



Dancing with World: Experimenting with Experiments

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An improvised, one take, partially live exploration of the relationship between body and world as *intermaterial*. A poetic layering of movement, images, words, things and sites. Based in a Berlin living room and on the island Suomenlinna, outside of Helsinki.

Keywords: intermateriality; outdoor movement practice; dance; choreography; Amerta Movement; body world relationship; ecology

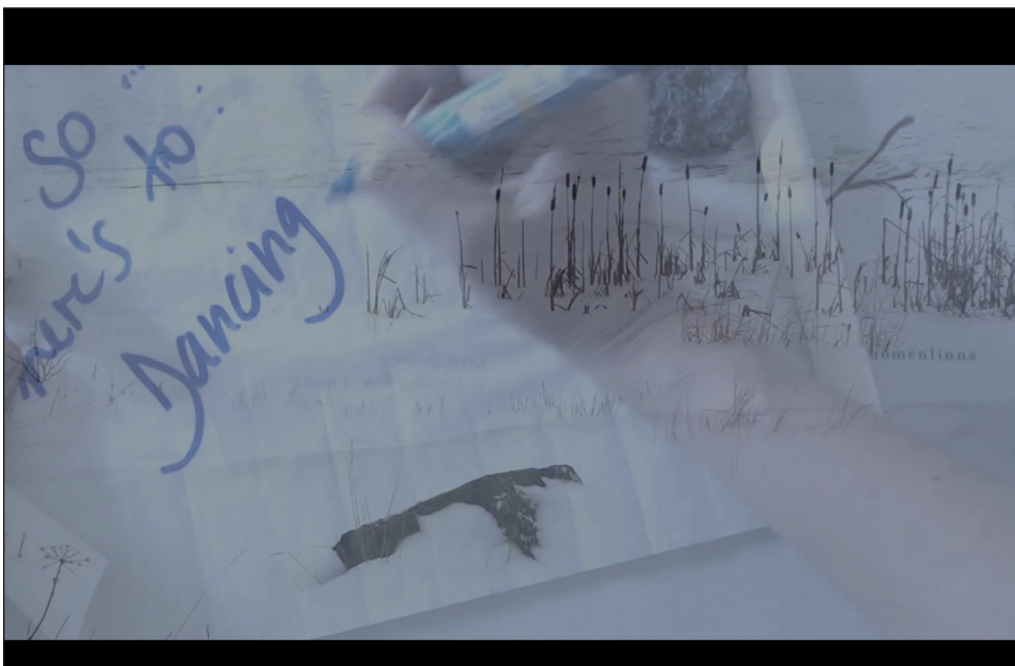
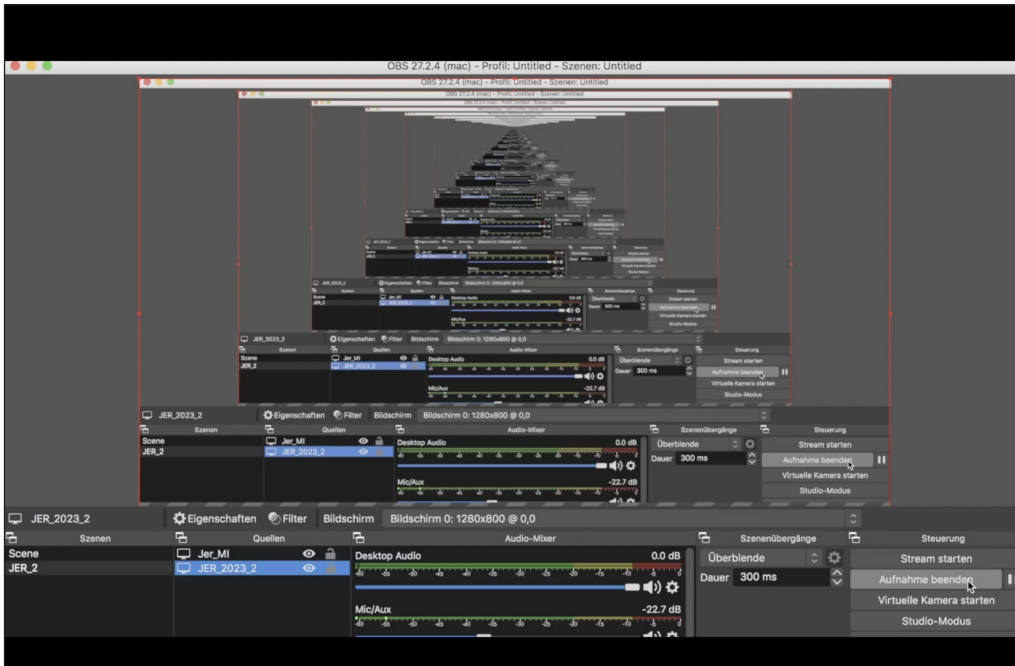


VIDEO ARTICLE

Available to view here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.16895>.

Available for download here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.16895.mp4>.

STILLS FROM THE VIDEO ARTICLE





VIDEO ARTICLE TRANSCRIPT

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[0:10]

Dancing with World experimenting with experiments

PAULA KRAMER (2024)

Abstract:

An improvised, one take, partially live exploration of the relationship between body and world as *intermaterial*. A poetic layering of movement, images, words, things and sites. Based in a Berlin living room and on the island Suomenlinna, outside of Helsinki.

[The first words in cursive are partially written and partially spoken]

[01:11]

[Paula Kramer:]

So ... here's to: Dancing with World

And maybe also walking with world, or, living with world, being, becoming with world, or in world, or: worlding ... maybe.

