



Open Library of Humanities



Part of the Ubiquity
Partner Network

JER *Journal of
Embodied Research*

Editorial

How to Cite: de Roza, E, Fari, NS, Hagan, C and Spatz, B. 2020. Embodiment and Social Distancing: Editorial. *Journal of Embodied Research*, 3(2): 1 (8:29). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.64>

Published: 09 October 2020

Copyright:

© 2020 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Open Access:

Journal of Embodied Research is a peer-reviewed open access journal.

Digital Preservation:

The Open Library of Humanities and all its journals are digitally preserved in the CLOCKSS scholarly archive service.

EDITORIAL

Embodiment and Social Distancing: Editorial

Elizabeth de Roza¹, Nathalie S. Fari², Cara Hagan³ and
Ben Spatz⁴

¹ LASALLE College of the Arts, SG

² University of Gothenburg, SE

³ Appalachian State University, US

⁴ University of Huddersfield, GB

Corresponding author: Ben Spatz (b.spatz@hud.ac.uk)

We are at a point in history in which bodies are linked in truly unprecedented ways. There are new types of limitations, new opportunities, and also new kinds of violence taking place through these connections. It is a lot to take in and very challenging to grasp as it unfolds. In this editorial video essay, the editors of the *Journal of Embodied Research's* special issue on “embodiment and social distancing” introduce the fifteen video essays that follow.

Keywords: embodiment; social distancing; video essay; practice research; artistic research; video art

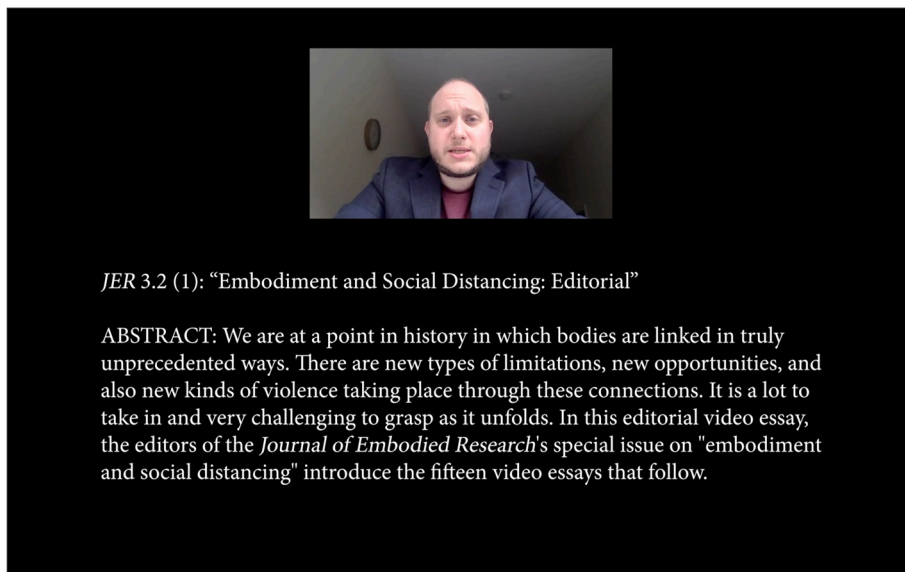
VIDEO EDITORIAL

Available to view here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.64>.

Available for download here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.64.s1>.

VIDEO EDITORIAL TRANSCRIPT

[00:10]



JER 3.2 (1): "Embodiment and Social Distancing: Editorial"

ABSTRACT: We are at a point in history in which bodies are linked in truly unprecedented ways. There are new types of limitations, new opportunities, and also new kinds of violence taking place through these connections. It is a lot to take in and very challenging to grasp as it unfolds. In this editorial video essay, the editors of the *Journal of Embodied Research's* special issue on "embodiment and social distancing" introduce the fifteen video essays that follow.

[Ben Spatz:]

Welcome!

This is an editorial video essay for the *Journal of Embodied Research* special issue on embodiment and social distancing. We are at a time in history in which bodies are linked together in truly unprecedented ways. There are new types of limitations, new opportunities, and also new kinds of violence that are moving across these links. It's a lot to take in and it's very challenging to grasp as it unfolds.

