

Band 8:

A POROUS RECORD: TRANSMISSIONS OF THE BODY

By **Rachel Gill**, with contributions by Lea Champagne, Aysegül Bilge Dursun, Mira Traub, EunChae Kim, Okumus Ceren, Lais Gruau, Paula Maria Landa Hartasanchez and Luisa Carmen Kunth.

“This zine serves as a poetic archive of the Sound & Body seminar. I co-taught this seminar with Prof. Dr. Cristina Gómez Barrio and Prof. Wolfgang Mayer of Discoteca Flaming Star as part of my cooperation fellowship with Akademie Schloss Solitude and Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste Stuttgart (ABK). Together, Cristina and Wolfgang run the M.F.A. KTPP program at ABK. The majority of the seminar participants are trained as visual artists, with little to no movement background. I was drawn to the ways improvisation could hold a shared space of inquiry—one in which my movement practice and the students’ visual practices might begin to speak to one another. In the seminar, we explored improvisation as a practice of devotional presence, yielding to what is unknowable as a generative space of encounter across the ambiguous terrain of movement. This archive aims to be a resource for others to begin their own improvisation practice. Exercises and concepts are organized alphabetically, with archival material from the ABK students throughout. Details about our practice of transmission, through which this material was generated, are included at the end.” (Rachel Gill)

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08–11	A—AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT
	B
12–13	C/D—COMPOSITION/DURATION
14–17	E—ECHOING
18–21	F/G—FALLING/GRAVITY
	H
22–23	I—IMAGES
24–25	J—JOINTS
	K
26–27	L—LISTENING
28–31	M—MIRRORING
	N
32–33	O—OBJECTS
34–35	P—PAUSE
36–37	Q—QUESTIONS
38–39	R—REPETITION
40–43	S—SHARING WEIGHT
44–59	T—TRANSMISSION
	U
	V
60–61	W—WITH GRATITUDE
	X
	Y
	Z

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I approach improvisation trusting that the body already holds all the material needed; the task is to attend to it. Improvisation becomes a shared terrain where this material emerges, circulates between bodies, and collides with the present. What unfolds is less an act of invention than a process of recognition, whereby we become attuned to what is already in motion yet not always easily articulated through language. Movers are invited to arrive just as they are; there is no correct disposition. My hope is that practicing improvisation will deepen receptivity to our ever-shifting relational currents while still honoring the irreducible interiority of others. I'm preoccupied by what strange and delicate encounters may arise here, where desire surfaces and is felt and shaped in a collective process.

The skills improvisation has taught me I use daily. Precarity shapes our lives in unequal ways, and each day we are asked for our attention, required to adapt, and dependent upon our sensitivity to others. Improvisation helps to reveal the permeations between our subjectivities and, at the same time, preserves our opacity, our resistance to being consumed, decoded, or extracted from. This unfolding contradiction creates a dialogue outside of language—through gesture and changing proximity—and gives us a kind of vocabulary: one of bodily vulnerability, of unevenness, of a shared movement in which we are always going and coming back again to each other.

Many of these exercises are open-ended and have been passed down to me by other dancers and improvisers. There is no need to follow them strictly; they are offered as starting points for your own artistic exploration. You can create a score, either by combining multiple exercises or by beginning from a single prompt. A score is a framework for improvisation: a set of chosen conditions that anchor choices as they unfold in performance or in practice. There are endless ways to create and notate a score, and it can be as detailed or as simple as needed. This tool is for you.

A—AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT^{exercise}

Two ways to practice:

¹In pairs - One person is the mover, the other the witness. The mover closes their eyes and moves freely, including being still or making sound. The witness observes without judgment and ensures the mover's safety.

²In a group - Half are movers and half are witnesses. Witnesses stay on the perimeter, responsible for the safety of all movers.

All participants should have the opportunity to engage as movers and witnesses. Afterward, take a few minutes to reflect on the experience.

Inspired by the practice of Authentic Movement, which originates in the work of Mary Starks Whitehouse, this entry approaches the idea of moving from an inner impulse and witnessing what arises.

