giving space for new audience groups and different ways of being within one performance. In Article IV ‘Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy’, we use the concept of affirmative spaces, which has similarities to the zone of potential in the sense that, through exercises and the pedagogy, we accommodate for a space where everyone is valid. In the present study, there is a special focus on disability and how those exercises employed by performance art pedagogues can be useful tools in investigating disability because they often encourage us to destabilise, resist conformity and go outside our comfort zones.

However, if we turn it the other way around, disability as a phenomenon can contribute to the development of performance art pedagogy by preventing the art from being commodified, opening up new perspectives and accommodating the unknown.

In Article I, there is a map of exercises that can work as a practical inspiration for teachers and artists working with exercises. Here, the idea is that the exercises can be used to create something unplanned within a performance work and for the making of new live art works and everyday realities. Each exercise is an entanglement and intra-action between different entities, producing new potentials and accommodating the unknown. The way exercises are mediated and performed in education and participatory performances in live art does important work in creating freedom and political agency. How can we plan for the unpredictable and the future? We have to look for strategies, material, places, words, situations and relations that can open up for being creative, that is, a zone of potential. To look for a pedagogy where we practice destabilising the norms and that suggests new ways of being together, ways of inclusion and the unpredictable. The exercises can help us create agency and actively train future thinking and practises.

## **6.2 Discussion in Dialogue with Colleagues**

In December 2021, I had a seminar with artist and art-teacher colleagues where the question was how my research would be relevant for other artists and teachers working with performance. The method of the seminar was a feedback session where I had asked the participants to give me feedback on what in the research, based on the four articles, could be relevant for them as practising artists. While writing this discussion a few months later, I came to think about the seminar, and while listening to the recording, I found it valuable to include parts of it. The seminar was a performative and dialogical way to reflect on the thesis. Another way to look at the seminar is as a result of diffraction, as ‘accounting for how practices matter’ (Barad, 2007, p. 88). The articles intra-act with the readers, and instead of reflecting directly on the dissertation, the seminar has helped highlight the different possibilities and potentials for those

readers. In the seminar, we start from the academic articles and my oral introduction about the research, followed up by the conversation below.

The moderator for the session was dramaturge and theatre director Kristin Bjørn, with whom I have also collaborated closely during the years of the current research. The seminar was organised by a performing arts festival RadVent in collaboration with the newly established Davvi Centre for Performing Arts. The dialogue in the seminar was influenced by the fact that most people came from the theatre. The participants were informed that the session was part of the research, and they gave their consent for me to include this conversation as part of my thesis. The conversation was in Norwegian, and the translation is done by me.



**Feedbacksession**  
Kristina Junttila fascilitert av  
Kristin Bjørn  
Fredag, 26. nov 2021  
kl. 10:00 - 13:00  
Provisoriet, Rådstua Teaterhus

### **Kristin**

I come from a performing arts tradition where you learn from the ‘master’, one who passes on a certain right way to create a performance, and my main

tools are text and sound. Your way of approaching a performance is an opening approach. Just the fact that ‘text’ is not part of the performative agents you have found, but you rather use the word ‘formulation’ is, for me, eye opening.

You think differently. You use 'formulation' to communicate something precise, and the text is there to initiate action for the audience.

The downside about the text tradition, where I am from, is that it can be very prefabricated and the artist try to control the performance too much. So one important aspect, which is valuable for the field, is that you point at some methods on how to achieve the here-and-now situation. Everyone talks about how it is the live moment between audience and performers that is the core in performing arts and that this makes us different from film and other art experiences. We always say that each performance is unique. I just saw a musical in London that had been performed for 15 years. Those who act in the performance might feel that it is different every day. But it is not. What you are doing is something completely different, and you have a method for creating performances that can be different each day.

You are pointing at how we can create new power relations without completely losing control of the situation. You are not interested in wide

open improvisation with the audience but rather in how to include or collaborate with the audiences' reactions, as well as all the other agents.

Intra-activity is a liberating concept because it better describes what happens in a performance. We are not just square cubes that meet each other and then become a larger cube. We are already entangled with each other. Through understanding intra-action, we are exercising how to understand and include what is happening in a room in varied ways. I want to learn more ways than only the intellectual on how to understand and analyse what is happening in the performance space.

The next point is that, when I work together with you, this is an 'angst-reducing methodology'. There is so much fear and angst when we are creating performance, and I think the reason is that we plan and control too much. We have preplanned what should happen in the meeting between audience and performer. We have so many dreams and we put so much effort into it in advance. When we meet our audiences, we need tools on how to

be present here and now. We shouldn't just be thinking, am I able to act the way I planned? But rather we should also think about how the audience perceives the performance? How does it affect that it is cold here or how do the chairs they are sitting on affect their experience? To learn to be part of all the components that are there instead of trying to control everything.

**Me**

An angst-reducing methodology; thank you! That is a nice thing to promote.

**Kristin**

Yes, I think you are creating an angst-reducing methodology.

Perhaps, we should give some concrete examples from when we have been working together? For example, when we have been working with the digital performance, 'Talking in the Rain. An Entertaining Show about the Weather' during the pandemic. As part of the performance, we had a researcher from social anthropology who was going to perform. She had a long text, which should be part of the performance. And I, as a text person, thought immediately

that I wanted to challenge her to change the text so it wouldn't be a so safe 'research text'. I was not the artistic leader of the project, but you were, and you had a different take on how to work with this material.

**Me**

Yes. I was more interested in creating all the components around it—instead of changing the text. I created, for example, a sudden break in the situation that had quite a lot of risk involved in the middle of her text. Instead of making the text less safe, I changed the situation to be less safe, and through the break, we become more or differently attentive to what she was talking about.

**Kristin**

That concrete experience taught me a lot; it showed me a very different approach where there is no such thing as a traditional director or instructor that goes in and instructs how others should do things better. However, I did cut one page of her text. The audience read that part of the performance very differently from each other. One of our colleagues who worked with text as her

main component said that it was the part where the whole performance made sense for her, while another colleague—working as a scenographer—mentioned that we would not have needed the research text. It is very nice that a performance can offer different ways of reading in the range of agents one puts into play.

### **Me**

I am interested in hearing from our listeners, our colleagues. What is interesting for you in all this? Is there anything you could benefit from in your own artistic processes?

### **Participant I**

I thought the relation between openness and traditional theatre, where you come with an interpretation loaded with references, was very interesting. This is especially true from the point of view of children and youth as audiences. I work with controlled performances, but I find it very inspiring to think about how we can include children and youth when they read the theatre context very differently from us.

### **Participant II**

You can also create angst and fear by opening too much up. But I know that you also work to make a safe environment, even though it is open. I like this research very much, but I also have become very curious about how one should open up. I work indirectly with children because I educate students who are going to work with children. I believe the school system has harmed the students because they are so goal oriented. When I try to invite them to become open, they get scared, and I am not able to do so.

### **Me**

That is problematic, and I don't have an answer, but perhaps, if the conclusion in the dissertation is that one should become even more aware of how ALL agents come into play, could that help?

### **Participant II**

Perhaps.

### **Participant III**

It is inspiring. What I immediately could use in my work with creating performances is how the different entities one chooses to use in a

performance intra-act with each other.  
And to become aware of that.

#### **Participant IV**

To be aware of what the audience brings in is also related to how society is rapidly changing. If we are going to look at the social structures and how we want to deconstruct the hierarchical structure or if we want to bring more diversity into the theatres, both in the form of what stories we tell and in what way, and in bringing in new types of audiences, then I think that this research is spot on. To investigate the premises for communication.

I am myself interested in having music and sound as equal components in my performances, but I have noticed that my audience usually interprets the text first. Perhaps because I come from the theatre.

#### **Participant V**

As a dance artist, I can relate very well to the way you think and work with performance. When you were talking about the example of the researchers' text, it is also about respecting that person's work and form. How can one

use it without changing it into a theatre text? By, for example, interrupting in the middle. I like the holistic way of thinking: how the audience arrives, what the material is there and how to make it comfortable or uncomfortable. It is a different, holistic way of thinking about a performance.

#### **Participant VI**

As has already been mentioned, I think this raising of awareness is good as it seems like I have already thought about these issues. It seems like you are creating a vocabulary, so we can talk about it. I really like that.

For me, this sounds like postdramatic theatre, where the text is no longer necessarily the main agent. What do you think about that?

#### **Me**

Yes, I think you are right—through theatre studies, this research can be read as part of the postdramatic tradition. On the other hand, I relate this research more to the live art or performance art tradition that does not derive from the dramatic tradition. I feel I want to take it out of the dramatic

and postdramatic tradition because I am not relating the research to a tradition where text has dominated.

### **Participant III**

One comment to the fact that you were talking about the postdramatic tradition as mostly within theatre. If one thinks about equal dramaturgy where everything should be equal, I think that this thinking Kristina introduces has a new dimension. You get conscious of more agents or entities.

### **Kristin**

In equal dramaturgy, one talks about the artistic tools: sound, scenography, costume. ... One uses the same tools as you used in dramatic theatre, just that they are equal. You talk about something different.

### **Participant VII**

I think it is great to listen to you and how you stir up the learned Anglo-Saxon text-based dramaturgy. The work you do is very important. Hurry up and get this done!

### **Me**

Thank you. My problem is that I hurry up with so many things at once.

### **Participant VIII**

I thought about two things since you talked about pedagogy and exercises. I come from dance, and it is much about planning exercises before you are going to teach. And then, it is usually in the unpredictable that something happens.

And then, I thought parallel to working artistically. I like improvisation and to facilitate for that and many nice things happen. But then, it is the journey from the open room to performance when everything should be set. Or should it be set? I felt that it is nice that everything can also be open.

### **Participant IX**

I also find it interesting that you put it into words this way—the non-hierarchical. It is very interesting to insist that everything should have equal space and still create something that takes you somewhere. It would have been interesting to hear more about the steps you take in the process. What is negotiated.

### **Kristin**

Can I say that you usually say that you facilitate more than you direct or instruct. You definitely don't instruct.

**Me**

You are right. If I work with actors who are used to personal instruction, they can be very frustrated.

**Kristin**

In my experience, you have very much respect for other people's expertise. You let people be their own entities.

But Karen Barad, who you refer to, has what she calls 'agential realism'. Fantastic word. And a citation you use in many of your articles, 'The future is radically open in every turn'. If we think about the sentence in terms of performance. It is utopia, an ideal, but to practice our minds to think that it is open—and then when we are back to why I think it is angst reducing. How do I analyse the experience of a performance as a cocreator of the performance? Instead of going into it through your intellect and ask whether the audience understood what you wanted them to understand, you accept that someone might be bored. You

accept that, someone didn't notice the text, and still, it was important. To listen to: Is there a flow in the room? Does the audience perceive the experience in their own way? How to look for the other things and not demand that it should be exactly how I dreamt of. That is impossible, and it creates angst. To practice noticing other things, that is how I want to be in the world. I don't want to be so tight.

**Participant X**

It is interesting that there are two different aspects in this conversation. On the one hand, the method has got to do with accepting that you cannot or should not control everything, but on the other hand, I would like to use this knowledge to create the perfect experience.

(Laughter)

You can use all the parameters to create exactly what you want.

**Participant III**

If you want to create the perfect, then you are perhaps starting to control everything again?

**Me**

If we take intra-action seriously or the relational, then the perfect is in relation to what else is there and who arrives at the space. I also work specifically with participation beyond watching and listening. Everyone in the performing arts works with the here-and-now experience. But I decided that, if I were to work with participation, which is one of the reasons why I started this research, I would have to learn not to control how I want the audience to experience or act. And how can I create performances that are not possible for me to control fully and that it will be interesting for me that new things appear, the future is becoming.

**Participant VII**

A perfect performance; ‘I didn’t understand anything’—that is the ultimate. We are so raised to be goal and result oriented. Can we just let go of what we want with this? That is extremely difficult.

**Kristin**

One comment that I have been thinking about while we were talking. I think

that the methodology can make the performing arts interesting for new audience groups. In theatre, we have, since the 1970s, had an ambition of reaching out to an audience we have not reached before. One important reason why the theatres in Norway get so much funding as we do is that we have an idea that it is a good thing for people to see performances. And everyone should go and see performances. Basically, it is the same kind of family that goes to see performances today as it was in the 1970s. There have been projects where we worked hard to get in new audiences, and it succeeded in certain projects, but they don’t come to the next performance. It is something about our art form that has some codes we are not aware of—since we belong to it. This is a big challenge for the field. You have made projects on new arenas, where a completely new audience belongs. You meet people in different places. Perhaps they don’t experience that they are in a performance, but it is live art. If we want to meet other people, we need to get out of the box.

**Me**

We must think that they are intra-acting and are cocreators with us. And then, they will also contribute to changing what the future of live art will be.

(The conversation continues into a coffee break, while I end it here.)

The conversation emphasised the perspective of the artist and how the thesis can be relevant for other artists. It was especially useful to understand how the seminar participants, mostly artists within performing arts, understood the concepts of intra-action and performative agents as useful tools in their own work. One of my goals with this thesis has been to investigate how to create a pedagogy which can open up for new formats of live art. This conversation made me understand that the concepts of performative agents and intra-action can be used by other artists and art pedagogues to create new works. Moreover, Kristin introduced the concept of an “angst-reducing-methodology” which prompts you to trust the surroundings rather than trying to control everything. This relates to the idea of inclusion where new things or people are included. Through a holistic view on performance and audience participation where matter and meaning are not separated, but all the performative agents intra-act and are cocreators, we cannot control everything. Rather, we need knowledge on how things are in relation, performative and in constant transformation.

## 6.3 Summary of Findings and Prospects for Future Research

The present thesis shows how the material-discursive exercises are performative agents that are in intra-action with the environment in multiple ways and that what an exercise can be is manifold. The different studies have emphasised the performative agents that were the most prominent as place/site, audience, performer, embodiment, formulation, materiality/performance objects, time, social media, multiplicity and affect.

By being aware of the complex process of how the entities are organised, the exercises are mediated and how they might intra-act, it is possible to accommodate an event, performance or teaching situation that can lead to a space for participation, inclusion, diversity and unpredictability. The exercises have potential for imagining and creating new realities and can contribute to the continuous development of live art, performance art and its pedagogy.

It is expected that, at the end of the thesis, I should write recommendations for future research on my thesis topic. First, my recommendations are that *how* we do research and *how* it is presented needs to be continuously reimagined and that practice-based research through art should be prioritised. There should be more acceptance of alternative formats of what a PhD can be because the format is interlinked with the content. I am familiar with how this is done in artistic research, but nevertheless, this reimagining needs to be extended in artistic research, as well as in more academic research. Linked to this are also my recommendations that more interdisciplinary research should be done with a focus on expanding—instead of limiting—what belongs within a certain field.

Research on live art and pedagogy is a marginal field and needs to be strengthened. As I am writing this last paragraph, I received a newly published book, *Performance Art in Practice. Pedagogical Approaches* (Korkeaojo, 2022), as a gift from my Finnish

colleague. The book is practice based on performance art, art philosophy and method. My colleagues from Finnish art universities are the writers of this article-based anthology. This book is an example of new research I believe the field of live art needs: practise based and very useable for other teachers and artists. I have not read the whole book and I am not in the position to review this book. However, one issue that has bothered me during my own research is that even though my goal is to develop live art and pedagogy away from normative assumptions, I am simultaneously strengthening the institutionalisation of live art and pedagogy. In a neoliberal society, where goals and study points have become more important than giving the students tools to create their own future and develop new practises, we need research on how, from a practical point of view, art pedagogy can be a counterpart to this. What kind of research format could possibly support this kind of research?

One important source of inspiration for this thesis has been event scores and diverse ways of working with event scores. The potentials of working with event scores in my artistic practise as a performer and performance artist has rarely been addressed during this thesis, and it would be interesting to bring about artistic research on own practice as a performance artist working with the potentials of event scores.

As my thesis has gotten to know me quite well these eight years, where we have had alternated between having a close and distant relationship, I also would like to ask my thesis for recommendations on what I should do. If anyone, my thesis knows how I do multiple things at one time, when I am an optimist and when I am a pessimist, what I do or write first when I start a project and my strategies for getting things done. My thesis recommends me to<sup>1</sup> .....

---

<sup>1</sup> Please fill in the missing words yourself, and if you wish, share the words with Kristina.

**Exercise:**

Everything matters. Eat one of the pages in this thesis.