And what you see here, are recordings from movement practice on the Finnish island Suomenlinna, across several seasons. And they are layered with live recordings, here in Berlin, on a table, in a space, in a room. And I'm filming everything in one take. So there is no editing beyond live editing.

So, as we begin, maybe you can notice where you are sitting. I'm assuming you're sitting and looking at a screen, but maybe you're also standing or maybe you're lying, reclining or lounging. Just notice your position for a moment and feel free to change it any time throughout. And also feel free to look away from the screen.

Just notice where you are, in your space, your surroundings. And just check if you can sense where your body is touching another material. So maybe it is a chair or a wall, a sofa, bed. Somewhere. Floor. Somewhere you will have some physical, material contact. And there's all this stuff in a way, all these things, that are tangible, graspable, very present, in our context, in any context.

And then there is also this sense of – not a sense, but there is also air, or space. Atmosphere. Temperature. Shadow and light.

So we're always organised, in a way, in this spectrum between, what is really manifest and tangible and what is really intangible and hard to grasp but equally relevant. For anything really, for our dance making but also for our breathing and living and socialising, building.

And in our practices, living included, there's maybe sometimes a stronger sense of resonance with world or context or surrounding or field, and sometimes maybe there's more a sense of separation and difference, maybe alienation. And it's that dynamic really, that I'm attending to here. And really wanting to give a space to both, both this possibility of being really integrated, entangled, part of. But to also not, in a way forget or leave behind or deny or ignore a sense of difference that I find really relevant for dance making, for choreographic gestures, again also for our daily life practices.

And I suppose I am saying it here because I find that the emphasis is more often on the entanglement, or maybe the desire of being connected, or immersed, or almost, maybe, becoming the same or invisible. Mh – maybe not invisible, but ... not so different. And there is definitely a value to that, to not being so different, but, to appreciate difference has equal potential.

So I've come to consider, in a way over many decades of working, [subtitle: it's many *years*, and more than a decade, but not many decades] this relationship between human and world, this co-affordance of body and site, to be one that is *intermaterial* and as such, both entangled and free.

“[...] the very material we are made of is *intermaterial*. We are, as political theorist Jane Bennett details, always already imbued with tiny living and non-living forms, '[our] flesh is populated and constituted by different swarms of foreigners', ... [this is a quote] ... 'not only are we embodied, we are' ... [again quote] ... 'an array of bodies' (both Bennett 2010: 113, emphasis in the original). Or as feminist

philosopher Rosi Braidotti phrases it: our ... [quote] ... ‘subjectivity [is] a collective assemblage’ (Braidotti 2017: 9)”.

And yes, also physicist and philosopher Karen Barad’s work is entirely relevant to this coming to ‘terms’, to this coming to an understanding of how body and world interrelate and yes, quote: “[...] ‘environments’ and ‘bodies’ are intra-actively co-constituted” (Barad 2007: 170).

Yet I decided to stick with the prefix *inter-*, which is resonant of the French ‘entre’ and in my understanding leaves a little bit more room, a little bit more space, to manoeuvre.

“Each particular working time has its particular weather, temperature, atmosphere. The general season and the wider location affect me, as does my constitution, today. The ground I traverse has a specific materiality, density and structures vary. The sky has particular colours and textures, the soundscape is of a distinct composition, today” (Kramer 2021: 80).

“Bodily forms and sensations, choreographic choices and physical movements are co-emergent with site, materials, atmosphere – yes. Distinction emerges through *intra-*action. At the same time, I consider relevant what Barad might call a ‘preceding’ separation, border or differentiation between materials or agencies. It is as basic as considering relevant the approach of a mover towards a site. Whilst always already *intra-*active, the mover is also coming from elsewhere, from another rhythm and temporality, is made of different stuff than the site, has a different temperature, different intentions” (Kramer 2021: 77).

“On the whole however, [it is] a matter of emphasis, brimming with both/and. My concern here is movement practice and choreography [...] [and] [u]ltimately I suggest that we can emphasize and tune into both the frequency of entanglement as well as the frequency of separation in our living and dancing practices. And at some point [...] [maybe we can] [...] stop tuning and allow for both (and more) resources to feed our processes of creation, above and below the threshold of what we are consciously able to register” (Kramer 2021: 78).

[19:12]

[Text, written after the end of the film:]

OK, so this piece primarily belongs to a live space and it is not always easy to see and hear its (and my own) imperfections banned on screen.

But only in a few instances.

So here it remains.

The work on Suomenlinna was made possible by a 50% postdoctoral research position at the Centre for Artistic Research, Uniarts Helsinki, 2016–2019.

From this research period also stem some of the texts I am speaking in this video, published in my book *Suomenlinna/Gropius – Two Contemplations on Body, Movement and Intermateriality* (Triarchy Press, 2021).

To place me:

I am an independent movement-artist and researcher, working predominantly outdoors. Based in Berlin I explore how we (can) live and dance *with* world, how to tune our capacities for making art and life in a wide, resonant, multiple, field.

I was introduced to outdoor movement work in 1998 and immediately taken. The lineage in which I place myself is *Amerta Movement*, a movement practice mainly connected to Indonesian movement artist Suprpto Suryodarmo (1945–2019). Amerta has a strong emphasis on dialogue and listening, from its early phases until today.

Bibliography:

Barad, Karen (2007): *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bennett, Jane (2010): *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Braidotti, Rosi (2017): 'Posthuman Critical Theory' in *Journal of Posthuman Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 9–25.

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The software I use for the layering is called *Video Mixer* and was made with Cinder by Tuomo Rainio & Jaana Ristola, Academy of Fine Art Helsinki (2018).

THANK YOU.

Bibliography

Barad, Karen (2007): *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

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