Choreoauratics: Social Choreographies for the Ears

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the University of Auckland, 2015

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the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Dance Studies, National Institute for Creative Arts and Industries,
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At a time of life when the body is often dematerialised, de-centred and fragmented and our natural and cultural world seems exhausted on a global scale, this creative research investigates the potential for choreography as a strategy for recovery and coming together. My research is situated at the intersections between spatial design, somatics, sound art, site-based performance and social choreography. A creative practice that thinks through doing, it interrogates the potential of a choreoauratic site-based performance practice to bring attention to the politics of public places, somatically, architecturally, and socially.

A series of participatory headphonic events shifts between the expanded field of choreography, critical spatial practice and theory. The participatory delivery of these test-events target a return to listening, sensory attunement and respons(able) encounter.

A new term choreoauratics is cultivated out of this creative research. It argues for the convergence of prosthetic listening and somatic choreography as a critical spatial practice. Tuning into the philosophies and politics of performance research, the language of the threshold offers a theoretical context for thinking through the dispersed, disembodied and accelerated social conditioning of digital infrastructures. Choreoauratic test-events intervene in public spaces, working poetically towards a recovery of the imperceptible and the disappearing. Performing in the margins, the practice orchestrates an emergent form of public activism.
Core concepts in this research are; The nomad, the chora, the witness, and the threshold.

These concepts stem from the following key theorists; Rosie Braidotti, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Julia Kristeva, Giorgio Agamben and Elizabeth Grosz and are re-evaluated as they intersect and comingle through writing and praxis. The harmony of praxis and writing engenders a vibrant middle space, like Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic territories, a heterogeneous space that is performed as intensities of speed (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Through praxis the theoretical is embodied in the sensate which brings writing into the choreographic, and as Kristeva suggests into the body, activating the poetic imagination.

Choreographies for the ears affect and politicise the way we inhabit and incorporate spaces. A new kind of subjectivity emerges through ubiquitous sound technologies and choreography. This activates the subject and the city in collisions and convergence, coming together in the striated, dispersed virtual space of listening prosthetically. Engaging in the unspectacular, the practice treads lightly, tuning into the intensities of the poetic, sound, the voice, place and the moving body.
The creative practice research presented for Doctoral submission as required by the University of Auckland is comprised of a live event, documentation and reflection of a process of 12 test-events; multimodal evidence in the form of digital sound files, photographs and participant testimonies and a written thesis that articulates and supports the practice.
Co-Production Form

This form is to accompany the submission of any PhD that contains co-produced creative practice components. Please include one copy of this form for each part of this thesis that was co-produced. Forms should be included in all copies of your thesis submitted for examination and library deposit (including digital deposit), following your thesis Acknowledgements.

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FIGURE 1: Instructions for (re)membering (#2), Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland, November 2011
CHAPTER 1: This is not the beginning

Standing in amongst the group of bodies that are moving about me, I point my camera into the space without looking through the lens, and steal random fragments of time. Wearing headphones, people move through the space. They are intently focused on their own worlds. I am an onlooker, an outsider, slipping in and out of the space they make, fleetingly they let me in with their eyes, and just as swiftly the gaps close.

The interspaces between me and them are permeable and shifting. There are moments of togetherness and intersection. I recognise glimpses of my own memories, which disappear the second I catch them. In fragments of moments the moving bodies begin to look like a choreographed ensemble. As swiftly as they assemble, the arrangement crumbles, disintegrating and then morphing to form a new composition.

Meeting in a doorway, three stand facing the same direction. They slip in and out of unison. They are watching each other and being watched. Some sit down on the seats around the space, taking their headphones off and watching, until there is one left in the room. He moves with careful articulation. We watch, witnessing.

Eventually he sits down. Afterwards some reflect on the experience, observing surges of self-consciousness, others commented upon the cocooning effect of the headphones, how they permitted safety and assurance in following the vocal suggestions. I consider the notion of self-consciousness and what this might mean in relation to becoming attentive.

1.0 Beginning, an ending

The text opposite is a reflection on the performance test, Instructions for (re)membering, presented at the Old Folks Association hall, in Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand at the end of 2011, one year into my doctorate adventure. This creative research sets out to engender new possibilities for choreographic thinking through engaging with sonic modalities, critical spatial practice and the politics of listening. The practice has been executed as a series of site-based participatory choreographies, presented and developed internationally and nationally over the last four years.

This research brings the practices, provocations and vocabularies of somatically informed choreography and prosthetics into performance studies, together with creative, theoretical and reflective discourses. Drawing from intermodal activities, critical spatial practice is thought through sonic choreographic encounters that prioritise listening as a politic for questioning the hierarchies and bifurcation of the senses.¹

¹ The assumption here is that vision reigns, and that the sound environment offers ‘untapped resources for the subversion of dominant modes of representation’ (Braidotti, 2002, p. 246).
The practice discussed in this thesis responds to a highly technologised life, that is dispersed and striated. In response to this, the choreography of affective listening, activates strategies for recovery, and for coming together.

These test-events that comprise the creative practice of the research activate a discourse between choreography, somatics, performance studies and spatial design through the politics of the social, the senses, space, and the body. The practice questions the role of the performer and audience, spectator and artist.

Written as a score and a recording, that has no true beginning, or end, this thesis guides you, the reader, through the remains of these test-events, facilitating a multimodal engagement through listening, reading and imagining. MP3 audio files accompany this written thesis, enabling you to listen to extracts from the choreoauratic scores developed in this research and prompted within this document. The potential for this practice to continue in this activity of listening and responding to its remains, suggests that within the traces of the research is a possibility for the practice to be extended into the future, (as discussed in the following Chapter).

Choreographic writing both emerges out of, and traces this practice of listening, moving and placing the body. Writing, speaking and moving come together in this thesis, as ‘translations from moved event to written text’ and the ‘practices of moving and writing partner each other’ (Foster, 1995, p. 16). The bodies that write and the bodies that speak, have no direct equivalent for the writing bodies that move. This suggests a rupture between language and the sensate which is explored as the threshold space through the writing of French/Bulgarian theorist Julia Kristeva and Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in Chapter 4: Listen Up and Tune In.

In her book, titled Speaking the Unspeakable, on the writing of Kristeva, Anne-Marie Smith asks ‘How can writing be experienced as an inscription of the body?’ (1998, p. 65). Composing through writing and practice brings ‘a writing body as well as a body written upon’ towards a scholarly practice (Foster, 1995, p. 12). These two bodies come together in different modes of awareness, as multiple bodies that write, that speak, that listen and that move through a critical discourse of the body as a political agent, participating in or resisting cultural and social forms of production.

Susan Leigh Foster proposes an ambulant and transient scholarship for the body, suggesting that the body is rethought as ‘always in the making and also always vanishing’ in relation to a time of life where the distinction between ‘the real and the simulated’ has collapsed (1995, p. 16). Foster’s thesis suggests that the writing and written bodies enter a ‘dialogue’ with one another, in co-motion. William Forsythe’s question, ‘What else, besides the body, could physical thinking look like?’ extends
FIGURE 2: Instructions for (re)membering (#2), Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland, November 2011
Fosters scholarship, cultivating choreographic thinking within this praxis in conversation with prosthetic listening and the threshold (2009, p. 1).

This research is rhizomatic, it moves in a discourse between multimodal practices, theory and philosophy. A praxis of choreoautics has emerged via constant states of tremor and negotiation. Rhizomatic thinking is generated through Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s model for a culture that is networked, and open to connectivity. A concerto of post-structuralist thinkers, philosophers and artists are brought together strategically as a foundation for the practical and the theoretical underpinnings of the research. They have been selected for their critique of how we place ourselves geographically, politically and socially through the body, language, technology and the arts. The way these ideas intersect both harmoniously and discordantly creates the necessary tension (and release) for a discourse that might create original and metamorphic ways of coming together. In this introductory chapter, This is not the beginning, I will briefly acquaint you with the critical principles of this thesis as a way to map the research landscape.

1.1 Somalogical patterns

This creative research develops new methods and practices for the performance of inter-relational spaces and perceptions within the digitally mediated present. Praxis, critical spatial practice, somatically informed choreography, and the test-event are terms that are investigated in Chapter 2: Methods for Coming to our Senses.

Twelve test-events form the creative research, in dialogue with the theoretical concerns. These test-events have been presented both independently, in specifically designed spatial contexts, and as part of a symposia or festivals, which invite invaluable peer critique and feedback.

Expressed through a reflective process, this creative practice activates rethinking place and the perceptual performance encounter through sonic site-based choreographic test-events. Praxis in this research is thought of as a rhizomatic entanglement of critical theory and practice where embodied material, spatial and choreographic thinking takes place. This becomes a process of thinking, doing, documenting and reflecting. Somatic, choreographic and spatial doing/thinking commingle, a process whereby the ‘doing’ comes first and is then engaged in a to and fro process that is reflected upon through processes that capture, document, archive, interpret and (re)present. This follows Robin Nelson’s claim that, ‘...PaR researchers sometimes aim to evidence the research inquiry in writings but not to yield answers in the form of analytic if synthetic propositions’ (Nelson, 2013, p. 58). Within the context of creative practice as research as Nelson suggests ‘sufficiency in the research may lie in sustained

2 Sally Jane Norman names this ‘sensuous knowledge’ (Art + Research + Values conference at the University of Auckland (March 2012).
and structured reflection to make the “tacit knowledge” explicit’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 112). This requires a structure, or a cartography that accounts for the process that is both happening, happened and about to happen.

The research solicits somatically informed choreography to argue how we perceive the body, space and time in mediated modalities. The term somatically informed choreography is extended within this choreographic research practice. Ubiquitous technologies come together with somatically informed choreographies to disrupt perceptions of time and place in live performance situations, and develop new modes of encounter.

Somatically informed choreographic pedagogies offer cues towards methodologies that tune the relationship between spaces of the inner body, the surfaces and spaces outside the body, and for becoming more attentive, through a ‘slower ontology’, ‘doing less’ and tuning into listening. Somatic methods (which span therapy, training, education, research and creative practice) are conventionally explored in private studios, in insular and socially cushioned environments. What happens if we adapt these methods to the extended, ocularcentric and accelerating terrain of new media and public sites? How might we affect change in performance practices by venturing into different, mediated, and complex spaces using these methodologies? These questions are examined through the series of test-events, incorporating practice-led methods into mediated sonic arrangements and somatically informed choreography as a way of bringing diverse systems together to activate dissensus around their theories and practice.

‘Always in relationship with the environment’, the doctrine of somatic practices began as a radical thinking of the ‘whole’ body that broke away from Cartesian models (Eddy, 2009, p. 10). The somatic body is perceived as a multiplicity of sensory perceptions through choreography and documentation engenders ‘essential insights into human nature’ and ‘functions largely as a potent agent of change’ (Batson, 2009, p. 2). Susan Leigh Foster suggests that the key to somatic thinking is the illusive body, ‘always shifting – it never is something’ (Foster, 1995, p. 4).

Theories of the posthuman provide this research with ways to think through the implications of somatically informed choreography and the technologically effected body. Digitally mediated encounters tend to extend our temporal, spatial and embodied experiences. Somatic practices also affect the sensate through ‘listening to the body’, transforming our perceptions of time, space and the body (Eddy, 2009, p. 7). Cyber-theorist N. Katherine Hayles in her publication Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers (1993) defines the posthuman body as patterns and randomness. Hayles thesis on the posthuman body is developed further by Braidotti’s posthuman ethics as nomadic, multiple,
sustainable and a radical rethinking of the conscious and the unconscious.

In proposing a relationship between somatic thinking and the concept of a rhizomatic posthuman (and technologised) body as a mutual flow of patterns and randomness, I argue that the posthuman and the somatic body convene. This unfastens the linear and historic accounts of arts narratives, moving towards a state of opening beyond the limits of anthropocentrism.

Jacques Rancière’s undoing of the historical story of modernism and post-modernism supports a recalibration of the linear trajectory of the past in favour of alternative, rhizomatic histories that are worked through this research project. This creates space for undoing hegemonic Western regimes that have been the perceived foundations of New Zealand society. Māori theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s thesis of decolonisation engenders a polemic that like Rancière’s notion of ‘dissensus’5, acts on the rupture between colonial and post-colonial perspectives.

Decolonialisation, as Tuhiwai Smith suggests, involves an opening to indigenous culture and signifies connections between principles of Māori Tikanga and somatic thinking such as the understanding of the Māori term ‘whenua’ which binds the body, ‘placenta’ and land, bringing the body and environment together (Mead, 2013, p.15). Combining Rancière’s reworking of history through dissensus with Tuhiwai Smith’s decolonial framework activates a discourse within heterogeneous connections where somatic thinking and indigenous ways of knowing might also come together. Specific to this research, these other ways of knowing incite a partition of the senses, to use Rancière’s terms, activated through discourse, spatial conditions and listening.

Methods for Coming to our Senses questions how performance studies might navigate these dissensual relationships, incorporating Rancière’s terms between the choreography of somatic practices and critical spatial practice towards a more response(able) way of becoming. The term response(able) is used as a way to embed somatic principles into the rhetoric of this discussion. Through my studio practice in somatic science6 I perceive this as being ‘able’ to ‘respond’ to the world, to self, to the community and to the environment through the ability to ‘listen’ and be attentive to the sensate. This opens a politic for perceptual performance practices involving creative technologies, bringing forth the Deleuzian notion of the “community of the sense” woven together by artistic practice (in) a new set of vibrations of the human community’ (Rancière, 2009, p. 56).

My background in choreography, dance training and holistic body practices, and post graduate study in spatial design, brings

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5 Rancière suggests that the ‘dissensual operation takes form of a superimposition that transforms a given form or body into a new one’ (2009, p. 66).

6 I have worked in a range of somatic practices since 1995, including; Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais Method, Skinner Releasing, Contact Improvisation, Yoga and more recently Shin Somatics. Shin Somatics has been trademarked by Sondra Fraleigh and is a holistic somatics methodology ‘informed by her certification in the Feldenkrais® Method and CranioSacral Therapy - as also her study of Myofascial Release, Effective Communication, Japanese Butoh, Yoga, and Zen meditation’ (Fraleigh 2011).
a unique perspective to the research that incorporates somatically informed choreographic\textsuperscript{7} practice with spatial thinking.

The practice and the theory are caught in a critical spatial field that acts on and writes through ways of knowing in processes of creating, making, doing, thinking, reflecting and writing. This praxis democratises the tensions of creative practice and everyday activities that attend to not only the spatial but also the critical (Rendall, 2008).

The archival traces of the practice are collated within the thesis as a collection of material remains. Contemporary writers of practice-led research - Nelson, Paul Carter and Estelle Barrett - help think through the slippery nature of evidencing creative-practice and how this is implicated in an academic context. Barrett, Carter and Nelson’s arguments for knowing through doing, material thinking and liquid knowing respectively are explored as maps for navigating the labyrinthine relations between practice and theory. Chapter 2 interrogates methodologies particular to creative research. It examines multiple methods of knowing through doing as they have emerged through critical spatial practice.

This research constitutes the term - choreoaauratics - which operates in a convergence of disciplines, between choreographic thinking, prosthetic listening and the politics of the live towards an original methodology. The methods explored in Chapter 2 bring these fields together in intensities of harmony and dissonance, loosening prescribed discipline specific approaches to creative practice. Out of this emerges new possibilities for transformation, and potential shifts from discipline bound arts practices, often seen in the performing arts world and held by traditions, rituals and histories.

I arrive at the following questions. What are the possibilities if we democratise the hierarchies of sound, touch, smell and the kinaesthetic senses in order to afford new possibilities in the intertwining of the digital world and perceptual performance? In what ways could perceptual choreographic study help to rethink our sense of being in our bodies and our cities in response to digital spaces? How might this reinvent our sense of the corporeal subject in highly mediated and intermodal spheres?

The dilemma that surfaces in the endeavour to document these test-events is discipline bound, not only in the political underpinnings of the live event, but is caught in the ocularcentric regime. Another hegemony that this research wants to destabilize is the ocularcentricity of the discipline of performance studies. As Nelson identifies in his book \textit{Practice as Research in the Arts} (2013), video documentation and a supporting DVD are expected modes for recording performance arts practices within the institution. In her landmark critique of ‘economies of reproduction’ Phelan’s argument suggests that in this practice

\textsuperscript{7} Natalie Garrett’s PhD study (2007) introduces the term somatically informed choreography to the research. Her argument diffuses the emphasis of the ocularcentric in dance performance in favour of a kinaesthetic focus.
that activates spatial and somatically informed choreographic ontologies, reverting to a scopic view might be, an ‘ontological betrayal’ (1993). How might the performed component of this research serve as a record of the work without championing the very ontology it attempts to reconfigure?

The outcome of documenting these test-events will always be incomplete, or partial. To negotiate this partiality (this is discussed in relation to Adrian Heathfield, Rebecca Schneider and Phelan in Chapter 2), or failure in documentation, multiple modes are used to gather and collect an archive of these test-events. These modes will always fail at representing what happened.

Audio scores are preserved in the digital remains and are embedded in this thesis as an imperfect archive, ready to be re-activated. These digital sound files are part of this multiple sensory encounter. You will be prompted to play the audio tracks that accompany this thesis (or via digital links), where you will be able to listen to excerpts from the choreauratic scores through headphones. The choreographic pathways that were inscribed on site are caught as fragments in still images, as traces in choreographic writing, and in the potential to revisit a score, as Heathfield suggests (2012, p. 237). Those who witnessed and those who participated are archived in this thesis using multiple modes such as notation, reflections, and still photographs. This practice of spatial and choreographic participatory encounters argues for multimodal forms of documentation that open the possibility of the event itself, suggesting that in Brian Massumi’s terms, the event has no beginning and no end.

1.2 The situation of sonics

Chapter 3: *The Unsightliness of Sonics* examines the fields of choreography and performance, through artistic, somatic, historic and political vectors, illuminating the critical and creative terrain this research is in dialogue with. In this chapter my intention is to present a brief anthology of performance practices that provide a contextual framing for the emergence of what I am terming choreauratics. This history is registered within multiple fields; the ‘expanded field’ of choreography, somatic practices, sound art, headphonic performance, participatory performance and site-based performance.

New language and the possibilities for perceptual performance and choreographic thinking converge in the digitally mediated sphere and are informed by the work of prominent artists, who inscribe the subject as embodied and virtual. The links that I make between their practices and writing shapes a critical perspective that brings choreography into relation with other fields.

Current headphonic works are investigated and classified in this chapter. A series of international works are examined, drawing where possible, from first hand experience. Operating outside of the architectural and monumental conditions of the theatre, the
mobile and site-based terrain of headphonic works challenge and question the conventions and politics of theatrical apparatus. Situated in public spaces, audience members participate in unstable circumstances and the conventional hierarchies of the spectator/performer relationship are reconsidered. Slipping into what theorist of performance philosophy Laura Cull identifies as an ‘interzone’ a between space similar to the interstitial territory of the Fluxus artists, ‘- where we can sense, rather than recognize, thinking as a kind of doing and doing as a kind of thinking’ (Cull, 2009, p. 243 & 252).

Participatory, and often site-based, many of the headphonic works discussed in this chapter are modelled around a score based structure, which resonate with the instruction based work of the Fluxus artists of the late 1950s. Attributed to a very early inception of the term ‘intermedia’, the Fluxus scores invited responses in any medium as systems that ‘determined the textures of the spaces between media’ (Doris in Freidman, 1998, p. 91). Concurrently, Happenings10 evolved as a movement associated with intermedia.

Like Guy Debord’s ‘constructed situations’, Rancière’s relatively recent book, The Emancipated Spectator, is a project that reforms the theatre. He brings the spectator and the researcher together as he reconsiders their roles: ‘This is what emancipation means: the blurring of the opposition between they who look and they who act, they who are individuals and they who are members of a collective body’ (Rancière, 2009, p. 9). More radically, and as mentioned earlier in relation to Tuhiwai Smith’s indigenous position, Rancière reconfigures art history, rejecting the dominant Western art movements of modernism and postmodernism for what he calls the aesthetic regime. In assembling ‘politics in aesthetics and the aesthetics in politics’, Rancière introduces a third term, an ‘aesthetico-political logic,’ in which his rationale undoes hierarchical arrangements of the senses that set out to separate art from life (2004, p. 85).

Rancière’s aesthetic regime calls up a different historical thread, connecting a genealogy of artists who position themselves politically; the Dadaists (c. 1916-1924) and the avant-garde artists from the late 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (this includes the Fluxus movement, the Happenings, and The Situationists mentioned above). Thinking through Rancière’s alternative history, the borders between choreography and visual art become less specific and open the field to contemporary international artists whose work I locate within the form expanded choreography. Discussed in this chapter are the works by William Forsythe, Tino Sehgal and Jerome Bel who work polemically with the qualities

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8 Fluxus: ‘It is an active philosophy of experience that only sometimes takes the form of art. It stretches across the arts and even across the areas between them. Fluxus is a way of viewing society and life, a way of creating social action and life activity’ (Friedman 1998, ix).
9 Intermedia was a term coined by Dick Higgins that was born out of an essay that he wrote in 1966 and was published in The July 1967 issue of De-coll/age, The Fluxus Magazine. (Saper in Freidman, 1998, p. 140). Intermedia was ‘concerned with matters of noticing phenomena as they occurred, requiring an act of attention by the participant in order for the work itself to be realized’ (Doris in Freidman, 1998, p. 105).
10 In the late 1950s in New York, Allan Kaprow sought to heighten the experience of the everyday, fusing the viewer ‘with the space-time of the performance and thereby lost their identity as an audience’ (Bishop 2006, p. 102).
and conventions of the institutional and the monumental. Local New Zealand artists Brent Harris, Mark Harvey, Sean Curham and Alexa Wilson could also be classified as working in this expanded terrain.

Forsythe’s work is influential in the space that oscillates between visual arts practices and choreographic thinking. The term perceptual performance is introduced from Freya Vass-Rhee’s discussion of Forsythe’s research into the ‘performative potentials of perception’ (Vass-Rhee, 2010, p. 390). Vass-Rhee interprets Forsythe’s experiments in intermodal performance as a means to direct attention to attention itself, ‘through shifting attention across the senses and as a result heightening the focus of the audience’ (Vass-Rhee, 2010, p. 390). According to Vass-Rhee, Forsythe sets out to penetrate the ‘auditory barrier’, extending choreographic thinking beyond the traditions of ballet and modern dance practices. The term ‘perceptual performance’ is brought to this research through Vass-Rhee, as a way of naming the space between the choreographed body and the sonic digital interface; mobilising, multiplying and dividing time, space and the body.

Rancière’s negotiation ‘of a micro-politics of art, between the opposed paradigms of art becoming life and art as resistant form’ opens to the dissent and activism of the 1960s (Rancière, 2004, p. 86-88). As performance theorist Steve Dixon observes, this was a ‘period of intense cultural and political change(s)’ (Dixon, 2007, p. 88). Collaborative and ‘pluri-disciplinary’ cross-overs between art genres generated radical new forms in an intermingling not just across practices but between the body and non-human systems, and as such between art and life (Salter, 2010, p. 243). As the body became hybridised, as both machine and organism, the boundaries blurred between the natural and artificial, expanding the potential of what it means to be human, towards the posthuman.

1.3 A state of listening

Through Braidotti’s argument for the nomadic subject, we tune into Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘body without organs’ which calls for ‘rethinking human embodiment in a manner that is coextensive with our technological habitat’ (2002, p. 61). In Chapter 4: Listen up and Tune in, Braidotti’s attention to technology and the arts as a way of explicating nomadic theory synthesises with my own concerns for social and ecological evolution in response to a highly technologised world. Somatic thinking implies, (introduced on page 5), the body as coextensive with the environment. What I am proposing is that somatic ontologies aren’t limited to natural habitats and might become part of an urban nomadic philosophy that is also digital. Braidotti’s social and political tactics seek to review individualism, reverberating with her post-anthropocentric
proposal, towards a sustainable ethics. Braidotti argues for the post-human, nomadic subject, and I bring this thinking to the practice of choreoauratics.

Two more key players are important in the theoretical register of this research and are discussed in this chapter, prioritising the conditions of the sonic and of listening. Julia Kristeva and Giorgio Agamben both demand a cross examination of the notion of the threshold, particularly through the conditions of language and speech, focusing on the potential and the impotentiality of language and the spoken word. The intersection between Kristeva and Agamben’s thinking of the threshold, as I perceive it, proposes contingencies for the subject relevant to choreoauratics. As we focus in on the limits of what it means to be human, the discourse resonates with Grosz and Braidotti’s exploration into the ‘other’. Technologised and networked bodies extend the borders of human life and bring us closer to being cyborg and at the same time more animal and insect-like (Braidotti, 2011, p. 99 - 103). In a choreoauratic threshold space, questions of how we listen somatically and prosthetically direct our attention towards potential multiple tunes of others.

This research works toward a reconfiguration of the senses and towards listening as a polemic, so that we might tune into the world differently. Chapter 4: *Listen up and Tune in* explores the command of the scopic in the 21st century, enforced by our daily interactions with technology and screen-based media. Braidotti proposes the ‘commodification of the scopic’ as a driving force in Western culture and a dominant force in the capitalist post-modern economy (2002, p. 245 & 155). Chapter 4 investigates the potential of bringing listening to choreographic practice as a strategy to tune into what is not visible. Listening is activated as a subversive strategy to rethink the hierarchical scopic hegemony, towards a democracy of the senses.

Feminist perspectives are also introduced in this chapter as a way to discuss the other. Concepts of becoming minor ‘break through conventional schemes of theoretical representation’ (Braidotti, 2002, p. 78). Braidotti identifies the dominance of the gaze as a driving concern in feminist thinking, ‘…it tends to reinstate a hierarchy of bodily perception which over-privileges vision over other sense, especially touch and sound’ (2002, p. 246). This chapter introduces feminist theorists such as Laura Mulvey, Lucy Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and Donna Haraway, who through their writing have brought attention to the ‘primacy of vision’, entangled in the ontological transactions that new media and screen based mediums attract.

The pervasiveness of sound and the potential for it to extend our spatial and bodily understanding beyond the scopic is the focus of Chapter 4, in an entanglement of feminist theorists, movement practitioners, scientists and philosophers. Different ways of listening are discussed, bringing together listening prosthetically, listening as an anatomical construct and listening
somatically. Tuning into these multiple modes of listening, mediated by prosthetic technology and somatically informed choreography, brings concepts of the threshold space into the theoretical discussion. Grosz and Kristeva tune into the space of the chora, as a space of potential, a space that ‘makes place possible’ (Grosz, 1995, p. 116).

Braidotti pitches sound as a subversive culture. The acoustic world, Braidotti suggests is both the most collective and the most pervasive. She refers to artists who engage with the counter culture of the sonic as a way of, ‘reinforcing different frequencies through technology’ or ‘marking spaces of intensive connection to impersonal and indiscernible others’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 108). Brandon LaBelle also perceives sound as a way of creating a counterpoint as he suggests in his text Raw Orality, ‘Sound may be appreciated to act as a hinge, bringing into contact particular contradictory forces or conditions’ (LaBelle, 2010, p. 167).

I suggest Chapter 4 that prosthetic listening devices have the potential to shift our perception of our sound space. Shifting perception has the potential to provoke a reconfiguration of the way we encounter time, space and the body in digital conditions, recalibrating the subject through listening differently.

Deleuze and Guattari’s thesis on the Body without Organs emerges in this research in their concepts of the nomad, the rhizome and becoming. This is understood through the writing of Cull, Braidotti and Massumi. Bodies without organs come together to dissolve boundaries and reconfigure the body in intermediated, intermodal and intersubjective performance choreographies.

The Deleuzian priority of the sensate body over the productive body is sustained in the nomadic subject. Thought through this praxis, is Braidotti’s description of Deleuze and Guattari’s text Anti-Oedipus, as a ‘joyful anarchy of the senses’ (Braidotti 2002, p. 124) in which they interrupt monastic and binary thought. This nomadic mapping of the mediatised world and the natural world as Braidotti suggests, channels a molecular re-arrangement of intensities and connections in a ‘joyful cacophony of many insect-like acoustic environments’ (2002, p. 170).

Braidotti’s posthuman stance offers a synchronous theoretical platform to Grosz’s ‘species-specific tunes’ where there becomes emphasis on listening as a counter-position to the ocularcentric drive we find ourselves in. In her latest book Becoming undone (2011), Grosz investigates Darwin’s, and Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophies where the human and the inhuman potential are explored through movement, politics and art.

We begin to hear in other ways, if we begin to get a sense of how other species might hear. In this electronic age, how might we listen from the inside out? Headphones cocoon our sound space, prosthetic listening brings the sonic to the inside of the body, reconfiguring the sensate, allowing us to hear differently.
1.4 Twelve test-events

The last section of the thesis, Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are an account of the series of headphonic choreoauratic test-events that make up the practice component of this research. These test-events have been presented over four years in international and local sites.

Struggling with the codes and traditions implicated in the usual terms that signify the ‘event’ (or the performance, the exhibition or the installation), it became important early on in the practice to establish a new term for a hybrid practice that sets out to destabilise conventional codes and break new ground. Adopting a hyphenated condition, the term test-event suggests a process that questions questioning. Co-constructing Avital Ronell’s notion of the test and the human drive to test, with Massumi’s theories on the event, (a term that Massumi adopts from Deleuze's idea of perpetual becoming) affirms the uncertainty of the test culture. This suggests a fluid process that ‘makes no promises’ (Harvey, 2011). Through terms such as Ronell’s ‘rescindability’ and Massumi’s ‘politicality of process’ this hyphenated space brings the cultural and the political together into the unknown.

Twelve practice-led test-events are discussed in detail in Section B, Chapter 5, 6 & 7, classified as three choreoauratic modes, named mnemonic choreoauratics, nomadic choreoauratics and social choreoauratics. This section is reflective, writing through the events, incorporating the remains of the choreoauratic scores as still images, sound files, diagrams and notes, and reflections from participants.

The first series, mnemonic choreoauratics (2011-2012) were sited in a range of different architectures around the world, from monumental and institutionalised, to temporary and urban spaces. This series questioned the implications of place and the impact of architectural codes on participants and audiences. Modes of collaboration and contingency were tested out with groups of participating subjects and witnesses in different sites and in different test-event configurations. Conventional performance and exhibition codes were followed in a number of the test-events and broken in others, gauging how these impacted on the encounter each time. A sociality emerged from participation in these six mnemonic choreoauratic test-events, developed over this first year.

The second series, nomadic choreoauratics (2013) loosened the conditions of the site. Working nomadically, the headphonic scores were situated as ambulatory encounters located in the streets of Dunedin. Two test-events were presented in 2013, one in February and then one in September, as mobile participatory walks that mapped sonic cartographies through the urban landscape. The act of walking becomes a nomadic activity in dialogue with the choreographic act of recovery as introduced by Andrew Hewitt in his book Social Choreography as a (2005, p. 88). The intention in these nomad scores was to listen in to the
disappearing histories, recovering stories that may have never been heard, the sound scores activating the substrata of the city.

The third series, *social choreauratics* (2014) is the culmination of all of the scores. Focused on a narrative of the St James Theatre and the surrounding civic space, these test-events were sited between the St James Theatre and the Auckland Public Library. The test-events at the St James continued with the politics of recovery, through listening, coming together and through activating the site. A public sociality emerged in these test-events that opened up the imperceptible layers of the city through sound, arousing the social, spatial, political and temporal spaces held within the site.

In the next chapters, you will encounter a multimodal cartography of the practice and the theoretical framework forming the spine of this study. These pages and sound scores invite multi-sensory engagement in their thinking through sound, as they weave performance-remains together via writing, listening, reading, seeing, feeling and moving.

FIGURE 3 (opposite page): *Instructions for (re)membering (#4) - A social choreography for the ears*, Gymnasium, The University of Chichester, UK, June 2012

FIGURE 4 (next page 16): *E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on* was presented as part of the Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, February 2013

FIGURE 5 (opposite next page 17): *Listening for Disappearing (#2)*, Auckland, May 2014
The most important thing about the ear’s difference, which I have yet to remark, is that the signature becomes effective - performed and performing - not at the moment it apparently takes place, but only later, when ears will have managed to receive the message. In some way the signature will take place on the addressee’s side, that is, on the side of him or her whose ear is keen enough to hear my name, for example or to understand my signature, that with which I sign.

(Derrida, 1985, p. 51)
CHAPTER 2: Methods for Coming to our Senses

2.0 Where I stand - tūrangawaewae

Beginning with where I stand (tūrangawaewae¹), situates this research in both the global and in a local context. How I stand in relationship to my geographic location emphasises the placeness of this practice, a critical idea in the methodological thinking.

Situated in Aotearoa New Zealand, our history is specific to our geographical location at the bottom of the southern hemisphere, and is uniquely distinct from European arts history. Beginning with where we stand brings somatic thinking and local indigenous thinking into the foreground. How we connect to the earth, how we stand on our own two feet, resonates with two cultures that perceive the body and the environment as entangled.

As a Pakeha New Zealander my relationship with the indigenous culture of Aotearoa New Zealand, unfolds from genealogy as a 6th generation European New Zealander. Growing up in 1970s Mt Albert in Auckland, New Zealand, I was immersed in Māori and Pacific Island cultures. These are my roots. Multiple cultures, European (mainly Scottish and English decent), Māori and Pacific Island constitute the polymorphic relationship with where I stand physically and spiritually on this land, in this place, caught between the remnants of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial stories.

Māori theorist of indigenous research, Linda Tuhiwai Smith introduces an alternative way of thinking through colonial history. She argues that a post-colonial discourse in a country where our pre-colonial histories are still evident is potentially problematic in that the post-colonial perspective excludes indigenous ways of knowing (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 25). Tuhiwai Smith strategically positions decolonisation rather than post-colonialism as a term that acknowledges both pre-colonial and the persistence of colonial histories. Decolonisation, as Smith suggests enters a discussion at many levels with imperialism and colonialism, inviting indigenous culture into the mix, softening the hold of Western thinking as the perceived foundations of New Zealand. Tuhiwai Smith’s thesis of decolonisation acts on the relationship between the colonial and the post-colonial together engendering a polemic (like Rancière’s notion of dissensus which is discussed further in this chapter), a ‘rupture’ that creates a way of ‘being apart together’ (Tanke, 2011, p. 5).

Pre-colonial culture in Aotearoa New Zealand informs my understanding of place and body in this research, signifying connections between principles of Māori Tikanga and somatic thinking. The Māori language for whenua, translates as ‘land’,
‘ground’, ‘placenta’ and ‘together’ (Mead, 2013, p. 15). Somatic practices share this notion of an ‘ecological body’, whereby the body is always in relationship with the environment (Batson, 2009, p. 5). Tuhiwai Smith’s decolonial framework activates heterogeneous connections between somatic thinking and indigenous ways of knowing. Tuhiwai Smith classifies five conditions of decolonisation, firstly critical consciousness, ‘awakening from the slumber of hegemony’, second, reimagining the Māori sense of the world through creativity, thirdly, a strategic intersection of disparate ideas, connecting history and events, fourth, ‘movement or disturbance’ which might destabilise the status quo and lastly, ‘power relations’ (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 201). Specific to this research, the first two of these dimensions resonate with my concept of choreoauratics in critically engaged poetic encounters that are aurally led and that might reimagine anthropomorphism, engaging the human and the non-human. The third, with Rancière’s notion of dissensus, incites a partition of the senses, which are united through a creative politics, inviting other ways of knowing and coming together through practice.

2.1 Making sense

Critical theories aim neither to prove a hypothesis nor prescribe a particular methodology or solution to a problem; instead, in a myriad of differing ways critical theorists offer self-reflective modes of thought that seek to change the world, or at least the world in which the inequalities of market capitalism, as well as patriarchal and colonial (or post-colonial) interests, continue to dominate. (Rendall, 2008, p. 3)

This chapter accounts for how social and site-based headphonic choreographies are experienced, documented, written about and reflected upon within a creative-led doctoral research practice.

The following terms; praxis, somatically informed choreography, critical spatial practice, the test-event and performance remains are introduced in this chapter. These terms help to shape a live, shifting, slippery, bodily, unsightly creative practice into a methodology. Outlining these terms gives an initial indication of what to expect in this chapter, serving as a prelude to how this research is both thought through and materialised. Following this overview I will write through these terms more deeply, articulating their significance as methodologies for the research practice.

Critical spatial practice² (a term appropriated from the writing

² Critical spatial practice is a term that Jane Rendall introduces in order to discuss the operations of art and architecture as they come together in public projects to both question the
of Jane Rendall) presents a contextual frame for the convergence of somatically informed choreographic practices with sound art technologies that activates a critical discourse in the philosophies, politics, practice and placeness of performance research (2008, p. 1). Drawing from multiple fields of practice, this critical context offers polymorphic positions from which to map a nomadic process - through embodied thinking, material thinking and practice, as well as modes of representing and reflecting on these thoughts and doings. In this chapter I refer to writers Robin Nelson, Paul Carter, Emilyn Claid and Estelle Barrett to validate the scene of practice as research as being a reflective, open praxis that ‘forges new currency’ in the research field (Norman, 2012).

The creative practice is reflective and multiple, composing writing, practice, documentation and reflection through material thinking. The research undoes thinking through doing and re-doing, it is a looping, shifting methodological process that moves towards the unknown. As Feldenkrais expert and choreographer/art-maker Thomas Kampe suggests, ‘art researches in areas where there is nothing to know’ (Kampe, 2014). This chapter discusses, how like pioneers, shifting into unknown territories we might enable a transformative and critical practice as Jane Rendall suggests, where thinking is a ‘form of practice and practice is (as) a thoughtful process’ (Rendall, 2001, p. 157).

The term test-event is used to name a process of testing the praxis through a series of twelve live events. Bringing two terms together, Brian Massumi’s exploration of the event and Avital Ronell’s politics of the human drive to test, express a space for potential in the unknown and the imperceptible. The series of choreaauratic test-events are situated outside of conventional performance frameworks such as theatres and galleries. They take place in public and liminal places, prioritising listening and somatic action to tune into the imperceptible. Both the test and the event are examined more closely later in this chapter.

### 2.2 Knowing through doing

Creative-practice research is a relatively new territory for The University of Auckland. Therefore, it is essential that practice-led research is qualified in this chapter, and that its history and culture are palpable foundations for this research. Drawing from Nelson’s writing in his recent book *Practice-led Research in the Arts*, a global context for practice-led research emerges. Nelson highlights the unsettled nature of the performing arts practices as a way of challenging the fixed, measurable and recordable knowledge often associated with the university academy.

Creative practice presents a departure from ‘positivism and “the scientific method” as the only valid research paradigm’
Nelson suggests links to poststructuralist thinking and the ‘softer’ methods of a research inquiry that might ‘afford(s) substantial insights’ indicating a ‘plurality of cultures’ and a ‘reconstruction of the subject’ that works against fixity as a postmodern cultural theory (2013, p. 30). This construct of multiplicity shakes up the essentialist binaristic trajectories of empirical structures “dismantling dualisms… subject-object, rational-emotional, and concrete-abstract” and Nelson adds, ‘theory-practice’ (2011, p. 52). He introduces Deleuze and Guattari’s model of the rhizome as an ‘image of thought’ a ‘tangle of inter-connected roots’ (2011, p. 54). In a nomadic way, Nelson invites multiple modes of practice that open on each other as opposed to the classical research model that narrows towards a deep and ‘highly specialized database’ (2011, p. 54). Introduced in this chapter, Nelson’s term praxis extends critical theory and practice, spatial and choreographic thinking together through processual practice.