Doesn't it taste just like paper?

## 7 Bibliography

- Agamben, G., & Heller-Roazen, D. (1999). *Potentialities : collected essays in philosophy*. Stanford University Press.
- Alver, B. G. o. Øyen, Ø. (2007). Challenges of Research Ethics: An Introduction. In B. G. F. Alver, Ingebjørg Tove og Øyen, Ørjar (Ed.), *Research Ethics in Studies of Culture and Social Life*. Academia Scientiarum Fennica.
- Arlander, A. (Ed.). (2009). *Essays on Live Art and Performance Art*. Theatre Academy Helsinki: editor and writers.
- Arlander, A. (2014). *On Methods of Artistic Research* (Method - Process - Reporting, Articles, reviews and reports of the ongoing development on artistic research, Issue.
- Arlander, A. (2018). Agential cuts and performance as research. In A. Arlander, B. Barton, M. Dreyer-Lude, & B. Spatz (Eds.), *Performance as research: Knowledge, methods, impact* (pp. 132-151). Routledge.
- Arlander, A., Järvinen, H., Nauha, T., & Porkola, P. (2021). *How to do things with performance*. <https://www.uniarts.fi/en/projects/how-to-do-things-with-performance/> . Retrieved 21.09.2022
- Atkinson, D. (2009). *Pedagogy of the Event*. Goldsmiths, University of London.
- Atkinson, D. (2011). *Art, Equality and Learning: Pedagogies Against the State: Dennis Atkinson* (Vol. 31). Sense Publishers.
- Aure, V. (2013). Didaktikk - i spennet mellom klassisk formidling og performativ praksis. *InFormation. Nordic Journal og Art and Research.*, Volum 2, Nr 1(2013), 1 - 24. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.7577/information.v2i1.611>
- Badiou, A. (2005). *Being and event*. Continuum International Publishing
- Bala, S. (2018). *The gestures of participatory art*. Manchester University Press.
- Barad, K. (2003). Posthumanist performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(3), 30.

- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway : Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Duke University Press.
- Barrett, E., & Bolt, B. D. (2007). Practice as research: approaches to creative arts enquiry. In. I.B. Tauris.
- Berg, I. T. (2017). Participation to the people! Locating the popular in Rimini Protokoll's Home Visit Europe. *Nordic theatre studies [elektronisk ressurs]*, 29, 162-183.
- Berg, I. T. (2020). *Negotiating the Participatory Turn: Audience Participation in Contemporary Theatre and Performance*. NTNU]. Trondheim.
- Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial hells : participatory art and the politics of spectatorship*. Verso.
- Bourriaud, N. (2002). *Relational aesthetics*. Presses du réel.
- Boyd, M. (2015). Towards a performative multi species aesthetics. *Antennae: The journal of nature in visual culture*(31), 9 - 29.
- Center for online learning. (2022) Internett source. Retrieved 23.12.2022 from <https://www.uis.edu/colrs/teaching-resources/foundations-good-teaching/pedagogy-andragogy-heutagogy>
- Certeau, M. d. (1984). The practice of everyday life. *Arts de faire*.
- Classroom, P. (2020). *Vibrations and waves - Lesson 3 - Behavior of waves, reflection, refraction, and diffraction*. Retrieved 25.08.2020 from <https://www.physicsclassroom.com/class/waves/Lesson-3/Reflection,-Refraction,-and-Diffraction>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design. Choosing Among Five Approaches*. (3rd edition ed.). Sage.
- Deleuze, G. (1992). *What is an Event?* (T. Conley, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.
- Dictionary, O. E. (2017). *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved November 22 from <https://www.etymonline.com/word/potential>
- Eeg-Tverbakk, C. (2016). *Theatre-ting, Towards a Materialist Practice of Staging Documents*. Doctoral thesis, University of Roehampton

- Ellsworth, E. (2005). *Places of Learning: Media, Architecture, Pedagogy*. Taylor and Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203020920>
- Eno, B., & Schmidt, P. (1975). *Oblique Strategies*.
- Feyerabend, P. (1993). *Against method* (3rd ed. ed.). Verso.
- Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New rev. ed. ed.). Penguin.
- Furman, R. (2009). Ethical Considerations of Evidence-Based Practice. *Social Work*, 54(1), 82-84. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/54.1.82>
- Garoian, C. R. (1999). Performing pedagogy: toward an art of politics. In. State University of New York Press.
- Garoian, C. R. (2014). In "the Event" That Art and Teaching Encounter. *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research in Art Education*, 56(1), 384-396.
- Goat-Island. (2000). *Schoolbook 2*
- Goldberg, R. (1998). *Performance : live art since the 60s*. Thames and Hudson.
- Gómez-Peña, G. & Sifuentes, R. (2011). *Exercises for rebel artists : radical performance pedagogy*. Routledge.
- Hannula, M., Suoranta, Juha, Vadén, Tere. (2005). *Artistic Research - Theories, Methods and Practices*. Academy of Fine Arts.
- Haraway, D. J. (1991). A cyborg Manifesto. Science, technology and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century. In.
- Harper, D. (2022). *Online Etymology Dictionary*
- Haseman, B. (2006). A Manifesto for Performative Research. *Media International Australia incorporating Culture and Policy*, 118, 98-106.
- Heathfield, A. e. (2004). *Live Art and Performance*. Routledge.
- Helguera, P. (2011). *Education for Socially Engaged Art. A Materials and Techniques Handbook*. Jorge Pinto Books.
- Hickey-Moody, A., & Page, T. (2016). *Arts, Pedagogy and Cultural Resistance. New Materialisms*. Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Howell, A. (1999). *The analysis of performance art : a guide to its theory and practice* (Vol. vol. 32). Harwood Academic.
- Jackson, S. (2011). *Social works : performing art, supporting publics*. Routledge.
- Josefson, I. (1998). *Läkarens yrkeskunnande*. Studentlitteratur.

- Juelskjær, M. (2019). *At tænke med agential realisme*. Nyt fra Samfundsvidenskaberne.
- Junttila, K. (2020). A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair. *Nordic Journal of Art and Research, Vol 9 Nr 1*.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7577/information.4083>
- Junttila, K. (2021a). *Homepage of Kristina Junttila*. Retrieved 25.01.2022 from [www.kristinajunttila.com](http://www.kristinajunttila.com)
- Junttila, K. (2021b). On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy. . *RUUKKU Studies in Artistic Research, 17 "Everyday Utopias"*.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22501/ruu>
- Kaprow, A. (2003). *Essays on the blurring of art and life* (Expanded ed.). University of California Press.
- Kester, G. H. (2004). *Conversation pieces : community and communication in modern art*. University of California Press.
- Korkeaoja, A. (2022). *Performance art in practice. Pedagogical approaches*. Worthwise.
- Koro-Ljungberg, M., Löytänen, T. & Tesar, M. (Ed.). (2017). *Disrupting Data in Qualitative Inquiry. Entanglements with the Post-Critical and Post-Anthropocentric*. Peter Lang Publishing.
- Kulturrådet (2021). Retrieved 21st of September 2021 from <https://www.kulturradet.no/scenekunst>
- Kvale, S., Brinkmann, S., Anderssen, T. M., & Rygge, J. (2009). *Det kvalitative forskningsintervju* (2. utg. ed.). Gyldendal akademisk.
- Kwon, M. (2002). *One place after another : site-specific art and locational identity*. MIT Press.
- Langenbach, R. (2017). Pedagogy against itself in 20 instruments. In P. Porkola (Ed.), *Performance Artist's Workbook. On teaching and learning performance art - essays and exercises*. (Vol. 61). University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.

- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2011). Investigating, Learning, Participation and Becoming in Early Childhood Practices with a Relational Materialist Approach. *Global studies of Childhood, Volume 1*(Number 1).
- Lilja, E. (2012). *100 Exercises for a choreographer and other survivors*.
- Lutkevich, B. (2021). *What is reverse-engineering?* TechTarget Network. Retrieved 19th of July from <https://www.techtarget.com/searchsoftwarequality/definition/reverse-engineering>
- Manning, E., & Massumi, B. (2014). *Thought in the Act : Passages in the Ecology of Experience*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Massumi, B. (2011). *Semblance and Event. Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*. The MIT Press.
- Nagel, L., & Hovik, L. (2014). Interaktiv scenekunst for barn - tyranni eller magi?
- Nauha, T. (2017). "Performance art can't be taught". In P. Porkola (Ed.), *Performance artist's workbook: On teaching and learning performance art - essays and exercises*. University of the Arts.
- NESH. (2006). *Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and Humanities*. De nasjonale forskningsetiske komiteer. <https://www.etikkom.no/globalassets/documents/publikasjoner-som-pdf/guidelines-for-research-ethics-in-the-social-sciences-law-and-the-humanities-2006.pdf>
- Obrist, H. U. (2008). *Formulas for Now*. Thames & Hudson.
- Otterstad, A. M., & Reinertsen, A. B. (2015). *Metodefestival og øyeblikksrealisme : eksperimenterende kvalitative forskningspassasjer*. Fagbokforl.
- Porkola, P. (2014). *Esitys tutkimuksena: näkökulmia poliittiseen, dokumentaariseen ja henkilökohtaiseen esitystaiteessa* University of the Arts, Helsinki]. Helsinki.
- Porkola, P. (Ed.). (2017). *Performance artist's workbook. On teaching and learning performance art - essays and exercises* (Vol. 61). University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy and New Performance Turku.
- Rancière, J. (2009). *The emancipated spectator*. Verso Books.

- Sandvik, N. (2015). Posthumanistiske perspektiver. Bidrag til barnehageforskningen. In A. M. Otterstad & A. B. Reinertsen (Eds.), *Metodefestival og øyeblikksrealisme - eksperimenterende kvalitative forskningspassasjer*. Fagbokforlaget.
- Sayal-Bennett, A. (2018). Diffractive Analysis: Embodied Encounters in Contemporary Artistic Video Practice. *Tate Papers*, no.29. <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/29/diffractive-analysis>
- Schechner, R. (2006). *Performance studies an introduction* (2nd ed.. ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Scott, J. (2015). Matter mattering: "Intra-activity" in live media performance. *Body, Space and Technology*, 14. <https://doi.org/http://doi.org/10.16995/bst.33>
- Singapore Statement on Research Integrity*. Retrieved 17.01.2018 from <http://www.singaporestatement.org/statement.html>
- Snaza, N., & Weaver, J. A. (Eds.). (2015). *Posthumanism and Educational Research*. Routledge.
- Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., Leggo, C., & Gouzouasis, P. (2008). *Being with A/R/Tography*. Sense Publisher.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2019). Post Qualitative Inquiry in an Ontology of Immanence. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 25(1), 3 - 16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418772634>
- Tillman, R. (2015). Toward a new materialism: Matter as dynamic. *Minding Nature*, 8(1), 6.
- Valkoinen, K. J. (2021). How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education. . *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.23865/jased.v5.2649>
- Whitehead, A. N. (1955). *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge*. . University Press.
- Åsberg, C., & Braidotti, R. (2018). Feminist Posthumanities: An Introduction. In C. Åsberg & R. Braidotti (Eds.), *A Feminist Companion to the Posthumanities*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62140-1\\_1](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62140-1_1)

- Østern, A.-L., & Moxness, L. (2017). Å undervise i sirkus som kunstfag - en studie av sammenflettede tilblivelser i intra-aktiv sirkusdidaktikk. *På Spissen*, 3, 39 - 40.
- Østern, A.-L., & Nødtvedt Knudsen, K. (2019). *Performative approaches in arts education : artful teaching, learning and research*. Routledge.
- Østern, T. P., & Hovik, L. (2017). Med-koreografi og med-dramaturgi som diffraksjon. Med som metodologisk agent for skapende og forskende prosesser i Baby Body. *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, Vol. 1, 43 - 58.

## **PART II**

### **Full text articles**



# Article I - On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy

Junttila, K. (2021) On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy. *RUUKKU Studies in Artistic Research*. Nr 17 “Everyday Utopias”.

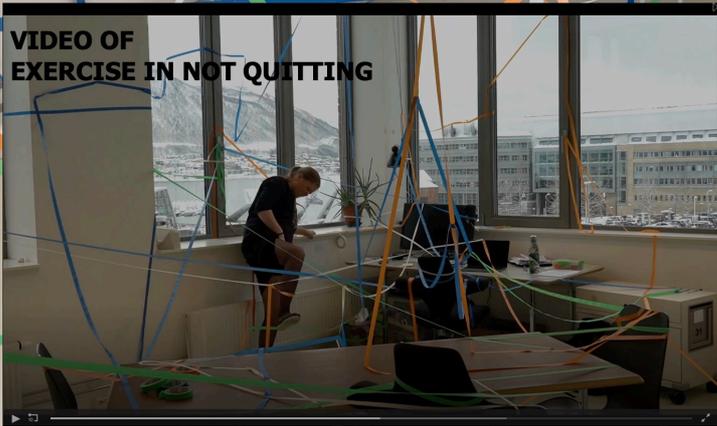
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.22501/ruu> Editors of the special edition: Pilvi Porkola and Suvi Salmenniemi

Direct link to the exposition:

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/722219/808598>

**This article is only available online and must be read online!** I have included images from the four pages of the exposition below, but they do not replace the online article.

## VIDEO OF EXERCISE IN NOT QUITTING



### ABOUT THIS EXPOSITION

This exposition is based on my artistic research on the potential of exercises in live art pedagogy. It consists of five pages, which can be explored in any preferred order.

The first page and the last page of the exposition are videos of two different exercises I developed for this exposition. The first video is an exercise in not quitting. Literally, it was made in the beginning of writing this exposition and it became an exercise in how to continue to write this exposition, even though I was unsure where it would lead to. The last video is an exercise in quitting where I am literally exercising how to end this writing. I am tapping my mouth until I cannot speak anymore, while I am trying to write and speak a conclusive text for this exposition.

The second page is a text about exercises in live art and pedagogy and shortly about my research journey, as a way to contextualise the exposition.

The third page is a map of exercises from different participatory performances, installations and workshops undertaken during the years of 2014 - 2019. The exercises that come from a specific project are clustered together. By cross-contextualizing the exercises, I look at similarities and differences of these exercises - and what are the dominating performative agent.

The fourth page is about which performative agents that have been dominating in the exercises. The agents that I emphasize here are place, audience, performer, the formulation, materiality and time.

The material for this research consists of several different artworks and workshops which has been part of a larger context, made in collaboration with other artists and with participants as audience and students. Collaborators are mentioned when you put the hover over specific projects. Everyone visible in the material has given their consent for it to be published.

#### MENU:

- [VIDEO / of Exercise in not Quitting \(this page\)](#)
- [TEXT / on the Potential of Exercises](#)
- [MAP / of Exercises](#)
- [AGENTS / in Exercises](#)
- [VIDEO / of Exercises in Quitting](#)

## THE POTENTIAL OF EXERCISES IN LIVE ART PEDAGOGY

### EXERCISE IN NOT QUITTING

Material: tape & unfamiliar article

While trying to write this exposition I suddenly find myself entangled in tape sitting in my workroom by the computer. It does not help me to write better or more, but it gives me a satisfaction of having done something concrete. And perhaps more important: to perform and from the exercise is to embody and write this exposition and a way of exploring the questions that I am circling around. The questions are "what are the potentials of exercises in live art pedagogy as a way to imagine and "bring new realities?" and "what are the performative agents in these exercises?"

### THE POTENTIAL OF EXERCISES IN LIVE ART AND PEDAGOGY

This exposition is a web of exercises which have been part of different participatory performances, installations and workshops. The projects were undertaken during the years of 2014 - 2019 as part of my artistic pedagogical research about the potential of exercises in live art and pedagogy. By extracting exercises from their original context and placing them in a rhizomatic map alongside other exercises, I examine what the exercises consist of and how they perform. Exercises can be used to create something unplanned within a performance work and for the making of new performance art works and everyday realities. Each exercise can also have value as an artwork in themselves, as a performance event score. The exercises can be a creative act that at its best can open up new potentials.

This work is inspired by new materialist theory, especially Karen Barad's (2003, 2007) theory of "agential realism", in which the material-discursive practices are formative agents and have constitutive power. I look at both live art and pedagogy as complex practice and my focus is on how the material-discursive practice produces new realities. The exercise in itself can potentially be a performative agent, an active agent with the capacity to change a situation in interaction with the environment. The exercise is an initiative for an action to take place and through the "physical practice of engagement" (Barad, 2007, p. 34) we are changing something new.