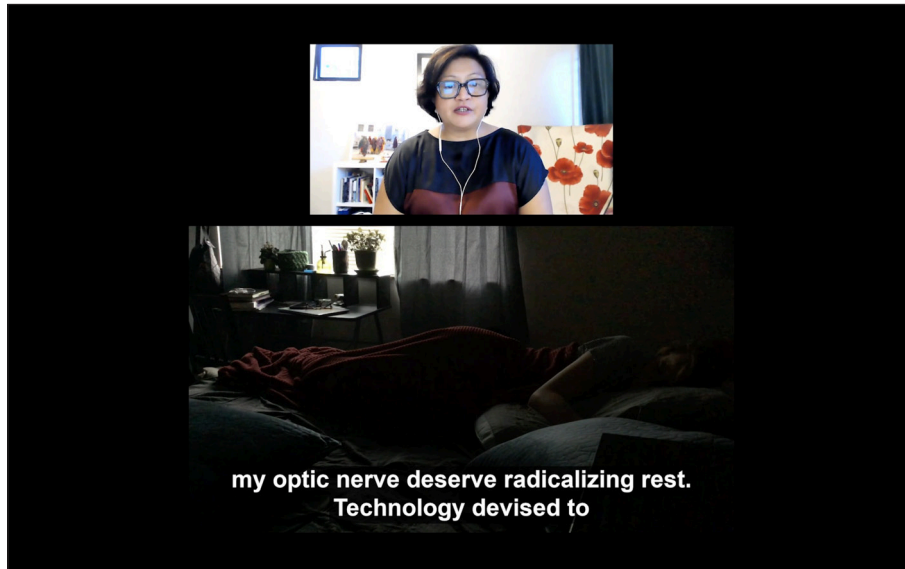
The *Journal of Embodied Research* is a platform that explores embodied practice as a kind of audiovisual thought; and in which the formal relations between textuality and audiovisuality are explored from the perspective of embodiment.

The four of us are recording this video essay across twelve hours of time zones and we have an exciting collection of fifteen video essays to share with you, created by contributors from twelve countries, involving at least four languages, and very diverse in their approach to form and content.

This format is also a first for the journal. The call for shorter video essays brought an excellent response and we're looking forward to doing this again as we continue to grow the journal's community and address other special topics.

Now I will hand over to my colleague Elizabeth de Roza, who will introduce the first composite video article.

[01:42]



JER 3.2 (2): "Embodiment and Social Distancing: Performances"

- Ellen Kress, "Rest is Resistance: Embodied Reflections of the Retraction Period in the Creative Process" (00:10)
- Lasse Mouritzen and Kristine Samson, "Pandemic Encounters" (05:34)
- Josiah Pearsall, "I All Occur Within Arm's Reach" (10:24)
- Shabari Rao, "Nothing to Show" (15:45)
- Charlotta Ruth, "What is liveness and what can it be?" (19:59)

[Elizabeth de Roza:]

The first video article falls under the theme of "Performance." There are five video essays and we are brought into the authors' environments

as they reflect and perform their new embodied encounters of what was once familiar, a passing through of a world that was once normal.

The first video essay, by Ellen Kress, entitled “Rest is Resistance: Embodied Reflection of the Retraction Period in Creative Production,” brings us into her domestic space, through which she performs rest as resistance and the need for retraction despite the current climate and capitalism’s need for productivity.

Lasse Mouritzen and Kristine Samson’s “Pandemic Encounters” closes in on how urban lives have changed into sites of strange encounters, needing to navigate proximities and presence.