Drawing on a range of writers, ‘different modes of knowing’ ‘liquid knowing’, ‘situated knowledge’, ‘embodied knowledge’ and ‘standpoint epistemologies’ are named by Nelson as other ways of thinking through what he terms know-what (2013, p. 51 - 52). Nelson distinguishes between ‘know-how’, ‘know-what’ and know-that’ as three differing ways of knowing. ‘Know-what’ often comes from ‘know-how’, this he describes as the intrinsic knowledge of a practice like dance, or riding a bike (Nelson). ‘Know-what brings to ‘know-how’ a process of ‘critical reflection’ and ‘informed reflexivity’ (Nelson, 2013, p. 14). For the record, ‘know-that’ is described by Nelson as ‘the equivalent of traditional “academic” knowledge articulated in words and numbers’ (2013, p. 45).

A further key influence on my thinking through the methodological paradigm of practice as research is Australian writer and philosopher Paul Carter who introduces the term material thinking in his book of the same name as a record of ‘creative research’ as complex and heterogeneous (2001, p. 7). Like Nelson, Carter recognises the challenges in promoting creative research within teaching and research institutions; ‘Nationally valueable research if identified with scientific and technological breakthroughs’, results in research that reciprocates ‘problem-solving’ where ‘simplifications, resolution, closure’ are the measures of success (Carter, 2004, p. 13).

The academic framework for a doctorate expects evidence of practice, testifying that there is and will be sufficient rigor in ‘capturing’ the academic value of the research. The cartographic process of mapping a method seems on the one hand inextricable from the ‘thinking physically’ that occurs in arts and performance based enquiries and on the other extrinsic in the act of marking out territories, that through the very nature of the research process, are in a perpetual state of shifting and dissolving.

In order to track through this process, the method has to
be mapped out and acted out in multiple ways. A process of making through asking questions is innately part of the process and generates looping, and calibrating methods. This implies a process that is open to the unknown. A process that asks, ‘what if?’ and reflects and asks again, implicating a reflective critical practice of testing.

An increasing acknowledgement of the value of the innate ‘knowing’ through ‘doing’ which comes before any form of academic writing, ‘has afforded recognition of how artists have gone about being rigorously creative in research’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 111). This ‘know how’, this experiential knowledge, carries the creative practice that both tests and reflects, through doing critically and spatially, composed, in this case as site-specific choreoauratic events (ibid). These test-events are accumulative, and through various modes of trial, documenting, archiving and (re)membering, generate processes of reflection and comparison. Differences are made comparatively between the affect of the test-events on the various sites, and spatial and social codes that are thought through critically in relation to this.

In science, these findings might be quantified, differences coded, categorised and measured. The results of such scientific tests are often represented in a graphic form, a symbolic language that transforms physical acts into data that is represented, reduced and captured as a system of codes. Nelson refers to David Pears who observes that the ability to make a discriminatory response to a situation must “precede the ability to codify the responses, if only because the use of distinct symbols to codify them is itself an example, indeed a sophisticated example, of a discriminatory response” (David Pears, 1971, p. 28-9 in Nelson 2006, p. 105).

In Material Thinking Paul Carter, like Nelson, challenges the traditional research paradigm whereby the research process seeks to ‘find’ answers to questions. Carter argues for ‘…the irreducible heterogeneity of cultural identity, the always unfinished process of making and remaking ourselves…Its success cannot be measured in terms of simplification and closure’ (2004, p. 14).

Donna Haraway, (feminist and cyber theorist) and Estelle Barrett argue that ‘theory is bodily’ (Haraway 1992, p. 298 in Barrett 2011, p. 145). Within this bodily thinking, thought emerges through somatic practice (and here I am drawing specifically on my practical experience in Shin Somatics), and value is impartial and fragmented. Hierarchical structures are dismantled and difference remains relative. Creating ‘effects of connection, or embodiment and responsibility’, Barrett, like Carter, calls this ‘material thinking’, although she links this thinking specifically to ‘practices involving bodies’ (2011, p. 145).

Barrett recognises the dominance of science in research traditions. She quotes Haraway’s critique of the scientific search ‘for universal laws and claims of objectivity’ which ‘are

4 Barrett also cites Donna Haraway’s term ‘reflexive artefactualism’ as material thinking. (Barrett 2011, p. 145)
reductionist’ (Barrett, 2011, p. 144). Haraway suggests ‘these accounts of knowledge constitute a ‘god trick’ that endorses the conquering gaze from nowhere claiming the power to see and not be seen’ (Haraway in Barrett 1991, p. 188).

Barrett’s suggestion that objectivity is never complete, ‘calls for re-admitting embodied vision and positioning in research’ proposing other bodily ways of making interconnections (2011, p. 145). This, she suggests situates knowledge, offering new perspectives in relation to established knowledge - which she furthers - ‘offers the capacity to ‘extend or alter what is known’ (Barrett, 2011, p. 145).

2.3 Somatically informed choreography

The practice of somatics introduces some fundamental operations in this choreographic research. These draw predominantly from my extensive background in somatic practices as they have met choreography and spatial practice over the last 19 years and include the following:

- A focus on process over end-gaining
- Witnessing as a passive, peripheral way of seeing that is respons(able)
- Moving from invisible scores
- Listening as a means to make connection
- Working as community
- Doing less

The research process also draws on my dance background in experiential and holistic training that includes specifically The Feldenkrais Method, Alexander Technique, Skinner Releasing, Yoga, Butoh training and improvisational dance forms alongside more Westerncentric, post-modern contemporary dance methodologies and more recently Shin Somatics. Within this study I have been influenced loosely from my experience with the principles of Butoh, particularly Body Weather training (specifically examining the ‘virtual body’ from Hijikata’s practice) and Shin Somatics. These have helped me frame a somatic language for coming into dialogue with perceptual performance (as introduced in Chapter 1). I have engaged with the sensate encounters of my on-going and daily practice of these forms. Somatic educator Martha Eddy identifies the potential of choreography and somatics to provide strategies for the study. ‘Indeed choreography, and its documentation, allows for long-lasting expressions of essential insights into human nature. When influenced by somatic inquiry, choreography and dance should become of increasing interest to academic inquiry, especially as its impact on modern culture

5 I am currently two thirds of the way through Shin Somatics teacher training and have a lineage of contemporary dance teachers that have brought forms of training for Butoh (namely Body Weather Training which is a method developed by Min Tanaka – who was also largely influenced by Tatsumi Hijikata) into their teaching as well as having studied Butoh directly with Joan Laage, Tadashi Endo and Frank van de Ven. Like Lepecki’s ontology, Shin principles use the language of ‘doing less’ and slowing down’ to increase perception. The notion of the ‘empty body’ and the ‘porous body’ are explored in Shin practice which emerges from the Butoh dancers projection of the body ‘toward nothingness’ ‘a transformative process that accepts change’; (Fraleigh and Nakamura 2006, 50)
becomes more known’ (Eddy, 2004, p. 23).

Natalie Garrett’s PhD study on somatics and dance making practices (2007) establishes the influence somatic practices have had on the ontological status of Western contemporary dance. She observes a shift in the dance aesthetic whereby visual perception is not always the privileged mode of engagement, revealing ‘the kinaesthetic potency of dance performance’ and diffusing ‘the privileged position of the spectator’ (Garrett, 2007, 3).

Choreographer and dance artist Emilyn Claid contests the broad suspicion that somatic practices are inward looking, recognising that this is no longer the only focus, ‘rather, the practice also allows us [the participant/mover/dancer] to notice what is happening outside’ (Claid, 2010, p. 136). As somatic practice becomes more integrated in education and performance practice in the 21st century, these assumptions are shifting as Claid suggests.

The language used in somatically motivated methods such as Shin Somatics, Body Mind Centering (BMC), Feldenkrais and Contact Improvisation suggest transformation, multiple trajectories and attention that dissolves fixed boundaries. Embodied connections are made through the whole body, using words and the imagination to activate, flesh, bone, the organs, and the social and geographical environment.

Examined more closely in Chapter 3, Western dance in the last century has been dominated by the spectacular theatre event, located within heavily coded architectures such as the historic proscenium arch theatre space, or in contemporary architecture, the black box studio. These buildings enforce movement experienced as a visually dominant phenomenon for the viewer. The other senses (listening, touch, smell, taste and the kinaesthetic) might be used to support the spectacle, there is little or no use of voice (in western modern and postmodern dance), the space and experience is distanced and mediated by theatrical conventions (sound, lights, scenography and the architecture of the space). Dancers are broadly seen as silent movers, composing images for the spectator. In these ways, dance’s reception is coterminous with dominant modes of media, as ocularcentric and spectacular.

Ask any dancer how it feels to be performing dance? This is a perceivably converse experience from the viewers position. In this creative research I consider how the dancers experience (and I locate the dancer in this case as somatically conscious and activated) might inform a new way of becoming an audience or rather a participant. Kinaesthetic, proprioceptive and visceral senses map, connect and perceive space as much, if not more than the acclaimed senses such as the scopic and aural.

Somatically informed choreographic practices and methods for creative practice can facilitate transformation of our
soma-sensory abilities and augment shifts in awareness and perception. Unique to this practice is the meeting of somatically informed choreography with the politics of listening in the highly technologised digital present. In the *inter-activity* of the digital world, particularly in hypermedia and networked spaces, like in somatic thinking, simultaneous currents, inwards and outwards and multi-directional actions unfasten borders. Vibratory responses\(^6\) materialise in to and fro activities, that create action and flow.

Choreography and somatic practices in the last half of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century have evolved methods that negotiate dynamic relationships between the territories of the inner body and the surfaces and spaces outside the body. These methods are adapted in this praxis to create intermodal arrangements in this series of *choreoauratic* test-events that test choreographic thinking, the voice and processes for perception.

### 2.4 Somatics inside prosthetics

The term *choreoauratics* has evolved through this research out of the practice-led somatically informed choreography and sonic investigation that operate in threshold spaces where philosophies of listening, place, digital networks and body come together.

In the 21\textsuperscript{st} century we take for granted the convenience of ubiquitous digital devices as part of our everyday encounters, through mobile phones, the internet, GPS devices to name a few. In the context of this research, digital technology is understood as encapsulating these everyday objects, which of course are evolving and developing exponentially. The term digital technology might therefore be rather vague and perpetually in flux. Yet the effect of these tools seems consistent, and this is what the research is concerned with. Digital devices split, divide, transform, transpose and mediate our senses and our relationship to space. As these new technologies continue to develop they become more advanced, more a part of the everyday, more integrated with the body and more accessible for use as interfaces in the arts. Increasingly *we are* mediated bodies and increasingly there is a question around how this is affecting our body politic.

*Choreoauratics* becomes a structure for rethinking performance arts practices as somatically informed choreography enters a hyphenated space with digital technologies to perceive new ways of ‘becoming’ (or sensing). It is widely acknowledged that technologically mediated encounters impact on our temporal, spatial and embodied experience. *Somatically informed choreographic practices* also impact on our embodied experience. Although less widely understood than digital practices, somatic practices offer methods for consciously re-organising embodied

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\(^6\) Andre Lepecki questions whether ‘the sonorous silence and vibratile stillness qualify as perception?’ (Lepecki 2000, 346). Referring to Steve Paxton’s Small Dance, Lepecki suggests ‘At this perceptual threshold a sensorial rearrangement takes place on the level of the microscopic, of what Paxton calls “minute movements”, and stillness reveals its many layers of vibratile intensities’ (Lepecki 2000, 345).
perception in time and space, suggesting multiple flows of intensity and direction.

In the field of choreographic practices, artists whose work seeks to negotiate the irreconcilable chasm between the corporeal and digital, while highly specialised, typically branch out into interdisciplinary fields. Disordering somatically informed choreography with audio technologies activates an interdisciplinary language between the practices. The practice considers how choreauratics hyphenates the sensate body into the digital which forges possibilities for negotiation between the fields of somatically informed choreography and perceptual performance with digitally augmented prosthetic listening. Framed by critical spatial practice, theories and codes of space and place, the body, theatre and digital technologies intersect to imagine new possibilities in intermodal performance arts.

2.5 Critical spatial practice

Critical spatial practice, as introduced earlier in the chapter, ‘serves to describe both everyday activities and creative practices that seek to resist the dominant social order of global corporate capitalism’ (Rendall, 2008, p. 2). ‘Critical spatial practice’ not only brings attention to the spatial, but ‘also the critical’ (ibid).

In this research, critical spatial practice takes form nomadically (drawing from the nomadic philosophy of Braidotti following Deleuze and Guattari) through inhabiting, collecting, capturing and representing the body rhizomatically in space and place. Codes of place are examined as they affect the practice, and the conditions of conventional performance spaces and the immersive spaces encountered in digital new media are scrutinised. The research that delineates this body of work seeks to examine how ubiquitous sound technologies disrupt perceptions of place and the body in live performance situations and as such develop new methods of performance encounter.

Rendall is specific in her references to spatial practice through the writing of two theorists, Michel de Certeau and Henry Lefebvre. Taking De Certeau’s use of the tactic or strategy as a transgression of the laws of a place, and Lefebvre’s spaces of representation as ‘spaces of resistance,’ (Lefebvre is careful to distinguish between representations of space and spaces of representation) Rendall arrives at a mode for questioning our spatial understanding (Rendall, 2008, n.p). In this engagement with critical spatial practice, Rendall recalls Roland Barthes definition “to criticize means to call into crisis” an undertaking which our current dire situation as one combining peak oil, global food crisis, climate change and military intervention most

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7 From the perspective of my practice I am curious about the perceived resistance to the mediated in many somatically focused processes. For example in my training as a Shin Somatics practitioner, references to nature in image based explorations privilege the natural over man-made or machinic despite the fact that most of us live highly urbanised lifestyles impregnated with technology.

8 Braidotti identifies Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘alternative figurations of the subject’ as not dominant, as in-between, as ‘different feminine, masculine’ subject positions, ‘becoming-minority, or becoming-nomad or becoming molecular’, that is decentralised and operates at the edges in ‘states of transition’ (2011, p. 36 - 37).
Writing on the difference between critical theories and theories in the natural sciences, Rendall suggests, (drawing from Raymond Guess who writes in *The Idea of Critical Theory*) that critical theories are “‘reflective’ rather than “objectifying” - in other words they take into account their own procedures and methods' (2008, n.p). Rather than setting out to ‘prove a hypothesis’ or create a ‘solution to a problem’ she recognises that critical theories offer ‘self-reflective modes of thought’ and often challenge dominant social, cultural and political structures (ibid).

The spatial conditions of the test-event sites encountered through this creative research collapse the borders that separate inside and outside, the public and the private, meeting bodies not through the material as such, but through somatic language and attunement. Questioning performance conventions, the idea of the studio as a secluded, closed space is emancipated. The performance practice moves into open public, civic and social sites, (such as the Aotea Centre), to sites that are liminal (such as the space between the St James Theatre and the Auckland Public Library), transitional spaces that are passed through (the streets of Dunedin) or temporary spaces (the shipping container). Studio space is reconditioned as a porous notion, which re-thinks conventions around dance-making and somatic practices.

Locating the practice in these interstitial spaces expands the disciplines and engages critical spatial and social conditions. Like Rendall suggests, ‘When art is located outside the gallery, the parameters that define it are called into question and all sorts of new possibilities for thinking about the relationship between art and architecture are opened up' (2008, n.p). She emphasises the importance of the ‘spatial aspects of processes or practices that operate between art and architecture’ as well as the importance of engaging in the critical (Rendall, 2006). Rendall presents the criticality of arts practices that occur in public spaces, ‘that refuse to give up their meanings easily but instead demand that we question the world around us’ (2008, n.p). These practices both work in ‘relation to dominant ideologies’ and question them (ibid).

Situating the practice in these public spheres has intrinsically opened up the social and political conditions of the sites. While both devising and performing the test-events in situ we meet and interact with the communities that belong to these places. The spatial dynamics that occur in response to the choreoauratic scores, are enmeshed by the conditions of the site, and this becomes most apparent in the *social choreauratic* encounters experienced in the last three test-events that took place as part of this series in Auckland. Not only does this specific situation draw attention to the social territories inherent in the civic site, it also engages with the borders of the Library, the street and the St James and their social and spatial economies.
2.6 Thinking physically

Choreographic researcher, Norah Zuniga Shaw suggests in the attempt to address William Forsythe's question, ‘What else might physical thinking look like’? that we begin to situate choreography in relation to other fields (2010). In the case of the work, Synchronous Objects (2010) which is discussed later in Chapter Three, he addresses the potential of ‘visualize(ing) choreography in new ways’ (2010). How might Forsythe's provocation, that brings multiple ways of perceiving choreography to the screen, be reconsidered in this creative practice by re-thinking his question and asking what might choreographic thinking sound like? And, how might this be presented in a headphonic space? Forsythe's process suggests an embodied thinking of choreography in its relationship with other fields, (in this particular case principles of architecture, visual arts and digital animation determine a system for the screen) as a ‘contrapuntal composition of complex relationships, patterns and trends’ (Palazzi, 2009).

Forsythe's use of the principle of counterpoint found in music and fundamental across forms of art and design, presents a method for thinking through intermodal compositions. ‘In music theory it involves two axis “vertical” or harmonic relationships and vertical or dissonant relationships to some degree independent of one another’ (Vass-Rhee, 2010, p. 399). Forsythe's use of musical structures is brought to the choreographic and translated through the video archive.

In recognition of the dominance of ‘sight and screen’ in new and early digital technology environments, this creative research deploys ‘other’ modes of sensing to release the ocularcentric culture we are immersed in, borrowing from Forsythe's notion of counterpoint as a creative strategy. My area of interest is in how we might invent from contrapuntal perceptions of performance (in)formed by somatic, choreographic and sonic methods in an increasingly technology driven society that functions with a binary vision (Ronell, 2005, p. 10).

In recognising that performance-making enfolds a complex series of interactions between bodily potentials, technes, poetic wisdom, sites, situations, the nature of materials and physical labour, this research activates a toing and froing that trembles and oscillates to establish a ground for local inventions in the spaces between writing and embodied actions, digital media and somatic perception, the public site and the private studio. Such inter-mediality expands choreography into other fields, such as architecture and the headphonic and situates the performative in indeterminate localities. This research process is thus heuristic, and is negotiated through a series of practice-based test-events that aim to reorganise sensory perception and the ‘performing body’ as it is mediated through different modes of sensing.
2.7 The test-event - as a methodology

Testing which could be seen as the throwness of technology, traverses many sectors of existence and does not begin as an explicitly technological life-form. Whether we are speaking of abandoned being (abandoned in the desert, on the cross, at home, or on the streets) or discursively bolstered being (socially pinned, legally inscribed, politically activated) – or where these formations meet and intersect - these skids on the path of becoming tend to assume the character of the test. (Ronell, 2006, p. 13).

In a lecture on The Test Drive, Avital Ronell names a testing process as a Deleuzian encounter, as ‘fields of encounter with the other’ (Ronell, 2006). Here Ronell liberates the rhetoric around testing, and questions ‘Why has the test - throughout history, and perhaps more pervasively today - come to define our relation to questions of truth, knowledge and even reality?’ (2005, p. 114).

Testing is appropriated as a methodological tool to navigate the unchartered territory explored through somatically informed choreography, prosthetic listening, and site-based performance praxis. The research activates the culture of performance through paying attention to threshold spaces, not only between the spectator and performer, but also the thresholds of body and place. The archetypal elements of theatrical works such as its ‘liveness’ and the presence of audience and architecture of the theatre, are re-imagined and reconfigured through an exploration of the sonic potentials for augmenting choreography. Through this process of performing spatial and choreographic configurations sonically, the research questions are embodied and subjected to a test cycle.

The term ‘test-event’, devised as a hyphenated condition, activates a between space where the politics of testing as well as the field of the event are thought of critically. Testing in the hyphenated condition not only questions questioning but also activates the event as a co-construct (Ronell, 2005, p.17 & 53). The co-construction, Massumi suggests is amodal, functioning as techniques of relations that tune into actions for coming together that shift to and fro and between (2011, p. 18). As Lepecki identifies, ‘the necessity of the senses to be in a constant state of tremor in order to perceive’ (2000, p. 348 - 350) supports Ronell’s theses on rescindability, the possibility of back tracking and forward tracking as part of the to and fro movement of testing and perceiving the imperceptible as minute shifts that challenge temporality and intensify the perceptual (2000, p. 354).

Ronell pursues the hypothesis of the ‘test’ primarily through examining Friedrich Nietzsche’s Gay Science, where she identifies the human desire to question ‘what is’. Our meeting with Nietzsche is through Ronell’s critique of testing as a ‘space of resistance’ (2005, p. 166) a ‘questionable questioning’ that
might undo what we already think we know (ibid). Ronell’s close reading of the test substantiates a testing process that might answer to the expectations of the academy as well as bolster a reflective, creative research practice. Through Ronell’s provisioning of the test, we tune into an idea of an experimental future, one that is risky and where a culture of testing or trial presents uncertainty, where, as my contemporary Mark Harvey suggests in his thesis titled *Performance Test Labour*, there are no promises (2012, p. 44). Harvey goes on to reflect on Ronell’s thinking that if indeed a test offered what it promised, there would be no need to test (2012, p. 44). Out of this failure to never ‘truly complete or completely incomplete’ comes an open space full of potentiality and impossibility and as Harvey identifies quoting Ronell, the ‘principle means of becoming’ (Ronell, 2005, p. 224 in Harvey, 2012, p. 44). Rescindability, Ronell suggests, is the condition of ‘thought given over to constant disturbance’ (2005, p. 10). This ‘endless erasure of what is’ in Nietzsche’s terms is located as the ‘experimental disposition’ (ibid). Rescindability activates a perpetual incompletion of movement that oscillates and never arrives.

Robin Nelson supports this opening towards incompletion, that, unlike most science hypothesis, the process of questioning need not imply that an answer be found, rather as Ronell suggests, it posits the potential for new thinking and ‘takes us in the direction of the unknown’, (2005, p. 10). Ronell identifies that testing in the scientific realm is a means to making things clear and dependable. Living in a contemporary culture where scientific testing is prevalent as Ronell suggests in her book the *Test Drive*, compounds a culture of dependability, truth and knowledge as fixed and as binary. Rancière’s interrogation of the notion of truth as finite, endorses Ronell’s repositioning of the test as indeterminate, that the truth ‘can only be told as a myth’ and that the only ‘truth about Truth is a fiction’ (2011, p. 15).

In thinking of each choreoauratic event as a test, I am not subscribing to the test in the scientific sense. Rather, I am using the term test as a strategic undoing of the empirical science-based notion of the test. Not seeking outcomes that are dependable, or repeatable, this mode of enquiry creates space for the unknown or new. Nelson suggests an etymological link to ‘experience’ originating from French and meaning ‘to put to the test’ (George cited in Nelson, 2006, p. 111). Nelson’s understanding of ‘testing’ speaks directly to its relationship in practice-led research contexts. For Nelson, the ‘testing’ of ‘human experience’ and the ‘embodied knowledge’ of time and space with the aim of new insights is done through ‘praxis’ or ‘critical spatial practice’ (Pearson cited in Nelson, 2006, p. 108). In this research each test-event connects a community of listeners, who, wired for sound, come together into a critical spatial practice. The criticality

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9 For Nelson (2006: 108) Lone Twin’s *Streets of London* (2001) and *walk with me walk with me will somebody please walk with me* (2002) are examples of where this is done effectively. These performances, for Nelson, activate the liminal spaces between rational discourse and ‘embodied knowledge,’ providing new insights into time and space.

10 The term critical spatial practice is also attributed to the writing of Jane Rendall in the methodology chapter.
comes into the praxis through the agency that the participants have to respond kinaesthetically to the sound, the questions that are asked of the practice and the reflections that are made in response to each test-event as well as my own navigation of the complexities and layers of this process.

Back tracking to Ronell’s idea of rescindability, my reading of the questionable questioning of the test materialises in this practice as a to and fro action between theory and practice. It asks questions of how we come to know through practice? It asks what is the experience of taking somatically informed social choreography into a civic site? What is the transformation of the limits of space? Or of the bodies in the space? In these test-events, the event is experienced through coming together, in multiple moments of a choric space, in which the choreography activates the community event. How we recall the traces, the remains of these events, has to be treated as multifarious and in such a way that authenticates the politics and philosophies that are entangled in bringing listening to the fore. This process of tracing, or accounting for the remains is explored in the section of this chapter on documentation. This unstable back and forth space of the test-event stands its ground (albeit a precarious vibratile ground) within an academic context that asks for a legitimate account of a practice.

### 2.8 An uneventful event

> Nothing happens there, but everything becomes, so that the event has the privilege of beginning again when time is past.

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 158).

In this performative practice, what happens is the event. The event, thought through Deleuze and Massumi is perceived as multiple, as a relay of occasions, or as sequences of occurrences that are difficult to pin down, always in becoming, where ‘the subjective is the passing present’ and the objective is ‘the immediate past of just this occasion’ (Massumi, 2011, p. 9). The subject, entangled in the midst of the event, is always becoming.

In his book the *Semblance and the Event*, Massumi’s description of the event as an expression of the subject and the object, brings into effect the question of time as the subject becomes possible only through the culmination of the event. Through William James, Massumi discusses the activist philosophy of knowing via the end point (2011, p. 5). ‘What’ we ‘know’ of an experience (or a test-event) is ‘only fully definite through it’s culmination’, suggests Massumi and at the precise moment of the end point, the live experience comes to ruin (2011, p. 9). This undoing of the end point works alongside Ronell’s rescindability, in a constant state of back and forth and incompletion.
Bringing activism to the event, Massumi proffers art, science and philosophy together. This activism, or ‘politicality of process’ brings with it a transaction of questioning, where there is a criticality in the process of the event occurring (Massumi, 2011, p. 13). This activist philosophy, Massumi positions as a virtual1 encounter that ‘recomposes the senses’. Thus we shift into the hyphenated place, ‘simultaneously cultural and political’, ‘aesthetico-political production’ of an excessive culture of the unknown (Massumi, 2011, p. 3).

In the social choreauratic test-events, participants meet the urban architecture with a political playfulness, making sense of the city through unfolding modes of activity. Listening invites unspectacular gestures of coming together and the choreauratic scores activate the city’s skin. Acts of writing on the walls of the St James caress the surface of the city, choreographic gestures scribe messages into the air and into the urban landscape. By moving, bodies become lines in the civic architecture and by coming together they create a chorus (as discussed further in Chapter Four, in the discussion of the chora as a conceptual frame).

2.9 Documentation

Rebecca Schneider asks whether, ‘in privileging an understanding of performance as a refusal to remain, do we ignore other ways of knowing, other modes of remembering, that might be situated precisely in the ways in which performance remains, but remains differently?’ (Schneider, 2011, p.98).

Performing arts are the most intangible and fleeting of arts practices. The politics and philosophies of what constitutes a live event have become a spirited debate of the 21st century and beyond and persist in a fast changing environment in which modes for representation and telematic technologies challenge notions of real, the here and the now. This complicates processes for documenting live acts that are already ephemeral and difficult to evidence.

Conventionally, in academic contexts visual documentation has become the accepted mode of evidencing research in contemporary performance. Nelson discusses this problem where the DVD is now ‘typically submitted at least as the ‘permanent record’ of research towards a (creative practice) PhD’ (Nelson, 2013, p. 83).

The process of documentation is inseparable from my artistic process, as reflected in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of this thesis, that present detailed evidence of the choreauratic test-events.

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1 The idea that the event is heterogeneous, simultaneous... Deleuze and Guattari call this ‘dead time, empty time’ in which they arrive at the concept or the virtual (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 158).
The politics of witnessing, (the conditions of the witness are considered via both Agamben’s theoretical thinking and through somatic practice), the archiving of the material remains and participation in the live event determine the way documentation is executed in this praxis. In this section we refer back to Barrett and Nelson and their reading of documentation in a Practice as Research context. We also look to Rebecca Schneider’s book Performing Remains (2011) to help map through the concepts of live-ness as it becomes enmeshed with how the live remains. The definition of the live is further complicated in an era when the live is no longer bound by place and as such the live event can occur in a displaced and disembodied fashion through accelerated network speeds and travelling data around the earth.

As a theorist of creative practice, Barrett negotiates the role of science and the notion of truth in documenting research. Similar to Ronell and Rancière’s thinking, Barrett argues that the scientific process of validation is incommensurate and relies on the ‘immutability’ of ideas. To complicate this further, Barrett suggests the invention of technologies that enable precise reproduction, prioritising ‘optical consistency’ (such as the invention of the printing press and I would add the video camera) not only present an increase in the mass spread of errors or inaccuracies, but also privilege representation and discourse over experience (Barrett, 2011, p. 144). Barrett’s position reinforces that creative research practice gives weight to the sensate and to the experience as Nelson suggests.

Nelson challenges ‘the dominance, if not virtual exclusivity, of writing (or other codified symbolic language) which has long since established itself as the appropriate means of storage and distribution of knowledge’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 105). He goes on ‘in the production of knowledge, as philosopher,’ with a supporting quote from David Pears ‘practice nearly always comes first, and it is only later that people theorize about practice’ (Pears 1971: 29 in Nelson, 2006, p. 105). Nelson’s argument highlights the dissonance that can be experienced between academic and artistic practice.

The very first test-events presented as part of this research performed the traces of other spaces from previous performance works, intrinsically folding documentation into the creative process. Witnessing took place in the ‘remains’ of the archived action, as well as within the live event itself. This raises the question, what determines the live-ness of a performance event? If the trace or remains of an event is re-performed or doubled through technology and through embodied (re)membering, does this effect our thinking of the live?

Is the argument of live-ness then around the event being seen ‘in the flesh’? In the age of Skype, in the ability to send video footage across space in real-time, live has taken on a doubled meaning. In his book Liveness: Performance in a mediatised culture Philip Auslander proposes that the relationship between ‘liveness and mediatization must be seen as a relation of dependence and
imbrication rather than opposition’ (1999, 52). Auslander breaks down the word mediation as embedded in the word immediate, recognising that the relation between the two is one of ‘mutual dependence’ (ibid). Auslander refers to Walter Benjamin’s notion of mass culture in the terms of overcoming distance (the loss of the aura, as a function of distance). The mass desire for proximity, Auslander suggests is a symptom of mass media (1999, p. 35).

Is ‘seeing’ legitimate as a witnessing? If we return to Barrett’s suggestion that in the increasingly accurate optic focus of contemporary and digital modes for representation there is a spreading of inaccuracies, are these accurate modes of reproduction then as authentic as we believe? Auslander returns to Benjamin’s argument around the aura and the authenticity of the representation, “the quality of [the original’s] presence is always depreciated” by reproduction’ (in Auslander, 1999, p. 35).

Ocularcentric modes for representation are the accepted form of representation in most contexts. The image, the photograph and video documentation are mostly afforded status as both proof and accurate recording of an event or activity. Prior to the accessibility of film and then video, artists working specifically with the expression of the moving body have devised expressive systems for representing movement. Labanotation, developed by Rudolf von Laban in the 20th century, is a system for documenting and interpreting movement and expression as symbolic codes (Salter, 7).

Seven women tune into layers of social and cultural place that hold the many, the public, the homeless, the skateboarders, the library staff, a handful of tourists and some council staff who take care to clean the street. I recall Braidotti’s idea of an acoustic space as subversive, a paradoxical relationship that is both pervasive and intimate but also collective.

Says one woman, ‘as a group of women we are marked markers on the street...’ One man takes offence to a woman’s occupation of the step. She uses books to lie down on. The pages and the words protect her body from the dirt and the hardness of the concrete. He singles her out. He accuses her of taking books from the library and of always being here and using this space. “Who gives you permission to use this space!’ he says. ‘Have you talked to the Library? Does the Library let you use this space?’ We are familiar with this man, we see him each time we meet here. This is the first time he appears to be unfriendly. Another man intervenes. She packs up the books into a green suitcase and moves on to another area on the steps.

Reflection from Listening for Disappearing (#2), Lorne Street, May 2014
and earlier in the 16th century *Orchesographie*, dance manuals produced by Jesuit Priest Thoinot Arbeau ‘literally, the writing, graphie, of the dance, orchesis’ (Lepecki, 2006, p. 6). Since, the evolution of the moving image, film and video have exceeded written notation, and in recent years digital recording systems and computer software have enabled artists to work across platforms, using a mix of notation, symbols, recorded moving image and stills to represent performing arts projects as archival records, documentary or a means to both conceive and present live events in contingent forms.

William Forsythe’s complex systems for visualising choreography, *Synchronous Objects*, as mentioned earlier, is a collaborative project by Forsythe, Norah Zuniga Shaw and Maria Palazzi that re-imagines what choreography might look like (Forsythe, 2009). *Synchronous Objects* features within a larger online project, *Motion Bank* a website dedicated to researching choreographic practice and the possibilities of this as it remains within the digital realm (www.motionbank.org). Merce Cunningham is also renowned for working collaboratively with digital technologies to create multimodal systems for visualising the body in motion, and his software *Life Forms* was developed as a tool for choreographers to use as a screen-based system for dance composition (Salter, 2010, p. 264). In the intersection between contemporary dance-based practices, animation, and film effects, there have been on-going studies of movement using the camera and software to capture and represent the movement of the body.

Nelson presents the shortcomings of relying on DVD, video and other forms for documentation, as a way to (re)present the live event. ‘The ephemerality of performance has been an issue in the practice-as-research context, but the gaining of access directly to live performance is ultimately a logistical not an epistemological problem’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 107). Nelson introduces the concept of ‘witness’ and ‘trace’ in documenting practice-as-research as a means for examining ‘how things might remain differently’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 10).

If the test-event documentation are experienced as multiple and partial representations of the live actions that have been recorded, then I argue that the test-event itself is performing traces of encounters in time and space that have already happened. Here begins the multiplicity and the impossibility of documentation without loss or transformation, raising the question, how might the archive perform?

The politics and implications of representation complicate the very idea of documenting a live event. Peggy Phelan is renowned for her stance on live performance. Phelan claims performance can only exist in the present. In her book *Unmarked: The Politics of
Performance Phelan opens a chapter on *Representation without Reproduction* with the argument that as performance enters into ‘an economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of it’s own ontology’ (Phelan, 1993, p. 146). Phelan’s proposal is problematic in a practice-as-research context and an issue that I confront in the complexities of evidencing this particular practice research inquiry that is ontologically bound in listening. How might the process of documenting the research meet the expectations of the creative practice framework without betraying the practice itself?

The backbone of this research solicits new methods and practices for the performance of inter-relational spaces and perceptions within the digitally mediated present. This has led to this series of test-events that signify the voice and audition and test the potential of sonic modalities to shift the temporal, spatial and embodied through somatically informed choreographic practice.

In the act of accounting for these test-events the documentation process becomes a part of the work, as the person with the camera, or the person witnessing the event becomes implicated in the work. If we pursue the theoretical discourse of Braidotti, who follows the Deleuzian premise that we operate within a plane of immanence, in non-hierachical, vibrating and equally intrinsic potentialities, then no one form of documentation should be privileged over the other. Here I list possible modes for documenting the event to meet the requirements of the study; video recording, stills photography, recordings of sound, drawing, forms of notation and reflective writing. In contemporary performance, video recordings as evidence of live performance is emphasised as the preferred mode by funding bodies, universities and even the justice system when we consider the prevalence of surveillance cameras used to evidence crime. Moving image as a mode for representation is clearly given priority.

My involvement in the production of the ambulatory dance-architecture *Tongues of Stone* (2011) enabled an opportunity to test out multiple modes of documentation and reflection in the many repetitions of the work over production week as both spectator and production assistant. The process of writing in order to account for the work was galvanised through the process of testing different prosthetic tools to document the work. Using the stills camera to take photographs, the lens became an extension of my eye and heightened the visual field. Interestingly, I found it difficult to focus on the sound while the scopic was so intensely framed by the lens. In another iteration of the work, I used a sound recording device to record the performance soundscape as it happened, augmented and captured through the reach of the microphone. The sound experience seemed to open up other sensory fields, in a more homogeneous manner, like Braidotti indicates of the acoustic field, ‘It increases the intensity of becoming… it also aims at approaching the imperceptible, the unthinkable, and the inaudible’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 110).
FIGURE 6: Sketches for four simultaneous choreoauratic scores, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013
FIGURE 7: Site and choreographic investigations, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013
Documenting the event through writing exaggerated my own presence in the work, not just as a spectator but as a participant who became part of the work, who watched and was watched and through language found another way to express this threshold of witnessing and participating.

To work through the difficulties of documentation I have tested the impact and effectiveness of different modes of recording. After the test-event has happened I'm left with a collection of remains, of traces of sound, movement and image. Still photographs, comments recorded, notations, reflections, observations and in the first series of mnemonic choreauratic test-events in 2011-2012, video recordings. The video footage created a visual record of the participant’s movement within a performance philosophy that agonises over the proliferation of the scopic. Not only paradoxical to the theoretical foundations of the research, it also lacks the intricacies and subtleties that are perceived in being there and in participating in the test-event itself. In order to make these videos, the camera had to be arranged as discretely as possible. This resulted in using a general wide shot, which with the camera set up in an obscure position became the most covert strategy for the act of recording yet compromised the effectiveness of the video footage.

The resonance from these test-events is captured best in the participant’s experience, in the subtleties felt in the quiet and intense spatiality of being there, in the still photographs that catch a moment in time, in the poetics of the reflections after the test-events and in the conversations with the participants. At the completion of my second year I decided to stop taking video footage of the test-events. The video camera was intrusive to the performance test-events, it overtly suggested an argument for the scopic into the test-events. The activity of videoing these test-events mitigates the questioning of how we might come to place and body through listening. We might ask how else might we archive the activity of listening and moving?

2.10 Materialising discourse

*Documentation works against the trace as it insists on the centrality of presence.*

(Lepecki, 2004, p. 133)

Nelson discusses the potential in practice-as-research to test out concepts ‘in ways of which words are not capable of’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 108). He suggests that the sensate encounter in space and time may best be experienced through praxis (Nelson credits Mike Pearson with the term critical spatial practice also cited previously by Rendall), rather than through writing or rhetorical debate (both of which are themselves practices). (Nelson, 2006, p. 108).

In his on-going dialogue with the live, art-writer Adrian Heathfield suggests that performance’s ‘tendency towards disappearance’ is inherent in the desire to preserve, name, locate and contain its
FIGURE 8: Listening for Disappearing (#2), Auckland, May 2014
remains (2003). In the complexity and adverse forces at work in the endeavour to represent the live event, Heathfield suggests that these efforts might be approached in such a way that is ‘attentive, not just to what is said, but to the saying’ (2003). Heathfield identifies the ‘gaps’, the ‘failures’ that are intrinsic in the process of telling, remembering and retrieving the live performance encounter, suggesting the potential to present the ‘otherness’ or the ‘unknown’ implicated in and around the event (ibid). Almost a decade later in a book edited by Amelia Jones and Heathfield titled Perform, Repeat, Record, he makes the point that ‘In each document the goal is not the finalisation or truth of an event, its full and transparent recovery, but the provision of a version for future revision’ (2012, p. 237).