My proposal is that when the exercises in a pedagogical setting or in a live art event initiate for an action to take place the participants are "in the making". Elisabeth Ellström (2006) argues for that pedagogues must mediate learning environments and embodied experience in a way so that "those who have not participated in its history - in making the knowledge already arrived at - may participate in making its future" (p. 10). Potentially the exercises are initiatives for making the future and can serve as a tool to negotiate the future. I am looking for a pedagogy of the agent, a pedagogy which is not instrumental - but focuses on the potential of what we can become. A messy, unsettled, untamed, complicated space. Maybe it starts from the simple, the exercise. The exercise can potentially destabilize, queer and decompose the existing.

A potential means "that which is possible", it is an unrealized ability. Yet, the zone of potential is not judged on a certain right or normative potential. Philosopher Giorgio Agamben (1989) emphasizes that all potentialities also includes the potential of not being active and thus we can also think that new ideas might just as well come out of being passive, of not performing the exercise. In that way there is a potential also in imagining and creating the exercises.

### MY WAY INTO THE EXERCISE

My practice as a performance artist, director and pedagogue is quite diverse. I have been working in the crossfield of contemporary theatre, performance art, visual art and pedagogy. The diverse possibilities of the live event and the exploring of the relationship to the audience and participation, has been in my interest for years. It is through this interest that I got inspired working with exercises. I have been interested in how I as an artist and pedagogue can open up situations, knowledge and possibilities that have an openness connected to it, where I am not the person who has the right answer on how the participant should act. The exercises are very concrete and the workshops that I refer to in this research are workshops made for art students, while the art works are made for very different audiences, including grown ups, youths and children.

### WHAT IS AN EXERCISE?

It could be relevant to speak about a task, but a task points more towards a duty, while an exercise is to employ, to put into active use. (Encyclopedia) The exercise initiates something that has not happened yet, and it can become an event. The exercise can be a way into getting an understanding of what live art can be. If I look at it from the Fluxus tradition, an exercise has similarities to a Fluxus event score. There are also many other references that have inspired me such as the Dadaist strategies (Cruz, 1979), Formulas for New (Chen, 2009), 100 exercises for a Choreographer and Other Survivors (Lilla, 2012), Transportergedanken (Sialito, 2013), Schoolbook 2 (Sokal Island, 2000), Exercises for rebel artists : radical performance pedagogy (Barnes, Stone and Silkenat, 2017) Performance artist's workbook. On teaching and learning performance art - essays and exercises. (Forsko, 2017) and many other workshops, works and artists using exercises as a tool.

Continue >>

The exercise can be seen as a restriction which initiates something, which makes something possible or "enabling constraint" (Barad, 2011). The exercise can at its best be a way of discovering how you can best part of the political, sensuous and social world. The exercises initiate something that has not happened yet. The exercises can be a way into getting an understanding of what performance art can be. An exercise can be an event, exact production, ingredients for a cake, a question to think about, a way to wake up, a way to write, painting the food papers, hugging the family. It can be small performances, way to develop repertoire for a performance artist, acts of intervention in own life. In this "Map of exercises" the exercises are somewhat similar in the way that they are all written instructions, they are all written by the same artist and are from live art projects.

But the exercises could also be so much more. In live art and performance art the question of dramaturgy - of what is being rehearsed and repeated until it become your craft has been somewhat different from art forms where the tradition is to train a certain skill, like in dance or music for example. There is no prescribed craft or set of exercises. And it is certainly not a goal to exercise in the sense of keeping physical fit. However, there are skills connected to the practice of live art and performance art as well - and by looking at what it is that repeats, we can also see what the skills are, what have a special agency. This exposition explores what it is that repeats in the different exercises. And how one exercise is repeated differently.

The focus on which performative agents that are dominant in some exercises does not exclude that in all exercises it is also about the intertwining of - and relationship between - the different agents. All the agents affect each other, and the same exercise will work different in each new context.

### ABOUT THIS EXPOSITION

The next page is a map of exercises. These exercises are traces of earlier works and the exercises that come from a specific project are clustered together. By holding the hover over the title of the project, you can read a short synopsis of the earlier work the exercise comes from. Further, I am also looking for how the exercises interrelated with each other apart from through the specific projects or context. Each exercise is complex and consists of different performative agents, such as for example place or time. In this exposition I have investigated what the main performative agents that repeats in the different exercises are. I look into how the exercises are mediated, what is the materiality or the technique of an exercise in live art? What does an exercise consist of? By cross-contextualizing the exercises, I look at similarities and differences of these exercises and it can work as a tool to develop further exercises. The exercises are color-coded and each colour relate to each other by what I see as one dominating performative agent in the exercise. It is possible to click further on from the exercise and that will be documentation and an elaboration of how that agent can perform. The agents that I emphasize here are the formulation, objects, performer, audience, place and time.

All the exercises that are part of this exposition has been employed, they are very concrete and I have aimed to obtain a certain playfulness. With this I hope that the exercises do not work as a way of conserving ways that are established, but rather can be in a constant flux and open up a potential for new things to emerge. The nature of the exercises is that they are performative, and anyone can try them out and repeat them differently from how I imagined them or they can work as inspiration to develop new exercises that can be performed in any other context.

### EXERCISE IN NOT QUITTING

Material: tape & unfamiliar article

At the end of doing the exercise I find myself entangled in the workplace. Doing the exercise has been fun and I found a visibility for this exposition. I am in a messy, unexpected, untamed, complicated space. Maybe it starts from the simple, the exercise.

### WHAT EXERCISE WILL YOU PERFORM IN THE MAP OF EXERCISES?

#### MENU:

- [VIDEO / of Exercise in not Quitting](#)
- [TEXT / on the Potential of Exercises \(this page\)](#)
- [MAP / of Exercises](#)
- [AGENTS / in Exercises](#)
- [VIDEO / of Exercise in Quitting](#)





## **Article II - How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education.**

Valkoinen, K. J. (2021). How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education. *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.23865/jased.v5.2649>

# How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen

*The Arctic University of Norway*

## Abstract

This article addresses a university course in performance art at UiT – The Arctic University of Norway. The aim of this article is to discuss how the *exercises* and the dramaturgy of the exercises in the course matter. The author is the teacher of the course and thus the diffractive analysis is informed by her role as a teacher and artist-researcher. The study uses new material feminist theory and the theory of agential realism from physicist and feminist theorist Karen Barad.

The study investigates how the exercises become agents and get constitutive power. The exercises are material-discursive, in *intra-action* and entangled with the entire teaching environment, and they compose a dramaturgical structure that allows the unpredictable to happen. The analysis describes three examples of exercises from the course and highlights three aspects that matter in the mediation of the exercises – embodiment, materiality, and site. The results of the study point toward the importance of mediating exercises that activate the student-participants to experiment and redefine what the ever-changing field of performance art can be.

**Keywords:** *agential realism; open dramaturgy; performance art pedagogy*

Received: October, 2020; Accepted: March, 2021; Published: May, 2021

## Sammendrag

### Om øvelsens betydning som dramaturgisk tilnærming i undervisning av performancekunst

Denne studien baserer seg på et universitetskurs i performancekunst på UiT – Norges arktiske universitet. Studien er en undersøkelse av hvilken betydning *øvelsene* i kurset hadde og hvordan øvelsene kan være det bærende dramaturgiske elementet i undervisningen. Den diffraktive analysen påvirkes av at artikkelforfatteren også er kursets lærer og forsker. Studiet bruker nymaterialistisk feministisk teori og teoriene til agentisk realisme fra fysiker og feminist Karen Barad.

Studien undersøker hvordan øvelsene blir agenter og får konstituerende makt. Øvelsene er materiell-diskursive, i *intra-aksjon* og sammenvevd med hele undervisningskonteksten og konstituerer en dramaturgisk struktur som kan legge til rette for det ukjente. Artikkelen analyserer tre konkrete eksempler fra kurset og avdekker tre områder som har betydning for øvelsene – kroppslighet, materialitet og sted. Resultatet peker på viktigheten ved å initiere øvelser som

---

\*Correspondence: Kristina Junttila Valkoinen, [Kristina.junttila@uit.no](mailto:Kristina.junttila@uit.no)

© 2021 K. J. Valkoinen. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

Citation: K. J. Valkoinen. «How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education». *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education, Special issue: Dramaturgiske perspektiver på didaktiske kontekster*, Vol. 5(2), 2021, pp. 57–72.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.23865/jased.v5.2649> 57 115

K. J. Valkoinen

aktiverer studentene til å eksperimentere slik at de får redskaper til å bli en aktiv medspiller i å skape fremtidas performancekunst.

**Nøkkelord:** *agentisk realisme; performancekunstpedagogikk; åpen dramaturgi*

## Introduction

I don't think the course would have been anything without the doing. [...] To have done everything and to experience what it becomes in the end, that is what has taught me the most. What is a practical subject if you don't practise it? It is through the experience of practising and the vulnerability of having practised it myself that I have learned the most.

The above quote is from a student who attended the ten-credit university course in performance art, which this article addresses. The quote confirms the pedagogy I attempted for in the course; an embodied and exploratory pedagogy, where learning is produced through experience and in the making (Ellsworth, 2005). An embodied and exploratory pedagogy is in many ways predominate in performance art pedagogy. In this article, I consider *how* the course *exercises* initiated by the teacher matter in producing such a pedagogy. The aim of this study is to investigate how exercises matter in producing a performance art pedagogy that can contribute to the continuous development of the field.

The study presents a diffractive analysis of three exercises from the course. In the diffractive analysis the embodied engagement with the research data is informed by my role as a teacher of the course, performance artist and researcher. The theoretical framework of agential realism and new materialism, where the focus is on how material-discursive practice also produces knowledge (Barad, 2003), informs this study. I will investigate how the course exercises can become performative agents. Barad (2007) uses the term *performative agents* to describe active agents with the capacity to change a situation through intra-action. Agential realism is part of the post-humanistic turn, which has shifted the focus away from the human as the centre of the universe. Barad's theories are interdisciplinary and developed in relation to quantum physics, poststructuralism, feminism, and queer theories, among others (Juelskjær, 2019).

This study is situated in performance art, a crossover field that explores the boundaries of the live action of bodies, time, and space. Often, the core of performance art involves disrupting boundaries, resisting definitions, asking awkward questions, taking risks, activating the audience, and being in constant development (Goldberg, 1998; Heathfield, 2004). To define performance art succinctly is to dive into an ongoing discussion, ranging from strict definitions to a more open notion of a diverse field in which various manifestations, aesthetics, and methods are accepted (Porkola, 2017, p. 14).

Performance art does not have an institutionally established set of exercises, so it is very much up to the teacher to devise exercises and frame the learning situation. It is also an oft-repeated statement that "performance art cannot be taught". In an analysis of this statement, Tero Nauha (2017) questions whether the difficulty of

teaching performance art stems from it not being considered an art form, but rather a countercultural phenomenon and form of institutional critique. I would take this further and propose that the difficulty of teaching performance art is also related to the various forms performance art can take, relating to another oft-repeated statement that “There are as many ways of doing performance art as there are performance artists”. This leads, again, to the question of how to facilitate a learning situation that allows for all these possibilities.

In the literature on performance art and pedagogy, several studies have focused on exercises (see Gómez-Peña et al., 2011; Howell, 1999; Porkola, 2017). I have not, however, come across studies that focus on both the teacher’s and the students’ perspectives on how exercises are used in performance art education. The present study contributes to the field by exploring how exercises matter in performance art education by examining the topic from diverse perspectives, combining the polyphonic voices of the teacher, students, and the material-discursive environment.

In the course of my research, I have observed that the dramaturgy of teaching reflects dramaturgical approaches that are common in performance art. These dramaturgical approaches often focus on the agency of objects (Lucie, 2020) and having an open dramaturgy that allows for the unexpected (Gladsø et al., 2005). In planning the course, I used the exercises as ‘building bricks’, or as the ‘dramaturgical approach’ of the course. The learning process occurred in relation to the exercises, specifically how the exercises were mediated and what components they consisted of. This is in line with the way in which the planning and execution of the artistic process informs and creates the dramaturgy of a performance. By exploring the exercises used in the course as the main dramaturgical teaching approach, I analyse the effect of the exercises in the learning situation and how this might matter to the future development of performance art. This study investigates the following research question: *How can exercises in performance art education matter as a dramaturgical approach in order for them to become active agents in the re-creation of performance art?*

### **The performance art course**

The performance art course was a ten-credit course which was a support subject for students doing a bachelor in drama and theatre at UiT – The Arctic University of Norway. The course took place in the spring semester in the second year of the bachelor program and had four gatherings with three days of intensive workshops throughout the semester. A couple of weeks after the last gathering, the students performed their individual performances for a public. Two weeks after this, they had their exams presenting their approved performance project with a follow-up conversation with an examiner. The participants were eleven students from the bachelor program completing the course, and five guest students from contemporary arts in the two first gatherings. The course was held in the locations of the Art Academy in Tromsø, which differed from the theatre room where the other courses in the

bachelor program were held. The guest students and the locations strengthened the affiliation performance art has to visual arts, and also made it easier to grasp how performance art differs from theatre. As mentioned earlier, I was the teacher of the course, and I designed the course based on my background as a practicing performance artist and my institutional background of having a master's degree in Live Art and Performance Studies from the Theatre Academy in Helsinki.

The focus in the course was to give the students practical exercises and a practical introduction to various forms of performance art. In addition to this, there was theory, lectures, viewing of documentation of works, a reading list, unexpected events, discussions, observations, feedback and a compulsory written assignment. The students also did presentations about a chosen performance artist or artist group, such as Kurt Johanessen, Morten Viskum, Yoko Ono, Linda Montano, the vacuum cleaner or Tori Wrånes, to mention a few. The theoretical side of the course was based on performance studies, especially on understanding the concept of performativity and an introduction to the diverse history of performance art. In the first gathering the theme was 'identity and autobiography', with a focus on *place* and *body*, in the second gathering the theme was 'everyday and art', with a focus on *time* and *action*, in the third gathering the theme was 'participation', with a focus on *audience* and in the fourth gathering the focus was on developing an individual performance, based on own interests.

In planning the course, I used a two-sided dramaturgical approach, considering the dramaturgy of the entire course through the exercises and dramaturgy of each exercise. In this study the focus is on the dramaturgy of the individual exercises. There were many types of exercises, exploring the themes and focuses as described above, where each gathering had between five and twelve exercises, starting from short exercises to more complex and longer exercises.

### **Intra-action, performative agents, and mattering**

Teaching is a complex practice that is interdependent with the entire teaching environment, including the structure, theme, facilities, and practical exercises of the course (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016; Taguchi, 2011). All the elements are generated and generative in *intra-action* with one another. The exercises are material-discursive, in *intra-action* and entangled with the entire teaching environment, and they compose a dramaturgical structure that allows for the unpredictable to happen. According to Barad (2003, 2007), *intra-action* is an alternative to *interaction* in which entities are not separated from one another before the interaction takes place. Rather, in *intra-action*, the borders between the entities are indistinctive and fluid.

Central to agential realism is the concept of how matter matters (Barad, 2003). Materiality has a constitutive power as well as language and humans, and it is an active agent in creating the world. Materiality is not important in and of itself, but it gains meaning through its interface with other phenomena, through *intra-action*.

According to Barad (2003, 2007), the moments in which the intra-action between agents changes something and takes new forms are called agential cuts. The distinct agencies do not precede but rather emerge through their entanglements and intra-actions with other agents. The agent is not a fixed essence but is produced and productive, generated and generative (Barad, 2007).

This way of thinking – that everything matters and can become agents – implies that the course exercises are not merely formulations of exercises. The exercises are also material, objects, places, or time, and they intra-act with the discourse of the course and the students. Similarly, in this article, dramaturgy refers not only to the language of the exercises but includes the dramaturgy of the material, place, time, and actions. In my work as a performance artist, my way of looking at dramaturgy is through *performance dramaturgy*, which takes in the complexity of all the elements that construct a performance. In site-sensitive performances, for example, the main building element of the performance is the site.