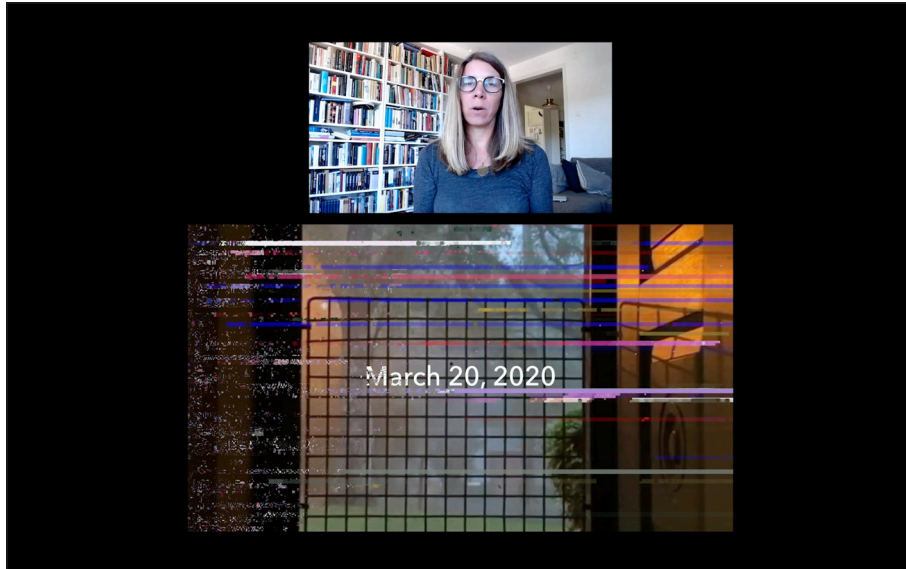
Josiah Pearsall, “I All Occur Within Arm’s Reach,” examines his embodied position in isolation and being constrained within the frame of his desk and computer.

Shabari Rao, “Nothing to Show,” performs her embodied encounters with her unfamiliar sense of self as her physical environment is severely restricted because of social distancing.

Charlotta Ruth, “What is liveness and what can it be?,” performs a phenomenological happening of an experience when fiction, real-life experience, and the digital perspective collide.

And now I hand over to Nathalie Fari.

[03:55]



JER 3.2 (3): “Embodiment and Social Distancing: Practices”

- Raffaele Rufo, “Dancing Together Alone: What Can Be Learnt About Connection When Touch is Forbidden?” (00:10)
- Anat Ben-David and Catharine Anne Cary, “What’s the Matter?” (05:54)
- Deanna Borland-Sentinella, Louise Gwenneth Phillips, and Alice Owen, “Virtually Embodied: Remembering the Sensations of Connection” (12:04)
- Nathalie S. Fari, “Notes from a zoom 5Rhythms® session” (17:10)
- AmberBeckyCreative, “Sheltering in Spacetimematterings: Audiovisual Considerations of Social Distancing” (22:42)

[Nathalie Fari:]

In the past six months, we have witnessed a global move of embodied practitioners into the digital realm. Often driven by an urge of keeping one’s own practice or training-routine alive, this move has also brought up a series of complex issues and concerns.

In the first video-essay of this composite video-article focused on “Practices,” Raffaele Rufo draws upon the embodied technique of Tango to lead a group dance improvisation practice that investigates how the absence of touch can be enabled through other means, be it an object or another body on the screen.

In Ana Ben-David and Catharine Cary's essay, the practice of improvisation is explored further, by using both the domestic space and the internet as sources for creating a common performative language.

Alice Owen, Deanna Borland-Sentinella, and Louise Gwenneth Phillips offer in their contribution another insight into the process of touching, especially by highlighting the memory and sensation of touch in a both virtual and physical space.

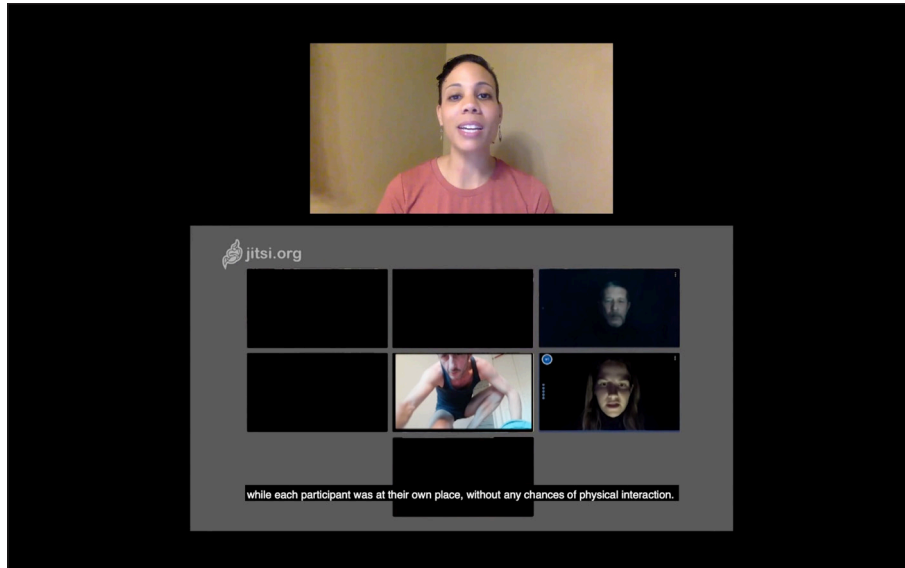
In my video-essay, I depart from the 5 Rhythms moving meditation practice in order to fathom what it means to access and enhance an individual and collective bodily awareness in a digital environment.