Carter (2004) similarly presents the problem of accounting for an art work through scholarly creative research processes, ‘creative research is related to the goal of material thinking, and both look beyond the making processes to the local reinvention of social relations’ (Carter, 2004, p.10). He proposes materialising discourses through creative research as generative structures for reconsidering human relations. Carter suggests material thinking is the process of recording practice, which is to write of the creative research, as opposed to writing about it and by this means ‘to document the making of a new social relation through a concomitant act of production’ (Carter 2004, p. 10). In this way, the purpose of creative research writing can be said to ‘preserve[s] the material difference of its discourse’ through the expression of the characteristics and techniques of the event (Carter 2004, p. 7).

Carter’s focus on difference reverberates with Lepecki’s investigation of dance writing. Lepecki asks in his essay Inscribing dance ‘What does it mean to write dance?’ (2004, p. 133) He continues with the complication of the document to ‘fixate’ dance or performance (ibid). ‘Documentation, in its optical-descriptive obsession, withdraws dance from the flow of its own materiality’ (ibid). Through Lepecki we hear of the Derridean critique of Western philosophy where there has become a reliance on the ‘desire to make presence always visible’ (ibid). Derrida’s emphasis on disappearance as a way of decentering presence ‘reformulates the very sensorial basis of philosophy’ (ibid). In this passage Lepecki identifies Derrida’s stance on writing as a way of departing from the limits of photology. Through Derrida and Lepecki emerges an argument for writing dance, not through the scopic body, but rather as difference.

As Lepecki suggests, this shift from the ‘optical-descriptive’ brings both choreography and writing ephemeral status. Heathfield names the many approaches to a discursive approach to live performance such as; ‘the manifesto, the performance

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13 ‘Différence never simply refers to that which is named or its opposite, but both and neither simultaneously – and because of this only its tracks or traces are discernible in what is written, where ‘writing’ as the trace-structure of an absence is the primordial structural possibility for both speech and writing in their orthodox sense’ (Harvey, 2011, p. 43). ‘There is a play (in the sense of scope for movement) in Derrida’s key concept of différence/différance (1978), and the possibility of infinite deferral suggests a free play beyond rule-governed activity’ (Nelson, 2006, p. 108).
lecture, the autobiographical account, performative writing, the performance score and script...’ (2012, p. 237). Between Heathfield, Carter, Lepecki and Foster (who was introduced at the beginning of this thesis), the efforts to account for the live event are partial, centred around Derrida’s thinking on difference they acknowledge the failure, or impossibility of documentation that ‘make(s) presence visible’ (Lepecki, 2004, p. 133). Auckland based artist Alys Longley sums up the diversity in which choreography and writing might be considered as they come together. ‘...as external to the ontology of performance and a betrayal of the live, (Phelan, 1993), as “a translation of live art into dead records” (Heathfield, 1997, para. 1) as a form of listening (Minnick, 2003), as a “record and a tool of making decisions about the nature of the work” (Lycouris, 2000, para. 1) “as markers and traces to be used as triggers and stimuli, as a catalyst to artistic creation” (DeLahunta et al, 2004, p.68), and as “a tablet for physicalizing thought without full-bodied dancing” (McGregor in DeLahunta et al, 2004, p.69)’ (Longley 2011, p. 6).

In this creative practice I approach the writing in multiple ways in that the writing is interpolated into the praxis through scores and scripts, as well as reflection and critical and theoretical discourse. Reflective critical practice is exerted through a series of processual test-events and their remains. Incorporated into this document these traces materialise as photographic stills, sound files (the sound scores and reflective recordings), journal entries, artists notes, critical and reflective writing (including participants reflections and my own). This materialising of discourse supports the spatial practice of performing critical writing, informed by creative practice, contextual reading, attending events, as well as an ongoing somatic and spatial practice. Over the duration of this doctoral study I have attended numerous presentations at conferences and symposia in international contexts that have supported the continued investigation of inventing modes for performative presentation14. Carter’s suggestion for a material discourse that writes of, rather than about, and ‘reinvents relations’ provokes a practice that rewrites itself through its remains.

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FIGURE 8 & 10: Post-it notes, documentation, *Listening to Disappearing (#2)*, ADA Symposium 2014, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, May 2014
Communal decisions are not pressed by our instruction. Knowing other participants. Congregating.

Other people walking together. Joining.

Whether to prepare the instructions.
FIGURE 11: *Listening to Disappearing* (#3), ADA Symposium, Auckland, September 2014
CHAPTER 3:
The Unsightliness of Sonics - contextual frames

3.0.0 Listen up - a ready-made future

This chapter situates the research praxis in the expanded field of choreographic practice through a survey of contemporary art contexts relevant to the project. It brings together a lineage of artists whose concerns have sought to investigate modes of participation, influenced by the explosion of ‘new technologies and the breakdown of medium-specific art in the 1960s’ (Bishop, 2006, p. 10).

The works discussed throughout this chapter politicise conventions in performance and art practices over the last one hundred years. The historic framework of the modern, post-modern and post-colonial is reconsidered and an alternative fabric is presented that foregrounds the relationship between art and life that Rancière presents as critical art (2004, p. 85). The term critical spatial practice evolves from this (as discussed in Chapter 2) bringing somatically informed choreography and sound art technologies together as part of this survey of works that prioritise listening and coming together with Rancière’s aesthetico-political agenda.

The first part of this chapter attends to the question, what is choreography, and focuses on the breadth of the expanded field of choreography, as introduced first through Forsythe. The second section tunes into the anti-establishment art waves of the early 20th century and the 1960s and the impact that these movements have had on performance studies. The third part of this chapter asks, what is headphonic performance and presents an overview of key artists who are working in this field in both an international and national context.

3.1.0 Re-wiring choreography as an expanded field

Choreography, Forsythe observes is an ‘unmanageable’ ‘deceptive term’ (2009, p. 1). He suggests choreography as an idea and considers whether it might be possible for choreography to express its principles autonomously as, ‘a choreographic object, without the body’ (ibid). The undoing of dance as a visual spectacle and as a dominant paradigm of choreography continues to influence the argument, extending the choreographic frame.

Positioning this research in the expanded field of choreography, reconsiders the conventions of the discipline. In doing so, it makes connections with other disciplines, taking cultural and often political bearings and negotiating the politics of the place in which the choreography is positioned, its ‘logical space’ (Krauss, 1979).
Performer, choreographer, educator and writer, Marten Spangberg's self-published, book Spangbergianism, foregrounds choreography in the expanded field as primarily concerned with authorship, ownership, production, the spectacle and theatrical conventions. Spangberg is highly critical of the hierarchical structures of dance making and choreography, and he destabilises the field in an anarchic and egocentric style of writing. Primarily Spangberg suggests, a rupture between choreography and dance. Spangberg advocates for the democratisation of hierarchical conventions in performance structures, suggesting new models of choreographic authorship and presentation (2011).

The term expanded field can be seen to be originally adopted from visual arts practices. In an essay featured in the October magazine in 1979, Rosalind Krauss introduces the idea of the expanded field of sculpture. Performance artist Mark Harvey, in his thesis Performance Test Labour, identifies Krauss's text as a marker for the expanded field and a ‘fundamental break with modernist boundary definitions’ (Harvey, 2011, p. 24). Krauss proposes the expanded field as a ‘combination of exclusions’ that suspend the terms of the medium itself. A double negative, she suggests that these terms of opposition expose thinking towards the outer limits of the field. She gives the example, the opposition of what is built, (that which is not built), is another way of expressing the term landscape and of extending our thinking to what it isn’t. The expanded field, as Krauss defines it, is engaged with cultural terms, rather than the terms of the medium, suspending the way sculpture is categorised (Krauss, 1979, p. 38). Tuning into the cultural situation locates the artist in multiple tensions, and in ‘reflection of the logical space’ suggests Krauss (1979, p. 43). I support Harvey’s apprehension of Krauss’s hold on what is a strictly logical structure, and her specific, and in my view, fixed historical bearings. From our advantage today, we can perhaps appropriate the term, and reimagine the expanded field within nomadic conditions as we assign the cultural and spatial logics to choreography.

Krauss’s argument suggests that dance might be excluded from choreography as a way of going beyond the field. Championing Forsythe and Spangberg dance is perceived as part of the choreographic field, but not conditional to it. If we rethink Forsythe’s question specifically within the terms of this project, we could ask what else besides the body, might physical thinking sound like? How can we bring choreography and listening to somatic thinking1, digital sound recordings, headphonics (prosthetic technology), and participatory social choreography within Forsythe’s question as a way of expanding choreographic thinking. Rancière’s theoretical framework of ‘dissensus’ offers another direction that might help to relax Krauss’ binary logic, provoking a political discourse of difference rather than a reductive force of opposition.

1 Somatics in this context are classified as the perception of the self and the environment in performance based relational practices, a mode of engaging with the body that pays attention to the body not as a singular entity, but as multiple fields of perception and sensation.
Bojana Cvejic’s response to theorist and philosopher Alva Noë, at Performance Studies International #17 Utrecht (2011), introduced the problem of spectatorship, also a primary concern of Rancière. Cvejic proposes that performance is no longer an ‘act’, but rather is activity. Remodelling the idea of performance as commodity, into performance as ubiquitous, Cvejic constructs a position that also ‘re-wires spectatorship’ (Cvejic, 2011). Cvejic engages in the debate that begins with Guy DeBord’s critique of the spectacle, who argues that the ‘mass spectacle’ generates a passive social condition that alienates social structures. Bishop suggests that the impetus behind the participatory act is to restore collaborative, non-hierarchical social models that have come to ruin in the isolating effects of capitalism (2006, p. 12). She cites three major concerns in the advocacy for participation and notes that these concerns all feature in the writing of DeBord, ‘activation; authorship; community’ (ibid). The terms of choreography in the expanded field are discussed in this chapter in relation to contemporary works that dislocate the assumed relationship between dance and choreography and re-write what it means to be a spectator.

In the 21st century, Forsythe’s Decreation (2003) and You made me a monster (2005) test the limits of both audience and performer’s perception, mobilising sensorial conditions, performance and spectatorship. Vass-Rhee specialises in the critique of Forsythe’s sensate choreographies and describes a number of his works since 2003, in which he ‘moves dancing across the perceptual boundaries between aural and visual’ intermodal performativity (Vass-Rhee, 2010, p. 389). Forsythe’s choreography extends the notion of perceptual awareness into a space for both the audience/spectator and the performer as he ‘seeks to emphasize the phenomenological and embodied moment of an experience of dancing’ across performance spaces (Vass-Rhee, 2010, p. 398).


Despite these more radical developments emerging out of choreography in the expanded field, and a persistent movement towards the emancipation of the spectator over the last century, conventional spectacular theatre persists as a strong force in dance and choreography (and performance) in the 21st century.
FIGURE 12: Alexa Wilson, *Star/Oracle*, to and fro, Artspace 11 July Photograph by Peter Jennings
Choreography as a visual ‘act’, for the viewer, is commonly experienced in specifically designed architectures where the space is designed to distance and mediate the encounter between the performer and the spectator. Theatrical apparatus (sound, lights and scenography), continue to support a space of illusion and control, giving the artist assurance that they will, more or less, be able to create a consistent live experience for a seated audience. In these situations, the spectators usually buy tickets to sit in a dark space where, as spectators they become a collective, losing any autonomy they may have entered the space with. Authorship, in the creation of such theatrical spectacles is usually privileged to the choreographer, and virtuosic choreographed sequences persist in their obsession with complex movement for the spectator to view. Despite the dominion of these conventions in the performing arts, participatory performance continues to propagate, shifting concepts of space, time, the real, and the virtual and is supported by the use of new technologies and ubiquitous technologies such as headphonics.

However enduring conventional theatrical configurations may seem, the expanding field of choreography is provoking the choreographic scene. Performance artist/choreographer Alexa Wilson’s recent group work, The Status of Being presents a plausible example of how choreography in the expanded field might come into dialogue with more conventional structures. Her recent group work commissioned by Footnote Dance Company earlier this year (2014) brought her back to New Zealand from Europe. Wilson also presented her solo show Star/Oracle which preceded the The Status of Being. I witnessed Star/Oracle at Artspace in Auckland, New Zealand in 2014. The work was part of a curated performance art series organised by Amelia Hitchcock, to and fro, (Artspace, 2014). Wilson aims to provoke the audience, to shake them out of the passive mode of observation that theatrical and new media encounters invoke in us. Throughout the duration of her solo show, the audience played a crucial role, asking the Oracle questions to activate the direction of the work. Wilson (the Oracle) attempted to answer these, while she stripped naked, sprayed her own body red with toxic paint, threw objects around the room, wielded a sword, wore an elephant mask, and ate suntan lotion. It was intimate experience, slightly destabilising, and at times a little uncomfortable.

The Status of Being, presented at the Q Theatre was built on the critical context explored in Star/Oracle. For all its efforts to call itself a political and controversial work, I feel it fails at this, and I am left wondering, unconvinced by the translation of Wilson’s more potent solo work, to a group work presented as a spectacle located within the conventional mechanisms of the theatre. In

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2 Footnote Dance Company has been operating for 29 years, based in Wellington it is a significant full-time company that began by specialising in dance in education.
3 Star/Oracle had been performed internationally at; Leonhardi Kulturprojekte, Frankfurt (2012); Ada Studio, Berlin (2012); Center for Performance Research, NYC (2013); G30 Gallery & Reh Kunst Gallery, Berlin (2013); Sophiensaele for 100 Grad Festival Berlin, Brussels Volksroom, Poznan Design Festival, Poland, Art Space Gallery Auckland, Tempo Dance Festival, Auckland, Body Festival and Physics Room, Christchurch NZ, (2014)
4 Artspace is the leading non-collecting, non-commercial organisation for contemporary art in New Zealand Aotearoa. Artspace is dedicated to commissioning and presenting new ideas in art and culture, as well as fostering critical debate and generating intellectual feedback.
the theatre, most of the work is predetermined, a preconfigured spectacle. The risk in the codependency that the gallery work relied on had been replaced with the security of a commercially viable event. Wilson’s anarchic performance politics seemed to be diluted by the dominating codes of the theatre and theatrical apparatus. The proximity between performers and spectators experienced in the gallery versus the theatre presents a different kind of subjectivity. Like the early mnemonic choreoauratic test-events in this research project (these are discussed further in Chapter 5), the effects of place impact significantly on the way Wilson’s two works are encountered by the subject.

Choreography in the expanded field offers a complex continuum in which dance and performance art histories intersect, shift apart and overlap. Questions of temporality and spatiality invite the inevitable political complexities in which the body appears, disappears, performs, moves, is still, speaks and is subject to social, environmental and temporal relations.

3.1.2 The Agitated disappearing body

Lepecki’s rationale for dance’s lament brings to the surface the temporality of modernism and the political rationale for dance in the 21st century as being caught by modernity’s infatuation with movement in a ‘perpetual state of agitation’ (Lepecki, 2006, p. 58). Lepecki quotes Teresa Brennan who situates dance as a ‘technique of subjection that could respond to modernity’s fundamental question: how to be on time’ (Lepecki, 2004, p. 126).

This notion of ‘being on time’ as a choreographic apparatus suggests the dancing ‘body’s subjection to a temporality perceived as a dissolving agent,’ its perpetually vanishing presence, is a fundamental problem for dance (Lepecki, 2004, p. 123). The ‘disappearing’ body dissolves, disintegrates, represents, reappears, doubles, multiplies, becomes a site of questioning, thinking, of the presence of the dancing subject. This ‘melancholic plaint’ as Lepecki proposes of the evaporating body ‘casts time as relentless agent of erosion of flesh and things’ in which choreography becomes the technique of the ‘embodying of temporality’ (2004, p. 123).

3.1.3 Choreography without the body

Lepecki locates the advent of choreography as far back as the early Renaissance era when Thoinot Arbeau created Orchesography, manuals which were written to (re)member dance movements. These ‘bodiless dance manuals’ became ‘a new science - a ‘graphology’ making ‘explicit Western theatrical dance’s deep alliance with the project of writing’ (Lepecki, 2004, p. 126). The ‘writer/choreographer’ serves the archive in what Lepecki describes as a ‘triple function of historical memory’, idealistic, structured by command, ‘and to dance’s relentless dissatisfaction with the structural impermanence of the body.’ (Lepecki, 2004, p. 123). Dance seeks its recovery in the symptom

In counterpoint to this legacy, Lepecki presents (borrowed from Gaston Bachelard) a ‘slower ontology’. This standpoint presents the still body as defined as ‘non-dance’ (Lepecki, 2000, p. 338). ‘Stilling the dancing body’, undermines the romantic dance pedagogies very identity (Lepecki, 2000, p. 339). In stillness, Lepecki advocates a shift towards a new sensorial, an awareness of the microscopic and a ‘vibratile stillness’ in which ‘introspective proprioception’ shifts the focus away from the scopic. ‘The small dance happens in that nowhere; the dancer must explore the unlocatable there between subjectivity and body-image’ (Lepecki, 2000, p. 346).

This recasting of dance’s ontology paves the way for what Lepecki identifies as the ‘conceptual choreographers’, who ‘exhaust this exhausting dance’ and begin to question the social, political and subjective implications of a capitalist, hierarchical global economy (2004, p. 126). Arguably, choreographers such as Jerome Bel and Tino Sehgal are not only concerned with questioning modernity’s consumption of the kinetic regime. The prodigious capitalist machine endures and these choreographers persist in questioning the unsustainable commodity driven communities we engage with. Like their forebearers, the anti-art, anti-capitalist Futurists, the Dadaists, Fluxus artists, and the performance artists in the 1960s and 1970s, their concerns could be constructed in the way that Rancière presents, as a ‘deconstructive practice’ (2011, p. 14). He describes this as ‘poetical knowledge’, an attempt to trace back ‘an established knowledge - history, political science, sociology, and so on to the poetic operations - description, narration, metaphorization (and) symbolization’ (2011, p. 14).

The choreographic ‘paronomasia’ of the conceptual dance scene in Europe presented a new ‘programme for body, subjectivity, temporality and politics’ (Lepecki, 2004, p. 127). This, not only ‘liquefies and slows’ assumptions of dance’s ontological status, but also the ‘infelicities and idiocies embedded in dance’s ambitions’ (ibid).
3.1.4 Constructed Situations - Tino Sehgal

No photographs of the pieces may be taken or reproduced; no catalogues or press releases may be printed; and no paperwork may accompany the buying and selling of a piece (which must be done by oral contract in the presence of a notary and, often, the artist himself). Thus Sehgal extends the late - 60s logic of the dematerialized art object to the work's certification and circulation as well. (Bishop, 2005, p. 2)

Sehgal makes what he names 'constructed situations', adopting Guy Debord's terminology in a critical move to position his work outside of the term performance or artefact. An economist and a choreographer, Sehgal's pieces present the 'possibility of simultaneously making and not-making something' (ibid). Mostly Sehgal's works are manifested through the activation of a set of instructions, which are acted out in close proximity between the participants inside monumental spaces such as museums or public galleries. Sehgal's strategy to subvert the object-centric ideology these institutions enforce, sets out to 'wreak havoc on our systems of acquisition and conservation' (ibid). As Bishop suggests, Sehgal's activation of a discourse that infers 'This will have been the past' dematerialises the idea of the art object. If we return to Lepecki's argument where 'the body's subjection to a temporality' is 'perceived as a dissolving agent' Sehgal embraces this modernist lament and consecrates it (2004, p. 126).

Sehgal's work draws heterogeneously from multiple trajectories - his discipline as an economist; the social relations from Debord's adaptation of Brecht 'situations' to 'constructed situations' (Bishop, 2006, p. 13), the Futurists and Fluxus artists' instructional works, to the conceptual devaluation of the art object, and also perhaps in the politics of the archive as in Schneider's discussion around the refusal to remain and Sehgal's refusal to document his work (2011). Bishop proposes that rather than emancipating authorship as in the Fluxus work, or for the latter, refuting arts role in the market place '(Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Lawrence Weiner)' Sehgal's aspiration is to 'deproduce' the 'materiality of the art object' (2005, p. 2 - 4). Returning to Krauss's early suggestions of the expanded field, Sehgal's exclusion of the object might suspend the terms of the object and the subject within the work. While it is clear what Sehgal is deproducing, Bishop suggests that there is less clarity in what Sehgal is producing. What is produced, she suggests, is the gesture (ibid). Andrew Hewitt, in his book Social choreography suggests the possibility that choreography as an aesthetic practice responds to the 'loss of gesture' or the 'destruction of experience in the bourgeois era' (2005, p. 83).

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5 Constructed situations originates from Bertolt Brecht's disruption of the narrative structure, encouraging audiences to take up active positions, using montage and juxtaposition to raise consciousness and participation (Bishop, 2006, p. 11).
In Sehgal's contemporary 'constructed situations' the gesture challenges the status of the art object, and perhaps, as Hewitt infers, the gesture becomes an 'aesthetic interruption' in its failure to connect, enabling an 'openness to discourses that cut across primary lines of communication' (2005, p. 83). Dance scholar Alexandra Kolb is critical of the prescriptive nature of Sehgal's recent work, These associations (2012) commissioned for the Unilever series in the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern. Kolb's description of the work as engaging with prescriptive and unresponsive mechanisms reverberates particularly with my own experience in devising the mnemonic choreoauratic scores in the first two years of this creative research. In the process of scripting a participatory choreoauratic score there is the risk of becoming dogmatic in the choreographic instruction. This potentially creates a paradoxical situation, undoing the intention of the work to democratise any hierarchical relationships remaining in the work.

3.1.5 Code breaking

We are called on to interrogate terms such as “thank you silence” – to do so, Bel provides us with silence and darkness. And boy, this Auckland audience would rather do ANYTHING else but dwell on silence for thirty seconds. (Longley, 2011)

Put in other terms, they are allegories of inequality. This is why you can change the values given to each position without changing the meaning of the oppositions themselves...The spectator is usually disparaged because he does nothing, while the performers on the stage - or the workers outside - do something with their body. (Rancière, 2009, p. 1)

In 2011 The Auckland Arts Festival brought French choreographer Jerome Bel's The show must go on to New Zealand’s shores. I participated in this work, which was rehearsed and performed by a group of locals, some performers and dancers, and some with no experience of the theatre.

‘Slowing the dancers almost to a standstill’ in The show must go on, Roselee Goldberg suggests that Bel intensifies ‘the act of watching’ (2005). Although I would argue that a ‘slower ontology’ as we have read in reference to Lepecki is not Bel’s primary motivation here, in an interview with Henrique Lopes and Dina Ed Dik in 2011, Lopes suggests that Bel uses ‘the stretching of time and slowing down to create space and to break the codes of the theatre’ (H. Lopes, personal communication, 21 February, 2011). The entire show is constructed using theatrical codes and the lyrics of a series of 17 pop songs. The audience endures these first two tracks (Tonight from West Side Story and Let the sunshine in from the live musical Hair), waiting in darkness, they

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6 Lopes and Ed Dik originally performed in The Show Must Go On and now assist in touring the work and creating the show with local people.
Figure 13: Jérôme Bel's *The Show Must Go On*, Auckland Arts Festival 2011

Figure 14: Jérôme Bel's *The Show Must Go On*, part of Festival/Tokyo 2011
Photo: Mussacchio Laniello
are presented with the provocation to listen more intensely as the lights are brought up over the duration of the entire pop song. I suggest that Bel’s first question to the audience is a mechanism for breaking the ocularcentric codes of the theatre. ‘…once you break that code then some of the audience members feel like that isn’t enough and they feel as though they have to ‘take action’ or we have to DO something’ says Lopes (2011). In taking the power out of the theatrical spectacle the audience starts to form a community (ironically the instruction taken from the third pop song - the audience and the performers literally are asked to come together to the Beatles song Come Together). Bishop suggests that the ‘sound track is used as a cipher for collective experience’ (Bishop, 2009).

Bel’s precise method of distillation in all elements of the performance gives the work its potency. He rethinks the theatre experience that prescribes with absolute accuracy the codes of theatre itself. Like Sehgal, Bel relies on the codes of the theatrical institution to engender meaning (Bishop, 2009).

3.2.0 Tuning in

Tracing the lineage of the avant-garde artists of the 20th century, this section makes connections between; the politics of participatory events today; the wave of dance artist’s of the 1960s that questioned dance’s ontological status and were influenced by somatic practices (tending towards experiential and participatory thinking); the radical and inventive participatory events of the Dadaists and Futurists and how these movements were significant in the development of sound art and a politic that invites Ranciere’s aesthetico-political agenda, bringing art and life more closely together, inviting a different historical thread.

Performance theorist Steve Dixon identifies the 1960s as a ‘period of intense cultural and political change(s)’, a time when traditional aesthetics were subverted through experimentation with chance and everyday movement (Dixon, 2007, p. 88).

At this time, experimental choreography emerged out of New York City. Judson Church became a hub for dance artists including Steve Paxton, Trisha Brown, Yvonne Rainer, Deborah Hay who ‘explored the ontological status of dance performance’ (Banes, 1981, p. 99). Working within democratic collectives, they began to look critically at modes of performance and presence; the political and cultural climate motivated change, in an environment where many artists (in all fields) were seeking alternative philosophies to late capitalist, Western modernism.
‘This was a group that whole-heartedly rejected the hierarchical organization of the modern dance world it had become part of, and, by extension, the authoritarian elements of American society its generation had begun to defy’ (Banes, 1981, p. 104).

This generation of artists activated a force that endorsed the politics of the body and of choreography as possible tactics to rethink capitalist infrastructures. Collective, participatory events remodelled hierarchical structures and rethought the role of the spectator.

The new radical dance aesthetics, exemplified by postmodern choreographies such as those of the Judson Dance Theatre, displayed similar features to innovative theater work: performances used quotidian movement, took place outside traditional venues, valued presence over representation, and/or were created by dance “collectives”. (Kolb, 2013, p.33).

Debord introduced the notion of physical involvement as a precondition for social change that influenced many of the artists from this era. Some forty years on, Rancière, breathes new life into Debord’s thinking, reconceptualising the spectator’s role as both becoming more distant, and on the other hand losing all distance (Kolb, 2013, p. 36). Kolb identifies Jerome Bel and Xavier Le Roy as artists who intensify this distance, confronting ‘the aesthetic creation with a discourse in the conditions of its production, reducing movement to the point of stillness, and highlighting the educational role of the artist’ (ibid). Rancière’s notion of dissensus brings the hyphenated condition to these works, whereby through the idea of difference he rethinks artist and participant roles. Examples of this include Bel’s The show must go on, where the audience are asked to take ownership of their responses to the work, and at the other extreme the highly participatory works...
of Forsythe’s collaboration with Dana Caspersen and Joel Ryan, creating *White Bouncy Castle* (1997) where the segregation between participants or spectators disappears completely, and where ‘complete physical destabilization results in social absurdity’ (Forsyth n.d. in Kolb, 2013, p. 36).

Here in New Zealand several local performance artists, such as Val Smith, Sean Curham, Brent Harris and Mark Harvey dissolve the distance between the performer and the spectator to varying degrees. Val Smith’s *Circle in a Box* (2014) strips the relationship between the spectator and the performer. Val creates a ‘hypersensitive’ space, where tuning into listening, to one another, to waiting, to sensing, to expecting, to the potential, and to responding, intensify over the duration of the work (Bate, 2014). I attended Val’s work in three different spaces. The effect the three sites had on the work was significant. In a version presented in a black box theatre, the conditions of the architecture commanded the way the audience responded more coercively than the codes of the choreography.

Today, new technologies, of mostly screen-driven devices imply high levels of participation but in much less physically imperative modes. This creates an entirely new social and political terrain and perhaps reinscribes the potential in Debord’s argument of physical engagement as a strategy for social change. Kolb introduces, ‘the experience economy’, coined by businessmen and academics Joseph Pine and James Gilmore (Kolb, 2013, p. 37). ‘The experience economy’, a new wave in the marketing and advertising worlds, Kolb suggests draws from avant-garde theatre practices and she also makes links to the experimental contemporary dance practices of the 1980s (Kolb, 2013, p. 37). Has this new wave of experiential encounters emerging out of commercial propaganda undercut the participatory act as an anti-capitalist tactic? Global creative agencies such as *Mother, Saatchi and Saatchi’s, Olgivy and Mather* among many, now have entire experiential marketing divisions, creating immersive, participatory, interactive, multi-sensory encounters to promote commodities and social responsibility. Has the participatory event, like Kolb asks, ‘become enshrined in, or internalized by, the very pillars of the capitalist system that experimental artists in the 1960s set out to undermine?’ (Kolb, 2013, p. 46).

Despite the commercial inventory for the ‘experience economy’ it seems that Debord’s argument for physical involvement as a means for social change emerges again with new potency as we are affected by technology. We become stilled bodies by the ubiquitous devices that position us in front of screens, tweeting, texting, liking, sharing in global activities that hone in on the use of our fingertips and our eyes. It is in these new circumstances that I call attention to how we place ourselves, physically and socially and ask how we might shift our focus from the drive of the scopic towards a new more respon(able) way of becoming.
3.2.1 Slowing down and stilling

The social appropriation of time and the production of man by means of human labour were developments that awaited the advent of a society divided into classes.

(Guy Debord 1994, p. 93)

While the diversity and experimental culture of the Judson Church aesthetic was difficult to pin down, the collective’s commitment to democratic thinking united the group politically (Banes, 1981, Salter, 2010). Many members of the Judson Church group in the 1960s worked with Anna Halprin, who endorsed working in natural environments, advocating ‘another kind of freedom in dance’ (Banes, 1981, p. 103). Facilitating the liberty to pursue impulses in improvisation Halprin’s experiential approach to dance and choreography could be seen as an early link to a growing field of dance and movement methods that researched somatic principles (Banes, 1981, p. 103).

Lepecki identifies Steve Paxton’s Small dance (1972) which emerged out of this era, as a move towards a ‘new sensorial’ as opposed to a ‘new kinaesthetic’ approach, that challenged dance’s very existence (2000, p. 346). Historically, dance has been defined by movement. ‘Stillness disrupted the ‘magic flow of dance’, undermining the identity of an art form directed towards an absolute definition (Lepecki, 2000, p. 339). Paxton’s investigation into stillness twisted the kinetic obsession of the body that had transpired from modernism. Salter proposes that the work at Judson Church during this time explored ‘a fundamental questioning of received assumptions of what the performing body was and how it could be technologically constituted’ (2010, p. 243).

At the same time, collaborative and ‘pluri-disciplinary’ crossovers between art genres generated converse new forms in exchanges not just across practices but between the body and non-human systems (Salter, 2010, p. 243). The body was hybridised as both machine and organism and the boundaries blurred between the natural and artificial. The ‘posthuman body’, feminist and theorist Donna Haraway suggests ‘sought to erase boundaries’ (Salter, 2010, p. 249).

As suggested in Chapter 1, somatics and technology may seem at first glance, unlikely partners. Yet, somatic potential for tuning the body through transforming attention is not unlike the reorganisation, amplification and extension of the senses via technologies such as the screen, the microphone or headphones. Perhaps it’s no coincidence that these two modes of transforming and interacting with time, place and the body emerged more or less simultaneously and have played a role in expanding choreographic thinking. Rather than framing these mechanisms for operating in dance as diverse, in this research they come together in relationship with one another.
3.2.2 Into the future with the art of noise

Contemporary art theorist Clare Bishop takes us back to the Dadaists, identifying this movement as the beginning of participatory art, manifested in large overtly public events where hundreds of people gathered in civic sites often authored or led by a political or social intention (Bishop, 2006).

The Futurists and the Dadaists of the early 1900s in Europe rejected expressionism and bourgeois social ideals. While the Futurists and the Dadaists were motivated by distinct social forces, both manifested radical activities incorporating a mesh of media and introducing performance events that could be perceived as the inspiration for performance art that emerged in the late 1950s and later. The Futurists turned to performance as a means ‘to disrupt a complacent public’ and in a celebration of the machine, experimentation emerged in sound, performance, dance and poetry. The Dadaists (c. 1916) began with performance, in a live cabaret series where radical performance evenings showcased guttural non-sense performance poetry, costume, theatre design and performance mediums that were mixed up and messed up. Performance became a testing ground for creative practice in this era (Goldberg, 2011).

In an era where new technologies were influencing the way sound and image were produced, the mechanisation of sound and its relationship to the body opened the way for sound art. Luigi Russolo began investigating the ‘art of noise,’ composing industrial sounds as in his ‘Futurist Orchestra’ (Goldberg, 2011, p. 21). Proclaiming the inescapability of the effects of modern technology ‘on the body and soul’, Futurist Marinetti in his telegraphic speech manifesto ‘Destruction of Syntax - Wireless Imagination - Words in Freedom’ ‘technologized his body’ (Kahn, 1992, p. 7).

In another manifesto, Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation Marinetti conscripted early immersive and instruction based participation. ‘Marinetti declaimed several passages from his performance Zang tumb tumb … “I had a telephone, some boards, and matching hammers…and the sounds of the artillery and machine gun fire”’, he wrote and ran and walked between three blackboards writing and drawing analogies with chalk to which

Particularly significant to this research is the origins of both sound art and instructional and participatory performance which originated with the Futurists. Both have endured through this movement and prospered in both the avant-garde era and in the emergence of performance art in the 1960s. These modes of performance are significant in the contribution they have made to rethinking performance ontologies and to my research field in headphonics and social choreographies.
his ‘listeners, as they turned to follow me in all my evolutions, participated, their entire bodies inflamed with emotion, in the violent effect of the battle described by my words-in-freedom’ (Marinetti in Goldberg, 2011, p. 20).

Attention to the recalibration of the spectator’s role is common among artists working in participatory and socially oriented practices, whose aims are to dismantle hierarchical and authoritarian structures. Over the last century, the origins of this can be attributed to the Dada artists and the Fluxus movement, as Bishop identifies, as well as more recently in performance art circles and in the expanded field of choreography.

Dada artist, Marcel Duchamp was a pioneer in the expansion of disciplinary fields. He often worked across multiple disciplines, and was interested in crossing between different sensory systems. Duchamp made works of art that depended on the viewer to complete the work in their interaction with it (Adcock in Kahn 1992, p. 123). Craig Adcock also suggests in Douglas Kahn’s Wireless Imagination (a series of essays on the history of sound art), ‘Duchamp wanted to not express a work of art in order to reveal the inner workings of the art process’ (p. 126). This idea of not expressing the work resonates with Krauss’s attention to suspending the medium, whereas Duchamp’s suspension originates in the meaning of the work. In Banging on the Windowpane a chapter in The Wireless Imagination, Christopher Schiff gives an account of the interactive nature of early French theatre, where participation was the norm, whether it was to sing along or to express oneself vocally, ‘the audience response was as carefully orchestrated as the presentation itself’ (Schiff in Kahn, 1992, p. 148). At the premiere of Apollinaire’s surrealist play, Les Mamelle (1917), a new style of participatory theatre emerged unexpectedly, when artist Jacque Vaché pulled a gun out on the audience and threatened to fire it randomly into the crowd. Vaché liked to reverse the roles of the performer and the audience members.

This violent response, Schiff describes, was a sonically significant act, given that ‘Vaché’s primary tool was sound. Working with the rule of a silent audience, Vaché often inverted this in his own interventions, offering the audience a voice. In Les Mamelle, Vaché was critical of Apollinaire’s use of the sound of gun-shots to represent a violent act in the play, ‘By transforming a violent act into an entertaining theatrical sound, Cocteau and Apollinaire were glorifying passivity in the face of mortal danger’ (ibid). I wonder what Vaché would have thought of Janet Cardiff and George Millers work, Forest (2012) for Documenta 13 in which they used Ambisonics to create a very realistic soundscape in a forest, bringing art and life into close proximity, with sonic booms and explosions that perhaps gave sound greater agency than in Apollinaire’s theatrical application. Vaché’s recognition of the potential agency of sound motivated his anarchic and totally extreme responses.

8 Developed in the 1970s by an Oxford mathematician, ambisonics creates a three-dimensional sound field out of whatever noises, vibrations or explosions have been recorded (Wray, 2012).
From an alluring appearance or persuasive structure of sound the work of the Dadaists became an instrument of ballistics. It hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to him, thus acquiring a tactile quality.’ (Benjamin, 1999, p. 231).

3.2.3 States of flux

The next wave of avant-garde art practices emerged in the late 1950s. The Fluxus artists were critical in this era, originating in the USA, initiated by the artist and composer George Macunias as the Neo-Dada movement. Comparable with the earlier Dada rationale, a common politic transpired amongst a group of like-minded artists who were experimenting with time-based performance events and the name Fluxus⁹ was established. Under this moniker a large group of artists including Macunias, George Brecht, Dick Higgins, Yoko Ono, Joseph Beuys and Nam June Paik constituted an umbrella identity for conceptual happenings that tested conventional art through their use of form, place, the body and language. These artists sought ‘to change the way people understand the urban and post-urban contemporary landscape’ through humour, participation and socio-political motivations repositioning the way they approached art politically and socially (Saper in Freidman, 1998, p. 140). They viewed Fluxus as a way of life, ‘a way of creating social action and life activity’ (Freidman, 1998, p. ix). Fundamental to Fluxus was an engagement with multiple mediums where artists worked across and between forms, experimenting with live art situations, the politics of performance and place and the rethinking of social hierarchies in performance and as a result, the relationship of the performer and the spectator. Marcel Duchamp presented a theoretical rationale to art making at this time, suggesting that the work of art relies on the participation of the spectator.

The ‘event’ a term that was coined by Fluxus was first introduced by Brecht in the fall of 1959, although the foundations of the ‘event score’ could be attributed to John Cage’s experimental musical composition classes at the New School in New York in mid 1958 to 1959 (Jenkins 1983, 66). Art historian and critic, Liz Kotz identified a noticeable shift in Brecht’s approach that directly followed classes with Cage at the New School.

The use of the term ‘event score’ and its structure within the Fluxus movement spread rapidly across early Fluxus festivals. The scores were commonly ‘descriptive instructions for actions’ as well as practical initiations and invitations that would ‘plunge the reader into a conceptual performance of the text’ (1983, 67). Scoring methods were characterised by an economy and simplicity of language. Text based, the event scores were largely conceptual and indeterminate. The realisation of the scores ranged from incredibly simple to multiple and complex manifestations.

⁹ Flux noun 1. a flowing or flow. 2. the flowing in of the tide. 3. continuous change, passage, or movement: (Dictionary.com Unabridged. Retrieved October 18, 2014)
Brecht, La Monte Young and Yoko Ono were particularly well known for their use of these notational methods. Brecht’s short texts, printed on cards that were sent to his friends via mail in the early 1960’s, were not unlike Marinetti’s early instruction based manifesto *Dynamic and Synoptic Declaration and* could also be considered as very early remote performance examples.