In agential realism, the focus is not on understanding what something is, but rather *how* it comes into being. The world is being created or becoming through intra-action. The act of being in relation is what creates the future world. The question is not *if* the materials matter but *how* the materiality matters. The performative agents are not something that is constant but something created in the process, continuously becoming and being created anew (Juelskjær, 2019). In teaching performance art, we are shaping the future of performance art through our intra-actions, entanglements, and initiatives. As Barad puts it, “The future is radically open at every turn” (Barad, 2003, p. 826).

### **Performance art, dramaturgy, and pedagogy**

Performance art uses diverse dramaturgical strategies and approaches. However, performance art dramaturgy is not exclusively bound to a dramatic text. Rather, it is determined by the artistic process and multiple approaches to how to set things in order. The dominant dramaturgical approach could be, for instance, the site, the audience, the body, the material, or the strategy with which to compose structures and allow for the unpredictable to happen (Gritzner et al., 2009). This relates to agential realism, in which any type of matter can become performative agents. An example of how to compose dramaturgical structures that allow for the unpredictable to happen is described by Lisbeth Bodd, the artistic leader of the performance art group *Verdensteateret*. Bodd does not want to control what happens in the relationship between image, text, and sound. She would rather let the dramaturgy remain open so that the various components can meet in unexpected ways (Gladsø et al., 2005, p. 149). The theory of agential realism allows for a broad understanding of dramaturgy in which the dramaturgical components or agents can vary by site, material, language, or action. In my artistic practice, I search for agential cuts when the intra-action between various elements transforms the situation or creates a new form (Barad, 2007). To link this concept to pedagogy, these moments could be the moments when learning takes place.

As a teacher, I strive to use an open approach that contributes to my students' development rather than defining a single truth about the field. This open definition of performance art as a field in constant change establishes a certain premise regarding how to teach the subject and find ways of opening up possibilities within the field. It also situates this study within performative art didactics, an art didactic based on the idea that art is in constant change (Aure, 2013). Elizabeth Ellsworth (2005) argues that pedagogy must be *in the making* and that the design of mediated learning environments and the embodied experience is essential in facilitating a *space of continuing experience*. According to Ellsworth, "It must do this so that those who have not participated in its history – in making the knowledges already arrived at – may participate in making its future" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 166). This is in line with how I, in the present study, investigate how exercises can serve as a tool in performance art education to recreate the potential future of performance art.

### **Diffraction research methodology**

In the present study, I engage in a diffractive analysis, searching for agential cuts in line with Barad's agential realism, in which I, as a researcher, intra-act and intertwine with the material. In the diffractive analysis, I not only observe but also produce phenomena and knowledge. In a similar way, I not only observe what the students do but also create the knowledge through the intra-action with the students and the material-discursive environment. My knowledge as an artist, teacher, and researcher is produced in *the making*.

The empirical material for this study includes notes, images, and videos from the course, my prewritten plan for the exercises applied during the course, and interviews conducted with eleven students before and after the course. In the diffractive reading of this material, the data do not represent stable knowledge but elements that intra-act with one another, the theory and with me (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2017).

In my analysis, I look for moments of diffraction and agential cuts; what the exercises do as agents and how they create possibilities, rather than their meaning (Scott, 2015). The focus is on the material effects of difference and how to study the relationship and co-creation between humans and non-humans. Barad defines it as "accounting for how practices matter" (Barad, 2007, p. 88). Diffraction is a concept borrowed from physics that describes how waves change direction as they pass through openings or around a corner (Henderson, 2020). In the diffractive analysis, I look for moments in which the exercises have the agency to cut and create diffraction. This is a specific intra-action in which an *agential cut* is enacted. The artist researcher Annette Arlander (2018) uses Barad to argue that it is important for the artist-researcher to "focus on articulating the apparatus used, the specific agential cuts enacted, and especially the marks on the bodies generated" (Arlander, 2018, p. 144). This can change within a specific case. According to Arlander, I must not only acknowledge my subjectivity and entanglement with the object of research as a researcher "but also account for

the agential cuts within the phenomena at hand – that is, what is included and what is excluded from mattering” (Arlander, 2018, p. 144).

In my double role as a teacher and researcher, I emphasised to the students that participating in the study was voluntarily. I reported the study to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) and followed the Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2016). All of the students in the performance art course gave their written consent regarding the material, including photos of students and situations, to be used in this study. In addition to this, the students who are identifiable in the pictures approved of such prior to the publication of this article. The interview guide did not contain private issues. It all centred on the teaching and the students’ experience of the exercises. However, performance art requires that the students reflect upon identity-related questions. As a teacher and artist, I know that this can be a highly personal process, and I have, as a researcher, been aware of how I deal with the empirical material in order to not reveal any sensitive information.

Another ethical consideration is whether or not the research is trustworthy when it is based on one’s own practice and embodied knowledge. This question is part of a larger discussion concerning artistic and qualitative research methods, in which the subjective voice provides knowledge about something that can be applied to a wider phenomenon. I consequently avoid basing the research on my opinions and, rather, base it on knowledge and experience obtained through practice in constant discussions with the theoretical framework.

In the following analysis, I focus on three exercises from the performance art course. I have chosen these three exercises by searching for moments when the exercises became agents and produced change. Another guide in making this choice was that I wanted to analyse different kinds of exercises that occurred during different dramaturgical stages in the course. The voices of the students, the material encounters, the images as physical manifestations of the situation, the discourse of the university, and my own experience all have a non-hierarchical relationship in this reading. I analyse these voices with a diffractive reading, and I search for what the exercises consisted of and how they worked as performative agents and matter in producing specific situations.

## **Marking our bodies**

### **Change clothes with another person in the class**

It was a shock to change clothes with another person in our class, to see someone else in my clothes, and to observe how much it affects your identity... I thought I was very casual and relaxed. It was an out-of-my-body experience! Clothes matter a lot. (Student, quote from interview)

On the second day of the course, I asked the students to pair up, leave the room, change clothes with one other, and come back. One by one, the students re-entered the room. From the outside, the change did not seem tremendous. Some clothes



*Image 1.* Two students who have just done the exercise “Change clothes with another person in class.” Photo: K. J. Valkoinen

are a bit too small or very baggy, and they looked somewhat awkward and different. The atmosphere in the class also changed. The students had a new energy; they were laughing, commenting on one another’s looks, taking pictures, and talked about how their feeling about themselves had changed immediately.

In the classroom, the conversation automatically turned toward the core issues of performance art: what it is that forms our identity and how we perform ourselves in everyday life through, for example, our clothes.

According to philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler, our identity is constructed through language, gestures, and all types of symbolic signs (Butler, 1988, pp. 519–520). In relation to Barad’s agential realism, in which material also has constitutive power, we can say that clothes are not separate from who we are, but are producing and being produced by a complex network of active and equal agents (Barad, 2003). The embodied understanding of the agency of the material, specifically the clothes, was further confirmed in my interviews with the students.

“Since different agential cuts materialize different phenomena – different marks on bodies – our intra-actions [...] contribute to differential mattering of the world” (Barad, 2007, p. 178). The students changed through the act of completing the exercise, and the clothes themselves also changed when different people wore them. The most obvious visual change can be seen in the image of a male and female student. On the right, the male is wearing clothes that are too small for him. He is unable to close his jeans; the shirt is so short that it seems like he has just grown out of it. On

*How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education*

the left, the female looks as if she is wearing clothes that would be good to hide in, like the large hoodie. Apart from that, the clothes are not particularly gendered, because the style of the clothes could be worn by both genders.

In this exercise, the materiality of the clothes intra-acted with the self-image of the students, the embodied feeling of wearing different clothes, and the different discursive understandings of what clothes seems proper for one to wear. This relates to the aim of the course – to provide a practical understanding of how to create performance art and participate in the ongoing discussion of what performance art has been, is, and will be.

These intra-actions attune us to the materiality of human and non-human relationships. From a Baradian point of view, the students and the clothes are not separate. Bodies are made of and entangled with the world. We form what we wear, but the clothes also form us and “work” differently when worn by others. Our bodies are marked. This exercise gave the students a personal experience of performance art being about the embodied feeling of a performer going through a transformation. It also address the invisible, how it feels to act as a performance artist, what it means to work with your own identity, and how this is portrayed in the work.

Clothes relate to personal identity, and this exercise queers the sense of student identity as a stable subject. To quote Barad (2014, p. 171): “Diffraction queers binaries and calls out for a rethinking of the notions of identity and difference.” The exercise is an exploration of how we can work against the dichotomies of the identity question in order to explore how we can be many things at once and how we are not the opposite of one another but rather a part of one another. The exercise provides an embodied and materialistic understanding of how identity is performative.

Half of the students I interviewed mentioned this exercise spontaneously. Some of them expressed that this exercise was an eye-opener regarding what it means to *perform yourself*. At least three students used the act of undressing and dressing as



*Image 2.* Three students who have just done the exercise “Change clothes with another person in class”. Photo: K. J. Valkoinen

part of their independent work later. The exercise had a slightly *shocking effect* because the agential cut deliberately destabilized the teaching situation. This destabilization allowed for new possibilities and ways of doing.

### Material agency

Try out different actions you can do with paper. Write a list of actions and make a composition in five minutes

I think the exercise with the paper was very good. It made me aware of how there are infinite possibilities in a sheet of paper. And then, when I had cleaned it all up, someone came to kick it, and it transformed once again. (Student, quote from interview)

The intention of the second exercise was to give a short introduction to working with material and time. It was a seemingly “boring” exercise. However, many of the students talked about this exercise, and I recall how the exercise created a *flow* in the class. Here is a quote from a student about how the experience of *doing* the exercise was liberating:

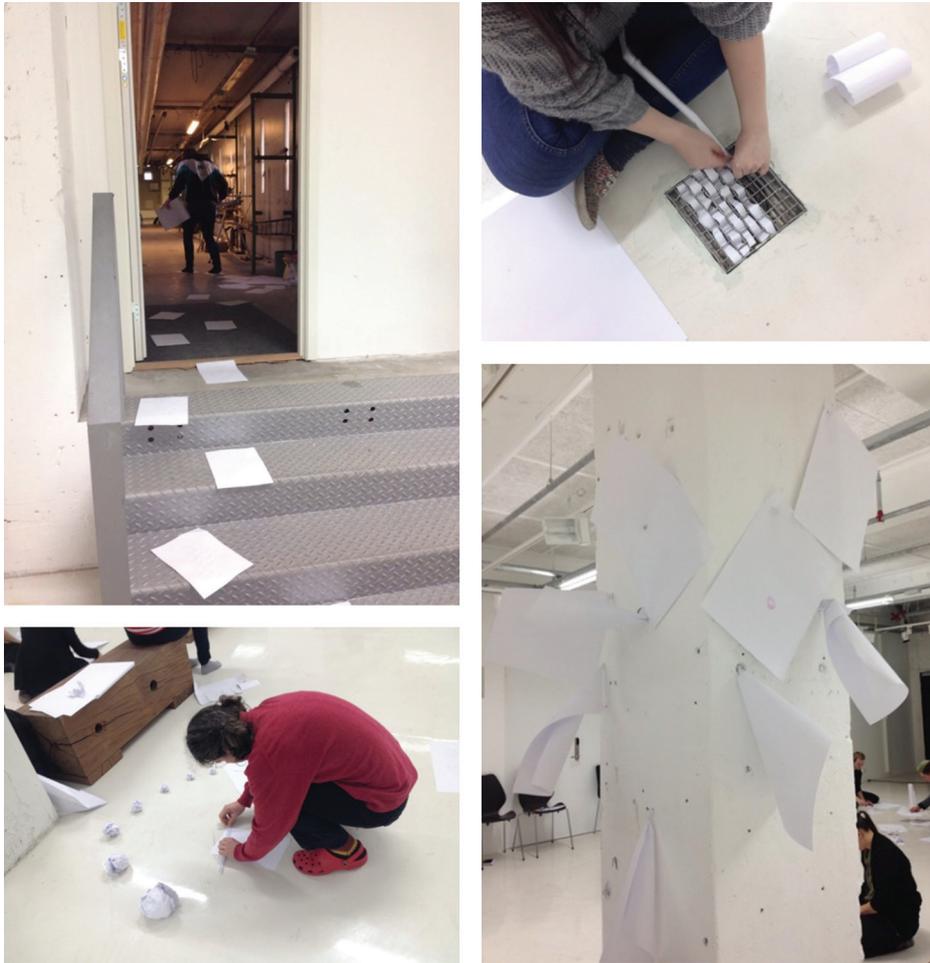
It was very nice and fun to play with the paper without having to create meaning. I like that there is no prototype in performance art. Normally, I am interested in subjects like maths and science; I love when there is one right answer, but it was liberating to do this because, sometimes, there is not only one solution. And then, it was not so that you got more credit if you were original. Everyone just did it. I understood that we don't need to analyse in the act but just be in the situation. Everyone was moving the paper around. Someone was tearing it; others were peeling them. There were so many ways to use the paper. (Student, quote from interview)

This exercise made it possible for the students to go through many transformations and, as follows, perform actions they could not have imagined. Perhaps because they were told to concentrate on the possibilities of the material, they allowed themselves to go with the flow and be surprised by the potential variations (see Images 3–5). The actions occurred simultaneously, and the actions of others around them inspired them to continue exploring the directions in which this simple exercise could take them.

This exercise mattered by allowing experimentation and exploration. The acts and visual images the students created could not have been planned for without the action and experimentation. The material, the paper, was the driving force and intra-acted with each student differently. The material allowed for indefinite usage. One of the reasons I chose this material was because it was cheap and easily accessible. It also became apparent that using such a common material in new ways was destabilizing the normative use of the material in the discursive environment of the university. The agential cut emerged through intra-actions between each individual student and the paper and their various actions revealed the many possibilities of one agential cut.

The composition part of the exercise, in which students were supposed to create a five-minute composition based on the actions they took, did not turn out to be very

*How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education*



*Images 3–5. Students doing the exercise “Try out different actions you can do with paper.”*  
Photo: K. J. Valkoinen

interesting. It was far more interesting to observe the images, actions, and multiple answers that were created during the flow of energy, and perhaps, the second part of the exercise was too complicated at that particular moment. The simple exercise, the everyday usage of paper in intra-action with the exploratory approach, led to a deeper understanding for the students on how simple actions can be important in the creation of performance art.

**Site matters**

**Do an action that adds something to a chosen public place**

The third exercise can be considered a series of exercises because it consisted of several steps. First, the students were asked to walk with either a blindfold or hearing protection and observe a nearby area. The next day, they were asked to think about an action that could add something new to a place they had noticed during the observation exercise. They presented their ideas to one another in small groups, gave

one another feedback, and prepared to perform their ideas. At the end of the day, we watched 15 different actions at different sites and provided immediate feedback.

One important reason this exercise led to an agential cut and created actions and possibilities, was the dramaturgy and timing of the exercise. Because we spent a great deal of time on this exercise, I expected it would lead to new insights. When asked if any of the exercises made a particular impression, one student responded: “What I remember best is when we were standing quietly in the park looking towards the art hall. It was very interesting” (Student, quote from interview). All the students I interviewed talked about this exercise at length, and they confirmed my expectations about how the mediation of this exercise mattered.

The exercise succeeded in balancing the students’ freedom to develop their own ideas with enough structure to support them in encountering new methods and expressions. Furthermore, the way the exercise was mediated emphasised looking for the potential of the various sites, rather than looking back on places or ideas that were not interesting.

For me, it felt like it was the first time we tried out an idea for a performance. It was the second gathering, and then, we were supposed to do something so scary all by ourselves. It was very nice to have the group there, to discuss and get feedback about your ideas. And then, it was inspiring to be able to partake in someone else’s process and to be pulled into all the performances through watching or participating. (Student, quote from interview)

It was essential for the students to have the chance to discuss their ideas in relation to those of others, especially because they were mostly used to working collectively in the creation of new works but now had to defend their own ideas. However, they also experienced the way in which, even as a solo artist, one is still *in relation to* others.

An important agent in this exercise was the chosen public sites and the fact that we were working outside of designated art spaces. The students expressed how meaningful it was for them to experience how much the site affects the performance.



Image 6. Students doing the exercise “Do an action that adds something to a chosen public place” outside the police station. Photo: K. J. Valkoinen

They appreciated the fact that they could really make a difference in the real world. One of the actions most mentioned by the students in the interviews was when everyone in the class stood spread out on a large field, facing toward the local art hall. We stood still for quite some time, until the student who had initiated the action said that it was over. Several mentioned that the performance became interesting when many passers-by reacted to us standing still and looking, and some of them even took pictures of us. This exercise, especially this framing, raised awareness of how much performance art is about choosing a frame to watch from. And also, how the frame chooses the performance and the performers. The site and the audience intra-act with the creation of the performance and can even be the protagonist in the performance.

