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Physical Futures



PHYSICAL FUTURES

Critical Path (choreographic research and development organisation) and C-LAB (Taiwan Contemporary Culture Lab) are both housed in former military research sites of invading colonial armed forces. Both organisations sit on (currently) expensive real estate, under regular pressure to justify themselves (societally, financially etc). The people of both organisations work to resource artists - and their practices - without resorting to visibility and product as proxy for value. Both work to hold the tide, the acculturated compulsion, to reduce and commercialise all things towards capturing or capitalising on the value that artists cannot help but generate through their very practise and care. Which is to say the primary shared characteristic of both organisations is their idealism. The value system that is embodied in doing the work of hosting.

2022 is the first in a 3-year pilot program of artist exchange between our organisations. We are working towards more rigorous choreographic and technological collaboration. Working to problematise the deployment of one as a decoration for the other. And supporting artists of either expertise towards a higher literacy (and criticality) with the other. It looked like this:

June 2022 - The artists worked locally onsite at the venue of their home countries, supported with studio space, wages, equipment and synchronous time schedule, all conditions aimed at making exchange integral and inevitable. And even so, the feedback from all at the end revealed a shared feeling of not having been together. - Valuable experiment result number 1.

August 2022 - To assist with expanding discourse, the exchange artists were supported by senior artists of international acclaim, namely Linda Dement (Australia), Eisa Jocson (Philippines), Su Yu-hsin (Taiwan) and Tiyan Baker (Australia). The most candid connections happened between those who could meet in studio, iterating materials directly in real time. - Valuable experiment result number 2.

How do we stop. Collaborate. And listen?

October 2023 - We'll resume in 2023 with a 4-week intensive working physically together in a mentored, collaborative framework. Thinking out loud through dancing. Iterating material directly and collectively.

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The Lab series 2022 ^[edit]

1. Digital Enchantment Lab ^[edit]

Xeno World Xeno Practice ^[edit]
Written by Linda Dement on Gadigal Land, (which recently became known as Sydney). ^[edit]

XENO - from the Greek *xénos* meaning alien, foreign, other, strange

For a week, we foreigners were physically-virtually in the Drill Hall Sydney and C-LAB Taipei. Recognising the superposition of our existences in space-time as simultaneously remote, aligned, offset, mutually perfusing and concurrent,

we delved into xenomogrifications: How could we use the digital for xeno-phenomena, xeno-bodies, xeno-places? How could we go outside our own familiar and discover our inner alien propensities? How might failures of our normal drop us into some wild space of previously excluded zones?

Inspired by Virginia Barratt, Danielle Braithwaite Shirley, Andrew Burrell, Choi Ka Fai, Adam Faramaway, Behnaz Ferahi, Future Tao, Mirabelle Jones, Adriana Knouf, Xia Lin, Mary Maggic, Nancy Mauro-Flude, Afrodití Psarra, Jenna Sutela, Cynthia Verspaget and ...

Within 5 short days the artists (Lee Ming-chieh, Lin Kai-yu, Leo Tsao, Wendy Yu) layered, stretched, entangled, composited, scanned and performed the physical, virtual and augmented. Time, space and bodies, human and inhuman, became the ground of experimentation: *Physical space* was captured, layered as augment, echoed bodily, measured, performed and conflated; The body of an electron as formed by its path was enacted by human within virtual 3D translations of optics processes; Future fauna beings, shaped by adaptation to millennia of climate change, were imagined and synthesised; Break dance was re-mapped on virtual agents and pushed into trompe l'oeil dimensions to exceed and escape the frame.

A week of marvellous and fragmented forays.

2. Choreographic Expansion Lab ^[edit]

Intimacies with technology ^[edit]
written by Eisa Jocson at La Union, The Philippines. ^[edit]

The Choreographic Expansion Lab is an amazing group of artist (Riana Head-Toussaint, Roslyn Orlando, Zhan Jia-hua, Tian Zi-ping and facilitators M@, Viviane Roi). True to its title it was a week of expansion rooted in processes of hijacking and care.

Collectively sharing and reflecting through the projects of participating artists, what unfolded was a deeper consciousness of our relational, material and *embodied* connection to technology. It was endearing to discover other ways of being with and relating to *technology* beyond capitalist functionality.

Moving with their questions, each artist went through varying strategies of intimacy; taking time to be with, to play with, to be in conversation with, to listen to, to dance with and even to download into one's body their respective technologies. Allowing these processes to happen and sensing what is e/merging between them and their chosen technologies (drone, Lamda, VR, laser)

Riana's investigation started out with the surveillance function of a drone, which progressed into a kind of companionship, finding more similarities as they (Drone and Riana) glide around each other, observing oneself through the other. Roslyn's experiments with downloading Sims dance language and Lamda generated text into her own body, hosting as well as disrupting the download, attempts at an embodied understanding of artificial intelligence. Dudu's studies at creating a meditative environment through virtual reality brought her to disembodiment as a condition of Virtual Reality, transforming her inquiry towards the effects of virtual body on the real body. Ping's tests on the interaction between Laser, Video, Body resulted in the materiality of laser light; in intimately caressing and making visible the surface of the human body and in contrast corrupting the video image and even destroying the video capturing device.