‘Three Aqueous Events (1961)
• ice
• water
• steam’
(Jenkins, 1983, 67)

The Fluxus events typically activated an examination of the relationship between the body, the object and language itself and became ‘inextricably bound to the productions of the body’ (1983, 67). The mere operation of receiving and reading the score implied a performative event, imbricating the participant in the ‘theatre of the act’ (ibid). This open structure loosened the authorial power that might destabilise the ‘instrumentality of a work of art’ (ibid).

The event scores pursued an unparalleled exploration of reduction as a ‘logic of the fragment’ (Kotz, 2001, 60). ‘Deeply prosaic everyday statements’ generated physically mundane activities as modest and banal representations that contradicted the sophistication of new technologies for recording and reproduction that had emerged out of the post war era and were reshaping sound and language (Kotz, 2001, 60).

Bishop attributes the natural ‘breakdown of medium specific art’ in the 1960s as a response to the ‘explosion of new technologies’ that follows both the Fluxus and Futurist movements of the early 20th century (2006, p. 10). She establishes a clear distinction between the immersive, inter-active art installation and participatory practices, suggesting the participatory as a less recognisable practice where artists ‘appropriate social forms as a way to bring art closer to everyday life (ibid).

3.2.4 Those who have walked here before us

The globalised contemporary performance studies context is circumscribed by a complex interweaving of histories that act on the edges of performance and visual arts practices. Since the beginning of the 20th century through to today the role of the performer, the artist and the spectator have been rethought against the modes of power and authorship constituted by theatrical architectures, galleries and arts institutions. As already discussed, Bishop positions these socially critical approaches to art making within Western art history, identifying key periods in the 20th century (the Futurists, Dadaists, Situationists, Fluxus) as drivers in the emancipation of the spectacle as a political force (2011). While this Western position belongs to this conversation it is not the only perspective. Bishop, located in the Northern
hemisphere, surveys a Eurocentric and American-centric scene in her analysis of the 20th century, highlighting key terms such as post-modernism, post structuralism and post colonialism (ibid). Rancière, as mentioned in Chapter 1 and 2 presents a different history, one that is not incarcerated by the historical grasp of the Western modernist and post-modernist movements. Rancière establishes an alternative regime, one that disestablishes the boundaries between modernism and post-modernism, inviting a ‘third politics’ in an exchange between non-art and art that convenes an antipodean position. ‘There’s no need to imagine a ‘postmodern’ rupture’, says Rancière, ‘blurring the border that separated high art from the forms of popular culture’ (2004, p. 85). Rancière’s refocusing of art history reinforces the relationship between art and non-art, creating space for other histories. It is with these other histories that we situate this research in contemporary headphonic practice in New Zealand. In the next part of this chapter I hone in on the emergent practice of sonic-led choreographies and performance.

3.3.0 Headphonics - the disembodied chorus

The conditions of sound complicate my position in relation to the context of choreography in the expanded field and performance art. Increasingly we are mediated bodies and increasingly there is a question around how this is affecting our body politic,\(^{10}\) opening up a field that is not bound by the complexities of technological developments. Rather it draws from the complexities of a culture that embraces the pervasiveness of new technologies as part of our everyday lives.

The field of headphonic performance has seen a growing emergence throughout the duration of this research, particularly in New Zealand with several international works touring here over the past two or three years and a smaller number of locally produced ventures, including my own. The first part of this section surveys the international scene, identifying key practitioners working with headphonics. The second brings us home to the South Pacific, reflecting on four key works that I have encountered in New Zealand during this research project.

Quoted in a book on the work of Janet Cardiff who is a pioneer in the creation of headphonic encounters, Miriam Schaub identifies that ‘the rise in sound-and voice-oriented art could be connected to the visual overload in contemporary culture’ (2005, p. 163). We now live in a world that is visual and screen dominant, we engage with miniature and large screens almost everywhere we go, in urban space, both civic and domestic, using screens to communicate, to play music with, to work with, and to relax to.

In November 2012 Ross Brown composed a full list of headphonic works that he could account for and posted it on despite the fact that most of us live highly urbanised lifestyles impregnated with technology.

\(^{10}\) From the perspective of my practice I am curious about the perceived resistance to the mediated in many somatically focused processes. For example in my training as a Shin Somatics practitioner, references to nature in image based explorations privilege the natural over man-made or machinic.
the SCUDD (The Standing Conference of University Drama Departments) email list (see appendix 2). He categorises this international list into two main categories, headphone shows and mobile headphonic events. His list is not complete and his categorisations are simplifications of a complex field; however it does provide a rudimentary map of an emergent territory.

The headphonic works discussed in this chapter deploy the politics of sound and open towards the world of sound art. Sound theorist Douglas Khan in his book *Wireless Imagination, Sound, Radio and the Avant-Garde* identifies a lack of documentation and critique of the history of sound in art, this he calls a ‘nonhistory’ (Khan, 1992, p. 2). Twenty years on, alongside Khan, sound artist Brandon LaBelle has begun tracking sound art through his writing, particularly in his book *Background Noise Perspectives on Sound Art*. Incorporating the politics of the sonic and listening, these headphonic works are thought through this research with a choreoauratic filter, at the intersections and thresholds of somatic choreography, body, place and digital prosthetics. The field of sound offers a ‘counter culture’, as Braidotti suggests in her book *Nomadic Theory*, or in Rancière’s language a dissensus, a useful counterpoint to the conditions of choreography (2011, p. 107).

### 3.3.1 Headphonic encounters of the aural kind

In this next section I will identify significant international artists working in the terrain of headphonic performance. The works discussed in this chapter often circumvent classification, they feature loosely in contexts such as theatre, choreography and performance. Even though these works are materialised primarily through sound, the works discussed don’t identify directly with sound art per se. Sound art has only relatively recently emerged as a recognised genre in the arts, and perhaps, as Khan suggests this is due to its ephemeral condition – ‘it is as poor an object in any respect as sound itself’, fleeting and highly mediated it is an awkward fit in the cultural milieu of the visual arts and performance art scenes (1992, p. 2). In the growing field of headphonic works, sound art and participatory performance meet, and perhaps it is through these interdisciplinary encounters that sound art is achieving greater recognition. Featured in an article in Australia’s Arts and Culture Magazine *RealTime* promoting a leading sound festival in Australia, Clinton Green suggests a recent shift in recognition ‘Sound art has recently become akin to the latest hip thing in international contemporary art circles’ (2014, p. 49).

My first encounter with a headphonic installation was at the Tate Modern in 2000. *The Muriel Lake Incident* (1999) by Janet Cardiff and George Miller was a diorama-like miniature theatre that the

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11 Dissensus is an aesthetic rupture, in which Rancière creates an egalitarian space, this is discussed in more depth in Chapter 1 (Rancière 2011, p. 15).

12 For example ‘Cardiff and Miller are artists who have become known for their work with sound’ this quote comes from an interview with the artists in the New York Times, Cardiff and Miller produce complex sound works, but don’t appear to identify as sound artists.
viewer experienced while wearing headphones. Cardiff and Miller, from Canada, met at art school and have been collaborating for the past 30 years making installation works that primarily engage with the sonic, as well as other multiple disciplines. Cardiff has developed her audio headphonic walks independently. The headphonic experience in *The Muriel Lake Incident* (1999) was immersive and allured the viewer into the miniature theatre. Looking at the screen, it was as if you were sitting at the back of the theatre and you too had been miniaturised and become part of the audience. The use of binaural recording was so convincing I recall a moment in the sound when I became startled, thinking the footsteps I could hear behind me were real. I spun around to look and was surprised to realise the sound of the footsteps were in the recording, my perception had become beautifully confused by what was real sound, and what was recorded. In the sonic world, the boundaries between the real and the virtual are easily blurred.

This is a good place to begin, with an artist who was to influence my thinking more than I appreciated at the first time I encountered her work. In relationship with my own headphonic sound practice, I am interested in Cardiff’s use of immersive headphonic sound, the specificity to the sites in which she situates her work and the nomadic pathways the participants perform, as the audio (and sometimes video) interfaces choreograph the participant’s body. Cardiff’s audio walks emerged in the 1990s as a relatively new form of participatory, headphonic encounter.
FIGURE 17 & 18: *Forest (for a thousand years...)*, 2012
Cardiff and Miller Forest audio installation
FIGURE 19: *Alter Bahnhof Video Walk*, 2012. Cardiff and Miller Video walk. Produced for dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany

Her first audio walk was an experiment for the Banff Centre for the Arts Residency in 1991 (Cardiff, *Alter Bahnhof Video Walk*, 2012). Since then she has created approximately 24 more audio/video walks, including of note; *The Missing Voice: Case Study B* (1999), *Her Long Black Hair* (2004) and video works; *Ghost Machine* (2005) and *Alter Bahnhof Video Walk* (2012) (http://www.cardiffmiller.com). She continues to lead in this headphonic terrain, also integrating video and small portable screens. In these site-based sound performance events she brings the body into our awareness, activating the sensate and affecting perception, as John Wray writes in the New York Times after participating in *Alter Bahnhof Video Walk* (2012), ‘all the above senses were engaged by the piece, not to mention my perception of timing, decorum and balance’ (2012). Wray quotes Cardiff in the same article, “we aren’t filmmakers, even when we’re working with video. Sound feels more directly tied to memory, and to dreams” (2012). She tangles this thinking into her work in an excerpt from *Alter Bahnhof …’Memories are like a different form of travelling, it’s like pulling a suitcase that we fill behind us’* (excerpt from the *Alter Bahnhof Video Walk*, 2012, www.cardiffmiller.com).

Since Cardiff’s audio walks began in the 1990s there has been a growing emergence of immersive and participatory events using headphones and it seems as if recently there has been a peak in prevalence. I attribute this to the growing availability of affordable and complex mobile devices as well as a counter reaction to the intensification of screen-based use in daily life.

Well known UK collective *Blast Theory* create all-consuming interactive urban works that obscure the boundaries between life and fiction. Amongst their repertoire they have produced a small number of headphonic oriented works. *Ride Spoke* is a solo cycling journey where participants navigate the city on their own, wearing headphones and carrying a small handheld computer. Remote connections are made with other characters and contribute to a network of stories made in the urbanscape, through sound and an interactive screen. ‘*In Rider Spoke* the city’s nooks and crannies, the eddies in its flow of near-continuous movement, are reframed as spaces of memory, contemplation and intimacy. Small secrets play out privately in public spaces…’ (Williams, 2009, p. 32). *Rider Spoke* augments multiple contributions to a community of listening and story making in response to nomadic mapping of the cities by bike.

Roger Bernat’s public headphonic radio theatre *Public Domain* has been touring the world since 2003 and similarly, *La Ligna Collective* use radio technology and have become well known for their radio ballets.

In June 2012, while in London I attended an exhibition the *Invisible; Art of the Unseen* at the Hayward Gallery. The exhibition jeered at the object-oriented visual art world, making space for the other to come to the fore. The works in this exhibition privileged the gaps, the architecture of the gallery, the invisible, the unseen and the unsightly. In doing so it drew attention to the
other senses that seem less palpable than the scopic.

Featured in this exhibition was Jeppe Hein’s work *Invisible Labyrinth* (2005) in which the participant wears ‘headsets’ that sit just above the ears. *Invisible Labyrinth* (2005) is an invisible maze that engages the participant in a process of spatial tuning and memory. The participant memorises visual maps of historic mazes and walks the ‘invisible’ spatial/visual memory of the maps. If the participant bumps into a ‘wall’ the headphones send a small electric buzz to the temples. There are different mazes for different days, a medieval walled garden or the snowy-hedged path or the maze from the finale of Kubrick’s *The Shining*. The mnemonic choreography that is activated in this work mapped pathways in space that trigger haptic sensations and memory. This haptic tuning had a slowing effect, I became more aware of my breath and my body, moving in the space. In conflict with these feelings of somatic tuning and embodiment was the dictatorial affliction of the mild electric shock treatment that helped to guide me through the maze. While this work misses the anatomy of the ear, the process of mapping mnemonically and proprioceptively, activated similar somatic sensations to the first series in this research practice, named *mnemonic choreoauratics*. The way we situate our bodies in space and time, using memory as a way of choreographing the body is active in Hein’s work as well as my own *mnemonic choreoauratic* test-events.

### 3.3.2 Listening in to our cities

At the time of drafting this chapter, a colleague of mine commented on the number of headphonic works that had emerged in Auckland over the year. Three headphonic works were programmed early in 2013 in affiliation with the Auckland Arts Festival. This indicated a progression towards the use of headphones in site based and mobile performance works. Whilst I could have felt discouraged by this burgeoning scene, seeing it as a threat to the originality of my research practice, I assume this proliferation indicates that the assimilation of sound playing *prosthetic devices* has become increasingly ubiquitous. I am careful to position my research so as not to be burdened by the latest interactive device or technological invention, or overly concerned with the form of the device itself, but rather with the effects that this expanding digital behaviour is having on the way we perceive the world.

The growing popularity of headphonic works at the time of my research also suggests a growing attunement to the way bodies, spaces and technologies come together in the everyday. Technology in this case affords the theatricality of the quotient, softening boundaries and bringing the poetic to ordinary spaces.

The following four works encountered in Australia and New Zealand are each framed loosely in a performance context, with affiliations to the dance, theatre and visual
3.3.3 Tongues of Stone a headphonic dance-architecture

*Tongues of Stone* (2011) was a collaborative dance-architecture event between choreographer Carol Brown, designer Dorita Hannah and sound artist Russell Scoones (MAP). An ambulatory choreography, the audience followed the performers around the Central Business District of Perth, while wearing headphones and listening to a headphonic score. Immersed in sound, they experienced the sonic remains of the site as they listened through time to the lost stories, to landscapes, to a woman who had lost her tongue, and another who reads her body like the map of a city. Water-carriers retrace the tributaries of ancient wetlands and these stories stream through the streets of Perth re-imagining its past. The audience follow, watching choreographic tableaux that unfold along their path (Brown and Hannah, 2011, p. 261-280, Brown, 2011, p. 16-19, Brown, 2011, p. 37-48).

In *Tongues of Stone* the spectators who walked together wearing headphones became part of a community of participants. They walked through the city with one another, recognisable by the prosthetic attachment of the headphones, as a body of bodies, they moved as a collective through the places they inhabited and passed through. The sound and the voice elicit an intimate relationship between the spectator, the author and the performer, and through this relationship, authorship disintegrates within the performative act and the roles of author, participant and spectator are loosened.

The soundscape in *Tongues of Stone* fused voice with field recordings of local sites and other places. The audience’s body, while both walking and watching became a vessel for mixing. Inside and outside sounds, the real and the mediated and the performer and spectator began to merge. Sounds were doubled and divided simultaneously, splintering and folding into a sonic orchestra. These sensations awakened my perception of the city and made sense of Kristeva’s choric space, one that shifts away from the binary, ‘Stepping outside binary logic enables us to think through the semiotic, the pre-verbal and other fluid, sensory forms of organisation’ (Kristeva in Smith, 1998, p. 71).
FIGURES 21, 22, 23: Tongues of Stone, Perth, April 2011
The voice is the story and she becomes me as she plays her memories in voice organs, and these memories immigrate through my own skin. The borders of other disintegrate, the singularity of I and her multiply as we become many together walking together through her city...

Words fall, float and trip “that sit that wait” lands inside my body heavily...
Some words enter the kinaesthetic sphere of my inner bodily experience more readily than others.

A man enters - walking through her he joins the Furies becoming part of her.

The hard edges of the city seep into imaginary spaces - breathing close to my ear – she is here, with me. I carry her along with me. So close her breath touches my skin, my own edges.

Pedestrians sync up with the rhythm of the soundscape, becoming with the rhythm.

Bright rubbish bin lids and water rivers from another time inside and outside inside and outside inside and outside inside and outside inside and outside inside and outside inside and outside rhythm...

My skin tightens as the temperature changes. Body feels the architecture. Fast pace of click click click heels on the ground make my pace seem even more, slow slow slow

A woman appears with a trolley – struggling, she makes a grand and wobbly entrance – her performance is astounding I want to applaud her in her perfectness, she has slipped into this performance place.

Slowing down to listen, the sounds sink inwards to the middle of me. The audio envelops me, contains me holds me in my body, holds me into space which grows into otherness. Slowing down my pace in the cityscape in order to make visible the hidden spaces, lost landscapes, – feeling the shadows cross me, the back streets... the voice of the street – is part of this, or part of us?

Excerpts from a written reflection, documenting Tongues of Stone, Perth 2011
Tongues of Stone exerted multiple borders. Headphones drew the soundscape into the body as sonorous vibrations that affected the perception of space and body. Listening from these interior spaces dissolved the borders of the body. Body and place became the site for the imaginary and the concrete to come together, they became interchangeable, and created other spaces. The city transformed through sound, evoking heterogeneous perspectives of place - multiplying and rupturing attentions to and fro and between the microscopic to the macroscopic. The spectator’s respons(ability) to the work had contingency, their pathway through the city became responsive to the urban landscape and to the group they were walking with. The individual became part of a social ribbon, weaving through the city. The collectivity of the audience’s pathway through the city generated a body politic that bound the group together, this sense of community seemed crucial to the work.

Tongues of Stone was reworked into a local landscape here in Auckland, New Zealand in 2013 for the Auckland Arts Festival White Nights programme. This work evolved as two iterations, 1000 Lovers and Tuna Mau.13

3.3.4 The Bench or Hello for Dummies

The second headphonic work is a two person headphonic play Bench Seat OR Hello for Dummies by Ant Hampton, in collaboration with Glen Neath and hosted by the Paul St Gallery, in Auckland, New Zealand, in April 2012. Based on the ‘theatre technique of autoteatro’ (coined by Ant Hampton), the play investigates ‘the delivery of recorded instructions given to an unrehearsed guest audience’ (St Paul St Gallery, 2012). This headphonic experience is quite different from the collective experience of Tongues of Stone. Not only does it operate through a narrative and the voice as the primary agents, it brings the participants together in an intimate duo.

My encounter with this work began remotely, with an on-line booking process. I received a text the morning of the event confirming the details. I was met by a man in a yellow t-shirt at 8.30am sharp at the designated meeting place. He led me up the road to meet the other participant. I was told that if I knew this person I should speak up. I did know him. We stood next to one another without looking at the other’s face. Again we were both asked the question, do we think we might know this person? We both said no. We were given a map and an MP3 player with two sets of headphones and were told to follow the instructions of one voice and repeat the voice of another. The accents were both English and were easily distinguishable. As directed we sat down on a bench seat in the local cemetery without looking at

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FIGURE 24: Hello for dummies or The Bench, 2010, Ant Hampton and Glenn Neath
I connected with the other person. We became absorbed, caught up in a fast exchange of dialogue, a call and response tag team, I repeated, verbatim the lines the character gave me. She was female and so am I. I was caught by surprise when I found myself identifying with her personality. She drew me into her insecurities, her life. She caught me off guard when she prompted me to offer personal information to my partner, in the play and then again when he was prompted to ask me questions that uncannily related to my own personal boundaries. The whole event took about 45 minutes.

In the process of following the words and being present to the converging of realities, my own world and her ‘other’ world, merged. Her voice took me on a journey to other places, sound liberating my imagination and leading me into a virtual imaginary world. Listening vacillated with the many others that I experienced, the recorded male voice that gave occasional instructions located me, back to the site, back to sitting on a park bench in the Grafton Cemetery, Auckland, New Zealand. Her voice took me into myself, into her and inwards and away from my sense of place. My own voice ripped through the thresholds of her, of me and of faraway places and of my immediate surroundings. Time slid through the pre-recorded, of other times and distant places. My own voice bringing me back to real time as did my partner’s voice. There was a slippage in who I am and who I was and who she is or was.

The Bench Seat or Hello for Dummies by Ant Hampton concentrates on an intimate, faceless engagement between two strangers. This faceless situation seemed to me to simulate the structure of online encounters in social media. The choreography of this work, of embodying the guise of another, was like becoming a sonic avatar in an intimate theatrical act. The voice was the primary vehicle in the work, and its exposure was amplified in the intense act of listening, and speaking, and relying on the vocal as the agent between ourselves and other. My vocal ‘performance’, as it is brandished into the air, seemed revealing in stark contrast to the cocooning sensation of the headphone space. In Schaub’s writing on Janet Cardiff’s work she compares the flesh to a drum skin, ‘Thus the resonance of the voice reflects the state of the body, its anxiety, the areas that hold tension or the areas that are inactive’ (Schaub, 2005, p. 171). This threshold space of flesh, place and digital was disrupted and doubled through the co-existence of the headphonic social space and the live site-based inter-action of the artwork. ‘Bodiless’ voices shift into our bodies and become us through the act of speaking. As Schaub identifies in Janet Cardiff: The Walk Book, the remains of the body are held by the voice, positioning the physicality of these ‘bodiless’ voices as avatar-like. I recognised similarities between Hampton and Cardiff’s work, the amorphous coming and going in thresholds of otherness and as Schaub identifies ‘unalterable physical remains’ that stay with the voice, ‘long after its body has actually departed’ (2005, p. 171).
Places come together through the voice as Brandon Labelle identifies in the potential of the voice to locate us. Creating an architecture through which we move. ‘…speech makes language site-specific because it participates in the ecology of a time and a place’ (Labelle, 2001, p. 64). These works make use of the voice as an essential agent in the work, resonating with Schaub and Labelle’s concern with the entanglement of speech as crucial to ‘how one is positioned in the world’ (2005, p. 171).

3.3.5 IQ2 A radiophonic theatrical ambush

Future Hotel’s IQ2 was presented in Aotea Square, Auckland New Zealand (Friday 2nd November 2012 at 5.30pm) as part of The Living Room project. This event was billed as an ‘intriguing theatrical ambush’ (Living Room 2012: IQ2, 2012). IQ2 is like a social experiment. Audience members wore headphones and enter a game-show type of theatrical experiment, (perhaps this is where the ambush occurs) as the participants were coerced covertly into becoming part of a theatrical spectacle. The borders between who is performing for who shift throughout this work. Stephen Bain and Nisha Madden use wireless radio headphones to lead the participants through a series of intimate questions. The answers positioned the group in space. We were asked questions about our income, our debt, our social beliefs, faith, love and convictions in life. From the inside, the exposure of our social demographics through our ‘performance’ seemed disarming.

FIGURE 25: Image from IQ2 Facebook page 2012
‘Attendants’ who became part of the performance, assisted with our group ensembles by presenting lines, signs and markers to help us gather and arrange ourselves in space. I felt as though I became part of a social machine and that my ‘performance’ shifted between a participatory sociality with the group I was part of, to a highly mediated spectacle for the people who watched from the steps. Did I inadvertently become a spectacle for the sake of others?

IQ2 was an immersive participatory theatrical event that resembled the format of Bernat’s participatory theatre Public Domain that debuted in 2008. Esther Belvis Pons names Bernat’s Public Domain a ‘socialogical choreography’ and in her review on the Furtherfield website quotes Shannon Jackson who calls the event ‘social work that comments on the nature of our public engagement’, which also seems a fitting description for IQ2 (2013).

3.3.6 En route - A Headphonic Encounter

It is 2.20pm, 21 March 2013 in Auckland city and I had received a text to rendezvous with my supervisor at the corner of Albert and Customs St to participate in en route. At the meeting point we were greeted by one of the organisers. Billed as ‘an expedition into the core of the city’ en route was a collaboration between one step at a time like this (Australia) and Richard Jordan Productions (England) (enroute 2013).

As we entered into the back streets of Auckland’s Central Business District, a male voice talked to us through our headphones, he mentioned falling in love with this city. We reached the end of Track 1. The voice told us to pause the MP3 player and within a second or so we received a text telling us to play Track 2 and ‘head through the glass doors at the end of the lane’. ‘Continue through and take the first right out to the street’. Text and music coaxed us along the journey, keeping us enroute. The city started to open up to us. We continued to receive text messages and followed chalk markings around the city. We arrived at the bottom of some stairs. We followed a narrow lane, the architecture here was clearly part of Auckland’s early history. We were invited to lean on the stone and brick walls of a narrow alleyway, and take a photo (see figure 27).

My perception became increasingly heightened as the soundscore tuned me into the city. A woman’s voice talked of ‘being inside seeing’, reflecting on how we see awakened my own practice of seeing. I recalled the words ‘the busy-ness of seeing’ as I reflected on my own research practice, on listening, considering the shift in perception and temporality that listening invites. As I listened, I noticed that I started to see differently, I observed art in the city I had never noticed before, people on the street stood out and became part of a live street theatre, unfolding before our eyes.

We wove through the back alleyways of a food hall, and then back out into Queen Street. When we went too far we received a
text telling us to go back the other way. While I was aware of the GPS tracking capabilities through our cell phones, this moment reinforced the panoptic view that *en route* HQ had, surveilling our path through the city. We continued to thread our way through the heart of Auckland city, receiving phone calls, picking up instructions, envelopes, following chalk marks on the street, we went into a fancy cake shop and we wrote personal messages onto the walls of the old courthouse. I saw a man in a turban talking on the phone and I imagined him to be part of this urban theatre, inventing elaborate stories in my mind, creating multiple narratives out of the urban theatre that was unfolding before me. I noted how acute my sense of smell had become, noticing a florist shop well before it came into view through its scent. Down an alleyway and into a bar, we frisked someone's fur coat in a secret cupboard and pulled out messages on note paper.

*En route* transformed the inner city into a private urban theatre performance. Having awakened my senses and tuned my perception, the next day as I jogged down my street I was startled to hear a baby crying in the storm water drain. Alarmed, I paused and listened and realised that the sound was actually coming from up on the hill and was bouncing down to me over the surfaces of the architecture and the landscape. I realised that the effects of *en route* had lingered with me. Sound, listening, smell recomposed through my awareness as life and art came together critically in Rancière's terms in an aesthetico-political relationship.
FIGURE 26: Photos taken while participating in *enroute, one step at a time like this* Auckland Arts Festival 2013
FIGURES 27, 28, 29 (clockwise from top left): Photos taken while participating in *enroute, one step at a time like this* Auckland Arts Festival 2013
FIGURES 30 & 31: Site and choreographic investigations, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013
FIGURE 32:
*Listening for Disappearing (#2)*, Auckland, May 2014
CHAPTER 4: Listen Up and Tune In

How to make us hear the inaudible, the imperceptible, that roar which lies on the other side of silence, is what is at stake in this process. (Braidotti retrieved 2011, p. 9)

4.0 A choreoauratic exercise

Below is an excerpt from the written documentation of a workshop process - with three professional performers, Kate Bartlett, Christina Houghton and Evania Vallyon, who participated in a devising process on the 29th January 2014; one of a series of workshops between 2013 – 2014.

Choreoauratic practice outside the St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland CBD:

Bringing listening into the space without headphones - testing listening as a practice.

It had been a while since we came together, us and the space. Today was a day to take listening to the fore, I decided not to use the headphones for a day and investigate listening without any prosthetic mediation, as a way of examining the difference experienced between modes of listening.

TASK ONE:

Lie on the ground with your legs up the wall and listen. When I give you the next cue you can move about, but keep listening. Then on the third cue you can listen and respond in any way you want.

Midway through this task I gave each participant a pile of post-it notes and a pen - and suggested that they could respond either through writing or through any other means.

We talk afterwards, and then we do another listening session. This time I add an idea that I have adapted from Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of material vitalism and Jane Bennett’s notion of vibrant matter\(^1\) which is investigated further later in this chapter (2010, viii). I suggest that we imagine the particles in the gaps between objects, these gaps are as full and vibrant as the material surfaces and urban architecture. In sound the gaps are filled with vibration and movement and the objects are so dense they seem soundless and static. If we prioritise sight, the gaps seem empty - but Deleuze and Guattari’s material vitalism suggests that the gaps that are filled with particles and are moving faster than the speed of light are as vibrant as solid matter and through listening we might become more aware of this.

\(^1\) Drawing from Spinoza and Deleuze and Guattari’s material vitalism, Jane Bennett introduces the idea of conative bodies, in a faith that ‘everything is made of the same substance’ (2010, viii). Thus she advocates for a vitality of matter ‘the scent of a nonhuman, thingly power, the material agency of natural bodies and technological artifacts’ (2010, xiii).
**Verbal responses from the participants:**
It was challenging to keep listening.
Visual distractions dominated.

Lying with our legs up the wall made me feel like I do in a Yoga class, listening inside myself...
Which is like listening to the entire world.

**Post-it note responses from the participants:**
Poses that move on microscopic scales. The layers layer up until it becomes noise. Can I calm?

Am I dancing? It's a small dance. Yoga positions in public places settling into.
Sounds that make music - receptivity
This large connected wall creates a side to the soundscape I move close to it - look up it does
It's more 3 dimensional judding skateboards clangy jangling sound board with wood and concrete instruments

The sound wall sounds different I turn towards away – it has no sound out by the tree I find its musical qualities to the beat of the bad library video tune

Back to sound, is it my backdrop
What happens when the skate youths arrive
Face the music
Listening together
As you walk over the voices that carry
Moving through, moving elsewhere
Wheels on hard surfaces – shouts of togetherness

I’m writing her is she writing me?
A quick clip of your heels to arrive in the place full of words

Tunnelling activity risky wheels
**TASK TWO:**

The next session the participants are asked to just listen into the space and respond to what they hear, in any way they feel is suitable. They are asked to consider that all aspects of the space are equal, the concrete, the buildings, the people. They disperse in the space and listen for about 15 minutes.

**MY OBSERVATIONS:**

Kate stays sitting on the steps. She doesn’t move the whole time. I imagine that she needs to be still. Somehow the listening is stilling her.

Christina begins still and after a while starts shifting her location around the space. I start to notice how she is listening. She is moving her body to focus the sound. Movement is composing the sound.

Evania goes to the edge of the space... the periphery – over by a tree. She lies down with her feet resting on the tree, connecting with the natural world. Getting away from the middle.

We talk about it afterwards.

‘It’s difficult listening. It’s hard to locate. It’s overwhelming, sickening, giddying. There seems to be a dissolving of the ‘I’. The self starts to disappear. There seems to be less of me’, they say.

In response there is a panic – a need to get grounded. Christina wants to put her hands on the ground, to crawl, to connect to the concrete, and so she does this. Kate stays still and closes her eyes. When Evania joins her she feels like some of herself comes back. Evania looks for the edges, where the sound comes from further away, trying to find the sounds that are escaping and coming from outside of the walls she hears.

Reflecting on this listening test without headphones emphasises the effect that the headphonic space has on the participants who wear these prosthetic listening devices in the test-event series presented within this site. The headphonic space has a cocooning effect, wrapping the participants in a sound world, offering them borders that are more clearly perceptible than the parameters of the city as an open sound space.
The ear is uncanny. Uncanny is what it is; double is what it can become; large or small is what it can make or let happen (as in laisser-faire, since the ear is the most tendered and most open organ, the one that as Freud reminds us, the infant cannot close); large or small the manner in which one may offer or lend an ear. (Derrida, 1985, p. 33)

4.1 Social Choreographies for the Ears

In this chapter, theoretical discussions on the sonic and listening are explored as tools for developing the practice of a critical choreoauratics. As introduced earlier, choreoauratics is understood as a critical spatial practice activated by social choreographies for the ears. Somatic processes, facilitated through prosthetic listening, provide the grounds for rethinking the way we might negotiate place and each other. I argue through this research that the practice can reconfigure our senses, impacting on how we might see, hear, feel, touch, taste or move differently through digital augmentation when listening and embodied soundscapes are brought to the fore. Through listening, choreoauratics appropriates the subject in the space of the threshold, received by its others (the site and participants).

What possibilities emerge if we foreground listening as a choreographic practice? How might choreoauratics help us tune into that which is not visible? These questions come to bear in response to a world that operates in a complex hierarchy which has tipped the balance of the senses and ‘turned ‘visualization into the ultimate form of control’ (Braidotti, 2002, p. 245). The ‘commodification of the scopic’ as Braidotti puts it, privileges vision over the other senses (ibid). Braidotti identifies sight as the ‘King of the senses’, the driving force in science and the arts in Western culture (2011, p. 107). In her book Metamorphoses she suggests ‘that visualization techniques are central to
FIGURES 33 - 38 (previous page and this page): Listening for Disappearing series, Site and choreographic investigations, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013/2014
contemporary formations of power as domination’ and that ‘the visual regime is dominant, or molar, in the political economy of post-modernity’ (Braidotti, 2002, p. 155). From a feminist perspective, this focus on the gaze limits perception, and invests in the powers that control Western political structures.

4.2 A Scopo-centric view

As discussed in Chapter 2 a scopo-centric view privileges visual media as a means of testimony and corroboration, reinforcing hierarchical arrangements of the senses. The act of looking monopolises the other senses, such as listening, tasting, touching and moving and is relied upon as a mechanism for the truth or for fixing perception. The monocular approach to the commodification of culture via the scopic intensifies disparities between the ways we make sense of the world. In this chapter we turn our attention to feminist and post-structuralist critique of the scopic and modernist subject. Theorists such as Luce Irigaray, Donna Haraway, Vivian Sobchack, Elizabeth Grosz and Braidotti have interrogated the hierarchy of the senses in dominant modes of bodily perception. Accordingly, the power of how the female form appears in contrast to how it feels, moves, tastes and sounds prevails in the media. Braidotti voices concern for the way vision is privileged over the other senses, ‘especially touch and sound’ (2011, p. 246). Idealised images in advertising and film skew the view of women’s bodies through a media driven consumer culture that propagates a limited field of ‘vision’. Digitally manipulated representations of bodies which appear in print, on screen, that pop up inadvertently in online adverts on our screens promote a particular body idea(l). In 1975 Laura Mulvey constituted critical thinking for feminist and new media studies with her influential essay, Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. Mulvey’s essential analysis of the representation of the female form in screen-based media interrogated the power of the gaze. Mulvey identified fetishistic and voyeuristic mechanisms entangled in screen images and the objectification and sexualisation of the female body through new media. In dance and choreographic culture, the politics of the ‘live’ performing body complicates this story. How the body has appeared historically in modern Western dance practice has also originated from an idealised form-centric style that engenders modes of power, obsessed with movement and the spectacular as discussed in Chapter 3.

4.3 A sonic counter-culture

If we transfer our focus to the acoustic world then how might this empower a displacement of the ocularcentric culture we are immersed in? Historically, sound has presented a counter-culture to the pervasiveness of visual culture (Braidotti, 2011, p. 155). Braidotti points out, that sound in youth culture provides a vehicle for cultural and political activism, from today’s highly portable and private iPod, to the invasion of public spaces with ghetto blasters balanced on shoulders in the early 1990s, to anarchic student radio stations, and early propaganda radio in
World War II; sound is often transmitted through technology as a way of subverting sociality and space (ibid). The acoustic order can be subversive, resistant to codes of power and ‘less prone to immediate commodification into an economy of language’ (ibid). If listening becomes a transversal act how might we then listen to the current cultural and political stasis creatively and ethically?

Braidotti identifies sound artists such as Robin Rimbaud, aka Scanner who make field recordings of the environment shifting the rhythms and refrains of our acoustic space, creating possibilities for new modes of experience. Scanning local habitats and playing these sounds back, Rimbaud uses digital processes to alter the sound space. In the works discussed in the Chapter 3: The Unsighliness of Sonics, site-based performance events such as *The Muriel Lake Incident*, *Tongues of Stone, en route* and *A Bench Seat for Dummies*, and in the *nomadic choreoauratic* and *social choreoauratic* scores in this research, internalise headphonic sound and mix the real-time environmental sound with recorded sound scores. A matrix of worlds are created, unexpected encounters and heightened moments of awareness are engendered through active performance practices.

Headphonic sound is experienced in the works by other artists and in my choreoauratic research as an intimate sound world, contained mostly within our bodies, mobilising and internalising our acoustic habitat. Activated by multiple thresholds, the body becomes co-present to layered sound spaces, through the prosthetic sound space, the environmental sound space and the bodily sound space. This chapter examines different modes of listening and the way this can mobilise and theorise our experience of space differently. Soliciting the body with and without organs as Australian artist Nori Neumark suggests, we create spaces for listening not only with the ears but through the whole body. The capacity for listening is thought through this practice in a post-Deleuzian sense, as a distributed body without organs.

How might a practice of listening bring us to a closer reading of the body without organs? Closer to a non-productive body, as butoh artist Tatsumi Hijikata suggests, as counter to the Western obsession with productivity and growth? How might Kristeva’s theorisation of chora as a spatial condition possibilise listening as a potential space within a culture of thresholds? What effect might this attunement to thresholds choreograph on our social, political and sensate encounters?
FIGURES 39 - 41: Listening for Disappearing Site and choreographic investigations, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013/2014
4.4 Perceptual Organs

Tuning is contingent in the activity of listening. Vibrational, buzzing sound waves define acoustic and spatial territories. The sensing organs operate as a complex matrix. Our sensory and perceptual systems bring the activity of listening to the ‘whole body’. In Neumark’s article titled *The Well Tempered Liver*, she proposes sound as a way of ‘substantiating the theories of the body’ (Neumark in Labelle and Migone, 2001, p. 89). Like Braidotti, Neumark thinks into a space between the machine and the body. She is critical of Western science that converts sound into sight through ultrasound technology. Neumark suggests the power of the gaze ‘fixes’ the organs, specifying the field of each organ as singular entities. Neumark identifies this time in history when we can see the insides of the body as remaking vision, ‘into something calculable and regularizable’ (Crary in Neumark, Labelle and Migone, 2001, p. 94). Neumark recognises the tensions of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the body without organs (BwO) as a subversion of the Westernised regime, in which the organs are silenced, commodified and separated. To refute this rigid and singular perspective, Neumark’s stance draws from Deleuze and Guattari’s description of leaking, seeping, emotional, responsive, living networked systems that advocate the deterritorialisation of the organs that Western science would have neatly and visibly organised into definable, measurable parts.

If we consider the materiality of the body and its ‘fleshy contents’ as ‘acoustic chambers,’ then as Neumark suggests, this gives voice to the organs, toning and pitching through the vibrational field of tension and release in our bodies (Braidotti, 2011, p. 109). Folding inwards with the help of technological augmentation and outward ‘into the world one inhabits’, multiple co-presencing of sound worlds become possible through both ubiquitous and highly specialised technologies. In this electronic age, do we now listen from the inside out? From the skin? From the belly? From the ears? Neumark translates Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the BwO as an (un)organized body where the boundaries and thresholds within and without the body are destabilised (Neumark in LaBelle and Migone, 2001). Thresholds occur as performance practices meet new technologies, and the body and place become vehicles for interrogating their limits.

4.5 Social agents: a chorus of thresholds

*The hinge of sound may come to teach us how to be present within the surges of the temporal, to locate ourselves in relation to all that disappears, or threatens to overwhelm. It could be understood as a particular form of politics, giving entry to the excluded, the repressed, the silenced through an ever-present flow of challenging noise.*

(LaBelle, 2010, p. 1)
Inside the social spatiality of these events, ‘sound operates as an emergent community, stitching together bodies that do not necessarily search for each other, [and] forcing them into proximity’ (LaBelle, 2010, p. 1). The way I perceive it, a negotiation of insides and outsides moves the participants who experience this creative research into and through indeterminate thresholds of the senses. The operation between spatial fields and the recalibration of the senses through listening prosthetically implicates a spatial and social threshold and the potential of the chorus. The choreographic score takes on a role as a social agent through its influence on the participating subjects in space. The author’s voice, (my voice), performs the instructive text heard on the headphones. In following this score the participants become subject to it and yet, through their performance they are also de-centred and desubjectified. In reflecting on this experience I draw on sound artist and writer Brandon LaBelle who uses the term ‘hinge’ to position sound strategically as a threshold of the body and of space, ‘bringing into contact particular contradictory forces or conditions’ (LaBelle, 2010, p. 1). This is fine as far as it goes but I am attempting, to not only articulate a tactic for dismantling the opposition of the outside/inside, but also seeking to enquire into the social dimensionality of this experience and what is at stake in this. To this end, LaBelle’s use of the term ‘hinge’ is strategically combined with Agamben’s theory of the threshold as the limits of experience.