Some students changed or developed their ideas while they were participating, as the audience, inspired by the performances their fellow students initiated. One student mentioned that, when she was standing in front of the art hall, she came to think that the same thing could be done in front of a more controversial site; the police station. This experiment was very different from the one with the art hall, and it raised awareness of how the site matters for the experience of performing:

I did my exercise outside the police station. I was really happy that nobody came out of the door. First, it was the three of us standing there, and then, more and more people came to watch us from the outside. I hate to get into trouble, but it would have been cool if they came to talk to us. Because we were standing somewhere it is allowed to stand, and it is just a matter of what they feel comfortable with. And then, I feel we were brave that we dared to do this. The police station is a charged building with many secrets. We stood for maybe ten minutes, and it felt like ages. Time feels different when you do something that is uncomfortable. I think it is a matter of time before they would have asked us to leave. (Student, quote from interview)

Another student who asked all her fellow students to cross a road blindfolded changed to a less dangerous crossing area when she recognized how risky it could be to perform in public places. This exercise prompted the students to take risks and try something new in a public place, using the site as the main component to create something.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to explore how exercises in performance art education may matter as a dramaturgical approach so that they can become active agents in the recreation of performance art. In the diffractive analyses of three specific exercises, I focused on three aspects that intra-acted and mattered within the exercises: the body in the clothes exercise, the materiality in the paper exercise, and the site in the last exercise. These aspects mattered and intra-acted in these chosen exercises, and if I had analysed other exercises, different aspects of those exercises would have come to the fore. The focus, in the analysis, has been on accounting for *how* materiality matters

and what specificity generates (Arlander, 2018, p. 144). These specific intra-actions show that in the planning of the specific exercises, there must be a conscious attempt to include the material-discursive environment. Additionally, in the execution of the exercises, one must allow the material-discursive environment to play and not control it as a teacher.

The dramaturgy of the way in which the exercises were structured influenced the students' approach to each subsequent exercise. The dominant dramaturgical approach for structuring the course was the exercises, and I wanted to create an *open dramaturgy* so that the various components could meet in unexpected ways (Gladso et al., 2005). Each exercise had an exploratory approach and taught the students how to open up to new ways of doing. The unpredictable appeared in the ways in which each student embodied the exercises in their own singular and unrepeatable ways within the given frames. This study suggests that the framing of exercises as the main component in designing a course in performance art, initiates action and give the students opportunities to experience and experiment. Further, it suggests that *how* the exercises are facilitated matters. The exercises that were analysed as creating change, did not have inherent meanings. Rather, they facilitated the students own exploration of the materiality. The exercises, in intra-action with the surroundings (Barad, 2003, 2007), accommodated the unknown and initiated an event-based experimental pedagogy that involved an unpredictable intra-action between students, material, and teacher (Atkinson, 2011; Garoian, 2014).

The exercises were part of a complex landscape that was interdependent with the context. The way the exercises intra-acted with the students' past experience was important. In order to adjust and guide the students, the teacher requires her own practical understanding of the field. There is, however, a risk for the teacher to initially suggest how she would have solved an exercise based on her own experience as an artist, which does not necessarily inspire potential variations. This double role of artist and teacher, as well as the double role of being teacher and researcher, has ethical implications. These ethical implications strengthen the argument for keeping performance art and its teaching as a field with multiple methods, aesthetic complexity, and important subjective knowledge. Today, each student will have different understanding of performance art and contribute to the development of the field in multiple, individual ways.

The exercises were encounters that made one see reality in different ways. The exercise that involved changing clothes queered the sense of identity as a stable subject, the exercise with the paper destabilised the normative use of the material in the discursive environment of the university, and the exercise with the sites prompted the students to take risks and be aware of the context. The exercises in intra-action with the material-discursive environment are interlinked with the critique of norms and institutions, which is central in performance art and its pedagogy (Nauha, 2017). It would be interesting for future research to further explore how exercises matter in creating counterculture.

## **Conclusion**

In this article, I have argued that in order to facilitate carefully planned practical exercises, a teacher can potentially initiate the recreation of performance art. The role of the teacher is here to frame an event and design a curriculum in a way that engages and prompts students to redefine what the ever-changing field of performance art can be. This could be referred to as an emancipatory process, in which students take responsibility for their own creativity. In this way, education in performance art can contribute to the development of the field instead of defining truths about the field. In this study, I wanted to highlight how each exercise, also the small ones, matter and can become agents for learning. Through focusing on how exercises matter and intra-act in producing a performance art pedagogy, we see how learning happens in the making (Ellsworth, 2005), and how unpredictability, exploration and experimenting is an important part of this. The practical and tactical exercises are active in themselves and they produce movement, destabilisation, reactions, and actions, which again produce a potential future of performance art.

## **Author biography**

**Kristina Junttila Valkoinen** is a performance artist, director and educator. She works especially with different modes of participation and has created performance works for among others Hålogaland theatre, Arctic Arts Festival, New Performance Turku Festival and Moving in November. Junttila is in the artistic leadership of Ferske Scener and Snakk for deg sjøl in Tromsø. She has more than 20 years of teaching experience in contemporary theatre and performance art for different levels, ranging from children, university students and professionals. She holds an MA in Performance Art from the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, and is currently a PhD-student at The Academy of Arts at UiT – The Arctic University of Norway. She works as associate professor in theatre at UiT, the Arctic University of Norway.

## **References**

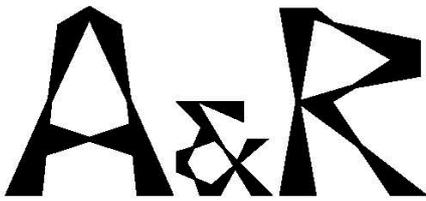
- Arlander, A. (2018). Agential cuts and performance as research. In A. Arlander, B. Barton, M. Dreyer-Lude, & B. Spatz (Eds.), *Performance as research: Knowledge, methods, impact* (pp. 132–151). Routledge.
- Atkinson, D. (2011). *Art, equality and learning: Pedagogies against the state*. Sense Publisher.
- Aure, V. (2013). Didaktikk – i spennet mellom klassisk formidling og performativ praksis. *INFormation. Nordic Journal of Art and Research*, 2(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.7577/if.v2i1.611>
- Barad, K. (2003). Posthumanist performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(3), 801–831. <https://doi.org/10.1086/345321>
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Duke University Press.
- Barad, K. (2014). Diffracting diffraction: Cutting together-apart. *Parallax*, 20(3), 168–187. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2014.927623>
- Butler, J. (1988). Performative acts and gender constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory. *Theatre Journal*, 40(4), 519–531. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3207893>
- Ellsworth, E. (2005). *Places of learning: Media, architecture, pedagogy*. Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203020920>

- Garoián, C. R. (2014). In “the event” that art and teaching encounter. *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research in Art Education*, 56(1), 384–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2014.11518947>
- Gladsø, S., Gjervan, E. K., Hovik, L., & Skagen, A. (2005). *Dramaturgi: Forestillinger om teater*. Universitetsforlaget.
- Goldberg, R. (1998). *Performance: Live art since the 60s*. Thames & Hudson.
- Gritzner, K., Primavesi, P., & Roms, H. (2009). On dramaturgy. *Performance Research*, 14(3), 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528160903519450>
- Gómez-Peña, G., Sifuentes, R., & Roger, R. (2011). *Exercises for rebel artists: Radical performance pedagogy*. Routledge.
- Heathfield, A. E. (2004). *Live art and performance*. Routledge.
- Henderson, T. (2020). Vibrations and waves – Lesson 3 – Behavior of waves, reflection, refraction, and diffraction. *Physicsclassroom.com*. Retrieved 25.08.2020 from <https://www.physicsclassroom.com/class/waves/Lesson-3/Reflection,-Refraction,-and-Diffraction>
- Hickey-Moody, A., & Page, T. (2016). *Arts, pedagogy and cultural resistance: New materialisms*. Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Howell, A. (1999). *The analysis of performance art: A guide to its theory and practice* (Vol. 32). Harwood Academic.
- Juelskjær, M. (2019). *At tænke med agential realisme*. Nyt fra Samfundsvidenskaberne.
- Lucie, S. (2020). *Acting objects: Staging new materialism, posthumanism and the ecocritical crisis in contemporary performance* [Ph.D., City University of New York]. CUNY. [https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc\\_etds/3828/](https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/3828/)
- Koro-Ljungberg, M., Löytönen, T., & Tesar, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Disrupting data in qualitative inquiry. Entanglements with the post-critical and post-anthropocentric*. Peter Lang Publishing.
- Nauha, T. (2017). “Performance art can’t be taught”. In P. Porkola (Ed.), *Performance artist’s workbook: On teaching and learning performance art – essays and exercises*. University of the Arts.
- The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees. (2016). *Guidelines for research ethics in the social sciences, law and humanities*. <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/ressurser/publikasjoner/guidelines-social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology/>
- Porkola, P. (Ed.). (2017). *Performance artist’s workbook. On teaching and learning performance art – Essays and exercises* (Vol. 61). University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy and New Performance Turku.
- Scott, J. (2015). Matter mattering: “Intra-activity” in live media performance. *Body, Space and Technology*, 14. <http://doi.org/10.16995/bst.33>
- Taguchi, H. L. (2011). Investigating, learning, participation and becoming in early childhood practices with a relational materialist approach. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 1(1), 36–50. <https://doi.org/10.2304/gsch.2011.1.1.36>



**Article III - A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.**

Junttila, Kristina 2020 «A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.» *Nordic Journal of Art and Research*. Vol 9 Nr 1. <https://doi.org/10.7577/information.4083>



## Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

### And an exercise about not dropping out. 'Tape yourself to a green chair.'

Kristina Junttila <sup>1</sup>

UoT – The Arctic University of Norway

#### Abstract

This article is about the participatory performance event *Speak for yourself* (*Snakk for deg sjøl*) performed mainly for teenagers at schools through the Norwegian Cultural Schoolbag program (*Den kulturelle skolesekken*), but also for an open audience at Hålogaland Theatre and the Arctic Arts Festival. The center of the discussion concerns *what* has agency to initiate various ways of participation and produce a zone of potential in this performance event. The author is one of the artists of the performance and thus the diffractive analysis is informed by her role as artist-researcher. The study's theoretical framework is inspired by the theory of agential realism from physician and feminist theorist Karen Barad.

The analysis suggests that the initiation of participation is a complex process influenced by both human and non-human performative agents in intra-action with each other. This study will especially focus on the formulation of exercises, performance objects, social media, multiplicity and affect t as *performative agents* in this performance event. The study indicates that being attentive to the performative

---

<sup>1</sup>UoT – The Arctic University of Norway, Academy of Music. [kristina.junttila@uit.no](mailto:kristina.junttila@uit.no)

agents at play and the kind of participation they produce can potentially create a space where there is room for inclusion, diversity, and unpredictability. This kind of zone of potential also has value for other participatory projects in the intersection between pedagogy and art.

**Keywords:** audience participation, exercise, zone of potential, performative agent, performance event, art pedagogy, unpredictability, diffraction, artist-researcher

### Introduction

*The gazes from the empty chairs dig into my spine the moment I enter the room. The bookshelves with many hundreds of pages stand there, covered in dust. The desks lock the chairs beneath them. The chalkboard smiles a white smile, reminding me of yesterday's lesson. The light from the sun is shining through the curtains and creating hallways of light. I open the window to let in some fresh air. I am looking forward to meeting the others. The air from the window hits me. Great. I am ready for a new day at school.*

This description of entering a classroom was written by a young Norwegian pupil, and it was the opening text in the participatory performance *Speak for yourself (Snakk for deg sjøl)*. In this article, using *Speak for yourself* as material, my aim is to discuss what initiates and produces participation in performing arts, and how this can create a *zone of potential*. The analysis is inspired by Karen Barad's theory of 'agential realism' (Barad, 2007), and I explore how working on participation is a complex and unstable matter. This study is situated in debates about participatory and socially engaged arts, as well as at the intersection between pedagogy and the arts, and a new materialist understanding of practice. Using this perspective, I discuss what needs to be considered by artists, teachers and others who wish to facilitate inclusive situations that allow for a *zone of potential*. By 'zone of potential' I am suggesting a framed temporary space or site where there is room for a plurality of potentials and ways of being. I regard the zone of potential as an event where something new can take place – both the planned and the unforeseen. According to Professor in Performance Studies Richard Schechner (2006), an event is a result of 'restored behaviour'. What makes an event unique is its particular recombination of the restored behaviour, which is always rebuilt in a new way (Schechner, 2006). The future is constantly being reshaped through actions and encounters, and it is *becoming* through events (Deleuze, 1992). It is through the recombination of our

actions and encounters that we are created once again and that something new can occur.

In this study, the zone is produced by the performance, and the focus is on what kind of temporary potentials the performance can produce. A potential means 'that which is possible'; it is an unrealised ability. Yet, the zone of potential is not judged on a certain right or normative potential. Philosopher Giorgio Agamben (1999) emphasises that all potentialities also include the potential of *not* being active and that being passive can also give room for ideas that have not yet found their form. In the performance, we deliberately wanted to accept all kinds of participation; both active and passive. The zone of potential is created by the framing of the performance, and how the actions and encounters intra-act with each other. The zone of potential includes multiple ways of being in the space, it is a temporary, diverse and inclusive zone that can potentially produce new beginnings.

Today, many artists and researchers are exploring the notion of participation in the arts and performance (Bala, 2018; Berg, 2017; Bishop, 2012; Jackson, 2011; Kester, 2004). My point of departure is that all live performances are participatory, with participants producing their own experience in relation to their personal backgrounds: 'Every spectator is already an actor in her story; every actor, every man of action, is the spectator of the same story' (Rancière, 2009, p. 17). However, different disciplines have distinct notions of participation, depending on their aesthetic and political history, and conventions of the artform (Bala, 2018). In this multifarious discussion, a need has been identified for awareness about what kind of competence is required to work on participation. The present study is in line with the notion that both artistic and pedagogical competence are needed, as addressed by Lisa Nagel and Lise Hovik (2014). These researchers have carried out studies of participation in children's performances in particular, and they have discussed what is required to produce *deep participation*, where the participants are dedicated to the experience. One competence that Nagel (2013) raises is the need for knowledge about children's reality and experience. My study contributes to this field by focusing on teenagers as audience participants and on how to develop new forms of participatory practices specifically for this age group as audience participants.

My study is informed by the theoretical framework of agential realism and new materialism, where the focus is on how the agency is not only about how we, as humans, act upon each other, but also how the material-discursive practice has a constitutive power (Barad, 2003). I frame audience participation as a complex and time-consuming practice with the focus on how the material-discursive practice also

produces participation. In the educational field, there have been an increasing number of studies of how we are interdependent with our environment; the classroom, the way we organise time and the objects that surround us are all examples of such factors (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016; Lenz Taguchi, 2011, 2012). In many ways, this interdependence and how the whole environment influences the learning experience is transferable to the performance situation. In the artistic research project *Baby Body*, Tone Pernille Østern and Lise Hovik (2017) used a similar theoretical framework, looking at how *co-creation* functions as a methodological agent in a creative research project. They discussed how co-working on the material and co-creation are *performative agents* and drive the creative process. The current study also centres the analysis on performative agents, but my focus is on how they create participation.

In this article, I explore how participation produces and is produced as a complex and unstable matter. By using a 'diffractive' research methodology, the centre of the analysis concerns how performative agents, in intra-action with each other and the environment, initiate various ways of approaching audience participation in the performance *Speak for yourself*. Further, the study discusses what the *potential* of the participation could be, creating a zone of potential.



*Image 1.* The audience doing the exercise about not dropping out: 'Tape yourself to a green chair'. The audience was informed that photos would be taken and have given permission for publication here. Photo: Marius Fiskum.