A quote that M@ shared from - Ghost in a Shell, resounded well in how the workshop week progressed.

"But that's just it, that's the only thing that makes me feel human, the way I'm treated, I mean who knows what's inside our heads have you ever seen your own brain? What if a cyber brain could possibly generate its own ghost, create a soul all by itself? and if it did, just what would be the importance of being human then?" - Major Motoko Kusanagi, Ghost in a Shell (1995)

3. The Exchange Residency ^[edit]

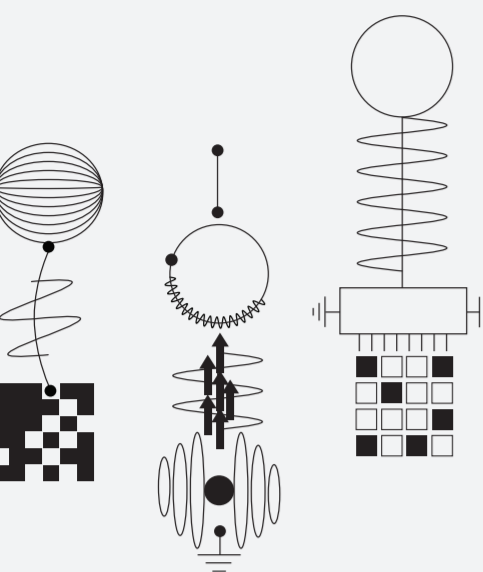
Physical Futures ^[edit]
written by M@ in台北, 台灣 ^[edit]

The Physical Futures Exchange Residency was a 2 week at-distance (but in studio) continuation of the labs. Resources to work through the epiphanies, to revel in affinities, and to attempt valuable artistic exchange within this construct. The *tools* we used are built for online *collaboration*. Interestingly, a shared feeling at the end of the residency was a desire for more togetherness, for a shared collaborative process.

Did we fail to collaborate? Or did we instead fail to feel the feeling of having collaborated? The familiarising times spent in-between data exchange. The camaraderie building side-affect of the effort - and exhaustion - of exercising empathy in the hope of being understood, across mediums, across languages, through physicalities... If a pre-requisite for mediums to work together is that the artists at the forefront of these mediums can work together, how do we do that? with rigour and with generosity?

And how do we centre the intelligence of the physical self through our playful and devoted misuse of the corporate-techno-office tools we are conscripted into thinking via and cohabiting? How do we insist on being together, in space and in time, for a shared experience within this virtual-miasma/swarm/stream/reality of our post-digital human world?

Next time, how best may we stop. Collaborate. And listen...



Mentors:

Linda Dement
Eisa Jocson

Special Guest artists:

Su Yu-hsin - 蘇郁心
Tiyan Baker

Artists of the Lab/Residency series 2022:

Tian Zi-ping - 田子平
Lee Ming-chieh - 李明潔
Wendy Yu - 余思嘉
Riana Head-Toussaint
Roslyn Orlando
Zhan Jia-hua - 詹嘉華
Lin Kai-yu - 林楷育
Leo Tsao - 曹恩維

Further artists involved:

David Huggins
Ong Kuan-ying - 王官穎
Lee Bai - 李欣穎
Viviane Roi - 王仁薇

Curators:

Wu Dar-kuen - 吳達坤
M@

Project Manager:

Viviane Roi - 王仁薇

Special Thanks to the following people without whom none of this could have happened:

Claire Hicks
Jessica Tien-Chao Li - 黎天墜
Cynthia Wang - 王惠娟

Designer:

Si Yi Shen - 沈思儀

The venues, artists, and fiberoptic submarine data cable that makes this ongoing exchange possible, runs through the unceded lands and waters of displaced first peoples. We acknowledge that every person involved is living in the aftermath of colonial instigated inequities that persist to this day and we recognise and pay our respect to first peoples and their ongoing custodianship of these places and our shared future.

Why a WIKI

The default state of the internet is latency, and asynchronicity. Both are antithetical to dance and choreography - to being together. <http://OpenTab.wiki> leans into a retro-techno frame, back when the defining breakthrough of the internet - The Hyper-Link - was still at the forefront of the joy of internetting.

"Communications tools don't get socially interesting until they get technologically boring... It's when a technology becomes normal, then ubiquitous, and finally so pervasive as to be invisible, that the really profound changes happen." - Clay Shirky

What is a WIKI

"A wiki is a hypertext publication collaboratively edited and managed by its own audience directly using a web browser." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki>

What is this WIKI

The <http://OpenTab.wiki> is an ongoing Critical Path Digital Head Quarters for at-keyboard choreographic collaboration. It has a pre-determined death-date of Dec 2024. Click here to see other questions being asked via <http://opentab.wiki/index.php/Questions>

OpenTab WIKI constructed by M@



An ongoing partnership between Critical Path Centre for Choreographic Research and Taiwan Contemporary Culture Lab supported by Cultural Division of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Sydney, Australia, CreateNSW and City of Sydney.

This page was last modified on 12 November 2022, at 23:52

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