Agamben opens the notion of the threshold as not being unconcerned with a spatial limit, but as, ‘the experience of the limit itself, the experience of being – within an outside’ (Agamben, 1993, p. 67). Agamben comes to this theory of being within an outside through his writing in The Remnants of Auschwitz. Agamben draws on the writing and personal accounts of the experience of Primo Levi in a discourse around the limits of experience as well as the archive, and the testimony.

In this research, I identify with some of these limitations, albeit within a very different context, experienced in the live test-events, negotiated in the tensions of being simultaneously inside the work and outside, as I grapple with the impossibility of documenting the work while becoming part of the encounter itself. Agamben’s positioning of the archive, between that which is said, and that which is left unsaid, becomes the testimony and potential for speech. Through language, there becomes an opening to subjectification, and a possible process of recovery of the subject. In this research I propose that the matrixial encounter between outside and inside within the choreographic, speaks across the thresholds of language and subject, in an activation of the inside outside of language. The thresholds of the sociality of the space emerge in the practice itself. As discussed further in the introduction to Part B, those attending the test-event Listening for Disappearing (#2) in Auckland in May 2014, witness a moment where the performer Evania Vallyon, opens up the threshold space between the multiple cultures and social groups.
that inhabit the space between the St James and the Auckland Public Library. Her action, as she lies down on a bed of books, intervenes with a previously imperceptible social sphere and in doing so opens another. The two social territories hinge together as she operates in her own silent sound space. This experience of a threshold space that surfaces in the practice is discussed more closely, later in Chapter 4: Listen Up and Tune In.

As we come to experience the limits of place in this research, Agamben’s definition of ‘outside’, not as oppositional, or binary, or as another space that resides beyond a determinate space, opens our perception of how we think of the threshold (1993, p. 67). In Agamben’s terms, the outside becomes the passage, in which the exteriority enables access. He suggests that the impossibility of the testimony, or the witness, founds the possibility of the ‘poem’ (or in Kristeva’s terminology after Plato of the chora), of another way of knowing that is outside of language (1993, p. 36). Both Agamben and Kristeva’s stance on the outside take form as pre-theoretical formations, Kristeva on the pre-verbal and Agamben on the potential (or in his terms the potential of the impossibility) of the unspeakable. In the test-events the participant finds him or herself mobilising the space between the enunciative act and language as a threshold that is generative in coming together in unspoken ways.

4.6 Words made flesh

Feminist theorist Julia Kristeva’s investigation into ‘the chora’, which she describes as a ‘pre-verbal space inhabited by sensation’, brings to this research a further perspective of bodily thinking and the threshold (Smith, 1998, p. 60). I encounter the chora as a pre-verbal space in the work of Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen who describes bodily thinking as an activity of perception. For example, Bainbridge Cohen’s explanation of the stimulation of the inner ear through movement and sound, reveals how our senses activate a sensorial pre-verbal space that escapes language. Through her investigation of movement in her method Body Mind Centering she explains how the vestibular mechanism, located in the inner ear receives information from the ‘proprioceptors, interoceptors and kinaesthetic receptors through the body and from gravity, time and space’ (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 114). Interpreting the bio-mechanics of the body through an investigative movement practice, Bainbridge Cohen substantiates the anatomical connections between listening, perceiving and moving. Bainbridge Cohen’s evidence of bodily thinking, as activities of perception through movement, could

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2 Body Mind Centering was first introduced to me during my undergraduate training in contemporary dance. In a lesson that draws from the principles of body mind centering we would map the relationship between the body and mind from an internal perspective as opposed to how it might look from the outside. We could move from the cellular structure of the body, or from the organs for example. ‘Movement can be a way to observe the expression of the mind through the body, and it can also be a way to affect changes in the body-mind relationship’ (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 1).
FIGURE 42: Listening for Disappearing series, Site and choreographic investigations, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013/2014
be compared to Forsythe’s perceptual performance (introduced in Chapter 1) that focuses attention to itself through the use of digital technologies, working with the kinaesthetic as another way of activating perception.

Poetic, fluid and organised as sensorial possibilities, the chora invites the potential of the limits of the bodies that write, (to use Foster’s terms), embodying the unspeakable. This choric space becomes a ‘receptacle’ of perception, ‘an invisible and formless being which receives things and in some mysterious way partakes of the intelligible, and is most incomprehensible’ (Plato in Kristeva, 1980, p. 6). Emerging out of the practice of choreoauratics, choric bodies are written upon, and, as Foster suggests are always in a process of making and vanishing (1995, p. 16).

Inscribing the body through literature, Kristeva's pre-verbal space of the chora is that of potential. Kristeva’s analysis of semiotics is positioned at the limits and threshold space of language as she attempts to ‘bring the unspeakable into language.’ Smith, in her book on Kristeva, Speaking the Unspeakable, embraces the term transubstantiation as ‘word made flesh’ – which ‘literally and metaphorically involves an incorporation’ (1998, p. 60). Kristeva argues ‘for bringing the body back into the structure of language’ (Smith, 1998, p. 36). She asks of writing, ‘How can it represent the senses in a way that erases the borders of individuals and their bodies and be experienced as jouissance, that is unspeakable sensual pleasure?’ (Smith, 1998, p. 65). Choreographer and dance artist Emelyn Claid brings Kristeva’s idea of jouissance into improvisational dance practice - as the ‘fluid, formless, multiple, semiotic drives internal to the body as sensation’ (Claid, 2006, p. 87). Both Kristeva and Claid explore the thresholds of the body and language. Claid gives the unspeakable to the body, bringing the idea of chora to somatically informed dance practices as she discusses the potential of ‘bringing the female body to a place where she can become subject, not object, of her own performance’ (Claid, 1998, p. 2).

These test-events, a series of choreographies for the ears, elicit listening. The cocooning sensation of the prosthetically organised headphonic sound space could be thought of as a choric space, a ‘sensory cavern... a pre-verbal space inhabited by sensation’ (Smith, 1998, p. 60). The participants in these choreoauratic scores are invited to perform operations that transform the internalised language of the sound score through a negotiation of movement that mobilises their perception and the social space.

Using headphonic sound, the participant’s moving body becomes the threshold between an intimate and private sound space and a social spatiality. Within this choreoauratic structure the subject is dispersed in the exchange between the voices heard through the headphones, the perceptions of
the participant and the interaction with the community body, 
who disappear and appear. The subject is, ruptured, fractured, 
doubled and multiplied, becoming a chorus through the text and 
action. Kristeva’s theorisation of the subject as split between 
the symbolic and semiotic disposition, asserts the potential of 
this work for reconfiguring perceptions of what it means to be 
human, thought through critical spatial practice and somatically 
informed choreography.

4.7 Wired for sound

When we are prosthetically wired for sound how do we listen 
differently?

Can listening become, as Braidotti implies, a transformative 
act? Braidotti’s nomadic thinking is cultivated from Deleuze 
and Guattari’s BwO and as such suggests ‘rethinking human 
embodiment in a manner that is coextensive with our technological 
habitat’ (2002, p. 61). This coextensive stance proposes that 
technology, positioned ‘halfway between mind and body’ has 
the potential to fortify the bodily configuration of both human 
and machine and the way they relate (Braidotti, 2002, p. 57). 
Braidotti’s approach helps to disengage the outmoded distrust 
of the machine as manifest in the early 20th century science-
fiction visionaries. The arts conveyed a skeptical view of the 
machine, seen in movies such as Fritz Lang’s Metropolis (1927) 
and in Gertrud Bodenwieser’s dance, Demon Machine (1926).
In the 21st century the evolution of the machine has endured. New technologies have become smaller and less visible, these devices have become so ergonomically integrated into our lives that we mount them on our bodies (MP3 players, mobile phones, hearing aids, GPS tracking devices, heart rate monitors, microchips in dogs, proximity sensors mounted on cockroaches). Capable of seeing through us, prosthetic devices multiply, duplicate, trace and distance our bodies and have become an essential feature in everyday life as well as in science in the Western world. So reliant, so attached we have become to these prosthetic appendages they have affected the way we think, the way we sense and the way we move.

In this project, prosthetic sound is solicited, inviting us to reconsider the conditions of the technologically augmented contemporary subject through listening differently. Braidotti introduces the contemporary subject as ‘a postmetaphysical, intensive, multiple entity; functioning in a net of interconnections’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 66). Braidotti’s recourse to the nomadic subject serves to navigate this research journey through a poststructuralist, posthuman era where hypermobility, globalisation and capitalism within a global recession draws attention to the stresses on the material world.

Through practice-led methods I argue that prosthetic listening devices have the potential to shift our perception of our sound space, which in turn has an impact on the sensate, the embodied
and our experience of place. When wearing headphones, sound is channelled into the body affecting our spatial orientation, potentially doubling and even multiplying acoustic territories.

Portable audio devices have historically been identified as having an isolating effect, ‘distancing us from one another and from our environments’ (Carlson in Hopkins, Orr & Solga, 2009, p. 19). One of the participants in Listen Up, Tune In and Play On - A Social choreography for the ears, the seventh test-event in the series in Dunedin in 2013 (discussed in the chapter on nomadic choreoauratics) made the comment, ‘I could not smell anything until I took out my headphones…’. For this particular participant the effect of cocooning the ears shifted her olfactory perception during the encounter. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev reflects on Janet Cardiff’s sound walks, suggesting that in using technology against its familiar alienating effect’ there is the potential to relocate ourselves in time and space (Carlson in Hopkins, Orr & Solga, 2009, p. 19). She suggests the common assumption that prosthetic audio devices are thought of as distancing, yet in Cardiff’s work, there occurs a shift in perception that re-locates our connectivity with time and space (ibid).

4.8 Listening in vibratory stillness

The practice of choreoauratics activates an embodied listening practice, driven by multiple flows of intensity; questioning, tuning, adjusting, repeating and reflecting on research parameters. Founder of the somatic movement method, Body Mind Centering (BMC), Bainbridge Cohen describes bodily ‘thinking’ as an activity of perception. Bainbridge Cohen identifies the vestibular system as our means for gauging our relationship with space and how we move through it. This system, which is located in the inner ear, contributes to postural tone and how much effort we make to stay upright against gravity. The inner ear helps us know where we are in relationship with the earth and gravity. The otoliths inside the inner ear through stimulation and response to gravity, tell us where our head is in relationship with the earth. The vestibular mechanism, receives information from the ‘ proprioceptors, interoceptors and kinaesthetic receptors through the body and from gravity, time and space’ (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 114). This interconnectivity provides us with information about our positioning within the magnetic pull of the earth and our ability to locate ourselves kinaesthetically in time and space.

In classical anatomy, the ear is divided into three sections; the outer, the middle and the inner portions. It is the inner ear that operates as two sensory systems, the auditory and the vestibular. The stimulation of the inner ear through movement and sound activates our senses and positions our bodies acoustically. Vibrations in the molecules of the air cause the ear drum to vibrate in turn and it is this movement that ‘excites the hearing nerve’ in the inner part of the ear, enabling us to detect sound (Thorne, 1992, p. 1). In this process the detection of movement is transferred across the inner ear ‘by the lever action of the ossicles’
This sets up a wave of cellular responses, travelling along the Corti, hair cells bend, releasing chemicals, discharging nerves and sending signals to the auditory centres (Thorne, 1992, p. 3).

In Western science, technology has invented processes for seeing, testing, separating, magnifying, amplifying, naming, exchanging and donating our bodies as individual parts, divided, separated and made visible. Developments in biotechnologies emphasise the microscopic view of the body as a way of seeing beyond the flesh. Rather than seeking verification through Western science methodologies for the organisation of the body, what if we refer to somatic practices such as Bainbridge Cohen’s system for movement, BMC. Bainbridge Cohen’s method for movement and perceptual awareness focuses on tuning into bodily systems through sensation, enabling ‘new’ encounters to become possible. Like many other leaders in somatic practices, Bainbridge Cohen, was influenced by Eastern movement forms. In the appendix to her book Sensing, Feeling and Action she lists an extensive lineage of influences that have contributed to the development of BMC. Included are practitioners in Eastern movement forms such as martial arts, yoga, acupuncture, zen, katsugen endo (Life-Force Movement). Eastern influences have expanded the global force of somatic practices. Martha Eddy traces the influences of Eastern principles on somatic practice in her article Somatic Practices and Dance: Global Influences (2002) (see Appendix).

Through experiential anatomical processes Bainbridge Cohen works with the perception of the internal bodily systems of the organs and the nervous system to increase perception and facilitate new possibilities for movement patterning.

Bainbridge Cohen identifies that for the potential for change there needs to be an expansion of the ‘traditional list of “the 5 senses”; touch, taste, smell, hearing and vision’ (1993, p. 114). She suggests that a new approach be inclusive of ‘both motor and perceptual activity’ and of both the ‘input and output aspects of the stimulus/response loop’ (ibid). The exclusion of ‘sensations of movement and visceral activity’ from the dominant sensing system she reflects is ‘a repression of bodily sensation in Western Culture’ (1993, p. 114). Bainbridge Cohen’s holistic focus on somatic perception resonates with Neumark, who argued that the separation of the organs becomes a cultural and scientific limitation. Bainbridge Cohen’s bodily thinking enforces the premise that in science ‘fact’ is determined by testing organs as separate and exclusive from the rest of the body. She observes that the experience of the sensation is considered ‘subjective’ and ‘not scientifically valid’ (ibid).

4.9 Making place possible

How might listening differently (through prosthetics) enable us to experience the world differently? How might listening prosthetically become a politic for coming together as opposed to
FIGURE 45: Listening for Disappearing series, Site and choreographic investigations, St James Theatre, Lorne St, Auckland, 2013/2014
the general assumption that headphonic sound can be alienating, as identified by Christov-Bakargiev earlier in this chapter. I ask alienating to what? To bodies? To place?

Listening prosthetically in the case of this research, elicits a threshold between language and the body. The rupture between the enunciated, and the ear that receives, in processes of recording and digitisation dislocates the subject and in this practice intercepts time. Agamben poses the question, ‘What lies between langue and its taking place…?’ (1999, p. 144). In the practice of choreauratics, the threshold of the inner and the outer body at the point of enunciation and of listening is not perceived as a division or separation. Rather, thought through Agamben’s terms, of what lies between, the threshold manifests in this research within the remnants of live actions. The subject that speaks is desubjectified, doubled and dispersed as the voice, caught in the digital recordings blurring the distinction between human and non-human. This acts ‘not as a division but as allowing for the salvation of the whole’ (Agamben, 1999, p. 164). The remains are captured as recordings that are embodied in the test-event and in the digital archive of the research in this thesis. The prosthetic technology in this project, ‘the non-human’ makes language possible. The speaking being is fractured, dislocated by the digital, in a process of de-subjectification, the ‘human’ becomes indistinct through the action of enunciation and listening.

At the thresholds of the spoken word and the body, we return to Kristeva’s term chora as an interrogation of the space between what is spoken and what is unspeakable. The ‘chora’, in Kristeva’s close investigation of the speaking subject comes before language. Kristeva’s efforts to bring ‘the body back into the structure of language’ invites a bodily thinking (Smith, 1998, p. 36).

Grosz also investigates the chora, tracing its roots back to Plato’s *Timaeus*. Plato, Grosz credits with the binary of reason/feeling, an impeding characteristic of Western thought that remains difficult to shake. Confounding this binary position, he also introduced a third mode. He nominated a passage, or a transition between the perfect (the idea) and the imperfect (the material). Plato named this the chora, a condition that functions as a receptacle, a potential ‘condition for the very existence of material things’ (Grosz, 1995, p. 116).

Grosz presents the chora as a space that ‘makes place possible’ (1995, p. 116). Identifying the chora as ‘neither something nor yet nothing’ it is impossible then to flag the chora in an objective way, or to be specific about it as an object (1995, p. 116).

FIGURE 47: Neil Harbisson, Colour blind artist with antenna 2014
Rather, it is the ‘condition of existence of objects’ (ibid). Often associated with the conditions of a feminine space, Grosz nominates chora by function: ‘to hold, to nurture, bring into the world. Not clearly an it or a she, chora has neither existence, or becoming’ (ibid). As theoretical support for this research practice, and as imbricated in the term choreauratics, I take from Grosz and Kristeva the potential of the chora as a threshold condition (Grosz, 1995, p. 116).

New technologies and prosthetics affect spatial conditions, and through reconfiguring the sensate ignite Grosz’s question of dwelling, asking how and where do we live in the world? (Grosz, 1995, p. 121). Like Braidotti, Grosz situates the visible as a dominating force caught in the material realm, that has reinforced binary thinking, as in Plato’s dualistic distinction between material and idea. Choreauratics offers a possible route towards loosening this binary framework. In a process of shuffling the senses and drawing attention to the sonic through headphonic listening, a potential space emerges through which to organise ourselves differently and ‘think through the body’ (as Bainbridge Cohen, Kristeva, Braidotti and Grosz imply).

Through concepts of porousness and fluidity, how might the body in relationship with headphones become placed? Here, I heed caution around the way we interpret site, or place. In a post-colonial framework, situated in a small country of islands at the bottom of the South Pacific, our understanding of place is overshadowed by a colonial history. Dame Anne Salmond, writer and scholar of Māori studies and anthropology identifies the unique colonial position of Aotearoa. Colonised at a time of ‘colliding cosmological ideas’, early settlers brought with them multiple world views (Salmond, 2012, n.p.). Salmond suggests that while the ‘Order of Things’ as Foucault proposed, segregated thinking, (mind from matter) and established a measured and binary framework, at this time there was also a growing consciousness of weblink, rhizomatic philosophies, (as the post-structuralists and vitalists, such as Deleuze and Guattari promoted), which she terms ‘the Order of Relations’ (2012 n.p.). This idea of relationality, locates itself closely to cosmological concepts and Māori kaupapa5 (Salmond, 2012, n.p.). Endowing this country with the survival of pre-colonial culture not only pitches a diverse milieu, it proposes other ways of knowing place and other modes of perceiving the world. Salmond recognises the resonance between the Order of Relations (from Europe) and Māori beliefs of the cosmos, ‘the dynamic nets of relations between different life forms’ as whakapapa (ibid).

If we conceive place through an indigenous structure, land and body become coextensive. Experiencing place through Māori Kaupapa invites a fluid and respons-able relationship of reciprocity between place and body, largely lost through the dominant colonial arrangement of the Order of Things.

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5 Kaupapa is ‘a way of framing and structuring’ the epistemology of things Māori and Māori knowledge (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, p. 191)
Early settlers territorialised the land, ‘surveyors divided it into gridded settlements and bounded blocks, cutting across the complex, overlapping networks of relations between Māori kin groups and local resources’ (ibid). While the matter of ownership in a capitalist regime is another story, indigenous understanding of place presents a networked, rhizomatic concept of how we site ourselves. When I refer to place or site in this research I envisage this through a decolonial6 perspective, where the borders of the body and the land become a threshold condition. This threshold place, a middle ground, in Māori is named pae (ibid). Salmond identifies the Māori approach to life as a balancing act that occurs across the threshold, between ‘plants and animals and other life forms, as well as people’ (ibid). The threshold concept surfaces in both European and Māori thinking.

Interdisciplinary scholar, Kelina Gotman introduces a European affiliation to the Māori idea of a middle ground and the Māori concept of whakapapa through her concept of ‘Dancing-place’ Adapted from cultural geographer Joël Bonnemaison, as the ‘centre of space’ or ‘crossroads’ ‘dancing-place’ pays ‘attention to history and historicity, genealogy, relations of alliance, identity and identification’ (Gotman, 2012, p. 8). Gotman’s proposal offers a potential possible choreological shift that questions how, why and where dance happens. In asking these questions, Gotman prioritises the choreographic relationship to ‘place and space’, presenting a more complex reading of site-specificity, she positions ‘dancing-place’ in the expanded field of choreography. ‘Dancing-place’ as choreography in the expanded field makes place possible (Gotman, 2012, p. 8).

4.10 Moving to a different tune

‘Deterritorialising our acoustic habits’, suggests Braidotti, broadens our perception and we become more attuned to the idea that, co-extensive with the Māori world view discussed earlier, ‘the human is not the principle in the harmony of spheres’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 109). As the body is deterritorialised, creative desires and imaginations are cut loose from the Western, modern script that persists in seeing humans in a privileged realm. Braidotti looks to the potential in the non-human, ‘We have to become-insect in order to be tuned into the nonhuman temporality of our cosmic world’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 109). Bats, whales and dolphins ‘see’ through vocalising and making sound waves. Sending out high-pitched frequencies bats are able to identify objects through the feedback they receive from sound waves that they have sent out and that bounce back to them off objects and prey in their path (Department of Conservation, 2005). This is the same principle used in ultrasound technology that allows us to see beyond the surface of the skin.

In pursuit of Braidotti’s trajectory of tuning in to the cosmic world, how might this reorganisation of the relationship between

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6 Linda Tuhiwai Smith introduces the thesis of decolonialism as a way of thinking inclusively of a pre-colonial and colonial history which is discussed in more detail, earlier in Chapter 2 (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).
the human and non-human shift our social and cultural politics? As the technological expands and transcends the human capacity to perceive the world, we continue to broaden our perception in art, science and in the social realm. Does this bring us closer to experiencing the ‘other’ through devices that both mimic and merge with insect and animal sensing?

Robotic cockroaches access spaces that are imperceptible or inaccessible to the human body. Using sound waves, the cockroaches are used as ‘surveillance bugs’, carrying minute microphones on their backs and surveilling dangerous and inaccessible spaces through listening (Wiles, 2014). Colour blind cyborg artist Neil Harbisson, senses colour through an electronic antenna attached to the top of his head. His prosthetic attachment transmits colour into sound, allowing him to hear and dream in colour (2014).

In broadening our ideas of ‘other’ we might also rethink Neumark’s thesis. Rather than fixating on ultrasound technology as manifesting an ocularcentric politic, perhaps this technology enables us to blur the boundaries between listening and seeing, human and insect, and sense more like the creatures of the sea and the sky? Perhaps the digital world also has the capacity to bring us closer to indigenous beliefs of myth and the natural world. I recall a work that was developed by a Canadian artist, Ken Gregory while on residency at Solar Circuit Aotearoa New Zealand (SCANZ), in New Plymouth in 2006. Ken’s project was to build a Night Kite, lit with blue LED lights that would broadcast a (super light weight) recording of New Zealand’s extinct native bird, the Huia into the night sky so that ‘the Huia [can] fly again metaphorically’ (Bugden, 2006). In the process of exchange that took place on the local Marae, I was impressed by the kaumatua’s understanding of the web-like relationships between the worlds of digital art and the natural, the mythical and the cosmological, through which they artfully wove their poetic, and prophetic oral responses. This experience reinforced the resonance of the rhizomatic network enmeshed in the digital realm, the complex matrixial universe and indigenous culture.

The interconnections that are made between the expression of the voice and listening is also explored in Grosz’s latest book Becoming undone (2011). Grosz’s exploration of Darwinian and Deleuzian philosophies suggests a posthuman position. Like Braidotti, Grosz draws listening into her discussion. Listening becomes a potential counter-culture to the ocularcentric regime of the global village we inhabit and a spatialisation of acoustic relationships in a threshold space. Through musical laws, she introduces a concept of life through the writing of Baltic German biologist, Jakob van Uexkull.

Composed of ‘various tones, frequencies, forms of organic resonance’ Uexkull describes a world of tunes with which a

7 The residency began with a Powhiri, to welcome us to the area by the local hapu, at the Owae Marae. Here the artists at SCANZ introduced their work to Māori elders (kaumatua) and tangata whenua (people of the place that we were visiting).
FIGURE 48: *Listening for Disappearing* (#2), Auckland, May 2014
creature can resonate through its own ego - or I-tone or quality [Ich-Ton], (Grosz, 2012, p. 176). Grosz goes on to explore Uexkull's theories of the living body as 'species-specific', ‘each species singing its own tune’ a tune that Uexkull names the Umwelt (2012, p. 178). Grosz perceives each species as participating in a greater harmony or orchestra of life. Relationships are manifested through sound as a chorus or harmonies of the collective species-specific tunes which determine mobility and activity. Grosz explores Uexhull's thesis through movement, drawing connections with the shape of the middle ear and the way that humans organise themselves in space and time. Grosz identifies three directional planes that map our coordination of three-dimensional space, and that are directly related to the shape of the human specific semicircular middle ear canal (2012, p. 182). Digital technologies transmute our experiences of space (as was observed in the difference between listening somatically and listening prosthetically at the beginning of this chapter), and shift, extend and intensify the scope of our bodies. As the potential of our perception takes on different projections, our human 'species-specific' territories are recomposed.

Like Braidotti, Grosz and Neumark, in her book *Theatres of Immanence*, Laura Cull looks to Deleuze through whom she interrogates the complexity in thinking a boundary between animal (or other) and human (Cull, 2011, p. 117). Cull contributes to the critique of BwO through her analysis of the work of Butoh artist and writer Hijikata Tatsumi who strategically positions dance practice as an ‘aimless use of the body’ (Hijikata in Barber in Cull 2010, p. 23). Like Braidotti's nomadic theory, Cull, through Hijikata identifies the capacity in the aimlessness of the moving body as a politics for performance practice. Through Butoh dance, Hijikata proposes a counter culture to the ‘production-oriented society we live in’ (Cull, 2010, p. 114). As Cull suggests, perhaps what Deleuze and Guattari solicited through the BwO, like Hijikata's interpretation, is a recovery of ‘the body’s productive capacities from their appropriation by an increasingly capitalist social order’ (Cull, 2010, p. 114).

Cull reflects on Hijikata's performance method as temporal and perpetually shifting, not as a representation of other body's movement, rather as a means to ‘locate new and unfamiliar ways of moving’ (Cull, 2011, p. 107). Never resting on a fixed image, ‘becoming animal in performance involves new ways of being in and out of time, in doing so, exploring how we might expand, extend or otherwise alter our human powers of perception and sensation alongside those of nonhuman animals’ (Cull, 2011, p. 110). In my experience of Butoh and Body Weather Training as a dancer, the transformative process of becoming ‘other’ was attempted through extreme processes of physical exertion and duration. In the Body Weather training that has been passed on to me by New Zealand dance artists Michael Parmenter, Lyne Pringle and Charles Koroneho, different ways of reaching an ‘altered state’ were practised. Sometimes extreme exhaustion was a means to find what I now identify as the limits of sustainability. Slowing the
dance down was another approach to the limits of the sensate, so that movement became imperceptible to the external eye and offered ‘other’ ways of perceiving the frame of the body.

4.11 The unspeakable threshold

In the arts, in Butoh as discussed above, and in choreography, that which is ‘unrepresentable may find representation in a type of dreamwork which makes visible’ (Smith, 1998, 59). In the impossibility of bringing the unrepresentable into language, we have to ‘reinvent language, to reveal hidden territories introducing the exorbitant and the unknown’ (ibid). How might these unknown territories be expressed in the conditions of choreauratics?

Braidotti, Kristeva and Agamben contribute to the notions of the threshold, through different routes, each scoping the impossibility in the unspeakable, the unsayable, the imperceptible, the unspoken. The critical spatialisation of the threshold is thought of as ‘a field of forces’ for the recovery of the subject, or even a mechanism for going beyond the subject (Agamben, 1999, p. 147). Braidotti appeals to the necessity of limits as a way to create relationship, of ‘one’s capacity to affect and be affected’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 307). While the permeable and transient nature of these boundaries might at times appear indistinct, they never disappear entirely, existing as complex, unfixed thresholds. Kristeva and Agamben’s conditions of the threshold offer further readings of the territories of the body, language and space, helping to navigate the conditions of the threshold within a choreauratic practice.

Kristeva thinks through the limits of language, problematising the process of signification as fixed and focused on productivity. Rather, she seeks out the poetic, the expression of the unspeakable, ‘constantly seeking to maximise the living organism’s capacities’ (Barrett, 2011, p. 160).

In Agamben’s reading of the threshold, he identifies the impossibility of the subject as ‘a zone of indistinction’ between the human and the inhuman, between the speaking subject and the living subject. Agamben’s notion of ‘bare life’ proposes the limits of human life as a threshold condition. Agamben draws on the personal accounts of Primo Levi in a discourse of the aporia of the witness, the archive and the testimony as experienced through the atrocities of Auschwitz. The Muselmann implicates a process of desubjectification, suggesting the impossibility of giving account of the ruination of the self within the catastrophe of the subject.

Agamben looks to the sheer exhaustion and malnutrition of the Muselmann, defined by the edges of life, that Agamben named ‘bare life’. Returning to the Butoh dancer Tatsumi Hijikata, as first introduced in this thesis through Cull, the conditions of the boundaries between animal (or other) and human is explored.

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8 A term used for prisoners of the Nazi concentration camps ‘whose humanity has been completely destroyed’ through the point of near starvation in what Agamben describes as ‘the gray zone’ (Agamben 1999, p. 133) ‘desubjectified and silenced’ (Agamben, 1999, p. 120).
as a life limit. The origins of Butoh have been widely attributed to the catastrophic bombing of Hiroshima in World War II. Treading lightly here and by no means undermining the gravity of the mass genocide at Auschwitz, Hiroshima was another devastating consequence of World War II, an unspeakable genocide with another massive death toll. Counter to common belief author Bruce Baird identifies that while Hiroshima has certainly contributed to the evolution of Butoh, that to attribute Butoh to the ‘post-atomic spectacle would be to rob it of much of its ethical, political, and philosophical force’ (Baird, 2012, p. 200). Baird suggests a more ethical and multifarious view, where the study of Butoh looks to the rhizome of everyday events as a ‘wide web of interconnecting relationships’ that shape society in a ‘universality of suffering’ (2012, p. 201).

Sondra Fraleigh who has studied with Hijikata’s counterpart Kazuo Ohno, suggests the Butoh dancer’s process of metamorphosis ‘cultivates movements of transformation and healing’ (Fraleigh, 2010, p. 3). Braidoti’s underlying ethics of metamorphosis as potential, bolsters Fraleigh’s positive proposal for transformation (Braidotti, 2011, p. 314). A poetic and transcendent dance form, the Butoh process invites a bodily thinking, or as Hijikata often puts it ontologically (and like Cull’s Deleuzian view of a Butoh body as a BwO), ‘the body that becomes’ (Fraleigh, 2010, p. 3). Fraleigh introduces the Zen word Ma as ‘the global connective tissue of butoh’ (2010, p. 6). Ma is translated as the space between, a passage space that is not limited to a spatial or perceptual concept’ (Fraleigh, 2010, p. 6). East comes together with the West here in the potential for these threshold spaces to work rhizomatically. Ma and chora inform one another, and the indigenous language of the land in which I stand, pae, (a threshold space introduced earlier in this chapter), is entwined in this research in a matrixial complexity.

Through the capacity to have or not have language, Agamben implies the potential for subjectification within the complexity of the outside and inside of language. In Greek outside literally means “at the threshold”. The outside therefore is not thought of as a space that resides beyond a determinate space, but rather, as Agamben explains, like Grosz and Plato, it is the passage itself. Agamben proposes that the impossibility of the testimony, or the witness, founds the potential of the poetic, of another way of knowing that is located beyond language.

Braidoti is critical of Agamben’s notion of the threshold as anthropocentric, suggesting that his reflection of the Muselmann feeds the philosophy of mortality as ‘a liminal state of not-life’ (2011, p. 333) that is ‘fuelled by an economy of loss and melancholia’ (Braidoti, 2006, p.13). Rather she offers a post anthropocentric position where life is thought of within an ethics of sustainability suggesting that the position of the ‘I’ and the human is shifted from the individual to multiple relationships. Positing Agamben’s notion of bare life in Hijikata’s terms might help loosen the singularity of the ‘I’ of the subject. As in Braidotti’s earlier descriptions of the
nomadic subject, there becomes a process whereby the subject becomes empty, a receptacle, like the chora that possibilises the conditions of the material. In my experience of Butoh and particularly Body Weather® training, the process of attempting to release the ego through altered states, conditions the body to become a receptacle for the ’other’. Hijikata suggests that when he dances, ‘I carry all the dead with me’ (Fraleigh, 2010, p. 2). I would consider then that through Braidotti’s nomadic thinking, Hijikata’s notion of a life that is not life and Kristeva’s expression of the unspeakable, there might also become a transformative process in reconsidering Agamben’s limits, that could extend to the posthuman, where the imperceptible can surface.

How might this notion of desubjectification be understood in the contemporary posthuman terrain of the digital? Digital devices have the capacity to activate the unspeakable and to extend the subject into the imperceptible substrata of the places we inhabit. Hitlab’s CityViewAR, in Christchurch City, New Zealand offers a screen-based example of activating the imperceptible (www.hitlabnz.org). This is an augmented reality experience that locates the viewer’s position in Christchurch City after the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. Using an android phone and GPS tracking, the user can remap the buildings of Christchurch that have been destroyed, as well as calling up the histories, making visible the layers of the city that have disappeared with the lost architecture.

The choreoauratic scores in this research incite both listening through digital devices and multiple gestures that become poetic, unspeakable forces of the body and the site. Kristeva’s notion of the ‘sensory cavern’ comes into force in digital headphonic sound spaces. The cocooning characteristics of listening through headphones are expressed as the pre-verbal space of the ‘chora’ that becomes a place of sensation (Smith, 1998, p. 60). Drawing on Derrida’s notion that ‘It is the ear of the other that signs,’ the practice of listening, mediated by headphones, activates a choric manifestation, where participants mobilise the scores and come together in chorus with site, in signing with each other and the virtual space (Derrida, 1985, p. 51).

4.12 The acoustic in transit

Resisting ‘the spread of visualization technologies on a global scale’ challenges binary thinking in which positive and negative, seen and unseen, symbolic and material seek a ‘historical politics of truth’ (Braidotti, 2001, p. 114). The mechanism of an acoustic threshold invites resistance to ocularcentric ways of knowing (discussed earlier) where vision, as Irigaray suggests, caresses proximity, and distances us from our sense of place (Braidotti,
Rather, strategies are explored that lead towards an attunement to listening, opening possibilities for a different way of perceiving towards molecular and minor ways of becoming.\textsuperscript{11} The terrain of ‘sound and music technology’ present ‘untapped resources for the subversion of dominant modes of representation’ Braidotti argues (2002, p. 246). Listening prosthetically brings with it a bodily listening, as well as a more literal acoustic listening, where shifting intensities of the sensate become perceptible.

\textit{The architecture was dramatised. For me the St James Theatre moved and had life... slowing down and a meditative feeling. It made me relax, notice things more and find beauty and drama in something I normally pass by.}

Participant’s response, Listening to Disappearing, Festival of Uncertainty, May 2014.

In somatic practices this kind of attunement to the senses through movement, (the imperceptible vibratory movement of sound waves that travel from the outside to the inside of the body is included in this movement spectrum) activates attention in a terpsichore between perception and sensing (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 114). These sensate states embody Braidotti’s theory of a nomadic methodology, of new figurations of body and perception.

\begin{quote}
Innate to the politics of the acoustic space is the transition. Braidotti locates sound as always in transit (2011, p. 106), and as a way of summarising the ‘paradoxes of nomadic subjectivity as simultaneously external and singular’, as ‘pervasive’, ‘interconnected’ and ‘intimate’ (Braidotti, 2002, p. 106-107). The provocation to think across these proximities sustains an ongoing practice-driven inquiry of choreoaauratics.
\end{quote}

Pivotal to this research journey is the question; how might digital infrastructures and somatically informed choreography come together to rethink the politics of place and community through listening? In the wired, virtual and hyper-connected spaces we encounter in contemporary life, I suggest that we have always been connected, networked and dispersed through the practice of listening.

\begin{quote}
Focusing on the way we sense through listening and through kinaesthetic and proprioceptive tuning, these territories are perceived as porous rather than fixed and are read as thresholds and hinge spaces (Labelle, 2010) that test the limits of what makes us human and the way we make connections in the world.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{11} Braidotti translates the Deleuzian notion of the Molecular line as ‘the other – “that of becoming, nomadic subjectivity and potentia’ (Braidotti 2011, p. 84). She suggests that in a Deleuzian sense, the Molar/Majority as the standard and the Molecular/Minority as the other in the sense of ‘the other of the same’ (ibid). She places emphasis on the ‘becoming-minoritarian as in woman/child/animal/imperceptible’ (2011, p. 85). The nomadic subject is described as ‘non-unitary yet politically engaged and ethically accountable’, one that attempts to dismantle the ‘unitary structure of a classical view of the subject’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 84). Braidotti infers that the process of becoming nomadic is ‘a-subjective, beyond conceived notions of individuality’ (ibid).
FIGURES 49 & 50 (previous page): *Listening for Disappearing (#2)*, May 2014, Auckland
Introduction: 
A series of Test-events

Meanwhile, the Zen pupil, often a wanderer, listens differently, stilling herself to consider the sonic eventfulness of growing grass.
(Ronnell, 1995, p. 114)

This section of the thesis reflects on a practice-led journey, leading us, the writer and the reader together through the performance remains of a series of twelve test-events that have taken place over four years. From Prague to Chichester, to Sydney and back to Auckland and twice south to Dunedin. Imbricated in the process of a testing practice, the choreoauratic events have evolved over the duration of this creative research and I have divided them into three distinct categories that question different conditions. These I am naming as follows; mnemonic choreoauratics, nomadic choreoauratics and social choreoauratics. The following three chapters discuss the test-events arranged according to these terms. In organising the practice in this way, this chapter serves as an introduction to the choreoauratic test-events as a method.

The participants in these test-events are invited to perform a series of operations that mobilise the internalised language of the sound score through movement provocations. Negotiating their own perception and the social space they inhabit together they become part of a movement chorus. Contained by the headphonic sound, the participant’s moving body becomes the threshold between an intimate and private sound space and a social and civic spatiality. Within this structure the subjects are dispersed in the exchange between the voices heard through the headphones, the perceptions of the participant and the interaction of the community body with the site, who disappear and appear. The subjects are always in acts of becoming; ruptured, fractured, doubled and multiplied through the voice and action. Kristeva’s theorisation of the subject as split between the symbolic and semiotic disposition, asserts the potential for this work for reconfiguring perceptions of what it means to be human.

This research considers how choreographic practice might create a discourse between somatically informed choreography and prosthetic listening towards a more response(able) way of becoming (as introduced in Chapter 1). It opens a politic for perceptual performance practices and creative technologies and questions what new forms of response(able) becomings might emerge as part of this discourse?²

¹ Rebecca Schneider’s discussion on the remains of live performance in the context of performance studies is considered in the debate around the accuracy and rather ‘lack’ of the archive or documentation of a live event. This is explored in greater force in Chapter 2.