## Speak for yourself

*Speak for yourself* premiered in March 2015 at Hålogaland Theatre, the regional professional theatre of Northern Norway. It was performed at the Arctic Arts Festival in Northern Norway, as well as at schools in the counties of Troms and Finnmark in 2016 and 2017 through the Cultural Schoolbag.<sup>2</sup> A trailer of the performance is available online.<sup>3</sup> It was co-created and performed by artists, including the author of this article, and teenagers. Three teenagers performed live during the performance, while one teenager performed via Skype. The roles and ways of influencing the project were fluid, and the performing teenagers played an essential part in making the project what it was. As I was part of the artistic team, this study was conducted from within the performance, and my embodied practice is part of the apparatus I am researching. (Barad, 2007; A.-L. Østern & Moxness, 2017; T. P. Østern & Hovik, 2017; Sayal-Bennett, 2018).

*Speak for yourself* was carried out within the framework of a larger, multifaceted programme in the field of pedagogy and art, which sought to promote the voices of young people by facilitating writing workshops and creating performances and related activities. Texts and themes from the workshops provided important material that was used in the performance. The workshops took seriously the complexities, ongoing processes and existential questions the teenagers encountered in their everyday lives (Stien, Kramvig, & Liabø, 2015). The theme of the performance focused on being an adolescent and being in school, but, primarily, it was about quitting school. In Northern Norway, up to 40% of upper secondary students left before taking their final exams during the period 2010–2014<sup>4</sup>, the years preceding the performance. The topic has attracted a lot of attention in public discourse and is regarded as a significant political challenge. However, the voices of the pupils are seldom at the forefront of the discourse. In the performance, we wanted to include and involve multiple voices, including the voices of the performing teenagers and audience participants. This article focuses on the participation of the audience, and not the performing teenagers. Most of the performances were shown for school classes, and teenage pupils formed the majority of the audience participants. However, the

---

<sup>2</sup> The Cultural Schoolbag (Den Kulturelle Skolesekken) is a Norwegian national programme designed to ensure that all school pupils in Norway experience professional art and culture of all kinds.

<sup>3</sup> <https://vimeo.com/173454481>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ssb.no>

audiences did not just consist of teenagers, and there will be examples of different age groups as audience participants in this article as well.

### Theoretical framework

Agential realism, developed by physician and feminist theorist Karen Barad (2003, 2007), is seen as part of feminist relational materialism and, taking a wider perspective, 'posthumanism'. There are different directions within posthumanism, but a common point of view is that non-humans also have agency, allowing them to create the future and what is *becoming* in the world. To take examples from the performance that is the subject of this study, the worn-out chairs on the stage, talking virtual humans and backpacks the audience participants brought with them were agents serving to create the performance experience. Further, in cases where the research turns its focus towards humans, aspects like affect, the body and energy can also be identified as agents and co-creators of the performance (Sandvik, 2015). Looking at technology as an agent and viewing how our co-existence with contemporary technology and how technology shapes our everyday lives are important parts of posthumanism. This is addressed, for example, by feminist scholar and historian of science and technology Donna Haraway (Donna J. Haraway, 1991) in the groundbreaking essay 'Cyborg Manifesto'.

The focus on how all the components have agency and affect each other relates to the importance of the whole complex landscape of creating change (Hickey-Moody & Page, 2016). The knowledge lies in the intertwining of – and relationships between – many components, all of which affect each other and, thus, can potentially disturb dominant practices and create new constellations. In studying what initiates participation in the complex landscape of the performance event, I study *what has agency* or, in general terms, what has the 'ability to cause some kind of change' (Tillman, 2015, p. 32).

Barad (2007) uses the term *performative agents* for active agents with the capacity to change a situation in *intra-action* with each other. According to Barad, intra-action is an alternative to interaction; entities are not separated from each other before the interaction takes place. Rather, in intra-action, the entities do not perform separately from each other, and the boundaries between them are indistinct and fluid (Barad, 2003, 2007; Lenz Taguchi, 2012). All the matter and active performative agents emerge from each entanglement with the audience participants and reconfigure the performance, making participation a complex and time-consuming practice.

Barad's (2003) understanding of performativity is useful for understanding how material is an active agent in performance. Language has had too much power, while matter appears to be the only thing that has not been given importance. Materiality has a constitutive power as well, and it is an active agent in creating the world. Materiality is not important in itself but in the meaning it gains as it interfaces with other phenomena—in *intra-action*. This way of thinking, that everything matters and has agency, is in many ways implemented in how artists think and work when we create new performances. The performance objects, the energy level and how we use technology create the performance experience. This notion is one reason why the theoretical framework of posthumanism is increasingly used as an inspiration by artists and artistic researchers.

In agential realism, the focus is not on understanding what something is, but, rather, on *how* it comes into being. The world is being created or coming into being in *intra-action*. Further, in agential realism, how the world comes to *be* and how it comes to be *known* are not separate but entangled processes (Barad, 2007). In this entanglement, we cannot fully plan the future. The performative agents shape each other and take responsibility for the event and what it will become: 'Intra-actions are constraining but not determining. That is, intra-activity is neither a matter of strict determinism nor unconstrained freedom. The future is radically open at every turn' (Barad, 2003, p. 826).

Although Barad states that the future is radically open, this does not mean that we should neglect taking responsibility for it. Rather, we can conclude that any performative engagement in the world entails intimate responsibility. There is no content or intention without an ethics or responsibility, and Barad calls this ethico-onto-epistemology (Boyd, 2015, p. 11). All the performative agents that are at play in the *Speak for yourself* performance have an ethical dimension and responsibility tied to them, and this needs to be continuously considered. As a result, one aim of this study is to develop methods where we are conscious of how we are creating the future through the whole complex performance landscape.

### **A diffractive research methodology**

A 'diffractive' analysis highlights different possibilities and potentials that depend on how the phenomena considered intra-act with other agents; this contrasts with being *reflective*, which involves looking back and reflecting the same image as the original (T. P. Østern & Hovik, 2017). All materials 'have a performative dimension, and are

involved in the production of the world rather than offering a neutral and objective description of it' (Sayal-Bennett, 2018, paragraph 10).

In this study, I have been both the artist and researcher, and I have conducted the analysis from within, through my embodied practice. I am engaging in a diffractive analysis where the researcher is engaged in intra-action with the material and is intertwined with what is being investigated. Diffractive analysis was first proposed by Haraway (1997) and Barad (2007). It looks at the research data through an embodied engagement. The focus is on the material *effects* of difference and how to study the relationship and co-creation between humans and non-humans. The practice of diffraction is at the centre of the study, and Barad (2007) defines it as 'accounting for how practices matter' (Barad, 2007, p. 88). There are no clear borders between the theoretical framework and practice. Diffractive analysis has similarities to other practice-based and performative research methodologies where theory and practice inform each other and expand and give new insight into each other.

I use varied empirical material based on lived experience, as well as a journal I wrote after nine public performances, recorded interviews with two of the co-creators and the manuscript, video and images of the performance event. I choose to read these data not as stable knowledge, but as elements in intra-action with each other and me. Data in this regard are: 'different human and non-human forces creating, generating, and reproducing knowing, affect, and sensory experiences' (Koro-Ljungberg, Löytönen, & Tesar, 2017, p. 2). Using a diffractive analysis, I identify the potential of the material and its differences, as well as the effect it produces. I am oriented towards what the agents *do*, how they create possibilities, rather than meaning (Scott, 2015). This gives me an opportunity to become attuned to how differences are being created and what effect they have on initiating participation.

In the following, I present the diffractive analysis, in which performative agents have a special role in initiating participation while intra-acting with other agents. I try to bring to light the moments when the intra-action between agents changes something and takes new forms; this can be called the *diffractive cut*. The distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through their entanglements and intra-action with other agents. The agent is not a fixed essence but is produced and productive, generated and generative (Barad, 2007). Diffraction happens when different performative agents intra-act. In performing the analysis, I look for moments when the agents, such as the performers, performance objects, theatre context and social media, intra-act and something unexpected emerges. I analyse what performative agents create participation in intra-action and how they do so differently. The performative agents I

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

discuss are the formulation of exercises, performance objects, social media, multiplicity and affect.

### **The performance event speaks for itself: analysis of how participation is produced**



*Image 2:* The audience participants are given different forms of exercises through oral and written instructions at several junctures. The exercises manifest themselves in different ways during the performance event. Here, the performers ask those in the room to raise their hand if they sometimes fall asleep at work or in school. Performers in the image have given permission for it to be published here. Photo: Marius Fiskum

#### ***The formulation of exercises as a performative agent***

In *Speak for yourself*, the audience participants are given different forms of exercises through oral and written instructions at several junctures. These instructions are carefully planned and scripted, and they explore a form frequently used in schools, where exercises are traditionally used to activate pupils. The exercises manifest themselves in different ways during the performance event; members of the audience

are asked to raise their hand and some are offered *adapted education*;<sup>5</sup> at the end of the performance event, everyone is given a book of written exercises, which they can complete independently as they choose. These exercises are literal, asking the audience participants to do specific exercises. They inherently initiate participation and are very straightforward to do, making it easy for the audience to react to them. They can thus potentially lead to an event. They work as *enabling constraints*, a restriction that makes something possible (Manning, 2014).

At the beginning of each performance, four audience participants could choose to participate by carrying out adapted tasks: one audience member could assist the lighting technician, one could hang out with the scenographer and assist in making food, one could walk around and document the performance with a video camera and one could help the sound designer, who had a place on the stage, to disrupt the performance. Disruptions included different kinds of sound triggers, giving notes to the audience, blowing up balloons, flying paper airplanes or other activities devised on the spur of the moment. The reason why we wanted to include these adapted tasks was to disrupt the hegemonic order, as well as to reference actions and methods that are common in the classroom setting. However, the disruptions were often rather tame, perhaps because they were too staged, and the sound designer had to push the audience to dare to be disruptive. In contrast, the audience participant assigned this task during our first performance on the school tour took up so much space that the other text and actions, which the rest of the audience usually had no problem noticing, were lost in his disruptions. The pupil involved said that he had never personally been disruptive in the classroom, but that, when he was asked to disturb, it triggered something in him:

*Earlier, I said that our task was to disrupt, and we should be as disruptive as possible. But after the experience where this turned out to be a problem, I changed how I formulated the exercise to say that I and the audience beside me could be disruptive by filling in empty holes – to stick something in between. I said that we should think about the in-between spaces that are already there, and beyond that, we should be on top of everything. This requires us to listen to what is really happening. Because*

---

<sup>5</sup> Schools in Norway are obliged to offer adapted education (tilpasset opplæring) to pupils who have a special need for it (<https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/tilpasset-opplaring/hva-er-tilpasset-opplaring/>).

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

*if you are going to fill in empty spaces, you must listen. My experience is that those who had this task after we made the change were much more attentive to what was happening around them. (Rakel, sound designer. Recorded dialogue, 20.10.2016)*

This diffractive cut shows the importance of the formulation of the exercise and what happens in the intra-action with the audience participant. In this example, the context of the school and the earlier experiences of that particular audience charged the atmosphere of the performance. Even though we wanted to accept all kinds of participation, we noticed that these disturbances altered the performance in a direction that did not serve the theme. This resulted in a slight reformulation of the exercise in later performances, making it more challenging for the participant to perform, while, at the same time, making more sense in the bigger picture. The exercises are formulated so that they are accessible and understandable, but this incident shows that we need to reformulate and readjust each exercise to fit the situation. Small adjustments of the formulation can take the participation and performance in completely new directions. Since everything is in motion, the 'attention to fine details is a crucial element of this methodology' (Barad, 2007, pp. 90 - 92). A constant reconfiguring of the exercises, impulses or enabling constraints through different intra-actions is important when initiating participation.



them the possibility of carrying out an act that is forbidden in other contexts. Intra-action with the marker thereby recreates possibilities for who the audience participants can become and what they can do. In this new context, the objects allow much wider usage than they do when in normal use in school, and the audience participants can explore the objects differently. This wider usage triggers imagination, freedom and action, and it gives the performance objects agency to initiate participation in a direction we had not planned.

Another example of an object engaged in a diffractive cut comes from one of the first performances for teenagers at Hålogaland Theatre. At the end of the performance, the audience participants could choose between 14 exercises. One of the exercises read, 'An exercise in not dropping out. Tape yourself to a green chair'. Blue tape was available for the audience to use. Suddenly, in the centre of a full stage, we noticed that four or five audience members were enthusiastically taping one of their friends increasingly tightly in a manner that could be hazardous, and we had to intervene. This example of what can happen when the audience has an open invitation to intra-act with performance objects has similarities with the well-known performance *Rhythm 0* carried out by Marina Abramovic in 1974. She placed 72 objects on a table, and the audience members were invited to use the objects as they desired, while Abramovic was standing passively beside the table. Some audience members became increasingly aggressive with the objects, cutting her clothes; they even 'nicked bits of flesh from her neck. Later, someone put a loaded gun in her hand and pushed its nozzle against her head' (Goldberg, 2000, p. 246). The result was that the performance had to be stopped, and, as Peggy Phelan (2004) points out, it became an important work in 'the ongoing post-war conversation about the ethics of the act: what does it mean to act when full knowledge of the consequence of your act cannot be known in advance?' (p. 19).

The situation in which the audience group intra-acts with the tape raises questions about the freedom – and responsibility – of the audience, as well as the choice of performance objects, which become active agents. Barad (2007) emphasises the 'ethical obligation to intra-act responsibly in the world's becoming' (p. 178). An immediate response could be that the exercise and the tape were problematic, because they invited acts that should not have been allowed to happen. However, one of our aims was to allow for risk-taking situations and work deliberately with the risk audience participation gives rise to. When instigating participation, it is not possible to pre-plan all the entanglements. Our way of taking ethical considerations into account in this situation was to be aware of how the situation developed, and to

take the necessary action if we saw that it was needed. We did not ban this exercise from future performances. Instead, we adjusted the number of available tape rolls and kept a close eye on how this exercise developed each time.

### ***Social media as a performative agent***

As mentioned above, the notion that technology has agency in our lives is important. There are no clear boundaries between the human and the technological. Which governs which is not given, and we can no longer choose whether we want to relate to technology; instead, we should look at what technology can do to us (Donna J. Haraway, 1991). The bodily intra-action with social media, the live engagement between body and machine, is producing and being productive. In our engagement with social media, we are performing our identity. However, we have little control of how this is conceived, how it is spread and commented on or how the framing of the specific social media, such as Facebook, Skype or Snap Chat, affects how we perform our identity (Marabelli & Page, 2018). Social media play an important role in the performance, as well as in the everyday life of the audience participants.

In *Speak for yourself*, there was a small screen on which the audience participants could read a Facebook chat taking place in real time between teenagers sitting in the audience, and the audience was given a few minutes' break during the performance to check their phones for new personal messages. In my journal, after a performance, I wrote about how I could sense that the audience was relieved when they had this opportunity: 'I saw it in their faces: Yes! I can see whether I have any new messages.' (14.10.2016)

This diffractive cut surprised the audience, mostly in a positive way. It allowed them to withdraw into their own familiar space where we, the performers, would not interfere for a few minutes. One effect of this diffractive cut produced by the agency of the audience participants' phones was that the members of the audience were given the opportunity to bring their personal lives into the performance room, which made it easier for them to participate by being themselves, as they were. This was strengthened by using other social media, especially through a large screen onstage where Wilde, a young girl, took part in the performance via Skype. Wilde had quit school twice, and during the performance, we would talk to her about her experiences; she was present for the whole performance via Skype, sharing her personal life story, and this meeting and ongoing communication with the 'real world' encouraged the audience members to share. At the end of each performance, it was

possible for a few audience members to have a personal chat with Wilde, and this became a popular slot.



*Figure 4:* Screenshot of Facebook chat visible to the audience. The chat is part of the performance and is written by young performers seated among the audience, commenting on what is happening in the performance space. The performers writing in the chat have given permission for it to be published here.

Introducing everyday life into the performance space through Wilde and her personal stories can be compared to the works of the theatre collective Rimini Protokoll, among others. Rimini Protokoll stage what they call *the experts of everyday life*, where people who have hands-on experience of the theme of the performance are performing and form the defining aspect of the documentary work. This is often done through a technical device, such as directing audience participants via phone from a call centre in Calcutta (Balme, 2019). Here, via the medium of Skype, the audience was invited to intra-act virtually with Wilde. The medium intensifies the experience of intimacy and immediacy. Each audience member could intra-act with her personally, so her story and presence became a key access point of the performance.

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential



Figure 5: Picture of the setup of the performance when performed in a school gym. Photo: Kristina Junttila.

