

DEEP RHYTHM OF THE SEA*

2023 CRITICAL PATH FELLOWSHIP: 'Decolonising Time – Discovering a new relationship with time'
WRAP UP AND REFLECTION (Ira Ferris) – Nov 2023

I write this exhausted.

I've been experiencing it for a while. Partly the lack of sleep. Partly a deep systemic fatigue.

But as Tom Melick, via Julia Bavyka, reminds me: there is a revolutionary potential in fatigue.*

What exhausts me the most is the ecology of comparing and contrasting we function in. In reality, crush under.

I waste so much energy on this. And to waste energy is to waste time. Not in that leisurely sense of 'time wasting' that I endorse.

In this ecology the relevant ones constantly produce. Self-worth comes hand in hand.

Yet, what we produce does not fulfil us (or others) for longer than the 24-hour spin of the Instagram story. In this avalanche of content, nothing is held for longer than a glimpse. It all disappears in a flash of a cacophonous blur. We produce waste.

When we rush, we litter.

The artists I admire the most produce one work every seven years. The kind of time it takes for the body and all its cells to completely renew. These slow artists let their works simmer for a while. They engage in long (re)search. They wait. Dadirri.

Take time.

But it is dangerous to take time. To take time is to waste it. Or, fall behind.
Can we *afford* to stop?

The idyllic concept of switching off the computer, the phone; locking the studio, not even thinking about the diary – going bush or ocean. It's frivolous. It's a privilege.

Sometimes I feel ashamed when advocating for a slower pace.

There is no luxury of questioning the relationship to time when faced with survival. Yet, I sometimes wonder (if not know) whether if we slowed down the survival would be more likely. The privilege of many, rather than a few, would be more likely. Is it not the world of haste, speed, overwork, exhaustion that is also the world of wars, oppression, poor and rich? I have lived through war. I don't say this lightly.

[...]

Our discussions on time were often discussions on gentleness. TIME before colonialism, industrialism, capitalism. Nature time. Nurture time. More attuned and sentient time. Responsive rather than responsible time.

The kind of time that does not rely on the artificiality of the clock but on sensibility of the body.

Individual body.
Individual time.

Yet this time aligns. We sense each other in this time. We take time to care.

Responsibility rushes. Response-ability notices.

Softer time is messier. Process rather than product driven; it gives time to the disordered. Lets go of the control.

To take a breath is to take a break. To break.

Break a pattern, a condition, a conviction. Systems crumble under the slower time. Transformation requires softness. Change in gravity.

Responsibility is stiff. Response-ability dances.

[...]

The time of our residency is up. For a paradigm shift:

REPLACE COFFEE WITH WATER *