² The notion of becoming is included in this chapter through Massumi’s rationale for the event. Later in the chapter, we explore the relationship of the subject within Massumi’s event space as always becoming. Further to this, in A Thousand Plateaus (translated by Brian Massumi) Deleuze and Guattari describe becomings in relation with a smooth space or a plane of consistency. The 7.9 becomings, which have neither culmination nor subject, but draw one another into zones of proximity.
Test-events 01 - 12

0.00 This is a hii haa hii story.
This is where we left off, it’s both the beginning
and the end.

Picking up the remains, we arrive and begin again.
This is a place to stand.
Here once an edge, where the water and the land
meet.

A vein coursing down the hill
Along your arm from the south east, a tributary.

Excerpt from E-Bodies: Listen up, tune in, play on and slow down
performance walk/presentation, Eastwest Somatics Symposium, The
University of Otago, Dunedin February 2013

An account and critical reflection of the test-events performed
throughout this doctoral research is arranged into the three
following chapters, mnemonic choreoauratics, nomadic
choreoauratics and social choreoauratics. The series of situated
sonic social choreographies have been presented in multiple
situations, as part of symposiums, exhibitions or festivals and
as independent events and have invited invaluable peer critique
and feedback. The next three chapters reflect on this process,
through reperforming the remains of these events through writing,
still photographs, audio recordings, notations of participant’s
reflections, a collection of remains of test-events as multiple
mappings, fragments and threads. Schneider acknowledges
the expansion of the document to include ‘the spoken word, the
image, and gesture,’ as ‘the fundamental relationship of remain
to document-ability remains intact’ (2011, p. 97).

Presented nationally and internationally the test-events span
2011 - 2014 as follows:

mnemonic choreoauratics:

1: A Live Recording Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design
and Space, Prague, Czech Republic, June 2011

2: Instructions for remembering (forwards) at an evening of
curated choreographic works with an auditory theme, - Hear
Me, The Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland, New
Zealand July 2011

3: Coming to our senses at SEAM 2011, The Drill Hall,
Rushcutters Bay, Sydney, Australia, September 2011

4: Instructions for (re)membering (#1) at The Performance
Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland, New Zealand, October 2011

5: Instructions for (re)membering (#2) A provisional year PhD
presentation of the practice, The Old Folks Association hall,
Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand, November 2011
FIGURE 51: Coming to our Senses, SEAM, Sydney, September 2011
6: Instructions for (re)membering (#3) A Social Choreography for the Ears, Kenneth Myers Centre, Shortland St, Auckland, New Zealand, June 2012

7: Instructions for (re)membering (#4) A Social Choreography for the Ears, University of Chichester, Chichester, UK, June 2012

nomadic choreoauratics:

8: E-Bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on, performance walk/presentation, Eastwest Somatics Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, February 2013

9: A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, Performance Presentation, Aotearoa Digital Artists AGM, Dunedin, New Zealand, September 2013

social choreoauratics:

10: Listening for Disappearing (#1) - A social choreography for the ears, Performance Presentation, The Festival of Uncertainty, Auckland, New Zealand, March 2014

11: Listening for Disappearing (#2) - A social choreography for the ears, Performance Presentation, PhD Presentation, Auckland, New Zealand, May 2014

12: Listening to Disappearing (#3) - A social choreography for the ears, Aotearoa Digital Artists AGM, Auckland, New Zealand, September 2014

Accounting for these test-events activates a process of reflection, of critical engagement, and of material remains. This performance manuscript makes an account of all twelve test-events that work nomadically.

In this section I hope to bring the theories discussed in the previous chapters to the notion of a bodily listening, implying that listening isn’t limited to just the ears, and find ways to discuss the sensate, the unspeakable experience of augmented bodily listening.

These test-events focus on participation through listening and moving and call up the politics of the spectacle, as discussed through Debord and Rancière. With attention to inciting a sociality through these test-events the dissolution of the spectator’s role is intensified. In attempts to unsettle the spectacular and to dissolve the power of the gaze, the test-events work towards activating a space for coming together and enabling a recovery of place through subtle choreoauratic scores.

Committed to the invisible, the marginal and the gaps between, these test-events explore the politics of time, place and body. Fleeting shifts in tension, awareness and perception
are magnified through an unspectacular practice. Imperceptible speed and flows become more apparent as we tune to in our own limits of respons(ability) through engaging in doing less.

SECTION B: Notes on Performing Documentation

When we approach performance not as that which disappears (as the archive expects), but as both the act of remaining and a means of re-appearance and “reparticipation” (though not a metaphysic of presence) we are almost immediately forced to admit that remains do not have to be isolated to the document, to the object, to bone versus flesh.

(Schneider, 2011, p. 101).

The theoretical substructure of what constitutes a live event and how it might be documented has already been discussed in Chapter 2. How can the work meet archival and documentation expectations while remaining faithful to one of the core theoretical concerns, that is to reconsider the ocularcentric through an attunement to listening? This becomes an going-concern in the test-events and the way this is negotiated is discussed in this section in relation to the praxis.

In the first series, mnemonic choreauratics which took place between 2011 and 2012 I make attempts at documenting the work in the standard academic modes (as discussed in Chapter 2), making video recordings and also taking still photographs (with the exception of the test-event A live recording in Prague in June 2011 where I rely on stills only because of the complexity of the exhibition format). Instructions for (re)membering (forwards): a
A slide show is presented in Auckland in August 2011 and features in a curated evening *Hear Me* that is part of an experimental performance series held at *The Old Folks Association* hall. The event is documented with video footage by the production team. Consequently, I have no control over this, but because of the way the performance event is established, following more conventional production structures the presence of the video camera doesn’t appear intrusive.

In this work I position myself overtly within its centre. My role in the work is complicated through its multiplicity, as author in the sound recordings, participating in the work and documenting the work. Testing different ways to record these test-events questions how documentation can take place without impacting on the experience of the test-event. The impact of the camera, a prosthetic attachment to my body, affects my status, confusing my multiple position as performer, witness and voyeur. The camera extends the gaze, amplifying the role of watching and obscuring the relationship between audience and performer. The documentation process becomes inextricable from the process of presenting the work.

In September, *Coming to our Senses* is presented at SEAM 2011 in Sydney. In this test-event I document the work with both a stills camera and a video camera. As you will read in the next chapter, the framework for this test-event is independent from other presentations in the symposium, and the architecture of the space offers greater agency for the set up and for the participants. The video camera is operated on a locked off tripod by a colleague while I document the work with still photographs. In this case I hold the camera to my face, looking through the lens, consciously framing my images. As in the *Hear Me* event I experience a feeling of the camera isolating me from the others in the room. The obvious presence that the camera has in the work troubles me as it conspicuously signifies a scopic focus, when the choreoauratic ontology argues against the scopic.

The fourth test-event *Instructions for (re)remembering (#1)* was presented as part of *The Performance Arcade* in October in 2011. The framework for this event is intimate. Set up in an empty shipping container, most participants perform the choreoauratic score in their own timing either on their own or at most in pairs. I ask each participant individually if they mind me documenting their participation in the work. I receive varied responses, most feel more comfortable not being recorded in this intimate structure. As a consequence, most of the documentation of this test-event is of colleagues performing the work, which fortifies the difficulty that the presence of a camera implicates inside a participatory encounter.

In *Instructions for (re)membering (#2)* in Auckland at the Old Folks Association hall I persevere with the problem of video documentation and still photographs as the primary means to document the work. The same difficulties come up, the camera
alters my role in the work, positioning me outside it. The video camera, positioned on the outside of the choreography, catches the formations that occur in the choreographic scores in a two-dimensional way. The camera misses the kinaesthetic sensations and the sonic and social experiences of the participatory encounters that are essential in the research. The video footage becomes arbitrary. The still photographs seem to capture a stronger essence of the event.

The following year in 2012, I present the sixth test-event Instructions for (re)membering (#3), at the Kenneth Myers Centre in Auckland. I witness again from the ‘outside’ armed with the camera. The space becomes uncannily silent, as the participants, wearing headphones listen inwards. There is a tension in watching, a strong feeling of being other as I watch the choreography metamorphosing in the space. To document the test-event I take still photographs from the centre of my body (shooting from the hip), not wanting to raise the camera to my eyes in an attempt to use the camera as a prosthetic extension of my body as a whole, as opposed to drawing attention to the gaze. I persevere with a video recording that is shot with a camera on a tripod, with no camera operator as a way of diminishing the impact of the camera in the space. Consequently the footage is even less effective than the earlier attempts. I also add another mode of documenting the work. At the completion of the score I invite the participants to give their feedback, guided by several broad questions such as...

- How well could you hear the audio?
- Were there instructions that seemed unclear?
- If so did this concern you?
- Did any instructions feel challenging or uncomfortable to you?
- Physically, emotionally or culturally? If so, please explain.
- Any further comments?

These very basic questions opened up a space for participants to offer feedback. ‘Any further comments?’ prompted the participants to respond to the work and generated the most cognizant responses. One participant commented that at times the social pull to belong with or be in sync with the other bodies in the space was greater than following the audio score itself. A few experienced performance anxiety around fulfilling the instructions, which seemed to disrupt the sense of attunement. These early experiments that included participant’s feedback as part of the process of creating an archive of the test-events was developed further throughout the series as another form of documentation.

Instructions for (re)membering (#3) is developed as Instructions for (re)membering (#4), and is presented in Chichester, in the UK in late June. In addition to my own process of documenting the work on the stills camera, (again shot from the hip) I set up a covert video camera on a locked-off wideshot to capture the test-

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3 The centre is a term that is used often in contemporary dance practices and identifies the pelvis area as the focal point for where movement stems from, this was prevalent in my dance training and came through a lineage of Graham and Hawkins technique.
At this point in the research process, despite the idea that relying on video footage as a way of evidencing the work seemed at odds with the philosophy of my practice, I set up a covert video camera on a locked-off wide shot to capture the test-event. Although it was tempting to eliminate any visual representation at all (as a polemic positioning to the ocularcentric) I decided this was too risky in the academic context of providing evidence of the work. This was the last test-event that was documented with video. By this time I had ascertained that the video footage was ineffectual and betrayed the research philosophies that had now become established.

In 2013 I begin the second series of test-events, nomadic choreauratics in Dunedin. I take part in E-Bodies: Listen up, tune in, play on and slow down as a witness. Taking on the role of witness, and doubled as author again created tension in my relationship with the participants. This raises the question that remains throughout this research process, how is it possible to both reflect on the creative effects of the test-event as well document the event as a record of its occurrence without also becoming subject to it? As maker and author, I am already activated in the sound score. This creates a doubling of myself by participating materially (physically) and virtually (digitally) in the work. Doubling the subject, disassembles its conditions, complicating the politics of subjectivity.

Agamben’s writing on the witness helps to think through the impossibility of the subject caught in this threshold space, through headphonic sound, through witnessing and experiencing the limits of where body and place come together. The struggle of ‘being - within an outside’ (Agamben, 1993, p. 67) is exaggerated by the thresholds that are manifest as the conditions of the scopic and the sonic meet.

The process of documenting these live participatory test-events continues to be entangled in the politics of the visual and modes for representation. In the eighth test-event, A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, presented in Dunedin in September I introduce another strategy, inviting the participants to contribute to the documentation process. The participants were given small pads of post-it notes and a pencil at the beginning of the walk. They were invited to reflect on the sound, the walk, what they saw, the feeling in their bodies, and anything else that came to mind. They were free to do this at any stage during or after the event. The results were rewarding, offering insights to the encounters through multiple senses and this created a significant shift in thinking through the documentation process. The responses to this task revealed the level of engagement with the work from the participants. This was evident in the text they left on the post it notes, (see the transcriptions of these on page 183 and figure 98, page 184 and figure 102, page 186). The observations that participants made captured the feeling of what it was to activate the choreauratic
score and seemed to enable a greater sense of respons(ability) in the encounter and a deeper sense of agency in the process.

The last three test-events were located outside the St James Theatre in Lorne St in 2014. Building on the success of participatory documentation in Dunedin I attempted to set up a similar scenario. The ninth test-event is part of *The Festival of Uncertainty* and because of the timing around other events there is less space to facilitate a documentation process for the participants. However, some participants send me reflections after the event via email. With increasing clarity around the imbrication of the documentation process and the test-event itself I investigate effective ways to weave this into the work. In these last three test-events I integrated this type of participation into the audio score, suggesting that the participants choose a piece of chalk and draw and write their messages for the city into the walls of the St James. This became a way of extending the choreographic gesture into writing, and of creating a trace that remains, marking the site through the participant’s movement. Facilitating agency in the participants to become part of the writing, possibilises, as noted earlier in Foster’s *Choreographing History*, ‘a body that is written upon but that also writes’ (1995, p. 15). This presents potentially new directions for the body in critical studies, involving the body as a political agent that might resist or participate in cultural production (ibid). Documenting the participants making the marks, and the marks that they leave behind allows these writings to become part of the future choreauratic scores, in the sense that was recognised in Heathfield’s proposal that provision be made for a future version of the event (2012, p. 237).
5.0 Introduction

The six test-events listed below form the scaffold of this chapter. These test-events attend to; prosthetic and somatic listening, social choreography and performing remains.

• *A Live Recording*, Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, Veletržní Palace, Prague, Czech Republic, June 2011

• *Instructions for (re)membering (forwards)* An evening of curated choreographic works with an auditory theme, - Hear Me, The Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand July 2011

• *Coming to our Senses* at SEAM 2011 The Drill Hall, Rushcutters Bay, Sydney, Australia, September, 2011

• *Instructions for (re)membering (#1)* at The Performance Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland, New Zealand, October 2011

• *Instructions for (re)membering (#2)* A provisional year PhD presentation of the practice, The Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand, November 2011

• *Instructions for (re)membering (#3)*, A Social Choreography for the Ears, Kenneth Myers Centre, Shortland St, Auckland, New Zealand, June 2012
FIGURE 54: A Live Recording, Listening to Tape loops prepared for PQ11, Prague, June, 2011
5.1 TEST-EVENT 01: A Live Recording
Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, Prague, Czech Republic, June 2011

This processual compilation of choreoauratics began with analogue tape loops listened to on almost outmoded walkmans (see figures 55 - 56). The sound scores were vocal choreographies, designed to mobilise bodies through the choreographic traces of digitised architectural remains. These architectural traces mapped a collection of colonial theatres in Auckland into the Veletržní Palace in Prague as part of the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (PQ11). These traces were originally made with a mobile security camera that was attached to my body, tuned into the space using radio frequencies to create remote video recordings of these architectural icons of theatre and of a colonial time in the antipodes.

Surfing sound waves to see, improvising these theatre spaces with my body, I worked at undoing the architectural codes of the theatre through actions such as lying down, walking, running, turning, climbing over seats, performing in the auditorium, scribing the architecture, feeling the invisible histories, the textures and smells using my body. Taking the movement remains from the remote video footage, I transcribed these choreographic architectural responses into words, by translating the movement remains from the video footage into instructional text-based movement scores. Giving these transcriptions a voice, the words were transcribed back into the body, where they vibrated and resonated with my vocal cords. Caught by a microphone as the words left my body, they were channelled through a digital process, the oral recordings were then selected, cut, repeated, and transformed into audio recordings. These choreoauratic audio scores were then transmitted to other bodies using headphones and tape loops, dropping into ear canals, coursing through connective tissue. They tracked sonically, through bones, through cartilage, reverberating and activating folds and creases in the body and simultaneously into the shadows and forms of dilapidated theatre buildings.

The scores brought listening to these architectures, they stimulated (re)membering¹ and sonically mapped space as potential acts of recovery. Bringing the audience² to listening as the word suggests, these choreoauratic scores work at coming together, spatially, socially and politically.

¹ (re)membering is considered as a re-membering of the body, a return to the embodied.
² n. late 14c., “the action of hearing,” from Old French audience, from Latin audentia “a hearing, listening,” present participle of audire “to hear” “to perceive physically, grasp,” from root *au- “to perceive” “to feel,” “openly, evidently.” Old Church Slavonic javiti “to reveal.” Meaning “formal hearing or reception” is from late 14c.; that of “persons within hearing range, assembly of listeners” is from early 15c. (French audience retains only the older senses). Sense transferred 1855 to “readers of a book.” Audience-participation (adj.) first recorded 1940.
FIGURE 55: (opposite page):
*A Live Recording*, Tape loops prepared for PQ11, Prague, June, 2011
FIGURE 56: A Live Recording, Tape loops prepared for PQ11, Prague, 2011
This first test, titled *A Live Recording*, was exhibited at the *PQ11* in Prague in the Czech Republic over two weeks in June 2011. This test-event was the beginning of the series and introduced some important principles and philosophies to the work.

Sited in the *Veletržní Palace*, Prague’s National Gallery, the *PQ11* exhibition event was strongly constituted, contained and limited by a dominating architectural rubric (the exhibition was presented in a large museum, architecturally monumental, made of marble and concrete, several stories high and also housing the works of renowned artists of the 20th and 21st Century). The test-event, was situated in this ‘expo’ format amongst international exhibits and spread across the city in locations with hundreds of participants. The exhibition environment fortified the agency of architectural codes and imposed on the way the test-event was received.

Situating these subtle sonic choreographies in this gallery framework reiterated the force that the contextual framework has on the practice. The test-event became determined by the dominating spatial prescription, the monumental, the exhibition format and the ocularcentric. *A Live Recording* relied on haptic and kinaesthetic participation, through picking up the walkmans, wearing the headphones, and taking time to listen and respond. The conditions of the Palace innately counter-posed this, coded in such a way that a gallery space implies a look but don’t touch politic. The intensely populated and spectacular expo style event proved to work in opposition to an order that worked lightly, responding to the unspectacular, the fleeting and the disappearing.

The participants that did engage with the work entered into a quiet zone, a place where listening provided a shift from the overtly scopic environment. A departure from the visual overload of hundreds of displays, the headphonic scores offered an alternative frequency through listening. During the exhibition I relocated the walkmans to an empty exhibition space. With more space around them, the public seemed less inhibited by the group exhibits multiple messages. More free to participate they put the headphones on and listened in.

The exhibition at *PQ11* drew attention to the impact that the spatial context has on the body and how these choreoaauratic scores might invite a space for listening and coming together. The importance of the spatial context was tested throughout the series of test-events over the next three years.
Figures 57 - 59: Instructions for (re)membering (forwards): a slide show, Old Folks Association hall, Gundry Street, Auckland, August 2011
5.2 TEST-EVENT 02: *Instructions for re-membering (forwards): a slide show*, Hear Me, Live Series, Old Folks Association hall, Gundry Street, Auckland, New Zealand, August 2011.

*Becca Wood’s in-the-round Instructions for re-membering (forwards): a slide show is arguably the most experimental work of the evening, dealing as it does with the absence of the expected, the way sound conjures presence for us, and the way our memories of places are embodied in the movements we share with others.*

(Whyte, Theatreview, 2011)

In an open discussion facilitated at the end of the evening’s programme where *Instructions for (re)membering (forwards): a slide show* had just been presented, I am asked why I have a problem with ‘theatricality?’ (I had said this flippantly while discussing a previous question from someone else.) I have to ask myself what I mean by the theatrical? Theatre stems from the Greek word theatron, or a place for viewing. The dominance of the spectacle in theatre, distances the spectator from the performer and privileges the ocular as a strategy for perception. Rancière calls for a different theatre. In his book *The Emancipated Spectator*, Rancière rethinks the ‘passive optical relationship implied’ by the term, suggesting another relationship, where the spectator is transformed into an active community body ‘enacting its living principle’ (2009, p. 3 & 5). This reevaluating of theatre is manifested around the prescriptive behaviour and expectations of space that we have come to understand through theatre history, the social, and through architecture. The theatrical liturgy suggests specific behaviours and activities. It is this coding I am interested in unravelling, its expectations I am interested in rethinking.

*Instructions for re-membering (forwards): a slide show* (August 2011) is situated in a very different context from the previous example, programmed within a live-curated performance evening in Auckland, New Zealand. The adjustment in the title points to a strategic shift based on reflections made following Prague. Presented in a programme of a selection of choreographic works, the governing title imposed an auditory theme, *Hear Me*. Thematically, this seemed to be an appropriate fit for my sonic choreographies. *Instructions for (re)membering (forwards): a slide show* was ‘performed’ by a small group of four ‘performers’. *Hear Me* was the second event in a year long programme, Live Series, presented by the Producing Project, aimed at supporting the development of hybrid experimental performance genres.

The spatial configuration of this test-event strengthened a) my understanding of spatial and social codes and their implications for the work and b) the roles of spectator and audience. In this new scenario, the conditions of the evening’s programme framed how the test might be viewed and performed. While the test-event at *PQ11* suffered from the manifestation of codes...
embodied in the art museum architecture and the expo style format, this test-event was also charged, by the conditions of the theatrical, despite being situated in an experimental performance venue that doubles as an Old Folks Association hall (OFA). The event was arranged in a manner that, while it broke with some codes of theatre, remained bound by traditional production values, with a relatively passive audience, lighting and sound cues and a production team to make all of this happen. The OFA is a tired but significant heritage building and example of modernist architecture, designed by Czech architect Heinrich (“Henry”) Kulka in 1953. In the last decade the hall has become an alternative hub ‘for some of the most cutting-edge, experimental performances in the city’ (McAllister, 2013).

Although the building doesn’t subscribe to conventional performance codes, this was the first time I had presented a sonic choreography in a linear time-based programme with a seated audience (somewhat informally in the round and on the floor on cushions), who I assume, had arrived with some expectation of a performance. The context presented me with new conditions, some of which played out as conventional performance strategies.

I cued the performers to begin as an ensemble in a typically theatrical manner. The performers followed the instructions on the headphones, (re)membering, mapping my spatial memories through their movement actions. Field sound recordings of my travels worked as a background ‘soundtrack’ for the audience. Choreographic images unfolded through the actions of the moving bodies in space. The manner in which the participants executed the movement appeared to operate in a space where listening was so immersive that the participants seemed to experience a tuning and quickening of their ability to take in each other and their surroundings. Braidotti describes this in Chapter 4 as the ‘principles of mobility’, where the ‘I’ diminishes and the subjective becomes nomadic and in a potential space of transformation (2011, p. 235).

Adrian Heathfield observes that the ‘continuing breakout by artists from institutional places of performance production, whether in relation to galleries or theatres, is about a challenge to the propriety of place and its operation upon its inhabitants’ (Heathfield, 2004, p. 10). Heathfield’s position resonates with my own labour to initiate ways of loosening spatial codes through prosthetics, the sonic and the body.
Instructions for remembering (forwards): A slideshow, Hear Me – Old Folks Association, Gundry St, Auckland-30th July 2011:

I wear an old woollen jersey, jeans and sneakers – deliberately very casual. I’m aware of the social demographic of the audience as they arrive, a mixture of avid dance/performance watchers as well as academics and dance reviewers as they enter the space. I welcome them into the space and offer them a seat. I know about half of the audience. I make a point of welcoming everyone into the space personally and asking the audience to sit down.

On the second performance evening I decide to dress a little more formally while maintaining pedestrian attire. I also take photographs throughout the performance. Perhaps both of these strategies distance me from the audience and the performers. I become acutely aware of the activity of taking photographs, somehow voyeuristic, intrusive, I feel as though I am stealing the performers images.

REFLECTION: Instructions for remembering (forwards), Hear Me – Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland - 29th July 2011
FIGURE 60: Coming to our Senses, SEAM, Sydney, September 2011
5.3 TEST-EVENT 03: *Instructions for (re)membering (#1)*,
SEAM 2011, Critical Paths, The Drill Hall, Rushcutters Bay, Sydney, September 2011

The third test-event is presented at *SEAM 2011*, Critical Paths
The Drill Hall, Rushcutters Bay, Sydney in September 2011. The work is more simply titled *Coming to our senses*. *SEAM 2011: Spacing Movements Outside In* is a three day symposium and part of Critical Path’s annual cross disciplinary research series. The format of the symposium offers greater flexibility for experimenting with the presentation of the test-event than the previous two (at *PQ11* and *Hear Me*). In this test-event, participants have more agency, they are free to come and go as they like within an hour session. The architecture and context are not as heavily prescribed as in the previous test-events, sited in a class-room like space and autonomous from other presentations in the symposium. This gives me more control over how I navigate the way the audience participates.

The participants, all attendees at *SEAM 2011* activate five different choreoauratic scores. They meet, unite, intersect and find syncronicity. With ten MP3 players and five scores (they are repeated) there is a greater complexity within the scores for the participants to work socially.

Walk into the middle of the space
Look around you and notice the other people in the room
Take a moment to stand still
Listen to your breath and the sounds coming from inside your own body
Listen to the instructions carefully
with your arms relaxed in front of you, raise the left foot off the ground
Extend the foot out in front of you
Now put your foot on the ground.
Lie down on the floor on your back
with your left finger tips resting on the left side of your chest
Your right arm down by your side and your palm up facing the sky

Excerpt from *Instructions for (re)membering (#1)*, *SEAM 2011*, The Drill Hall, Rushcutters Bay, Sydney, Australia. September 2011

Some participants took on roles of witnessing. They sat around the edge of the room and watched the spontaneous choreography taking place. Their presence as spectators created a relationship of being inside and outside as they became part of the performance space. Positioned on the periphery, their bodies created a threshold and a way of holding the edges of
FIGURE 61 & 62: Coming to our Senses, SEAM, Sydney, September 2011
the space as well as containing the choreography. Formations
came and went as different movements synced up through the
sound scores, dynamic arrangements appeared and dissolved,
making compositions. The multiple possibilities for participating
in the work presented at SEAM 2011 at Critical Path within the
given hour enabled spontaneous ebbs and flows in pace and
intensity. The room performed group choreographies and as
people completed and left, dynamic solos and duets emerged.

One pair seemed to wait for everyone to leave. They’d
been watching, sitting on the edges of the room, observing
the choreography that had been emerging in the space. One
of them put on a headphone set. Not long afterwards the
other one joined in. By now all of the other participants had
left the space. They began what became a lengthy and lightly
flirtatious duet, both of them trying out the different tracks. I
watched them, enjoying their play, they formed a memorable
choreography together, their concentration and attention to
the movement tasks was engaging to watch as was their input
into how the work materialised. The soundscore that played
over a PA in the space was made up of field recordings. This
worked as a sonic backdrop, a context created through sound. I
considered the duet they made as a kind of coda to the multiple
choreographies that had just taken place in the space before
them. Their dance remained as a perpetuation of the previous
bodies who had traced and (re)membered the remains of remote
places and times. Mapping movement pathways and gestures
the participants doubled space; scenes from photographs taken while travelling Europe, a series of actions made by a collection of different people, some strangers, some friends, held together in my memories, rethought, remembered, voiced and reassembled they formed an embodied collection of memories of places.

My voice was caught intimately on the inside of the participants bodies, words skidding through time and prosthetic technology. Words choreo-graphed, embodied shapes in space, movements across the room, a look, gestures that came and went. My presence in the work as author was doubled temporally through the bodies of the participants, as they made visible their interpretation of my spoken words. The words themselves escaped signification through being recomposed with the body. In this way the space that was carved out by their movement could be said to be ‘operating in an ‘assignifying manner...’ as Massumi identifies where we, ‘make things happen on other, nonlinguistic levels’ (2011, p. 66-67). Alternatively, it might be likened to Kristeva’s pre-verbal choric space discussed in the Chapter 4.

One participant stayed to do every choreographic variation, swapping the MP3 players that were numbered, waiting for the remaining tracks to become available. Some commented, saying it’s a little fast for them to keep up. Some participants said they felt quite calm and peaceful after having performed the choreoauratic score.

Reflecting on this test-event I considered what it might be to change these conditions and questioned what is now at stake in the research? I enjoyed witnessing the moments when it seemed as though a silent sociality had emerged out of the choreography. Connections between friends and strangers in space were fleeting. Transitory reciprocity in space, syncronised through the activity of listening and moving consciously to the choreoauratic score. I speculated on how I might accentuate this connectivity in the choreography. What if I developed the ensemble, would this facilitate a stronger sense of coming together? How might I create greater agency for the participant? The sociality that emerged in this test-event subverts the passivity of the role of the spectator in modern theatre.

FIGURE 63 (opposite page): Instructions for (re)remembering (#1), The Performance Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland City, October 2011
FIGURES 64 - 67: *Instructions for (re)remembering (#1)*, The Performance Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland, October 2011
5.4 TEST EVENT 04: Instructions for (re)remembering (#1), The Performance Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland, New Zealand

Instructions for (re)remembering #1 was presented as part of The Performance Arcade produced by The Playground NZ and was set in a row of shipping containers in Auckland’s Aotea Square in October 2011. The Performance Arcade is a community that engages with Live Art projects that sit somewhere between the performing and the visual arts, neither for the black box of the theatre or the white cube of the gallery (Archer, Goldthorpe, Morgan, Nortje, Simpson and Trubridge retrieved 2014).

Four of the five choreographic scores from Coming to our Senses, September, SEAM 2011 were played in a continuous loop on four MP3 players positioned on boxes in an otherwise empty shipping container.

Coincidentally, The Performance Arcade 2011 shared the Aotea Square, a significant civic site, with another public event. Occupy NZ, was part of a global protest movement Occupy, a peaceful global resistance to capitalism. This movement emerged from an advert in Adbusters3 that called to occupy Wall Street on 17 September 2011. The movement argues for a global shift to revolutionise the world, pursuing the strategy of the Tahrir4 movement to upset the power of Wall Street.

Occupy spread across significant sites around the world, fast turning into an international network against capitalism. In Auckland, this took form as a cluster of tents set up on the grass in the middle of the CBD, in Aotea Square, adjacent to the line-up of shipping containers that made up the temporary structure for The Performance Arcade. Occupy NZ attracted a strong police presence and I imagined this both attracted and perplexed some passers-by to The Performance Arcade, further confusing the usual public use of a civic centre. The Occupy NZ movement subverted the power of the civic structure by using it differently, threatening the codes of this civic space with their durational occupation and domestic use through the activity of sleeping, cooking, gathering and sustained remaining.

Over the one day of my installation as part of The Performance Arcade, some of the other artists involved participated in my test-event. They took the headphones outside into the civic space. I watched them bring the choreographic score to the conditions of the site. In all its confusion, they could have been part of the Occupy NZ movement. They brought attention to themselves
to attack the system like a pack of wolves. There was an alpha male, a wolf who led the pack, and those who followed behind. Now the model has evolved. Today we are one big swarm of people.” - Raimundo Viejo, Pompeu Fabra University Barcelona, Spain Adbusters

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3 Adbusters is a Canadian based anti-consumerist magazine that has been in print since 1989.
4 “The antiglobalization movement was the first step on the road. Back then our model was
FIGURE 68: *Instructions for (re)remembering (#1)*, The Performance Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland, October 2011
through the smallest movements, a fold of the hips, a raising of the hand. These understated gestures spoke loudly in a space that normally orchestrates pedestrianised responses to the site. Playfully placing bodies in this civic site differently unsettled the codes of civic architecture. Like the Occupy NZ these gestures gently pushed at the borders of capitalist infrastructures.
5.5 TEST EVENT 05: Instructions for (re)remembering (#2), Old Folks Association hall, Gundry Street, Auckland, New Zealand

Instructions for (re)remembering (#2) (November 2011) followed the Instructions for (re)remembering (#1) presented as part of The Performance Arcade in Aotea Square. The last test-event in this series it was also the culminating performance for completion of my first year of the PhD. I situated the test-event in The Old Folks Association (OFA) hall in Gundry Street, in the daytime, in natural light, without any theatrical devices apart from a PA to amplify the sound. Using the existing recordings composed for SEAM, Hear Me and The Performance Arcade, I added one additional choreoauratic score into the composition. The instructions in the additional sound score tested a distinct choreographic dynamic. Less prescriptive, this track offered greater agency for the participant and was available to multiple performers who were able to join together in the same choreoauratic score.

The spatial codes of OFA are less prescriptive than some of the other contexts that the test-events have been located in; the monumental National Gallery in Prague in June, being part of a performance programme or works within the OFA hall in August, and also part of a live art programme in the Aotea Square as part of the Performance Arcade in October of the same year. Coming to our Senses at SEAM 2011, situated in an old classroom space, seemed to be the most successful context
FIGURE 70: Instructions for (re)membering (#2) - A social choreography for the ears Old Folks Association Hall, Gundry Street, Auckland, November 2011
for the test-events up to this point. Consequently, I constructed the following test-event, *Instructions for (re)membering (#2)* much like the situation at *SEAM 2011*, participants could enter and leave in their own time (this was also like the arrangement for *The Performance Arcade*). The participants arrived together, they had been invited to attend the test-event personally, and some had successfully downloaded sound files and copied them to their own MP3 players.

The choreoauratic ensemble materialised in this score in a playful sociality. The participants engaged in a to and fro of witnessing and participating, sometimes sitting on the edge of the space observing and sometimes being part of the choreoauratic score. They could swap players and shift amongst the different sound scores. It was up to the group to keep the test-event activated or to let it come to a completion. The addition to this test-event, of a sound score designed for a larger ensemble, consolidated a synergy in the group’s dynamic. As the test-event came towards an ending, three participants were left in the space, headphones on, moving to the choreoauratic score. A trio formed. Those on the periphery of the room watched. Towards the end, two sat down and one performer was left in the space. His focus was clear, on listening, on moving. The remaining group created a border, bodies situated on the edges of the space, watching him. They held the space in this act of witnessing. His body scribed words attentively, his movement was precise. The doubling and splitting of the subject that seemed to occur here takes me back to Braidotti’s nomadic subject. The power in transforming the body/space relationship through movement and listening called up an ethical subjectivity that rethinks the subject as the body and digital technology come together.

In this test-event each participant seemed to work autonomously, the internalising nature of the headphonic space was immersive, drawing the participants focus to the inside of the body as each person listened intently to the sound score. From the outside perspective a sociality emerged, observed in the spatial relationships between bodies, although I’m not certain that this is a focus for the performer/participant. This autonomous yet paradoxically social arrangement has a similar structure to that of social media networks. The individual focus and internal silent contribution can be distancing. I wonder what might overcome this? Or is the cocooning experience of the headphones so immersive that the individual loses the connectivity to the ‘others’ in the space and perhaps the space itself? I get a sense that as these bodies tune into the space and each other, a kind of deepening of perception takes place. A sociality and spatiality emerges through proprioception and kinaesthetic empathy in a different way than when language or the gaze constructs our version of reality.

FIGURES 71, 72, 73, 74 (opposite page) :
*Instructions for (re)membering (#1) - A social choreography for the ears*, Old Folks Association hall, Gundry Street, Auckland, November 2011
Two test-events for 2012 were organised around a presentation proposed for the Somatics and Technology Conference in Chichester in the UK in late June 2012. The preliminary showing in Auckland was designed as a test run for the choreoauratic score for Chichester. Central to these test-events are two primary concerns; 1) to tune into the specific conditions and histories of the sites I am working in and 2) to explore strategies for coming together choreographically and socially in relationship with place and with others. An emphasis on social mapping was developed following on from the responses to the previous test-event Instructions for (re)remembering (#2) at the OFA in Gundry St.

**Choreographing Radio Histories**

V1: Hello can you hear me ok, wave your arms in the air if you can hear me. If you can’t, check the volume on your MP3 player. If you need assistance turn to face the middle of the circle. Otherwise keep looking out in front of you. Think about what brought you here.

V2: Political leader Michael Joseph Savage had the building completed in record time. He saw the
FIGURE 75: Instructions for (re)membering (#3) - A social choreography for the ears Kenneth Myers Centre, The University of Auckland, Auckland, June 2012
potential power of radio to reach the masses in the lead up to the elections in 1935.

V1: Have you been here before?

V3: Exercise Tiger was transmitted from here. Chichester was the nerve centre controlling the fighter planes in the D-Day operations.

V1: You should be standing in the middle of the space.

V2: The lavish neo-romanesque styling led to the building being called the magnificent palace of broadcasting, a kind of blend of practicality and romance.

V1: Put your right arm up to your face and shade your eyes and gaze up to the sky (sound of planes overhead) what do you see? Then take a look around you take 5 steps forwards away from the centre of the circle and then stop and keep looking outwards

V1: Walk all the way to the outside edges of the space.

V1: Stop when you reach the edge - turn around and face inwards looking towards the centre and
FIGURE 76: *Instructions for (re)membering (#3)* - A social choreography for the ears Kenneth Myers Centre, The University of Auckland, Auckland, June 2012
the other bodies in the space.

V4: During the 2nd World War from 1942 the college was occupied by the Royal Airforce

V1: Look at the people. Who stands out the most.

Excerpt from: Instructions for (re)membering #3: A Social Choreography for the Ears

Instructions for (re)membering (#3) and (#4), were performed first in Auckland, New Zealand, and a few weeks later in Chichester, UK. The choreoauratic score draws the two geographically separate locations together, the histories of both sites are linked through recalling stories of world wars and coincidently through the development of radio transmission. The University of Chichester, as well as being the site for the Somatics and Technology Conference in which I was participating, was home to the RAF Operations Room, in World War II. The Auckland site, the Kenneth Myers Centre, part of The University of Auckland, was the first national radio station in New Zealand and an early means of transmitting up to the minute world news from afar.

Most of the participants wore their own MP3 players, to which they had already selected one of two sound tracks. Through a process of downloading or playing live one of two audio tracks from Soundcloud (an online sound publishing service) as a pre-requisite to participate, the test-event began to engage the participants, hours or days before the participants entered the space. The first of the duo of test-events was based in the Kenneth Myers Centre, in Symonds Street in Auckland, New Zealand.

Two different choreoauratic scores asked different questions of the participants. They made movement choices based on their personal stories or social beliefs. Hoping to provoke greater agency from the participants in these two test-events, the sound score was designed to create opportunities to come together, to separate, and to relate to the other participants through movement tasks. This expanded the dynamic range in the choreography - and possibly in the play between individual agency and unanimous assembly, intensifying the degree of sociality for participants as they negotiated collective social mapping.

Navigating two test-events based in two remote locations led me to research both sites simultaneously, and a contextual narrative was made between the sites and their historic connections as transmission locations for radio, during the time of World War II. Given that aesthetically, politically and conceptually the sonic is particular to the lexicon of this research, the history of the radio station 1YA was presented in the narrative. Uncovering the narratives that were recorded for the Kenneth Myers Centre and for the Chichester University test-events, the last two of the mnemonic choreoauratic scores, introduced performed recordings, by three different actors. These test-events introduced a methodological shift, bringing the voices of others into the scores in which the narrated content was scripted and aesthetically controlled.
the histories of the Chichester site remotely, revealed Chichester University’s history as a communications centre, transmitting codes and radio messages across the continent in war time. Through stories of war and acts of ‘being in (and out of) time’ (Lepecki in Heathfield, 2004, p. 126 brackets my own) these social choreoauratics tune in to the disappearing, the unseen, the unspeakable and to place.

Stories of coincidence and synchronicity emerged between the two places through the creative research process, evident through histories and imaginings that became tangled together. The influence of the different research experiences (remote and site-based) to my perception of place clearly shaped my understanding of the two sites. The site research was composed into a collaged narrative of the two places, and in a mix of somatically and choreographically composed text-based movement scores, also derived from the site research.