### ***Multiplicity as a performative agent***

*There were a couple things I came to think about when reflecting on why initiating participation works. I think a key component is that there is so much difference and diversity. We are among the audience. We are close to them; we have tried to say hello to them by walking in between them and talking to them one on one. And then I think it matters that there are so many points of focus onstage. If it is the kind of performance with only one focus all the time, it is a higher threshold to break into it. There are disruptions: We have a screen here and another screen there, we have the constant projections of teenagers on the side stage, many of whom read and talk... It never feels like we break one focus. And then I think it matters that we are who we are. That we have personalities they can feel safe with, and we are different. (Rakel, recorded dialogue, 20.10.2016)*

In the comment above, Rakel, the sound designer, reflects on the importance of multiplicity and diversity as agents initiating participation. She points out that the performance has many focuses and uses multimodal ways of communication simultaneously. In intra-action with how secure we are with our differences as the performers, this initiates different kinds of responses and ways of participating. The selection of different expressions, different texts and a heterogeneous group of teenagers on stage is important and creates a feeling of recognition for many in the audience. This helps to create a space where the audience participants feel that they also have room to act – there is space to be who they are. This includes those who do not wish to actively participate in the exercises. They can be together with the rest of the audience just by being in the same room.

While the audience participants are free to choose how they want to participate at the end of the performance, there is also a multiplicity of options, with fourteen exercises to choose from. In the first performances, we only mentioned a few of the exercises and asked the audience to read about the other possibilities in a book. However, we noticed that they only did the exercises we had mentioned, so we adjusted the performance to describe all of them. We realised that it made a difference when we mentioned all the different variations and did not expect the audience to read about them independently. This diffractive cut showed that where we put the focus affects what the performance produces. Given our conscious choice to use multiplicity to enhance inclusion and initiate a variety of possible ways of participating, we needed to constantly ensure that we were actually displaying the multiplicity. Giving space for entanglements and multiple focus makes it more likely that the performance will initiate a variety of participations, and this can open a zone of experimentation and potential.

*One teacher came and told me that he loves the kind of chaos that was happening, when all the students are just doing something. He said that he just came from that kind of chaos – from a science experiment. He called it 'organised chaos'. It is such a great feeling when a teacher sees what we are doing. (Journal, 18.10.2016)*

### ***Affect as a performative agent***

Affect is the last performative agent I highlight and it has a greater focus on the human aspect and the role of the participants than the previous ones did. Since this study is about initiating participation, we cannot exclude the agency of the audience participants and their reactions, although it can be more problematic to analyse when we talk about the human aspect as *Other*. To affect and be affected is to be in an encounter, and it concerns an immediate participation in the events of the world (Massumi, 2015). Affect is a non-conscious experience of intensity; it is the body's way of preparing for action through an intense experience. Our senses are affected and prepare for action. We cannot draw a clear boundary between the individual and her/his surroundings. Sometimes, the real message or language is of less importance than the affectual resonance of the message source. The music, atmosphere and different media can have a biological effect on the body and transfer affect. When we are affected, this can initiate something (Shouse, 2005). Creating affect via intense experiences is perhaps one of the most important tasks of art. However, it is also one of the most difficult because, as artists, we cannot control how the audience participants react, and knowing that someone is affected does not say anything about

the content of their affect. In this performance, we wanted to include all kinds of affectual responses that emerged from the intra-action with the performance. By witnessing and acknowledging affect, we encouraged immediate participation:

*I am standing here alone. One teenager alone. I stand here nervous and alone. One teenager. I feel lonely up here, no one to talk to about how I feel. I am a teenager. I am one of thousands of teenagers who stand, sit or lie down. I am a teenager. You are a teenager. We are many thousands of teenagers. Why do we feel so lonely?* (Text from the performance, written by a teenager)

One of the last things that happens during the performance is that a teenager standing in the audience reads the above text. The audience participants are onstage, and they look up at the teenager, who is using a microphone; the light fades out and a big disco ball spins on the ceiling. When the reading is finished, a melancholy song fades in while the disco ball continues to spin. This is an intense moment in the performance, and it is an affective moment for many people; the audience is touched. When the performance toured different schools, this text was read by a teenager I picked from the audience, and it intensified the affective experience that many people knew the person reading the text.

The decision to ask one of the audience participants to read this emotional text alone in front of the audience during the performance, was taken after we had held the performance a few times. In the beginning it was one of the performing teenagers who were part of our artistic team who performed this text. We realised, however, that at this moment in the performance, the audience participants had actually 'taken over the space'. After careful consideration, we decided to trust in the situation, and ask one of the audience participants to perform this last text. In the event that we would not be able to find someone among the audience, we had a plan for how to proceed. However, it was never a problem to find someone for this task. For ethical reasons, we always made sure that it was done voluntarily, that he or she could practice reading the text with one of us first and that the person was asked in a situation when he or she was not being watched by other audience members. This was possible at that moment in the performance since there were multiple things happening in the space simultaneously. In addition, we made sure to take care of the person after the reading and to give positive feedback. It always turned out to be a positive experience for the person reading.

After this last reading, the audience participants are given lunch bags and are told they can leave the performance space when they wish. In the performances, there was a feeling of both community and relief in the room – perhaps the latter was because the audience no longer had to participate within a defined framework. Now the room was just an open room where the audience could hang out, but it carried all the stories, encounters and intra-actions of the performance, a space of being and becoming. We often had ‘difficulties getting rid of the audience participants’ as they just wanted to be there.

Since the performance was mainly performed in schools as part of the Cultural Schoolbag, the audience participants had not decided to be part of the audience themselves. This could result in stronger reactions and it also had ethical implications. As stated above, there is an ethico-onto-epistemology where all the content and intention have an ethics or responsibility, and are interdependent on each other. (Barad, 2007) The ethics operates within, it is immanent in the entanglement of the performance. However, in a performance where the audience participants have not chosen to be there, it is problematic to say that the audience as an agent has equal responsibility, since they have been ‘thrown into the situation’ and had no chance to prepare their agency. For some audience participants, the experience of the performance was so emotionally intense that it was difficult to participate in the exercises we had initiated.

Coming to terms with the fact that ‘each intra-action suggests possibilities for what the world may become’ (Barad, 2007) means also paying attention to ‘discomforting as well as joyous affective and material relations. Paying attention, and not turning away from “sad” passions.’ (Carstens & Geerts, 2019, p. 920) To take ethical considerations into account in this situation is to also be attentive to the difficult reactions, and to ‘stay with the trouble’, to put it in Harawayan terms. (2016) In this case, ‘staying with the trouble’ means acknowledging and accepting the variety of reactions and feelings the performance evokes in the audience participants, also the feelings of discomfort and disharmony. This raises questions related to whether the initiation of participation should only produce social harmony, or whether it could include disharmony, thereby opening for differences. Claire Bishop (2004) uses the term *relational antagonism* to describe participatory works that expose resistance and opposition, and, in this way, ‘provide grounds for rethinking our relationships to the world and to one another’ (p. 79).



Figure 6. Picture from the end of the performance taken in the direction of the audience.  
Photo: Marius Fiskum.

### **Closing remarks on how to initiate a zone of potential**

Rebekka: *Most people will be all right.*

Kristina: *Are you sure?*

Rebekka: *Yes, I hope so. We just need to practise a bit first. We must exercise quitting or starting or enduring.*

These were the last scripted words between me and Rebekka onstage. After this, the audience participants were introduced to several exercises that they could engage with as they wished. They were in intra-action with the situation, practising being in the middle, being influenced by and influencing what was happening. The performance event brought many different people together in a single room, like in school, and showed alternative ways of creating a community, where those who wanted to be included as they were would be included through enactments and their intra-actions with the performance. Looking at the diffractive cuts, the focus is not on who one is when one enters the room, but instead, on what happens in the encounters. In the relations and encounters, responsibility is shared between different agents, and this requires extra attentiveness to unforeseen situations. The

event can lead to situations that neither the artists nor the audience can foresee, potentially allowing them to create new ways of being together.

I have analysed the performative agents that I have considered to be *productive intensities* (Massumi, 1995) and as creating a diffractive cut in the production of participation. Each cut is an entanglement and intra-action between different entities, producing new potentials. In the analysis, I separated the different performative agents and analysed their details to consider how they acted differently. These cuts have been analysed specifically because they highlight different issues. In the *formulation of the exercises* as a performative agent, I highlighted the attention to detail and need for constant readjustment of how we formulate the instructions and intra-actions between the facilitator and audience participant. When looking at the *performance object* as a performative agent, the emphasis was on how matter is productive and 'triggers' the audience participants in the intra-action. These intra-actions can also take the situation in a direction that raises ethical questions around who has responsibility. According to Barad (2012), responsibility is shared between all the agents; it happens in the relations: 'According to agential realism "responsibility" is not about right response, but rather a matter of inviting, welcoming, and enabling the response of the Other. That is, what is at issue is response-ability – the ability to respond' (Barad, 2012, p. 81).

With *social media* as a performative agent, this study discusses how social media are part of our lives today and how it is natural to intra-act with them. Wilde's presence in the performance via Skype intensifies the relationship between her and the audience participants, making the relationship and participation intimate and immediate. Considering *multiplicity* as a performative agent, I discussed how the diffractive cuts of multiplicity can enhance inclusion by displaying many ways of participating. With the last performative agent that I analysed, *affect*, I discussed how it is not possible to anticipate or pre-plan all entanglements. Attentiveness to the situation is a prerequisite for readjusting to each circumstance. In this last diffractive cut, the situation is not necessarily pleasant for the audience participant, which can potentially lead to a rethinking of our relationship to the world and each other.

Following the lines of these diffractive cuts and intra-actions, we can see how the performative agents influence how participation is produced in the entanglement. The consequence of this is that artists and teachers who want to accommodate participation must be aware of how everything – the room, the objects, the performers and the language – is organised. It is necessary to consider the whole complexity of *what it is* that creates the performance experience, while at the same

time being aware that the participation and meaning only emerge in the intra-action. This entails imagining what kinds of intra-actions might arise, while at the same time maintaining an attentive and welcoming attitude to what *does* emerge.

In this performance, the aim was to create new beginnings beyond the norms and expectations associated with the classroom and performance space, where there would be room to include everyone. When breaking norms, there must be consciousness of what the norms are, in this context, the norms of both the theatre and the school. Many individual events break norms, and these small but not insignificant events were what the audience participants intra-acted with. These diffractive cuts of the conventions of the theatre and school destabilised the audience participants in such a way that they could not relax in a safe format. Audience participants must be in constant intra-action with the disturbances of the space. This not only initiates participation, but also opens a space for the unpredictable to happen. By looking at how participation is produced in the intra-action, in the relations, in the in-between, we can also see how we can accommodate a zone of potential.

This zone of potential is produced by the aesthetic and ethical choices made in the performance, and how they intra-act. The zone of potential frames different ways of being in the space, which can potentially open up a new way of looking at or being in the future. However, it is also important to note that the performance was a temporary space and that this temporariness has limitations as a catalyser for lasting transformations. However, the performance is a relevant place to practise and experiment with new ways of being together and encountering multiple realities and accepting differences.

### **A last image**

We see a teacher drawing a heart on a chair using a permanent marker, while a girl is doing the exercise about not quitting and is already taped to the green chair. One brave pupil is doing an exercise about quitting, calling his parents to tell them that he will quit school. After a while, he will tell them that making the phone call is just an exercise. Some people are touching the sound triggers in a small group; another group is reading texts aloud using the microphone. One boy is alone, hiding in his hoodie. Most of the audience participants are just sitting or standing around.

*To be a teenager is shit. So much shit just comes towards you. So fast.  
Everything at once. Never one by one, but everything at once. And then  
there is this fucking puberty and I fall in love all the fucking time. All I can*

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

*say about that is: Why do you do this to me?* (Text from the performance, written by a teenager)

The performative agents in this study have initiated different forms of participation and had an effect we could not necessarily have anticipated or always wished for. This situation stops here, but it also continues in many directions. It has temporarily opened a new way of being together and given space for the complexities and diversity that are part of teenagers' lives. I look ahead and ask: What is the potential of this situation?

### About the author

Kristina Junttila is a performance artist, director and pedagogue working in the field of live art. She is doing a PhD at the Arts Academy in Tromsø and have recently started as Associate Professor in Performing Arts at the Music Conservatory in Tromsø, both placed at UMAK, UoT, The Arctic University of Norway. She holds a Masters Degree in Live Art and Performance Studies, as well as in Theatre Pedagogy from The Theatre Academy, University of the Arts, Helsinki. Junttila have worked nationally and internationally as an artist for twenty years, and is today in the artistic board of Ferske Scener and artistic leader of Snakk for deg sjøl in Tromsø.

### Referanser

- Agamben, G., & Heller-Roazen, D. (1999). *Potentialities : collected essays in philosophy*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.
- Bala, S. (2018). *The gestures of participatory art*: Manchester University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.7228/manchester/9781526100771.001.0001>
- Balme, C. B. (2019). *Audio Theatre – The mediatization and politicization of theatrical space*.
- Barad, K. (2003). Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 28(no. 3), 30. <https://doi.org/10.1086/345321>
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway : Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. North Carolina: Duke University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822388128>
- Barad, K. (2012) Intra-actions/Interviewer: A. Kleinmann. (Vol 13), *Mousse Magazine, Special dOCUMENTA*.
- Berg, I. T. (2017). Participation to the people! Locating the popular in Rimini Protokoll's Home Visit Europe. *Nordic theatre studies [electronic resource]*, 29, 162-183. <https://doi.org/10.7146/nts.v29i2.104610>

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

- Bishop, C. (2004). Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics. *October*, 51-79.  
<https://doi.org/10.1162/0162287042379810>
- Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial hells : participatory art and the politics of spectatorship*. London: Verso.
- Boyd, M. (2015). Towards a performative multi species aesthetics. *Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture* (31), 9 - 29.
- Carstens, D., & Geerts, E. (2019). Ethico-onto-epistemology. *Philosophy Today*, 63(4). <https://doi.org/10.5840/philtoday202019301>
- Deleuze, G. (1992). *What is an Event?* (T. Conley, Trans.). Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Goldberg, R. (2000). Here and Now. In T. Warr (Ed.), *The Artist's body*. London: Phaidon Press.
- Haraway, D. (1997). *Modest\_Witness @Second\_Millennium.FemaleMan@\_Meets\_OncoMouseTM: Feminism and Technoscience*. New York: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. J. (1991). A cyborg Manifesto. Science, technology and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century. In - mangler det noe her, og skulle dette stått før D, Haraway (1997) siden det er utgitt før?.
- Haraway, D. J. (2016). *Staying with the trouble : making kin in the Chthulucene*. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822373780>
- Hickey-Moody, A., & Page, T. (2016). *Arts, Pedagogy and Cultural Resistance. New Materialisms*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Jackson, S. (2011). *Social works : performing art, supporting publics*. Abingdon: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203852897>
- Kester, G. H. (2004). *Conversation pieces : community and communication in modern art*. Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press.
- Koro-Ljungberg, M., Löytönen, T., & Tesar, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Disrupting Data in Qualitative Inquiry. Entanglements with the Post-Critical and Post-Anthropocentric*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.  
<https://doi.org/10.3726/b11070>
- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2011). Investigating, Learning, Participation and Becoming in Early Childhood Practices with a Relational Materialist Approach. *Global studies of Childhood, Volume 1* (Number 1). <https://doi.org/10.2304/gsch.2011.1.1.36>
- Lenz Taguchi, H. (2012). *Pedagogisk dokumentation som aktiv agent : introduktion til intra-aktiv pedagogik*. Malmö: Gleerups.
- Manning, E. (2014). *Thought in the act : passages in the ecology of experience*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816679669.001.0001>

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

- Marabelli, M., & Page, X. (2018). Performing Identity through Social Media: A Sociomaterial Perspective. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3134979>
- Massumi, B. (2015). *Politics of Affect*: Polity Press.
- Nagel, L., & Hovik, L. (2014). Interaktiv scenekunst for barn - tyranni eller magi? Østern, A.-L., & Moxness, L. (2017). Å undervise i sirkus som kunstfag - en studie av sammenflettede tilblivelser i intra-aktiv sirkusdidaktikk. *På Spissen*, 3, 39 - 40.
- Østern, T. P., & Hovik, L. (2017). Med-koreografi og med-dramaturgi som diffraksjon. Med som metodologisk agent for skapende og forskende prosesser i Baby Body. *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education*, Vol. 1, 43 - 58. <https://doi.org/10.23865/jased.v1.906>
- Phelan, P. (2004). On Seeing the Invisible: Marina Abramovic's *The House with the Ocean View*. In A. Heathfield (Ed.), *Live Art and Performance*. London: Tate Publishing.
- Rancière, J. (2009). *The emancipated spectator*. London: Verso Books.
- Sandvik, N. (2015). Posthumanistiske perspektiver. Bidrag til barnehageforskningen. In A. M. Otterstad & A. B. Reinertsen (Eds.), *Metodefestival og øyeblikksrealisme - eksperimenterende kvalitative forskningspassasjer*. Fagbokforlaget.
- Sayal-Bennett, A. (2018). Diffractive Analysis: Embodied Encounters in Contemporary Artistic Video Practice. *Tate Papers*, no. 29. Retrieved from <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/29/diffractive-analysis>
- Schechner, R. (2006). *Performance studies: an introduction* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Scott, J. (2015). Matter Mattering: "Intra-activity" in live media performance. *Body, Space and Technology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.16995/bst.33>
- Shouse, E. (2005). Feeling, Emotion, Affect. *M/C Journal. A journal of Media and Culture*, 8(6). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.2443>
- Stien, K., Kramvig, B., & Liabø, R. B. (2015). To be or not to be: når å skrive er å skrive seg inn i et fellesskap. In A. M. Otterstad & A. B. Reinertsen (Eds.), *Metodefestival og øyeblikksrealisme : eksperimenterende kvalitative forskningspassasjer*. Bergen: Fagbokforl.
- Tillman, R. (2015). Toward a new materialism: Matter as dynamic. *Minding Nature*, 8(1), 6.