The final video essay, by Amber Ward and Becky Christ, turns the gaze away from an embodied practice, towards the materiality and agency of things. Anchored in an audiovisual language, it plays out different materials, texts and sounds by establishing an open conversation.

To sum up: This composite video-article is exploring the various ways in which an embodied practice has been affected by either the physical absence of other bodies or the restrictions as well as possibilities imposed by the screen.

And now I hand over to Cara Hagan.

[06:21]



JER 3.2 (4): “Embodiment and Social Distancing: Projects”

- Annie Abrahams and Daniel Pinheiro, “Why is the use of videoconferencing so exhausting? An analysis on the demands” (00:10)
- Mauricio Carrasco and Daniel Zea, “Vortex Decameron: Building narratologies in pandemic times” (05:23)
- Tina La Porta, “Internet Art at the Turn of the Millennium” (11:34)
- Alicia de Manuel, David Casacuberta, and Pep Gatell, “La Maldición de la Corona: Revisiting videoconference as a system to foster group creativity” (16:51)
- melissandre varin, “Freezing elements of research” (21:55)

[Cara Hagan]

The offerings in the “Projects” section of this special issue of the *Journal of Embodied Research* interrogate the trappings of the digital world as experienced by humans as they critique it, create in it, and establish new processes and improvisations for enacting cultural ritual in a time of forced isolation.

This section takes viewers on a journey through the myriad ways videoconferencing taxes the body and mind, in Annie Abrahams and Daniel Pinheiro's "Why is the use of video-conferencing so exhausting?"; the creation of new collaborative methods in music-making, in Mauricio Carrasco and Daniel Zea's "Vortex Decameron: Building narratologies in pandemic times"; the presence of liveness in digital space, in Tina La Porta's "Internet Art at the Turn of the Millennium"; possibilities for engaging groups in generative practice online, in Alicia de Manuel Lozano and David Casacuberta Sevilla's "La Maldición de la Corona: Revisiting videoconference as a system to foster group creativity"; and audiovisual abstractions and assemblages in melissandre varin's "Freezing elements of research."

Taken together, the projects presented in this section of the journal present a course in embodied inter-human innovation that transcends the boundaries of the skin and offers us a roadmap for navigating the unprecedented historical occurrence and outcomes of the global coronavirus pandemic.

We hope you enjoy this special issue of the *Journal of Embodied Research*. Please check out past issues and stay tuned for subsequent calls and issues.

Journal of Embodied Research 3.2 (2020)

Embodiment and Social Distancing

jer.openlibhums.org

This is a transcript of a video article. Individual elements from the transcript, such as metadata and reference lists, may appear more than once in the document in order to be properly read and accessed by automated systems. The transcript can be used as a placeholder or reference wherever it is not possible to embed the actual video, which can be found by following the DOI.

How to cite this article: de Roza, E, Fari, NS, Hagan, C and Spatz, B. 2020. Embodiment and Social Distancing: Editorial. *Journal of Embodied Research*, 3(2): 1 (8:29). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.64>

Submitted: 26 August 2020 **Accepted:** 31 August 2020 **Published:** 09 October 2020

Copyright: © 2020 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.



Journal of Embodied Research is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Open Library of Humanities.

OPEN ACCESS The Open Access icon, which is a stylized padlock with an open keyhole.