Synchronous spaces & writing distances

Prepared with their audio tracks, participants arrived by the side door of the Kenneth Myers Centre to take part in Instructions for (re)membering (#3): A Social Choreography for the Ears on a cold wintery Friday evening. I welcomed them individually into the Black Box studio space, making sure that each participant had an MP3 player, that the files were loaded correctly and gave them a sheet of paper that held explicit instructions for the beginning of the choreoauratic score. In accordance with the first instruction the group made a compliant ensemble, lining up along one edge of the space they were then given the command to press play on their MP3 players simultaneously. My hope was for the groups to begin as ‘in-sync’ as possible, as in this version I had a particular agenda, I was interested in testing unison and group ensembles that might incite the group socially. To this end, the sound scores asked at times for the participants to be responsive to other members of the group. They tentatively made their way into the centre of the space as instructed and formed a large circle together. Early on in the score it became clear that the start times had slipped, despite the organised cue to begin, there were gaps in the groups timing and my supervisor was clearly listening to something quite different from the rest of the group. This ‘solo’ contrasted the ensemble, strengthening the spatial and temporal dynamics in the room. The distinction between the participant’s selected soundtracks eventually became clear through their movement activity. All were listening intently to the sound score on the headphones. The space was intensely quiet, apart from the soft shuffle of feet and occasionally some more decisive steps that were heard clearly in the video recordings. In this almost silent space the participants generated a collective choreography, carving out spatial relationships with their bodies.

Held by the structure of the two distinct sound tracks being performed the subjects were dispersed in the exchange between the voices heard through the headphones, the perceptions
of each participant and the unpredictable interactions of the community body. The internal sound score became enclosed within the spectators' bodies, intermingled with their personal experiences, emotive and social responses that became party to the choices they each made.

The ‘presence’ of the voices that were heard intimately through the headphones took form through their movement, reconfiguring and performing the space. The few spectators standing on the periphery of the room who could not hear the voices on the headphones, witnessed a kind of choric embodiment of the sound score. The words made flesh facilitated a kind of speechless and visceral affect of voice (Kristeva in Smith, 1998, p. 55). One participant commented afterwards that at times the social pull, to belong with, or be in sync with the other bodies in the space was greater than following the audio score itself. Another participant, my supervisor (as mentioned earlier) had already taken part in an earlier score and accidently played a completely different sound score, one from a previous test-event that she hadn’t deleted from her playlist. This became apparent somewhere in the middle of the test-event when she broke out into a solo movement score, her actions different from everyone else as she carefully performed the remains of another test-event. Her stand out solo performance was dynamic next to the quiet configuration of the rest of the group.

Again my role doubled, and I became dispersed, divided and multiplied through my voice performing through the headphones, and the activity of the participants doing the choreography. In this version, two of the participants also feature in the sound score, they too are doubled and perform back to themselves. This performance framework commingles and complicates the agency of the subject. Through sensate responses the performer of the text might also become the spectator and is also the author and the maker.

A few weeks after the event at the Kenneth Myers Centre in Auckland, New Zealand, the work was re-presented as part of the conference for Somatics and Technology at the University of Chichester, in the UK in late June. In Chichester it became
FIGURES 78 & 79: (this page and next page): sequential photographs ‘shot from the hip’ - shot from the hip’ - Instructions for (re)membering #4 - A social choreography for the ears Gymnasium, The University of Chichester, UK, June 2012
FIGURE 80: ‘shot from the hip’ - *Instructions for (re)membering (#4) - A social choreography for the ears*, Gymnasium, University of Chichester, UK, June 2012
obvious that this group of participants were mostly well-seasoned movement artists. The participants carefully constructed unison ensembles and the interpretations of the gestural prompts were executed with precision and attunement to one another (see Figure 3 and 78 - 82).

There were some moments that stood out in the Chichester test-event. The participant’s encounter with the work mobilised an unmistakable social cohesion. Braidotti’s contemporary nomadic subject, speaks of this coming together through the headphonic, the body and the space. Listening occurs on multiple levels, not only through the audio score, but also via each other in a kinaesthetic realm and through the spatial field.

In Chichester one participant (who was coincidently from New Zealand) embodied the choreauratic score differently. This difference seemed to be more about a feeling than a discrete visual difference. How might a feeling, a sense that is barely perceptible be articulated in words? He pulls the cameraman from the Dance Tech network, who had been documenting the work on his iPad, into the choreauratic space. The cameraman, who was shifted abruptly from the outside of the work to the inside, became entangled in witnessing and participating simultaneously, and in this in between space, he became neither for a moment. The sociality took over, the will to be human, to be playful and make the connections with one another drove this magical moment towards the end of the score. You will see in the
photos (see figure 82), the cameraman being moved by one of the participants into the space. It is at the moment that he became located in the choreography, and I can see that it is through the disruption of the score that these two brought a whimsical tension in the test-event. The New Zealand participant was left alone in the space as the score concluded, completely immersed in the sound score he drew attention to himself in a similar way to the way Instructions for (re)membering (#2) concluded at OFA in the previous year.

We had an informal discussion at the end of the test-event in Chichester. I asked the Chichester participants similar questions to those that were asked in Auckland. The response I found most interesting was the anxiety expressed by some participants around not getting the instructions and a strong desire to fulfil the sonic choreography correctly. On the contrary, several participants felt that it didn't matter if they did not get every instruction, and this is where the participant who disobeyed, and the participant who accidently tuned into a different choreauratic score activated what Forsythe calls a counterpoint in the choreography (see figures 75 and 82).

Most participants indicated that the experience eventually brought them into a quiet attuned state. A couple arrived after the test-event began and were too late to participate in the choreography, so they observed from the periphery. They were enchanted by the way the performers synchronised in space and the attention this created which felt focused and uncannily quiet. Through reintegrating this external role (that had been incorporated in the earlier test-events at Hear Me in Auckland, at SEAM in Sydney and at the PhD presentation in Auckland), the outside witnesses seemed to relax the borders of the space. Through witnessing lightly as a collective at the edges of the space, they lessened the intensity of the singular witness. Combined with the addition of the cameraman’s presence, the assembly of witnesses softened my presence with a camera in documenting the test-event.
...the nomadic subject is flows of transformation without ultimate destination. It is a form of intransitive becoming; it is multiple, relational, dynamic. You can never be a nomad, you can only go on trying to become a nomad.
(Braidotti, 2002, p. 86)

FIGURE 83: E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on, Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin, February 2013
CHAPTER 6: nomadic choreoauratics

Looking west towards the hills. If you look East, north stretches out along your left arm and South out of your right finger tips. Take some time on the bridge to look in both directions, look at its structure, the surfaces, its bones, its fluids. Notice your own soft fleshy surface in relation to the architecture of the city, and the water of the Leith. The body and the city merge, the bones scaffold, the fluids flushing, networking, creating passages to pass through. When you feel ready turn towards the south, and follow Forth St in the direction of the yellow building.

After the bridge there is a carpark on the right. I can hear buses waiting, lined up, panting, ready to transport bodies through the arterial routes of the city.

Head towards the next street corner you will see a large yellow industrial looking building, its yellowness stands out against the blue sky.

Excerpt from sound score from *E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on*, Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, February 2013

About your sensory sonic walk, I found that after orienting myself in relation to the others, that my point of reference, after crossing the road, was the green grass and chain links, and then the lovely black arch. I did enjoy standing in its midst, the filigree of fine white cobwebs lacing its struts. I could have stood there much longer, but felt what was perhaps the inevitable pull of the crowd, the group, an urge, a lure to keep walking and following, to be part of that; and yet also a need to be alone, knowing that the container of the group experience was there; the freedom to lag behind a little, to explore the feel of the leaves, the uneven structure of the walking surface, the hot sun, a bird perching on an electricity post, the mechanical machine, at the hand of its human operator, intent on boring holes into the sealed surfaces of Leith, the birds waiting to fly the dry sweepscape of the uprooted concrete riverbank, a need to place my foot into a concrete foot imprint left behind, to walk around a corner, your voice tapering off with “I lost my leg”, to see a funny sticker thing on the wall of a headless sheep... Ah, I am in New Zealand, I thought...

Participant’s comments from *E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on*, Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, February 2013.
FIGURE 84-89 (this page and next page): Site Study for *E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on*, Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin, February 2013
FIGURES 90 & 91: *E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on*, Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin, February 2013
6.0 Smooth Open Spaces

This chapter engages critically with the next two choreauratic test-events in the series, *E-Bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on* and *A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears*. Presented in Dunedin during 2013 these two ambulatory test-events incorporate the everyday action of walking in the scores. Walking as a somatically informed choreographic act becomes a new tactic in the research. Taking somatic practices out of homogenised studio environments and the choreauratic scores into the streets and into the open dynamic urban landscape becomes a strategy in this research to agitate the borders of the body and site.

The spatial and somatic conditions of these two test-events are politicised as follows; space as smooth and nomadic, walking as a somatically informed choreography and an act of recovery, listening as a way or re-organising the sensate, the body and place as vibrant matter (Bennett, 2010).

If the terms of site are considered nomadic,¹ according to the terms of Deleuze and Guattari, the process of deterritorialisation loosens bodily borders so that the distinction between place and body is deterritorialised². Reterritorialised by the prosthetic attachment of the headphones, the ear becomes a threshold, receiving the varying intensities of sound waves that vibrate the interior and exterior spaces. The site becomes a ‘smooth space’, a distributed space determined by different frequencies, ‘in the course of ones crossings’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 559). This smooth open space is activated by the movement of the nomadic, by the underdog or the counter culture, a deterritorialized plane, where there are ‘no points, paths or land’ and where the tactile is haptic and the visual might become sonorous (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 444-445).

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¹ Braidotti argues that ‘Deleuze's (1972, p. 1980) 'nomadology' is a philosophy of immanence’, one that ‘mobilizes one's affectivity and enacts the desire for in-depth transformations in the status of the kind of subjects we have become’ (2006, p. 1 & 3).

² ‘Deterritorialisation must be thought of as a perfectly positive power that has degrees of thresholds (epistrata), is always relative, and has reterritorialisation as its flipside or complement’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 62).
6.1 TEST-EVENT 08: E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on, East West Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, February 2013

The context of the Eastwest Somatic Symposium, at The University of Otago, Dunedin promoted a culture of practice-led research, open to question conventional conference practices. Working across the inter-modality of a somatic lesson and a theoretical presentation resulted in, what in this case I am calling a nomadic choreoauratic test-event, in which walking, listening and participation became somatically entangled. The structure of a somatic lesson meshing with a performative walk seemed to enable listening and participation to facilitate openings in perception as the responses of those involved revealed, (quoted at the beginning of this chapter). The ambulatory format resisted the stasis of a typical conference delivery, taking the audience outside into the surrounding urbanscape.

E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on began inside a lecture space at The University of Otago. Starting in this way, I introduced the work as if beginning a lecture, outlining the creative process as a sonic choreo-graphic structure, in which the majority of the choreoauratic score was developed on-site, in Dunedin. I explained how I had made live field recordings, taking myself on somatic meanders, tuning into the aural conditions of the streets of Dunedin city. We then set off together as a group, it was a very warm Dunedin summer day. An organised group of bodies; a collection of flesh and bones, organs and connective tissue, concrete, dirt, brick and water we assembled and disassembled, flocking within the sound score in a kinaesthetic sociality. Sound thresholds merged as the intensities of volume between headphonic sound and live sound competed with one another. The outside space became ambiguous through sound, was it outside the body, or inside? Or perhaps in the spaces between the bodies? Through these entanglements, borders loosened through sound, time and place, dispersing, connecting and multiplying the ‘matter’ of this walk. This sonorous somatic attention cultivates, as Jane Bennett calls for in her book Vibrant Matter, a political ecology of things, ‘a cultivated, patient, sensory attentiveness to nonhuman forces operating outside and inside the human body’ (2010, p. viii).

As each participant adjusted to listening to the score, there was almost no dialogue between the members of the group. This body collective who walked silently not only gave the group a kind of performative agency, their attention to the space and one another reinforced a networked space - a silent walking chorus. In tune with the places they walked through, a group sociality emerged out of this mutual connectivity to site, while simultaneously holding individual headphonic choric spaces. I watched as bodies found a place to rest in the University grounds, as they soaked up the sensations of the day in their skin, in their bones by the way they positioned their bodies in relation to the space and the sound score, the collective held lightly by the sound. I was reminded, by
these bodies as they shifted inside a silent chorus, inside the city, of Deleuze's interpretation of movement as a translation of space, and through his rethinking of Bergson’s expression of duration, as bodies that persist in the landscape ‘through spatio-temporal forces’ (Braidotti, 2006, p. 3).

Many of the sound recordings were made on location and my own bodily experiences of placeness and listening were integrated into the walk. Instructions and somatic prompts directed participants through the city, over a bed of field sounds. The engagement with listening and the action of walking together became the somatic story for the walk. Through this creative process I observed the differences in researching the site on location. As compared with researching the site remotely as in the earlier work Instructions for (re)membering (#4) in Chichester, UK, the immediacy of researching a site through sound and the body using a microphone, recalibrated the composition of my senses, prioritising the sonic. Coming to understand the site through this reorganised sensate experience activated a different kind of corporeal knowing. Shifting the hierarchies of the senses seemed to enliven the experience of tuning into the city and the body through listening, enabling a heightened sense of the urban scape.

Stimulated by the mediated field sound recordings of my body moving through the site, through microphones and headphones, sounds were reconfigured. Some sounds seemed much louder and closer than the ears would ever hear naturally, making
the imperceptible perceptible; the sounds of the textures of clothes moving over the body, the crunch of feet meeting the different surfaces on the ground and the wind beating on the microphone. Digital sound recording processes augmented the sensate environment and the microphone dis-organised the natural acoustic order. The microphone and the headphones recomposed the acoustic selection process, channelling digitally magnified sounds into the body, through the ear canal, vibrating and unsettling the volume intensities. Listening to the environmental soundscape through the headphones altered my perception of place as I made these recordings. This affected the way I perceived the urban landscape, I noticed details that I might normally miss. Listening in this way opened perception and I became more aware of my breath and my body’s walking rhythm. As I perceived my world differently I ‘tuned in’ to shifting vibrational sonic intensities, my sensation of time and place amplified. I recognised responses that parallel the spiritual meditative processes that Braidotti refers to, whereby the ‘capacity to “take in” the world, to encounter it, to go toward it’ is emphasised (Braidotti, 2011, p. 234).

Drifts in perception became a way of remapping place, through an electro-acoustic field of restless intensities. This was evident not only in my own experience choreo-graphing the walk but also in some of the feedback I received from the participants. One participant made the following comment: ‘I could not smell anything until I took out my headphones... On the walk back, I could see more than I typically do, but I was aware that busy ‘I’ had re-entered my mind’. Her comments indicate that throughout the duration of the walk, the process of listening had focused her mind as well as re-composed her perception of the sensate, evident in the change in capacity of her olfactory senses after the walk.

Drawing from somatic and choreauratic cues, the walk shifted through modes of listening and participating. Cues taken from somatic lessons were worked into the score for their potential to facilitate openings in perception through movement praxis as well as processes for attunement to site.

Notice how you are standing. Feel the weight pouring through each leg and down into the concrete. Stand strong and face the hills. Feel the distance between you and this hills. Feel the air on your face. We are going for a walk. Walk with me. Don’t worry you won’t get lost. Getting lost is how you find your way rest, lie, lean, pause.

Excerpt from E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on was presented as part of the Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago
Drawing on a web of thinking that explores what Bennett (2010) describes as vibrant matter through somatic listening, the body and the site can be said to take on similar qualities. By softening the borders between outside and inside, I attempt to bring a politic to somatic practices where the archaeologies of both the body and the landscape are brought together. Jane Bennett’s agenda to evoke ‘more attentive encounters between people-materialities and thing-materialities’ reverberates here, bringing a greater sense of responsibility to our anthropomorphic positioning and as a consequence the differences between what determines human and non-human lose their potency (2010, p. x).

Relying heavily on processes for listening, the headphonic score for *Ebodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on* uses digitally recorded narratives and field sound recordings as a method for guiding the participants through sensate territories as well as through space and time. The recorded voice is used as a cartographic tool for the listening bodies who perform the choreoauratic score, weaving through the streets of Dunedin.

In the process of capturing some of the sounds for composing this choreoauratic walk I also developed my own listening practice. Making the field sound recordings and mapping the walk I brought my whole body into a practice of listening through moving. Opening my perception, first to sound through movement activates a bodily listening process, enlivening the senses as ‘a motor response’ and tuning into multiple modes of perceiving (Bainbridge Cohen, 1993, p. 114). Bainbridge Cohen identifies movement as perception, and as the first perception to develop it is the most important for survival. She uses the term ‘somatization’ as way of engaging with the kinaesthetic system as opposed to relying on the visual system (1993, p. 1). Through movement practices such as Body Mind Centering we can tap into all of the senses; listening through the surface of our skin as it meets other surfaces (as in Contact Improvisation), listening through the flesh, through the organs (as in BMC). I took the recording device with me as I mapped the walk, headphones cupping my ears, microphone balanced gently in my hands. My digital sound recorder simultaneously captured the acoustic world around me as well as my own bodily walking sounds, which were magnified and channelled into my headphones, my ears and back through my body. Using my own body, affected and extended by prosthetic recording devices, is a continuation of previous research methods mentioned on page 129 in the explanation of the first mnemonic choreoauratic score, *A Live Recording* in Prague 2011. The remains of my body’s movement pathways resurface in these choreoauratic scores, engendering the politics of Rebecca Schneider’s *Performing Remains*. Like she suggests, ‘performance challenges loss’, (Schneider, 2011, p. 102) where the bodily trace remains differently, and through remaining differently there is the potential for change and perhaps recovery rather than remains.
6.2 Walking as an act of recovery

Augmented digitally and prosthetically, this nomadic choreoauratic test-event fosters somatic attunement to both body and place through listening and walking and the human drive for recovery.

Andrew Hewitt writes of social and political aesthetics as a way to contextualise the act of walking as it intersects with the politics of choreography. Hewitt’s analysis of social choreography positions walking as a choreographic act with the potential for recovery or recuperation (2005, p. 88).

‘Stumbling’ suggests Hewitt, is the failure to fall and walking as a choreographic gesture slips somewhere between walking and falling, engaging a threshold space, where the stumble is recognised as a human act of recovery (ibid). Here Hewitt falls into step with Braidotti through the threshold and recuperation and in Hewitt’s terms through the act of recovery. Working within this notion of walking as recovery, Hewitt presents a choreographic spectrum in which he brings everyday movement into the choreographic realm. Stumbling (or the failure to fall, or the failure to fail) is as Hewitt suggests an ‘unbelievable power of recovery’ (Hewitt, 2005, p. 89). He identifies the stumble as ‘not a loss of footing but rather as finding one’s feet’ (2005, p. 89). This brings a politic to the everyday action of walking as a choreography and choreography as an act of recovery that might
FIGURE 92 & 93 (this page and previous page): *E-bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on*, Eastwest Somatic Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin, February 2013
return us to our bodies. Hewitt suggests that to ‘To ask about walking is to ask about how our society works’ (2005, p.88).

6.3 TEST-EVENT 09: A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, ADA Symposium, Dunedin, New Zealand, September 2013

Encompassed in the city
The foot fall sound connects the group

It’s cold and I feel like I want to walk in the sun
But I can’t – don’t want to break the shared experience

It’s George Street but I feel so soft
Voice enacting the body

Moving as an enclosed phalanx
Glued by sound

Sound of traffic imlitrates the headphones, combines with music.
A tin can stutters on the road we are crossing, wind is tearing the sound from my ears.
The ghosts of songs.
Crescendos of wind and voices
Is the sound recorded or is it the world?

The voices of women like Babbage speaks of, endlessly cycling in the air
descriptions of the sky,
I check its blue with my own body
Overlaying one city with another.
A city made of description.
“walking becoming an act of recovery”

A city symphony. Rhythms of me chanisation??

Bartheons Berlin, but here now.
“Demolition by neglect”
The bells have fallen in Christchurch – but the body does not fall. Each step catches me. Girl with blonde hair slumped outside the Priory

The material of stone, porous, crumbling, The body of the earth,
Holding me, upright.

Documentation from participants, September 2013, A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium 2013, Dunedin.

In September 2013 I returned to Dunedin to present another nomadic choreauratic test-event as part of the Aotearoa Digital Artist Network Symposium 2013.
The remains of the earlier performance walk in Dunedin in February became entangled into the ADA 2013 test-event and its end point became a starting point for the second ambulatory event, *A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears*.

A new force emerged in this iteration of the work for Dunedin, arising from the focus towards the characteristics of a specific architectural site (2010, p. viii). This shift in attention steered towards greater agency in the site, and the sound recordings, poetics and narrative activated the spirit of the site, the invisible and that which has disappeared, and with it, as Bennett suggests, ‘the vitality of matter’ (2010, p. viii).

Situated high on top of the ridge overlooking Dunedin city, the participants leaned into the old Priory’s walls. Having walked across the city on a blustery spring day, they are bound together in a choric space, they have walked as vessels of sound, surfaced with leaks as they spilled into the city. Here at the site of the Priory, their bodies pressed into the rough surface of the concrete wall, they listened to its surface. They offered bodily support to the architectural framework, they drew with chalk into the Priory’s surface and imagined wings for her to fly with. They’ve reached the end of a nomadic track through the city, carrying with them two women’s stories. A contemplative quiet was experienced up on the hill as the end of this choreoauratic score was delivered. They whispered secrets back to her, into her cracks, her orifices. The borders of bodies and of architecture softened, territories between others seem to dissolve and there was a feeling of congeniality amongst the group. The group had travelled a journey through the urban landscape together in a performative chorus, drawing attention to themselves in the way that they moved together through the city, marked by the prosthetic attachment of wearing headphones. They’ve listened. They’ve walked. They’ve activated stories across the city.

The sound score for *A choreography of mumbles and a digital meditation* introduced the voices of others, the two women I have interviewed tell of histories that this urban architecture hides in its bones. This nomadic choreoauratic score was composed out of narrative scripts, field sound recordings and adapted musical scores. The inclusion of a narrative was introduced earlier in the last two of the mnemonic scores (*Instructions for (re)membering (#3) & (#4)*), but in the case of this nomadic choreoauratic test-event the stories came from the subjects’ personal accounts of their lives in this place. Working through a theoretical understanding of nomadic forces, this series incorporated both walking and narrative into the score. These unspoken stories entered the headphonic space, and the bodies of the participants, became enfleshed in an ambulatory choric space. In these nomadic

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3 Following this, in the social and nomadic choreoauratics scores I continued to experiment with the integration of the ‘others’ voice, introducing live interviews with local participants who had memories of the specific sites. This methodological shift offered an authentic trace of the sites as (re)membered through the body, the impressions of the sites reflected in the vibrations and intonations of the participants voices. The recordings made for the social choreoauratic series were recorded in and around the site itself.
A DIGITAL MEDITATION
AND A CHOREOGRAPHY OF MUMBLES
A SOCIAL CHOREO-GRAPHY
FOR THE EARS

FIGURE 94:
Invitation and map: A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium, Dunedin, September 2013
scores, the site became increasingly significant and is entwined within the politics of post-human thinking as we reconsider the borders of humanity, place and body.

The first voice to be heard in the sound score, other than my own, is from an immigrant to Dunedin as an 11 year old from Northern Ireland. Her moment of arrival to Dunedin is a pivotal memory for her. Her story unfolds, and with it so does Dunedin’s. Through this woman’s voice we hear of the life of Dunedin city and the life of the Priory. She recalls the mystery that the St Dominic’s Priory contained as a Catholic school girl. Forbidden to go inside the Priory itself, somehow she recalled traces of sensations of what it was like inside, yet she is no longer clear whether this is a real memory or her imagination.

The second subject, tells us of her early memories of Dunedin, as a young Dominican nun, shipped out to New Zealand from Dublin. What strikes me first is that she has no memories of urban Dunedin while she spent her time in this city confined by the walls of the convent. Her story has been held in the walls of the Priory, itself a place of silence and of unspoken stories. Two narratives unfold in the sound score, a portrait of a building and of a place, through the psyches of two women from different times. In the recording of these women’s stories, they speak about the mysterious, the hidden and the mythic in their memories.
FIGURES 95 & 96:
A Choreography of Mumbles and a Digital Meditation, Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium, Dunedin, September 2013
These two stories are woven into a sound score, cut and pasted between voices, their tongues carrying the stories. I catch their words with my microphones, composing them for other bodies, for ears that will carry these memories through the city. These words are moved out of silence and into the vibrations of the sonic, mobilising the unspeakable. The vibrations of the voice and the sounds of the city work together in a score for listening and moving.

The introduction of others’ voices and stories into the sound making method presented a different rhythm and texture from that of my own voice. In A Choreography of Mumbles and a Digital Meditation I introduced an additional performative layer to the score. Working with three local Dunedin performers, I integrated a prescriptive performative role that I had been testing in Auckland while working with the St James site. These three additional performing participants also wore headphones and were choreographed to appear at different times and in specific places over the duration of the ambulatory score. The headphones signified to the walking participants the potential that these others (the performing participants) could be part of the choreoauratic score, although this was deliberately ambiguous. The walking participants first encountered two of the performing participants as they passed the Museum park, where the pair appeared caught in an enduring embrace. The action would have been considered normal, except for the unusually extended timing, making something ordinary appear strange.

The performing participants appeared throughout the walk, and arrived together with the other participants at the Priory. The architecture of the Priory brings the group together.

The rough stone wall supports their bodies, a place to lean and create another outside through which to listen. They write notes and leave them on the Priory’s doors, placing the remnants of mapping, of remembering through a city on the surface of the building.

The integration of varying and different modes of participation and performance both loosened and multiplied the subject, confusing the actual and the imaginary. The inclusion of participating performers (also wore headphones but activated a different role from those audience participants who walked) helped to blur the edges of the insides and outsides of the test-event, the theatre of the everyday and the codes of the city that merged with the performative, suggesting ambiguity in what/who is performing?

The Aotearoa Digital Artists Network 2013 was centred around the political and artistic terrain of digital arts practices. A growing and current concern in this field is the role that digital language and interfaces have in the way we interact with place and community. The ADA symposium for 2013 was titled and themed Space: Network: Memory and engaged with practices that rethink the contemporary city, through existing networks and
memories (Aotearoa Digital Artists Network 2013).

Local Māori orator, Tuari Potiki opened the symposium. He spoke of the importance of ‘making visible’ the places of the tangata whenua. Potiki’s talk resonated with my own concerns for my work positioned within this symposium. Potiki remembered the histories that have disappeared, the pre-colonial stories that might be recovered as we ‘take place’ in reimagining the city for the future.

The effect the choreoauratic test-event has had on the participant’s sense of place, body and temporality became apparent as they completed the walk, as they wrote on their post-it notes and taped them to the door of the Priory. Derrida’s translation of Nietzsche’s ‘ear of the other’ comes to mind here as the participants ‘sign off’ the choreoauratic score by the way their bodies write into the city, and by the construction of their relationship with the other (Derrida, 1985, p. 51).

Throughout the time between the two test-events in Dunedin, I continued with a site-based research praxis based in Auckland. The Auckland research informed the Dunedin work and returned to some of the tactics from the first mnemonic choreoauratic scores. Organised around the decrepit and abandoned St James Theatre and the site that surrounds it, the praxis works with the politics of being outside the architecture, an edifice of a disused theatre. The

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4 (tangata whenua – Tangata means ‘people’ whenua is the Māori word for land. It also means placenta, ‘All life is seen as being born from the womb of Papatūānuku, under the sea’ (http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land/page-4)
‘I want to walk in the sun but I can’t – don’t want to break the shared experience’, ‘but felt what was perhaps the inevitable pull of the crowd, the group, an urge, a lure to keep walking and following, to be part of that.’

‘The foot fall sound connects the group’ reflects one participant, noticing how they have come together through sound and rhythm.

‘I check its blue with my own body’, ‘The body of the earth, Holding me, upright’, the participants expressing their sense of place, as the sky, place and body come together.

‘Is the sound recorded or is it the world?’ their sense of place merges with the virtual, the borders of how we feel placed become porous like the crumbling walls of the Priory.

Excerpts from participants feedback: A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium, Dunedin, September 2013
FIGURES 97 - 99 (clockwise from top left):
A Choreography of Mumbles and a Digital Meditation Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium, Dunedin, September 2013
97. Emergency Map for participants
98. Post it notes written by participants
99. The Priory
FIGURE 100 & 101: A Choreography of Mumbles and a Digital Meditation, Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium, Dunedin, September 2014
FIGURE 102: Post-it notes left by participants in *A Choreography of Mumbles and a Digital Meditation*, Aotearoa Digital Artists Network Symposium, Dunedin, September 2014
FIGURE 103: Site study, *Listening for Disappearing (#2)*, Auckland, May 2014
FIGURE 104: Listening for Disappearing (#2), Auckland, May 2014
The St James theatre moved and had life... the history seeped out much more noticeably than normal. I felt self conscious at one point realising that myself and the audience were creating choreographed movement. A slowing down and a meditative feeling. It made me relax, notice things more and find beauty and drama in something I normally pass by...

I left the work early but kept walking with the soundtrack on. I remembered the place I left but it also affected the passing worlds around me. I felt quite peaceful and meditative. The atmosphere created with the sounds of the track I am sure will come back to me when I walk past the library.

The place is always a space I am passing and have never really stopped before. I felt closer to the rest of the group as I had been part of their movement— we had moved as one but individually earlier on I had watched a different performance and had felt apart from the rest of the group in body and relational positioning. The St James theatre or library had not meant much to me before but this shifted after.

The smell of stale urine is NOT PLEASANT and lingered longer than the performance.

... I also found the nostalgia for the building a little bit tedious - the red velvet etc. imagery also speaks to a time where a certain class went to the theatre. ... I think because we were there as part of the performance festival, and this performance was site specified away from the majority of performances, I felt really engaged in a similar way to the space throughout. Would be different coming to a one off performance, or encountering it unintentionally.

I think I was really aware of the skaters when we arrived ... I enjoyed watching them talking about what we were doing and pretending to join in.

Excerpt from participants feedback: Listening for Disappearing (#1), The Festival of Uncertainty, Lorne Street, Auckland, New Zealand, April 2014
CHAPTER 8:
social choreoauratics
7.0 Undoing architecture

The culminating series of test-events were presented in Auckland where I had been working with three performers on-site between the disused St James Theatre and the Auckland Public Library from mid 2013 through to 2014. Responding to the developments made in Dunedin and in other locations, combined with the on-going explorations outside the St James, this series took stock of the entire creative process to date. The previous nine test-events provided the groundwork for this final series and through a reflective process I began to hone in on what underpinned this practice as follows:

- the coming together of performer/participants/place and body through choreaauratics
- somatically informed choreography as an act of recovery
- listening as a way of re-organising the sensate and extending the limits of what makes us human
- tuning into the disappearing and the disappeared
- the use of interviews as a way of coalescing multiple voices
- a participatory and multi-layered documentation process

Taking a studio based investigative practice out into the public sphere in Auckland has provided a rich choreaauratic process developed between three performers and the site. Through testing somatic choreography, listening, slowing down, through ‘making things strange’ and tuning into the city we have attempted to subvert the subject in the civic space, rethinking the way the architecture does us (Kampe, 2014). In her book *Site-Writing*, Jane Rendall poses the question, what is it to ‘un-do architecture?’ (Rendall, 2010, p. 31). ‘Doing architecture, we follow certain rules...’ she proposes the consumption of architecture, as a means for social identity (ibid). In Auckland, our devising process folds Rendall’s provocation into the choreaauratic score, asking the performing participants, what if we disobey the architecture of the city?

Bringing the language of architecture and somatics together provokes actions that unravel the architectural codes of the city. The group of performing participants who have been working with me at the site for over a year upset these codes through their actions. Lying down in the street, blocking the flow of the cars, writing on the walls of the St James, like the others who engage in the city in this way such as graffiti artists, the homeless and the skateboarders, their actions sometime appear to be anarchic, disrupting the everyday. In these experimental test-events we listen to the surface of the city helped by our prosthetic headphone devices, tuning into times past, into other’s stories. Taking our time at the site we get to know its rhythm, its surfaces, its culture and its community.

*Listening for Disappearing* involves a site-based investigation in Auckland, working with the three performers, and three different groups of participants on-site between the St James Theatre and
FIGURE 105 & 106: Invitation & Map to Listening for Disappearing (#2), Auckland, May 2014
EDITED EXCERPT FROM LISTENING FOR DISAPPEARING (#1), THE FESTIVAL OF UNCERTAINTY, LORNE ST, AUCKLAND, 2014
the Auckland Public Library between 2013 - 2014. The resulting series of three choreoauratic test-events responded to the developments made in the previous test-event series between 2011 - 2012 in Dunedin, Sydney, Chichester, Auckland and Prague. This series is prefaced by an extended period of testing choreoauratic scores and somatic choreography on-site with three experienced performers, Vallyon, Houghton and Bartlett. Concentrating on this one site specifically allowed us to work more deeply with the characteristics particular to this civic space, the layers of its history, the social and cultural structure and the architecture itself. We take an investigative studio practice out into the public realm. This new series, social choreauratics I title

Listening for Disappearing. A new title marks the shift in focus from the previous series of nomadic test-events. The decision to confine the location more specifically transpired from the desire to offer greater agency to the participants. In Dunedin, the logistics of moving the participants from A to B via the nomadic choreauratic score imposed limitations on the narrative structure, the timings and the pace of the walk. Situating the test-event within the limits of these more obvious architectural boundaries meant the sound score could be developed in a less prescriptive way, enabling greater focus on the poetic potential of the work and the relationship between the body and the architecture as a way to frame the test-event.

In this chapter I will discuss the three test-events as well as the on-site testing process that has allowed listening prosthetically and somatically to deepen as a choreauratic practice through an intensive period of working within one site with three consistent practitioners. The process of devising, of testing, reflecting and observing has raised questions that bring the language of architecture and somatics together.

FIGURE 107: Studio rehearsal, Listening for Disappearing series, Auckland 2013/2014

In fact one very wintery and wet day we take our process into a dance studio - to quickly learn how strongly the architecture of the space colonises the movement of the body (see figure ). After this experience we decide to work on-site regardless of the severity of the natural conditions, as it is these very conditions that shape and cultivate the study.

2 The three test-events were presented as follows: The Festival of Uncertainty April 2014, a post-graduate presentation as part of the Choreographic Research Aotearoa May 2014 and Aotearoa Digital Artists Symposium 2014, September 2014.
7.1 Test-event 010: Listening for Disappearing (#1),
The Festival of Uncertainty, Lorne Street, Auckland,
New Zealand, May 2014

In April 2014 Listening for Disappearing (#1) was selected to be part of The Festival of Uncertainty, which was billed as ‘a platform for ‘...art that slips by, that fails to eventuate that lacks quality or craft, that is impossible to find, that plays out in isolation, or in a social crowd; ideas, sketches, hopes, obsessions, or as simply a process of continued and unstoppable practice’ (http://www.ofa.org.nz/festival-of-uncertainty/ retrieved 4 July 2014).

About fifteen people attended Listening for Disappearing (#1) as part of The Festival of Uncertainty, which took place on a Saturday morning in March 2014, in Lorne Street between the St James Theatre and the Auckland Public Library. As the group accumulated on the steps outside the Auckland Public Library a group of skateboarders had also gathered around the steps. I had arrived early with spare headphones and MP3 players, and I became aware of the skateboarders watching the participants for The Festival of Uncertainty as they gathered and become a group. An unexpected dynamic took place between the two groups in this test-event. The counter-culture of the skateboarders to the civic space confronted the unspectacular counter-culture of the group who were participating in the choreoauratic score. The coincidences that occurred in the city as the choreoauratic score met the city’s cultural and social terrain were unpredictable and took us into the unknown.

The group of participants attending Listening for Disappearing (#1) put on their headphones and I indicated the time to press play and start the choreoauratic score. This group of quiet listeners became clearly marked by their appearance, coded by the collective prosthetics of wearing headphones. The skateboarders who had gathered on the steps were also clearly distinguishable by their choice of clothes, their boards and their distinct critical mass. The group attending The Festival Of Uncertainty became more noticeable as the subtle movements they performed unfolded throughout the 30 minute duration of the choreoauratic score. In the moments that the group came to stand together, their collective presence commanded attention from the passers-by as well as the skateboarders.

Skateboarders read the city differently. The way the skateboarders engage with the civic space highlights Rendall’s question, what if we ‘undo architecture?’ (2010, p. 31). Choreographed by the architecture of the urban landscape, they look for smooth surfaces, railings, steps and ramps that offer movement possibilities, where they might play a different rhythm of the city from the prescribed architectural score. Reinscribing the civic architecture as Ian Borden suggests, ‘the skateboarder’s highly developed integrated sense of balance, speed, hearing, sight, touch and responsivity is then a product of the modern metropolis, a newly evolved sensory and cognitive mapping’ (2001, p. 18). Borden suggests that as the skateboarders take on the surfaces, the railings, the architectural possibilities for
FIGURE 108: Listening for Disappearing (#1), The Festival of Uncertainty, Auckland, March 2014
FIGURE 109: *Listening for Disappearing* (#1), The Festival of Uncertainty, Auckland, March 2014
movement they might transform the very nature of the urban space through their physicality, not only through receiving the city as a mechanism, but through returning it to itself (ibid).

The skateboarder's critique of modern architecture through movement practice in the urban environment meets my own spatial criticality of the mediated urban space. Through shifting the hierarchies of the senses through augmented sound the participants share a related politic to the skateboarders, though admittedly a less spectacular one. Through listening prosthetically, they engage in an altered, heightened sensory frequency, soaking up the imperceptible, (and unspoken narratives, histories and stories that might otherwise be forgotten). Although this participating listening body takes on the urban architecture in a different way from the skateboarders, there is a comparable politic at play, as they reimagine the city through movement practice. Listening invites a less spectacular gesture of coming together and as such activates the potential for recovery.

‘Skateboarding is then a kind of unconscious dialectical thought, an engagement with the spatial and temporal rhythms of the city, wherein skateboarders use themselves as reference to rethink the city through the practice of skateboarding' (Borden, 2001, p. 23).

The skateboarders watched the group who were participating and wearing headphones. The participants who wore headphones at times watched the skateboarders. Who was performing for who here? The borders of who was watching and who was being watched became confused. The margins of performing and not performing were in flux. There were moments when the headphonic participants became unmistakably part of a choreographic ensemble as they converged in graphic movement collectives. As they dispersed their presence became less apparent and they dissolved back into the spatial/social configuration of the site. Towards the end of the test-event the sound score invited more explicit choreographic activity. They wrote in the air with their hands, messages directed to the city council. This was a unique choreographic moment, gesturing with their arms they seemed to feel free to scribe their messages with their bodies into the cityscape. There was a precision and clarity in their gesturing that was captivating, and became distinctly performative. I see this as a gentle political movement, a reticent shout out to the creeping capitalism of our civic structures.