Kristina Junttila. Exercises in intra-acting: A zone of potential

.

### **Own sources cited in the text:**

Journal written by the author after public performances at Hålogaland Theatre and on tour with the Cultural Schoolbag, 13.10–21.10.2016.

Audio-recording of a reflective dialogue/interview between the author, Rakel Nystabakk (sound designer) and Rebekka Brox Liabø (project manager), 20.10.2016.

### **Performances**

Hålogaland Theater, Tromsø 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2015. Audience: 3 performances for adult “art audiences” (many teachers) and 3 performances for schools, age group. 13 – 16 years old.

Arctic Arts Festival, Harstad: 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2016. Audience: Adult “art audience”.

The Cultural Schoolbag in Troms and Finnmark: October 2016, January and February 2017. Audience: teenagers aged 13 – 16 years old, during school hours.

### **Artistic team**

Rebekka Brox Liabø - project manager, script writer and performer,

Kristina Junttila (author) - artistic director, audience participation designer and performer

Rakel Nystabakk - sound designer and performer,

Linda Nilsen - visual designer and performer



## **Article IV - Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy**

Jaakonaho, L. & Junttila K. 2019. "Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy". Østern A. & Knudsen K. N. (ed.) *Performative Approaches in Arts Education: Artful Teaching, Learning and Research*. London: Routledge.

# Appendix

## Clarification of responsibility for the articles

### **Note on article I – On the Potential of Exercises in Live Art Pedagogy**

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen had the main responsibility for the study, including research design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and visual design, drafting and revising of the exposition. Artist colleagues mentioned in the article have

### **Note on article II – “How exercises matter as a dramaturgical approach in performance art education.”**

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen had the main responsibility for the study, including research design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and drafting and revising of the digital article.

### **Note on article III – “A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential. And an exercise in not quitting. Tape yourself to a green chair.”**

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen had the main responsibility for the study, including research design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and drafting and revising of the digital article.

### **Note on article IV – “Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy”**

Liisa Jaakonaho and Kristina Junttila Valkoinen have had shared responsibility for the study, including research design, data collection, analysis and interpretation. Liisa Jaakonaho has been the main author of drafting and revising the article. Kristina Junttila Valkoinen has been the second author of drafting and revising. See signed letter between the two authors at this next page.



Required enclosure when requesting that a thesis be considered for a doctoral degree

**Declaration describing the independent research contribution of the candidate**

In addition to the thesis, there should for each article constituting the thesis be enclosed a declaration describing the independent research contribution of the candidate (problem formulation, method, data collection, analysis, interpretation, writing etc.).

For each article the declaration should be filled in and signed by the candidate, then circulated to the other co-authors for signatures.

Article no: IV

**Authors: Liisa Jaakonaho and Kristina Junttila**

**Title:** "Exploring (Dis)ability: Towards Affirmative Spaces in and through Arts Pedagogy".

*Liisa Jaakonaho is the main author of the article as she did the most writing, however it is still not possible to differ strictly who contributed to independent research when it comes to several of the aspects. Similar to how artist collaborate closely and are entangled in the creation, this has also been the case during this study between the two authors. The article is about a joint workshop the two art-pedagogues planned and executed together, so the data collection, problem formulation, method and analysis are co-created. Jaakonaho brought especially in the perspective of disability and Junttila the perspective of performance art, both brought in the perspective of arts pedagogy.*

<p><i>Kristina Junttila Valkainen</i> ..... Signature of the candidate <b>Kristina Junttila</b> Name (bold letters):</p>	<p><i>Liisa Jaakonaho</i> ..... Signature of co-author 1 Name (bold letters): <b>LIISA JAAKONAH</b></p>
<p>Any Comments:</p>	<p>..... Signature of co-author 2 Name (bold letters):</p> <p>..... Signature of co-author 3 Name (bold letters):</p>

## List of performances, installations and workshops mentioned in the thesis:

- 10 stp course in Performance art at UiT, Arctic University of Norway, held in 2014 and 2016
- *Kahviland* in collaboration with Leena Kela, at Mänttä Art Festival (2014). Participatory installation.
- *Snakk for deg sjøl* premiere at Hålogaland Theatre (2015). Shown at the Arctic Arts Festival and in schools through “Den kulturelle skolesekken”.
- *Hverdagslige framtidssfabuleringer* at the exhibition Kurant Nabolag (2016) and festival KaNo, Tromsø (2017)
- *Den store skolefesten* premiere at The Arctic Arts Festival, Norway (2017)
- *Becoming disabled* workshop held at the Research Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, Italy. (2017)
- *Imagining exercises for the performance artist* workshop held at the Hollo symposium, University of the arts, the Theatre Academy, Helsinki, Finland. (2017)
- *Post-sense* (2018) Performance installation at the New Performance Turku Festival, Finland
- *Søvnløs* (2019) Performance at the Arctic Arts Festival

## List of conference presentations, related to PhD-project:

- "Pedagogy of the Event". NERA 44th Congress 2016, SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND SOLIDARITY IN EDUCATION. Helsinki, Finland.
- Enhancing quality in drama and theatre training and Artistic based Research in Norway and Russia: Tradition and New trends in Drama and Theatre. Final Seminar- Cooperation Programme with Russia. Oslo 2016
- "Performance as a pedagogical event – practicing to become something without knowing what it will be.." The 22nd conference of Nordic Network for Research in Music Education. Göteborg, Sweden. 2017
- "Becoming disabled" performative workshop and installation. Research Pavilion in Venice Biennale 2017. Venetsia.
- "Becoming Disabled - A Lecture Demonstration." Carpa5 - The 5th Colloquium on Artistic Research in Performing Arts, Helsinki, Finland. 2017
- "Imagining Exercises for the Performance Artist." 7th annual research symposium of the Hollo Institute, Helsinki, Finland.. Back to Senses – Exploring Future Directions of Arts Education. 2017
- "Performance Art, Exercises and Untamed Education." I organized a one-day seminar at UiT, supported by *Fondet for UiT, Norges arktiske universitet*. Artist and professor of Art Education Charles Garoian and artist and professor of Live Art and Performance Studies as visiting professors.
- "Post-sense". Workshop & presentation together with Liisa Jaakonaho. PSi#25 (Performance Studies International) 2019. University of Calgary, Canada.
- "A performance as an exercise in initiating a zone of potential." Art in education – conference. Oslo Met 2019
- Participated in Forsker Grand Prix 2019, a competition for research dissemination. The first competition was in Tromsø, and I was selected to represent the North in the National competition. See <https://tv.nrk.no/serie/kunnskapskanalen/2020/KOID75005919/avspiller> for the TV-documentation of the National Finland, and

<https://tv.nrk.no/serie/kunnskapskanalen/2020/KOID75005819/avspiller> for TV-documentation of the competition in the North of Norway.

- Keynote with Rebekka Brox Liabø (Snakk for deg sjøl) at the Cutting Edge conference, Tromsø 2019
- “Midtvegsevaluering.” Midway Evaluation. October 2019. Opponent; Professor Rikke Gurgens Gjørsum.
- “Feedbacksessions” RadVent, organized by RadArt, network for performing arts, Tromsø. December 2021. Feedback on the PhD-project, facilitated by Kristin Bjørn. Focus on what relevance the project has for other artists.

## List of tables, figures and images.

The author of this thesis is the photographer of the images and creator of the figures.

Front page: Image from Video used in Article I, the digital exposition “On Potential of Exercises in Live Art Education”. The image is from my office in the Art Academy.

Page 22: Illustration on how the studies in the four articles are interlinked with the research question.

Page 39: Image from a writing exercise.

Page 40: Image from a writing exercise.

Page 49: Illustration and visualisation of the main theoretical concepts.

Page 59: Illustration of research journey I.

Page 60: Illustration of research journey II.

Page 66: Screen shot from TV participation in national Norwegian competition in research presentation.

## List of approved PhD-courses:

SVF-8048 Allmennretta forskningsformidling, 3 sp, 2014

SVF-8049 Vitenskapelig forskningskommunikasjon, 2 sp, 2014

SVF-8054 Vitenskapsteori, 7 sp, 2014

SVF-8038 Forskningsetikk, 3 sp, 2015

PR411H Å forske på egen praksis, Universitetet i Nordland, 5 sp, 2015

PLU8021 Kvalitative analysemetoder, NTNU, 5 sp, fullført høst 2014

KT-KD5 Expositionality in artistic research, University of the Arts, Helsinki, 2 sp,  
2016

KT-TD10 Seminar fruits, University of the Arts, Theatre Academy, Helsinki, 2 sp,  
2017

T-TD102 Research seminar, University of the Arts, Theatre Academy, Helsinki, 1 sp,  
2017

KT-TD19 Writing in artistic research, University of the Arts, Theatre Academy,  
Helsinki, 6 sp, 2017

KT-TD6 From postcolonialism to afrofuturism, University of the Arts, Theatre  
Academy, Helsinki, 4 sp, 2017

KT-TD8 Philosophy in artistic research – aesthetic thinking, University of the Arts,  
Theatre Academy, Helsinki, 4 sp, 2017

KT-TD9 Affect theory, University of the Arts, Theatre Academy, Helsinki, 2 sp, 2017

T-TD6 What is going on? The context of contemporary performing arts, University of  
the Arts, Theatre Academy, Helsinki, 2 sp, 2017

KT-TD16 Socially engaged art practices, University of the Arts, Theatre Academy,  
Helsinki, 2 sp, 2017

# Appendix for article II

## Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

### ”Øvelser i performancekunst”

#### **Bakgrunn og formål**

I forbindelse med mitt doktorgradsprosjekt i kunstpedagogikk ved Kunstfakultetet ved Universitetet i Tromsø skal jeg forske på øvelser i performancekunst og hvordan øvelsen kan initiere handling. Prosjektet er skapt av meg og jeg vil ta utgangspunkt i egen undervisning og egne kunstverk. Den første delen av studien dreier seg om øvelser i undervisning og jeg ønsker å se spesielt på 10 sp-kurset i performancekunst, våren 2014, som jeg skal undervise i. Jeg ønsker å spørre dere som er studenter på dette kurset om å delta i denne delen av studien.

#### **Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?**

Først og fremst innebærer det at du ønsker å dele egne erfaringer og dine subjektive opplevelser knyttet til kurset i performancekunst. Jeg vil selv foreta observasjoner av kurset gjennom egen loggføring. I tillegg ønsker jeg å dokumentere deler av undervisningen med video og muligens bilder og lydopptak. Jeg ønsker å intervju noen av dere like etter undervisningen og en stund etter undervisningen. Det er mulighet for å bli intervjuet i grupper eller alene. Spørsmålene vil omhandle undervisningen, med spesiell vekt på hva dere fikk ut av de ulike øvelsene, hva dere forsto og hva som eventuelt endret noe. Jeg registrerer data ved lydopptak, som jeg senere vil registrere selv. Jeg innhenter ikke annen informasjon om dere fra andre steder.

#### **Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?**

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Det er kun jeg og eventuelt mine veiledere som har tilgang på intervjuene.

I publikasjonen kan det forekomme personopplysninger, som bilde, historier eller lignende, som kan tilkjenne deltakerne. Jeg vil ikke publisere slik informasjon før jeg har fått samtykke fra de det eventuelt gjelder.

Denne delen av prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes mai 2014. Etter dette vil jeg behandle opplysningene og skrive en artikkel med utgangspunkt i funnene. Artikkelen kan også innebefatte redigert video- og bildemateriale. Etter at opplysningene er behandlet vil jeg lagre datamaterialet så lenge det er hensiktsmessig for hele doktorgradsstudiet.

#### **Frivillig deltakelse**

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert. Deltagelse eller fravær av deltagelse i studien får ikke innvirkning på deltagelse i undervisningen.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

Ikke nøl med å spørre om det er noe du lurer på i forbindelse med studien.

Vennlig hilsen Kristina Junttila Valkoinen

E-post: [kristina.junttila@uit.no](mailto:kristina.junttila@uit.no) Mobil 41462350



Harald Hårfagres gate 29  
N-5007 Bergen  
Norway  
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17  
Fax: +47-55 58 96 50  
nsd@nsd.uib.no  
www.nsd.uib.no  
Org nr. 985 321 884

Kristina Junttila Valkoinen  
Kunstakademiet UiT Norges arktiske universitet

9019 TROMSØ

Vår dato: 22.01.2014

Vår ref: 36913 / 2 / AMS

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

## TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 06.01.2014. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>36913</i>	<i>On the potential of the singular exercise in Live Art education</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>UiT Norges arktiske universitet, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Kristina Junttila Valkoinen</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.12.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Anne-Mette Somby

Kontaktperson: Anne-Mette Somby tlf: 55 58 24 10

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

*Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.*

*Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:*

*OSLO:* NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. [nsd@uio.no](mailto:nsd@uio.no)

*TRONDHEIM:* NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. [kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no](mailto:kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no)

*TROMSØ:* NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. [nsdmaa@sv.uit.no](mailto:nsdmaa@sv.uit.no)

## Questionnaire from the article about the performance workshop

### **INTERVJU-/TEMAGUIDE**

Til sammen er det 15 studenter og alle blir forespurt om å være med på studie. Det er ikke et mål at alle studentene skal gjennomføre alle intervjuene, men heller at noen av studentene gjør flere dybdeintervju. Målet er å få studentene til å beskrive situasjoner, opplevelser og lignende så godt og konkret som mulig. Det er viktig å unngå at dette blir et lærer-student forhold hvor studenten prøver å svare "riktig".

#### **Intervju – noen dager før første undervisningsdag**

- Hva tenker du på når du hører ordet "performance"?
- Hvilke forventninger har du til kurset?
- Er du interessert i å drive med performance?
- Hva tenker du er det viktigste med performance?
- Hva er det som gjør at du har lyst til å handle/gjøre noe aktivt?
- 

#### **Intervju – like etter første undervisningssamling, midt i kurset (mellom samlingene) og noen uker etter at kurset er avsluttet. Ikke alle spørsmålene kommer under hvert intervju.**

- Hvordan opplevde du de ulike øvelsene? trekk frem et par øvelser. Hvordan løste du oppgavene/øvelsene?
- Har du fått noe ny innsikt? Hva var det eventuelt som ledet til denne nye innsikten? (Noe som ble sagt, gjort, noe du har gjort...)
- Er det noe fra undervisningen som du husker spesielt?
- Hva er det som trigget/ikke-trigget deg i undervisningen?
- Hva var det som gjorde størst inntrykk? Ble du overrasket av noe? Ble du overrasket over noe du selv gjorde/lærte/innså?
- Hva tenker du når du hører ordet "performance" nå?
- Er du interessert i å drive med performance?
- Hva tenker du er det viktigste med performance?



**UiT** The Arctic University of Norway