Listening intently through their headphones, the participants moved as an assembly to the walls of the St James, they picked up chalk off the ground and wrote on its walls. Rewriting the old theatre's future, scribing wishes and promises into its concrete surface, giving them permission to activate the city's skin in a covertly anarchic way. I perceive this act of writing on the walls of the St James as a caress, a soft stroke, an act of caring and a concluding signal. The marks they made in chalk last for days, these marks become the partial remains of the event that has
taken place as well as a last trace of their movement through this civic site as their bodies write.

The choreoauratic score for *Listening for Disappearing (#1)* was derived from both the on-site process in Auckland and reflections and observations made based on *A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles* presented in Dunedin in 2013. Drawing from the method of recovering the stories of the Dunedin site, I applied this process to the St James. As part of the creative process I interviewed three different people about their memories of the St James, and used these stories as a way of recovering histories and the stories that might be held within the architecture of the theatre.

The sound score called attention to the site through both the memories of the interview subjects (who had lived in Auckland and had attended events and the cinema at the St James), and their visions for the future of the site. A fictional character was also added to this score. She was positioned as the larynx of the St James. Giving the unspeakable a voice, I anthropomorphised the theatre through her story, giving agency to the St James and bringing her character into our imagination. Woven into the choreoauratic score are the conditions of listening, coming together and recovery.

One audience participant reflects that the detail in the text that labours the theatre’s interior, such as the red carpet and the ornate Spanish architecture is nostalgic. This causes me to reflect on how we remember. Is there nostalgia caught up in the act of remembering? All of the interview subjects recall a highly visually descriptive plush interior, ‘the red carpet,’ ‘the red and gold ornate’ detailing. The imagery of the interior is thick in our memories and our imaginations. Having been in the building in the last decade and having also peeked in through the doors in chance moments more recently, my impressions of the interior now are that they are tired, once red, now faded. The interior décor is visibly deteriorating with the pressure of time and the intrusions of weather and the homeless seeking shelter. I suggest that in the tenor of Braidotti, (re)membering is thought of ‘in the intensive or minority-mode, in fact, you open up spaces of movement - of de-territorialisation - that actualise virtual possibilities which had been frozen in the image of the past’ (Braidotti, retrieved 17 October 2013). Activating the soundscore, we are not bound by nostalgia, but rather our attention is drawn to a soundscape that speaks of time that is ‘neither linear or sequential’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 35), where the site becomes an event space of multiple

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3 Nostalgia: (noun) A sentimental longing or wistful affection for a period in the past: (origin) late 18th century (in the sense ‘acute homesickness’): modern Latin (translating German Heimweh ‘homesickness’), from Greek nostos ‘return home’ + algos ‘pain’. Oxford definition

4 A fire in the adjacent theatre resulted in the doors of the St James closing in 2007. The previous decade had seen the ornate theatre used as a venue for music and experimental film and performance events. Built in 1928, the theatre was originally designed for vaudeville theatre, but as the ‘talkies’ took over, cinema became its focus. Mr Bob Kerridge (son of Sir Robert Kerridge ‘who owned 133 theatres over Australia and New Zealand in his hey day’) (Dixon, 2012) has formed a trust to try and protect the St James from demolition. Since forming the Trust the St James has been listed as a category 1 heritage building. In October 2014 the St James was sold to a private investor committed to preserving the building.

5 Site is thought of in terms of Deleuze and Guattari’s smooth space, ‘a space that is occupied by intensities’ a space that is haptic as opposed to optic (1987, p. 557).
Listening for Disappearing (#2), Auckland, May 2014
occurrences, multi-directions, a ‘smooth space of affects’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 557). Remembering nomadically ‘is not indexed on the authority of the past’, rather in the potential for creative imagination of the future where re-imagining and transformation are possible (Braidotti, 2011, p. 34).

7.2 TEST-EVENT 11: Listening for Disappearing (#2), Lorne Street, Auckland, New Zealand, May 2014

Stream of books
Peoples Palace
Woman lost in thoughts
what is one thinking?
I want him back
Bacteria on hands on wood.
Book stepping, stories, 
Aspiration, inspiration, breathing

Man without shoes passes by
Man with headphones stares
Man talks to himself
Birds flying, lush
Edges on the edge
Point to the sky and cover the ground

Post-it note responses from participants - Listening for Disappearing (#2), May 2014

In May, I schedule another test-event as part of the creative-practice component of my doctoral research and the Choreographic Research Aotearoa\(^6\) programme. I take this

\(^6\) Choreographic Research Aotearoa (CRA) is a meeting ground and project space for dance students, performers, choreographers and scholars. CRA emphasises an engagement with process and dialogue, encouraging a dynamic and diverse approach to dance through indigenous
opportunity to test a more complex layering of performer and participant relationship, bringing *The Festival of Uncertainty*, score together with the choreography I have been devising over the last year with the three performers on-site. The test-event is presented on a sunny Friday morning on the 16th May 2014. Four women participate as audience and three women participate as performers.

The sound score cradles a small assembly of women in this civic space as they tune into the different frequencies of the city. Like the skateboarders, this group of women find a counter-culture in the city as they engage with an intimate and silent sonic chorus. The city’s otherness opens, and the group find themselves moving within the different social and cultural layers of the city. As in the previous work, the sound score invites the performers to disobey the architecture of the city. I recall Braidotti’s idea of an acoustic space as subversive, a paradoxical relationship that is both pervasive and intimate but also collective. Coincidently this group is all female.

One performer/participant carefully arranged a bed of library books along the steps, creating a surface to lie on, a protective layer for her body, and a bed to rest on. Resting on words,

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7 The ‘Others’ of modernity as Braidotti suggests ‘mark the crisis of the majority and the patterns of becoming of the minorities’ (2011, p. 29). In the vein of Deleuze’s Majority subject, Braidotti identifies the ‘dominant power structures’ of the Western capitalist system as a ‘standardised mainstream subject’ (2011, p. 28). In the site of these performance test-events nomadic minorities take a distinctive presence in the civic site, the skateboarders, the women, the homeless, the tourist, the children.
supported and protected by knowledge. A man arrived (we had seen him here often, he occupies this space with others who might be homeless, or who treat this civic space as a place to inhabit during the day) and he started to interrogate her. ‘Have you got permission from the library to do this?’ he says. ‘I see you here, everyday you come and you do this! You can’t do this here! Who says you can take these books and do this!’ I go over to intervene, wanting to protect her. His outrage was abrasive and punctures through the soft and encompassing soundscape space that the group has been immersed in: Before I can intervene another man speaks up to protect her. ‘She has as much right to be here as you!’ He continued to negotiate with the offended while she followed the score and gathered up the books, putting them back inside an over-sized suitcase and continued on her way.

The all-female participants continued to weave through this civic space, feeling a sense of safety in their sonic bubble, but I was ruffled by the abuse and the presence of the men on the street, and felt responsible to take care of these women who participated in the test-event, as I maintained my role of witness as a somatic practice. On reflection, the man who intervened also assumed the role of witness (both somatically and socially). This was a precarious moment, and uncannily, the gendered politics of this space reorganised itself without my intervention. Reminded of the histories of women in urban spaces, one participant commented, ‘as a group of women we are marked markers on the street…’. The political disposition of these women became exaggerated through their actions as they mobilised the site differently, upsetting social codes and commanding agency in the power of the assembly. Occupying the site as both dispersed bodies and a collective body simultaneously, there emerged a new body politic. They activated a between space, ‘speaking the silence of women within the language which is one and the same for everyone’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 93). This implied ‘both retrieval (memory) and creation (imagination)’ as a way of expressing the ‘nomadic itinerary’ which Braidotti suggests is ‘what counts in the project of sexual difference’ (ibid). These bodies moved to and fro within the spatiality of the site, they activated as a trace, a between state that unsettled the status quo, even that of the city’s homeless.

Two other women take the green suitcase and unpack library books, laying out books as stepping stones across the road, re-imagining the Horotiu Stream that once coursed through this site. They use the books as stepping-stones, making a methodical rhythm as they move. Not once do they step on the concrete. The other woman walks slowly across the street, slowing down the rhythm of the city.

Four women wearing headphones write messages in the air with their arms, conducting words into the space,
silent messages. They tune into the space between the closed walls of the decaying St James Theatre and the open space of the Public Library, pausing, moving and listening.

A man talks to himself. One woman lies down in front of the oversized stage door and a partially sighted woman in an electric mobility chair drives towards her. Another man intervenes to protect the woman who is lying down in the street with her eyes closed. Oblivious, she draws around herself with chalk. She traces the entire outline of her body and then traces her body into the lines of the St James, drawing her body into its walls.

Two women hold blank pieces of card in front of them. A silent protest. Open and subject to imagining. Impossible to put words to. The smell of urine is strong.

They write with chalk on the walls. Of hopes and dreams for her. They mark her walls with their thoughts and their movement - these remain, reminding the city that something happened here.

7.3 TEST-EVENT 12: Listening to Disappearing (#3), ADA Symposium 2014, Lorne Street, Auckland, New Zealand, September 2014.

Listening to Disappearing (#3) was presented as part of the Aotearoa Digital Artists Symposium in September 2014 and was the last test-event for the year. An assembly of digital artists met under the statue of Aspiration at the top of Lorne Street, as in the previous test-event, just before 1.30pm on a Saturday afternoon. It had been raining heavily in that tropical Auckland storm kind of way, and remarkably, the clouds had parted and the sky had cleared just before this last choreoauratic test-event of the series began. Standing facing toward the Sky Tower, the participants made a formation of bodies wearing headphones. Some who shared MP3 players were tethered together in pairs, two by two connected by fine wires to their ears, held together by sound.

This is both a beginning, and the end. On-site, the participants, artists, performers, public, these bodies, stand for listening. Feet connected to the ground, the concrete underfoot opens up through the vibrations of the augmented voice, resonating inside bodies and the soundscore reminding them of the surface that was, before the concrete. Feet strike a collective beat with the surface of the street and this group begin the audio journey, making their way down Lorne Street in a human swarm.

In this encounter with Lorne Street an uncertainty among some participants emerged, they made comments afterwards
FIGURES 113 - 115: Listening for Disappearing (#2), Lornet St, Auckland, May 2014
about feeling nervous in anticipation of what they might be asked to do as they watched two other people wearing headphones lean into the wall of the St James. They stood opposite this pair. Are the two opposite them actually part of this score at all? The participants’ territories are unclear, who is performing? The unease that is felt at this moment was discussed afterwards as they identified with feeling watched, yet they were also watching. In this double watching and being watched I hoped to rupture the tension in being watched, through the act of listening.

Vallyon, one of the performing participants who I have been working with over the past year, traversed the steps in slow motion, slowing the city down. A member of the public watched her and joined in, he slowed his rhythm to meet hers. The oscillation of listening auscultatively and listening to the city dismantled any kind of security in being held for too long in the headphonic space. Houghton and Bartlett picked up library books and dropped them on the ground. They made a loud thwack. Thwack. Thwack. A thwack that punctured the internal score and brought the sounds of the outside space to our attention.

Two young men drew precisely and carefully with their finger tips, their message to the city. The whole group leaned against the walls of the St James Theatre together, looking across the street towards the library. A silent agreement taking place in a collective activism and sonorous connection to the building, the city and one another. Lepecki refers to Suely Rolnik’s idea of the ‘vibrating body’... ‘as deep auscultation of the sonic density of the world as it resonates within and throughout the subject’ (Lepecki, 2000, p. 356).

Based on this reflection of the penultimate test-events, I can identify some clear strategies emerging out of the twelve tests so far.

- The performance of the site as agent, both bringing attention and recovery to place, and scripting spatial codes.
- The potential of somatically informed sound-based choreographies to activate a sense of community and social encounter.
  - Headphonic sound as a way to negotiate the thresholds of inside and outside and body and place.
  - The practice of listening as an attunement to the body, the ‘other’ and its relationships with place.
  - The possibilities of contingent ephemeral practices that are fleeting.
  - The impossibility of the archive of the live event and how this opens possibilities for failure and alternative modes of documentation.

These strategies bring me to a provisional proposition for the ontological specificity of choreauratics. Through these test-events I suggest that rather than the notion of a singular event as a focal point for the live act, that we might draw on
multiple reverberations. As Massumi suggests in his unravelling of the event, traces (re)member, echo, and operate on the edges and within the remains of embodied listening in multiple times and places. Beginnings and endings merge into one another, appearing again and sometimes disappearing. Sound scores remain online for some time, accessible to download, and participants may come back to them in their own time. The definitions of what constitutes live performance, the boundaries of its form, its temporality and who performs becomes unclear as the sound trace of the performance test-events survive online, on a community sound network after the event has occurred and in the memories activated when participants return to the site.

The choreoauratic scores, listened to through headphones, provoked an experience of shifting within, through and into movement patterns of dispersed and multiple sites. The trace that the body leaves is fleeting. Movement rhythms of speed and slowness exist through the sensate, as feelings, memories, potential for connectivity, of becoming disconnected or disappearing and becoming visible. Through concepts of porosity and fluidity, the moving body becomes a site and the site becomes the body.

These test-events convene remnants of histories, place and myth across multiple sites and twelve test-events. Named as ‘choreauratics’ the performance framework draws on philosophies of place, language, the body and somatics while attempting to arbitrate the power of the spectacle as a capitalist politic.

Through the activity of testing, critical thinking, reflection and recording, the following primary conditions have emerged through the praxis:

- The research foregrounds the potential of a choreographic practice for recovery, of the social, the body and place (the unseen and the disappearing).
- The emphasis on listening is used as a tactic for rethinking the positioning of choreography in response to digital conditions.
- A concern for the exhaustion of the material world and a rescripting of place deepens a site-based practice that invites the nomad and disrupts binary codes and fixed histories of place.
- A desire to elicit an attunement to respons(ability) that accommodates the fleeting and unspectacular through social participatory choreographic events.
- An investigation that reconsiders the body as a dispersed, intersected, multiplied, decentralised and dematerialised condition.

This series of sonic social choreographies activates somatic and theoretical epistemologies with an auditory emphasis for
questioning how we have become electronically attuned. All of these test-events led participants, immersed in headphonic sound, through sequences of somatic cues. These cues are composed as choreoauratic scores that attempt to politicise the placeness of the body as an extended threshold received by its others (site and participants).

The research is activated by multimodal practices in somatics, spatial practice and choreography. Theoretical and reflective discourses are opened through spatial and somatic practice to support and contextualise the creative process. Critical thinking emerges out of this intermodal practice and operates across multiple fields; nomadology, dissensus, chora, witness. This critical cartography as discussed through this practice seeks to make new connections, communities and ways of coming together through a bodily attention to place.

The most significant elements that have impacted on the test-events at this point in the praxis are as follows:

- the historic and spatial codes of the site or place
- the relationship created between participants as an effect of the sound score
- the construction (particularly temporality and spatiality) of the choreoauratic score
- the framing and production of the event space (the way participants are mediated in space and time).

- the context of the test-event, whether it is included as part of a bigger festival event or whether it takes place independently
- the implications of modes of documentation

The experimental process imposes changes to each test-event that are based on reflection, theoretical discourse and ‘gut feelings’, and observations and instinctive responses based on the previous test-event. The micro adjustments and shifts that transpire from this process of testing and remaking affect how the space, sound, choreography, the exits, the entrances and the bits in the middle are choreographed in each sequential event. Although these minute adjustments may at times seem invisible, the amplification of some of the smallest changes have been surprising in the materialisation of the events.
VOCAL REFLECTION FROM *LISTENING TO DISAPPEARING* (#2), LORNE STREET, AUCKLAND 2014
FIGURE 117: Post-it notes from participants, Listening for Disappearing #2, Auckland, May 2014

- Bacteria on hand on wood
- Man without shoes
- Man with wireless
- Man talking to him
- Her ha he
- KTH?
- Squid on fence
- Senior staff
- Application
- Inspiration
- Breaking
- Beginning
- Birds flying
- IN
- Edge on the edge
- Pint to the
- Why
- And core the ground
- Smell of rain
- What no
- Required?
- Thinking
- I want him back
FIGURE 117: Listening for Disappearing (#2), Lorne St, Auckland, May 2014
During the walk I felt this relationship between my body and the buildings body and between my skin and the building’s skin so there is the question of inhabitation of the building and the decrepidness of the building, and then kind of the self... there is a play that produced quite a strong emotional response not just because of the plight of the building that’s been abandoned, but also the plight of the self in the city... When I was writing on the skin of the building it was like I was writing on the skin of the self, sort of saying don’t forget me...

The idea of remains having a sense of presence within that space that is but that is projected on to that building with has this amazing life inside of it, with the gold and the red, the lush carpet and everything that is talked about in the sound track that is now closed up and its like the interiority of our lives, of our selves being closed up and becoming anonymous within the city scape.

Audience comment - Panel Presentation, ADA Symposium, September 2014

FIGURE 118: Listening to Disappearing (#3), ADA Symposium, Auckland, September 2014
FIGURE 119 & 120 (this page and opposite page):
*Listening to Disappearing (#3)*, Auckland, September 2014
FIGURES 121 - 123 (this page and previous two pages): *Listening for Disappearing* (#3), ADA Symposium, Auckland, September 2014
FULL SOUND SCORE, LISTENING TO DISAPPEARING (#3), ADA 2014 SYMPOSIUM, LORNE STREET, AUCKLAND 2014
CHAPTER 8: Picking up the remains and beginning again

This is a Hii Ha Hii story. This is where we left off, it’s both the beginning and the end. Picking up the remains, we arrive and we begin again.

This is how we begin the thirteenth test-event. The test-event that is yet to happen. We conclude within a threshold space of both completion and incompletion, a place of possibility and potential. In this threshold space we become nomadic. Nomadic subjects that are becoming, nomadic subjects that never quite arrive, perpetually caught within a failure to find an ending and interminably in a state of opening. This state of opening asks what could become possible if we rethink the hierarchies of sound, touch, smell and the kinaesthetic senses? Is this even possible?

The research has brought together remnants of histories, places and myths across a series of sites in a process I have named choreoauratics, drawing on philosophies of place, language, the body and somatics while attempting to interrupt the power of the spectacle as a capitalist politic. Within the tensions of the embodied and the imperceptible, the practice speaks to the ruination of care to physical infrastructures, securing vibrant matter as a condition that does not return us to individualistic ego-centred instrumentalism (Bennett, 2010). Rather, the practice moves toward a politics of the poetic that is ephemeral and matrilineal, that works lightly in processes for coming together, and enabling choric encounters.

The practice has asked in what ways somatically informed choreography, perceptual performance and critical spatial practice might come together to rethink the subject in the highly mediated encounters of urban life? This research questions the driving force of the scopic in the Western regime of representation.

I argue that through listening prosthetically, the subject becomes nomadic, deterritorialising place through intensities of the sonorous and the kinaesthetic. Tuning in to the poetics of listening via headphonics has brought attention to a new kind of subjectivity and sociality. Softening into sonic borders, the participants in this series of test-events seemed to become more receptive to expanding and shifting synaesthetic and social fields. Recollecting the social choreoauratics series, I described how during Listening to Disappearing (Auckland, May 2014) one participant interrupted the codes of the site with her actions. Lying on books, lying down in the city, the social layers and codes of the civic space became confused, the social and political borders dismantled and different cultural milieux collided in an interzone.
The socio-political forces that emerged out of the spatial conditions became critical to the performance practice, responding to the everyday, and to the current political climate that perpetuates neo-liberal capitalism. Operating within this framework, hierarchies in performance structures became emancipated, the artist or maker and the participant shared roles of authorship, the spectators (who were sometimes unsuspecting and became involved by chance) became part of the work. The imperceptible, the lost and the disappearing were recovered, as partial remains, given a voice, embodied, they were heard through the ephemeral layers of the urban landscape.

Wired together by insulated sound spaces, participants activated listening, inscribing place with the ‘ear of the other’ (Derrida, 1985, p. 51). Kinaesthetic responses became placed within a sonic community, and in the reflections that the participants made of their encounters. They indicated a sense of coming together; through the pull of a collective foot-fall rhythm, an invisible web that wove through their connectivity of tuning through place, of the sky’s blueness as perceived by the body, and the way the earth holds the participants together in a chorus (Kristeva in Grosz, 1995, p. 116). ‘Is the sound recorded or is it the world?’ asked one participant as the digital sound world and the physical sound world collided (A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears, ADA Symposium Dunedin, 2013). Through sound our placeness merges with the virtual and the physical, and the borders of how we feel placed became porous like the decaying walls of the St James Theatre.

In this research the thinking materialised through the practice, (drawing from Carter’s term material thinking) and became a tracing, in the form of multifarious recordings of the creative research. Processual creative research tuned in to the complexity of a choreographic practice that (re)membered the subject, culturally, socially, politically and spatially in the ‘always unfinished process of making and remaking ourselves’ (Carter, 2004, p. 13). As Carter suggests and as referred to in Chapter 2, any findings of something new, or the rediscovery of something that has disappeared, that has involved an imaginative process, connotes a research process that is ‘unavoidably creative’ (Carter, 2004, p. 7). Carter suggests that its success is immeasurable and irreducible, and never complete. This creative practice continues to emerge out of an assembly of somatically informed choreography, critical spatial practice and philosophies of listening that reconsider the conditions of place, the body and the subject through refiguring the politics of the sensate. In attempts to archive the process, the dominant ocularcentric stance was rethought, provoking a practice that rewrites itself through its remains.

Developing the original term, choreoauratics, contributes to ‘choreography in the expanded field’, bringing the ontologies of somatically informed choreography, the conditions of listening prosthetically, and critical spatial practice together. The impact
that this thinking has had on my research and the community of practitioners I belong to reconsiders the characteristics of performance practices in dissensus with the politics of listening. This aligns with a different history of visual and performance arts, one that Rancière presents as a ‘micro-politics’, where the ‘radical strangeness of the aesthetic object and the active appropriation of the common world’ convene in a way that brings art and life together (2004, p. 88). This aesthetico-political thinking is not new and can be traced back to the Dadaists, with whom I identified in Chapter 3, as belonging to my own artistic lineage and that I also refer to in this creative research.

In a time of life when we are wired in, and wirelessly networked to a complex matrix of interconnectivity, a new political resistance has emerged. As Rancière suggests, ‘Art no longer wants to respond to the excess of commodities and signs, but to a lack of connections’ (2004, p. 90). The technological realm has become intensely networked and interconnected, particularly through screen-based media. In the intricacy of our social and digital networks lies a paradox, in the hyper-connectivity of a wired world, we experience physical isolation more than ever, estranged and disconnected from one another and to place.

These choreoauratic test-events have the potential to be adapted to other places, activating between spaces and potentially across distance to bring diverse communities together. The notion of proximity is rethought in this practice and brought into a sonic spatiality, as a smooth space ‘of affects’ that in Deleuze and Guattari’s terms is ‘occupied by intensities, wind and noise, forces and sonorous and tactile qualities’ (1988, p. 557). Braidotti’s emphasis on the space between, also draws from Deleuze in her attention to the nomadic in sound, and invites a spatiality that pursues ‘dissonance’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 106). This she suggests returns us ‘to the external world, where sounds belong, always in transit, like radio waves moving ineluctably to outer spaces, chatting on, with nobody to listen’ (Braidotti, 2011, p. 106).

The potential for this choreoauratic practice to extend its logic beyond the MP3 player and the headphonic invites possibilities for a future practice that transmits sound in other ways. The possibilities for new speaker technology, to further the notion of the choric as a sonic entity and continue working with notions of coming together and proximity suggests an extended investigation of ‘dancing-place’ via the imperceptible and the sonorous (Gotman, 2012). The temporality of our placeness, as a choreological and dramaturgical concern evokes the past and the future as a choric possibility, a sound space of potential, a space that ‘makes place possible’ (Grosz, 1995, p. 116).

Developing ‘choreoauratics’ as a way of thinking through the choreographic and through listening has exposed a choric space that prioritises the recovery of the imperceptible and the disappearing. The potential of this practice to activate multiple
FIGURE 124: *Listening to Disappearing* (#3), ADA Symposium, Auckland, September 2014
FIGURE 125: Listening to Disappearing (#3), ADA Symposium, Auckland, September, 2014
spaces through choreauratic thinking makes possible an authentic and sustainable performance practice that can be taken and adapted to/for other spaces and places within today’s social and political scene. In the future this might be taken to distant places, in connection with the other.

As this research has evidenced, tuning into the ordinary, to less, to the slow, to the other and the disappearing activates the potential for becoming other, in art and life, suggesting the possibilities for a framework that privileges difference towards a hopeful future.

Addendum

The last test-event of this series will be presented towards the end of summer in Lorne Street, in the space between the St James Theatre and the Auckland Public Library. This event has the potential for future development as the St James Theatre faces a future of privatisation and a hopeful recovery of its physical structure through restoration.
FIGURE 126: Listening to Disappearing (#3), ADA Symposium, Auckland, September 2014
SECTION C: APPENDICES AND REFERENCE LIST
### Performance Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mnemonic Choreauratics</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Sound Files</th>
<th>Spatial &amp; Social Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>A Live Recording,</em> Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, June 2011</td>
<td>Veletržní Palace, Prague, Czech Republic</td>
<td>Glenn Eden, Lopdell House, Mercury Theatre, St James Theatre, Victoria Theatre</td>
<td>Exhibition Installation - Monumental Gallery Architecture - Expo event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>Instructions for remembering (forwards): a slide show</em> An evening of curated choreographic works with an auditory theme, - <em>Hear Me,</em> July 2011</td>
<td>The Old Folks Association in Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand</td>
<td><em>Hear Me 01, Hear Me 02, Hear Me 03, Hear Me 04</em></td>
<td>Theatrical conditions, audience seated, participants in performance roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>Coming to our Senses</em> at SEAM 2011 September, 2011</td>
<td>The Drill Hall, Rushcutter's Bay, Sydney</td>
<td>Seam Europe 01, Seam Europe 02, Seam Europe 03, Seam Europe 04, Seam Europe 05, Glenn Eden, Lopdell House, Mercury Theatre, St James Theatre, Victoria Theatre</td>
<td>Performance Installation within a Symposium, open and non-place architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Instructions for (re)membering(#1)</em> at The Performance Arcade, October 2011</td>
<td>Aotea Square, Auckland</td>
<td>Performance Arcade 01, Performance Arcade 02, Performance Arcade 03, Performance Arcade 04</td>
<td>Installation - Shipping container, civic site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>Instructions for (re)membering(#2),</em> A provisional year PhD presentation of the practice, November 2011</td>
<td>The Old Folks Association hall, Gundry St, Auckland</td>
<td>Performance Arcade 01, Performance Arcade 02, Performance Arcade 03, Performance Arcade 04, Gundry Street</td>
<td>Participatory Performance Event, Old Folks Association hall, mixed and non-place architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>Instructions for (re)membering(#3),</em> <em>A Social Choreography for the Ears,</em> June 2011</td>
<td>Kenneth Myers Centre, Shortland St, Auckland</td>
<td>Kenneth Myers 01 and Kenneth Myers 02</td>
<td>Participatory Performance Event Kenneth Myers Centre, Black Box Studio without theatrical lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>Instructions for (re)membering(#4),</em> <em>A Social Choreography for the Ears,</em> June 2011</td>
<td>University of Chichester, Chichester, UK</td>
<td>Chichester 01 and Chichester 02</td>
<td>Participatory Performance Event (originally planned for outdoors) Gymnasiun - due to the bad weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERFORMANCE MAP</td>
<td>PLACE</td>
<td>SOUND FILES</td>
<td>SPATIAL &amp; SOCIAL CONDITIONS</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NOMADIC CHOREOAURATICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>E-Bodies: Listen up, tune in, slow down and play on</em> and performance walk/presentation, Eastwest Somatics Symposium, February 2013</td>
<td>The University of Otago and surrounding streets, Dunedin February 2013</td>
<td>Choreoauratic walk Dunedin01</td>
<td>University grounds and Civic site - streets of Dunedin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <em>A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A social choreography for the ears</em>, Performance Presentation, Aotearoa Digital Artists AGM, September 2013</td>
<td>From the Gregg’s Factory to the The Priory, Dunedin CBD, New Zealand</td>
<td>Choreoauratic walk Dunedin02</td>
<td>Civic site - streets of Dunedin and the exterior of The Priory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL CHOREOAURATICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. <em>Listening for Disappearing - A social choreography for the ears (#2)</em>, Performance Presentation, PhD Presentation May 2014</td>
<td>Lorne St, Auckland CBD, March 2014</td>
<td>St James Auckland Audience Participants St James Auckland Participants Choreography</td>
<td>Civic site - mixed pedestrian/ vehicles street, exterior of the St James Theatre and exterior of the Auckland Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. <em>Listening to Disappearing - A social choreography for the ears (#3)</em>, ADA Symposium 2014, September 2014</td>
<td>Lorne St, Auckland CBD, March 2014</td>
<td>St James Auckland Audience Participants 01 St James Auckland Participants Choreography 02 St James Auckland Participants Choreography 03</td>
<td>Civic site - mixed pedestrian/ vehicles street, exterior of the St James Theatre and exterior of the Auckland Public Library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ross Brown’s list of headphone works – published on the SCUDD email list:

**Headphone shows**

- Tai Shani, Vicki Bennett (People Like Us) And Of The Brimming Freeze Frame / The Zone, Nov 2012
- Proto-type Theater - 2008 Whisper
- National Theatre of Wales/Mike Pearson – summer 2012 Coriolanus
- David Rosenberg and Glen Neath - currently touring Ring
- 2008 production Contains Violence by David Rosenberg of Shunt, Lyric Hammersmith
- Back to Back’s Small Metal Objects, and Soft (2002)
- Red Shift’s Invisible Show I and Invisible Show II
- Drylands by Zecora Ura part 2 of Hotel Medea overnight trilogy - audience uses headphones and are brainwashed by Jason’s political campaign.

Videos from LIFT2010 here: [vimeo.com/hotelmedea](http://vimeo.com/hotelmedea)

- First Person Theatre, Waystation (2008-11)
- Lundahl & Seitl - Rotating in a Room of Images (2011)
- Unclaimed Creatures --The Portable Emporium- @ The Roundhouse (2011) and The Invisible City, which was originally @ the Old Vic Tunnels (2010)
- Rimini Protokoll’s Sonde Hannover
- Any number of shows by Ant Hampton and Silvia Mercuriali, both as Rotozaza and also independently - [http://www.rotozaza.co.uk/home.html](http://www.rotozaza.co.uk/home.html) - and a new work by Britt Hatzius
- [http://www.brithatzius.co.uk/micro-events.html](http://www.brithatzius.co.uk/micro-events.html)
- Blast Theory’s Desert Rain
- Nowhere Less Now, Lindsey Seers, in association with Artangel
- Tongues of Stone (Dancing Cities Event) April 2011 Produced by STRUT Dance Company: Perth, Australia.Sound Design: Russell Scoones CoDirection: Carol Brown (choreographer) and Dorita Hannah (designer)
- House by wilson+wilson (1998): in one room the audience wore headphones and listened to an audio track which combined a poem by Simon Armitage with sound by Scanner.
- In Mulgrave by wilson+wilson (2005): whilst travelling in buggies through a wood the audience listened to an audio track through headphones written by poet Amanda Dalton and composed by Hugh Nankivel. [www.wilsonandwilson.org](http://www.wilsonandwilson.org)
- Gob Squad Kitchen, You’ve Never Had it So Good (2007)
- Hannah Hurtzig creates a performance in 2000 in which audience members could watch on TV screens 8 simultaneous conversations which happened elsewhere in the Theaterbuilding at that time and had to choose with a switch which conversation they would follow/listen to via their pair of headphones. See here [https://www.mobileacademy-berlin.com/englisch/filiale2000/filiale_2000.html](https://www.mobileacademy-berlin.com/englisch/filiale2000/filiale_2000.html) for more info.
- Slung Low’s Pandemic, They Only Come at Night: Resurrection
MOBILE

- Blast Theory’s ‘Rider Spoke’
- en route by one step at a time like this http://www.onestepatimelikethis.com/enroute.html
- Sussurus, David Leddy/Fire Exit Ltd, 2011
- Duncan Speakman’s Subtlemobs http://productofcircumstance.com/

PROTOTYPES

- Antenna Theatre/Chris Hardman (1980s) High School and Alacatraz ‘walkmanology’ tours
APPENDIX 3

Martha Eddy's extensive list of Asian and African traditional movement styles that have foreshadowed somatic practices:

- The whole system perspective is embedded in Afrocentric models, as reflected in the unification of mind-body and spirit, but more importantly the omnipresence of “the circle,” the dance and communication formation that supports the communication in community;
- Ecological constructs emerge in such Eastern principles as the oneness of yin-yang, and the cycling of destruction and construction evident in the Shiva principle of Hinduism. Joseph Campbell, married to dancer-choreographer Jean Erdman often juxtaposed dancers and icons of Shiva to depict this phenomenon (Campbell, 1978).
- Spirituality is central to various traditional forms of Asian and African education, medicine, and philosophy, even if it is not articulated through specific religious forms.
- Female and/or matriarchal power is acknowledged in numerous cultural contexts in Asia (e.g., mother as controller of household economy) and Africa (e.g., matriarchal lineages).
- Nonviolent change is a concept central to a number of movement forms. For example, aikido epitomizes the development of a martial art that negates aggression. Self-defense is achieved when the attacked person transforms the attacker's energy avoiding violence as much as possible (Eddy, 2001a).
- Decentralization of decision-making can be found in various Asian and African movement practices.

EXHIBITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Performing the city Panel Presentation with Carol Brown, Russell Scoones and Tracey Benson, Aotearoa Digital Artists AGM Dunedin September 2014
Listening to Disappearing Aotearoa Digital Artists AGM Dunedin September 2014
Listening to Disappearing Action and Delay AUT June 2014
Listening for Disappearing The Festival of Uncertainty – Performance presentation, May 2014
A digital meditation and a choreography of mumbles - A Social choreography for the ears. Performance Presentation, Aotearoa Digital Artists AGM Dunedin September 2013
Listen Up and Tune in paper presentation, TDENNZA Conference, The University of Waikato, Hamilton 2013
The Body Imperfect Panel Presentation with Dr. Mark Harvey and Dr. Dermott McNeel, SCANZ 2013 Wānanga-symposium, Western Institute of Technology, New Plymouth 2013
E-Bodies: Listen up, tune in, play on and slow down performance presentation, Eastwest Somatics Symposium, The University of Otago, Dunedin 2013
Incorporating technologies: Social choreographies for the ears paper presentation, NICAI Doctoral Research Forum, The University of Auckland 2012
Instructions for (re)membering: a social choreography for the ears Somatics and Technology Conference, Chichester University, Chichester, UK 2012
Instructions for remembering (forwards) Provisional year presentation, The Old Folks Association in Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand, November 2011
Instructions for (re)membering at The Performance Arcade, Aotea Square, Auckland, New Zealand, October 2011
Coming to our senses at SEAM 2011 ‘Critical Paths’ in Sydney, Australia in September, 2011
Instructions for remembering (forwards) at an evening of curated choreographic works with an auditory theme, - ‘Hear Me’, The Old Folks Association in Gundry St, Auckland, New Zealand, July 2011
Instructions for remembering Coventry June 2011 Somatics Conference
A Live Recording Post Graduate Student Exhibition, Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, Prague, Czech Republic, June 2011

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES (PEER REVIEWED):

WOOD, B (2014) Incorporating Creative Technologies : A choreography for the ears Body, Space and Technology, 12 (2)

OTHER REFEREED MEDIA (PEER REVIEWED):

WOOD, B (2011) Making Sense of No Body Online Journal: Creative technologies, Issue 1, COLAB, Auckland University of Technology
RESEARCH GRANTS / FUNDING

Conference and Creative Event Funding: to exhibit at the Prague Quadrennial 2011, Czech Republic and present at the Performance and Somatics Conference, University of Coventry, UK 2011

INVITED LECTURES

Guest lecturer, New Media Studies, School of Performing and Screen Arts, Unitec, Auckland, New Zealand 2006 – 2013

2000 - 2013 - PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN PERFORMANCE, CHOREOGRAPHY, PRODUCTION AND/OR DIRECTION

*Tuna Mau* landscape performance by MAP, Auckland New Zealand (performer) 2013

*1000 Lovers* site-based performance by MAP, Auckland New Zealand (rehearsal director) 2013

*Blood of Trees* site-based performance by MAP, Auckland New Zealand (research assistant) 2012

*Tongues of Stone* site-based performance by MAP, Perth, Australia (research assistant) 2011

*Urban Devas* site-based performance by Carol Brown and Phil Dadson 2010 - 2011

(performer/production assistant)

*The Show Must Go On* by Jerome Bel, Mercury Theatre, Auckland Arts Festival, Auckland (performer) 2011

*Contact* a retrospective by Jim Allen Artspace, Auckland Arts Festival, Auckland (performance coordination and rehearsal) 2011

*Contact* a retrospective by Jim Allen Govett Brewster Gallery, New Plymouth (performance coordination and rehearsal) 2010
CONSENT FORM - Audience
THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS

PROJECT TITLE: A Choreography for the Ears – Creative Practice PhD
UAHPEC ETHICS NUMBER: 011869

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Carol Brown
PhD Candidate/Researcher: Becca Wood

I have read the Audience Participant Information Sheet and have understood the nature of the research. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research project as a participating audience member
- I understand that this will involve participating as an audience member in a public event, A Choreography for the Ears
- I understand this research will take place (Date TBC)
- I understand that the research will take place on-site in Lorne Street, between the Auckland Public Library and the St James Theatre in the Auckland CBD
- I understand that by participating in this event I am agreeing to be photographed and that I can also volunteer to contribute to a written reflection as explained in the Audience Participant Information Sheet
- I understand that documentation of the artistic research (in the form of still photographs and written reflections) will be held indefinitely and that the CD of the outcomes will be disseminated to libraries and public archives for the arts
- I wish/do not wish to receive any digital copies of the research

NAME:_______________________________  SIGNATURE:________________________  DATE:________________________

CONTACT DETAILS:
EMAIL:_____________________________
ADDRESS:___________________________
PHONE NUMBER:_______________________

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON_______ FOR 3 YEARS REFERENCE
CONSENT FORM
Performer
THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS

PROJECT TITLE:  A Choreography for the Ears – Creative Practice PhD

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:  Carol Brown
PhD Candidate/Researcher:  Becca Wood

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research project as a participating performer.
- I understand that this will involve engaging in a sustained research and development process towards two public presentations of A Choreography for the Ears as outlined in the Participant Information Sheet.
- I understand this research will take place between August 2014 and February 2014.
- I understand that the research will take place on-site in Lorne Street, between the Auckland Public Library and the St James Theatre in the Auckland CBD.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation from this research process as outlined in the Participant Information Sheet.
- By agreeing to participate in this research process I am agreeing to have my performance practice recorded with audio-visual media (video, photography, audio and written responses) and understand that I have a period of up to two weeks from recording to request the withdrawal of any material as outlined in the Participant Information Sheet.

NAME: _______________________________________
SIGNATURE: __________________________________ DATE: ____________________

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON ________ FOR 3 YEARS REFERENCE.
REFERENCES


______ (2007). *Interest: The Ethics of Invention*. In E. Barrett, & B. Bolt (Eds.), *Practice as Research Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (pp. 27) I.B.Taurus & Co.

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