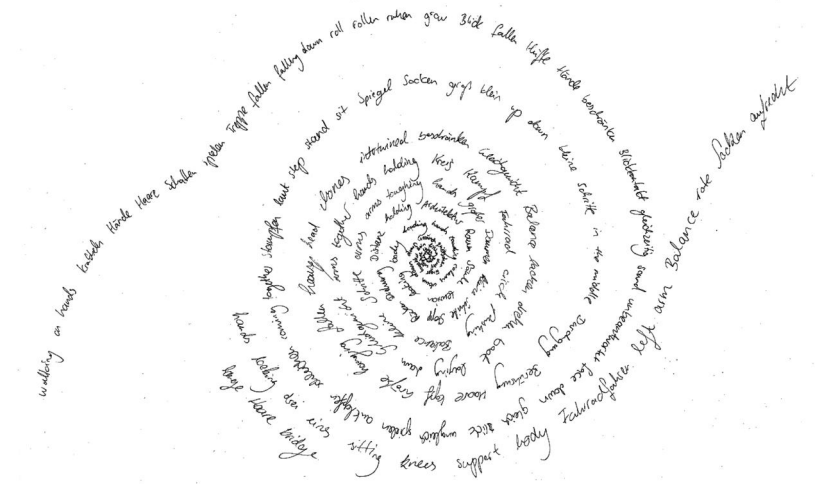


Drawing by Paula Maria Landa Hartasanchez

Collective thoughts

balance. better perception. borders. breathing. bumper cars. connection. cushion. delay. didn't want to crash. discover one's own limitations. dizzy. dynamic. echo. essence of intuitive needs. extension of the self. exhaustion. expectation to move. frame. freedom. god. hands are the organs that see. her body gave me impulse. hungry. i don't want to decide for her. i don't want to interrupt. intervention. longest eight minutes of my life. letting go. more empathetic to how she is moving. parents. pasos. possibilities of communication through touch. protection. seeing with hands. sense. shadow of the other. smell my protector. second time around. softness. static. surprise. tired. tip toes. trust experiment. warmth.

C/D—COMPOSITION/DURATION concept



Drawing by Luisa Kunth

How do we compose in real time?
How do we allow the composition to be new each time?
How do we listen to our own internal arc,
as well as the arc of the group?
When is it time to be still?
When is it time to move?
How long do you practice an exercise?
How long do you stay with a score?
Let duration become a partner in composition.

Observe your peers moving. Respond to their movements like an echo or reverberation. Let their gestures pass through your body until they transform or disappear.

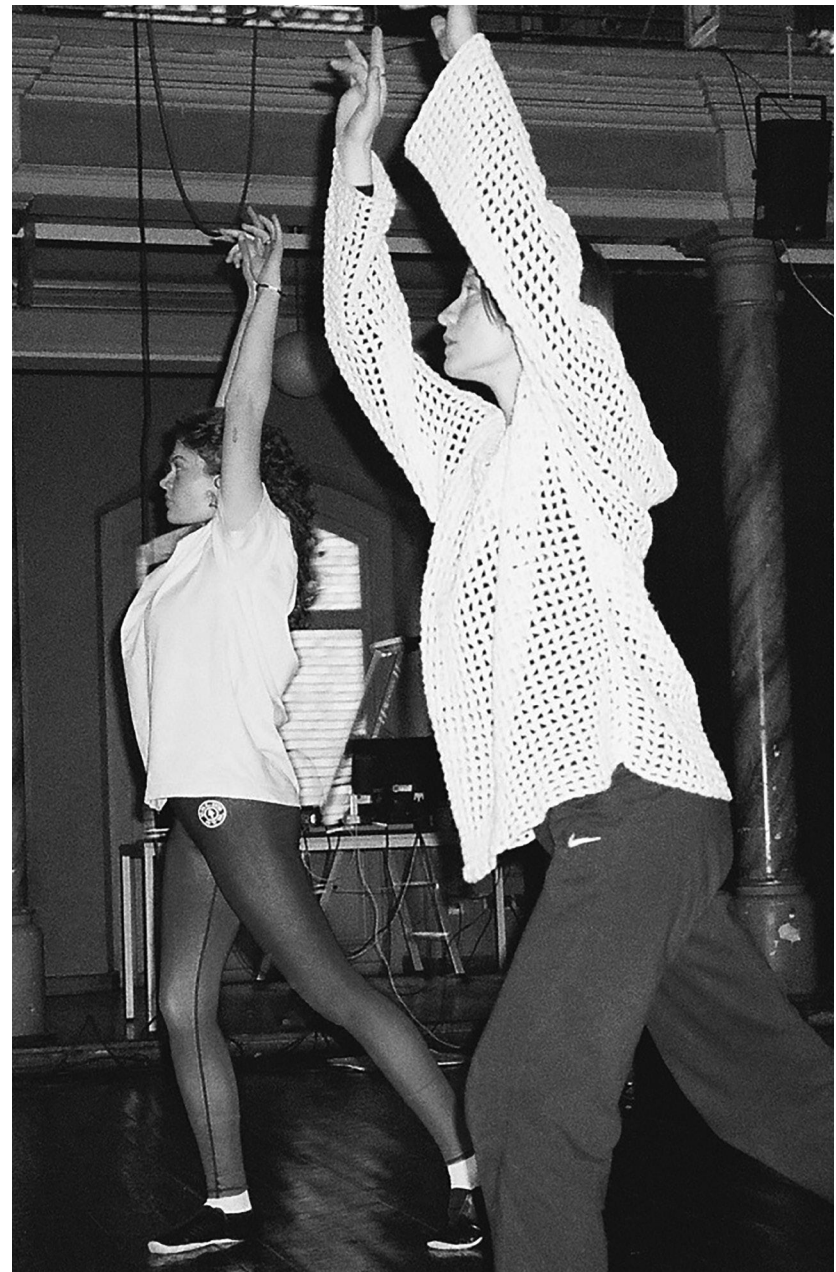
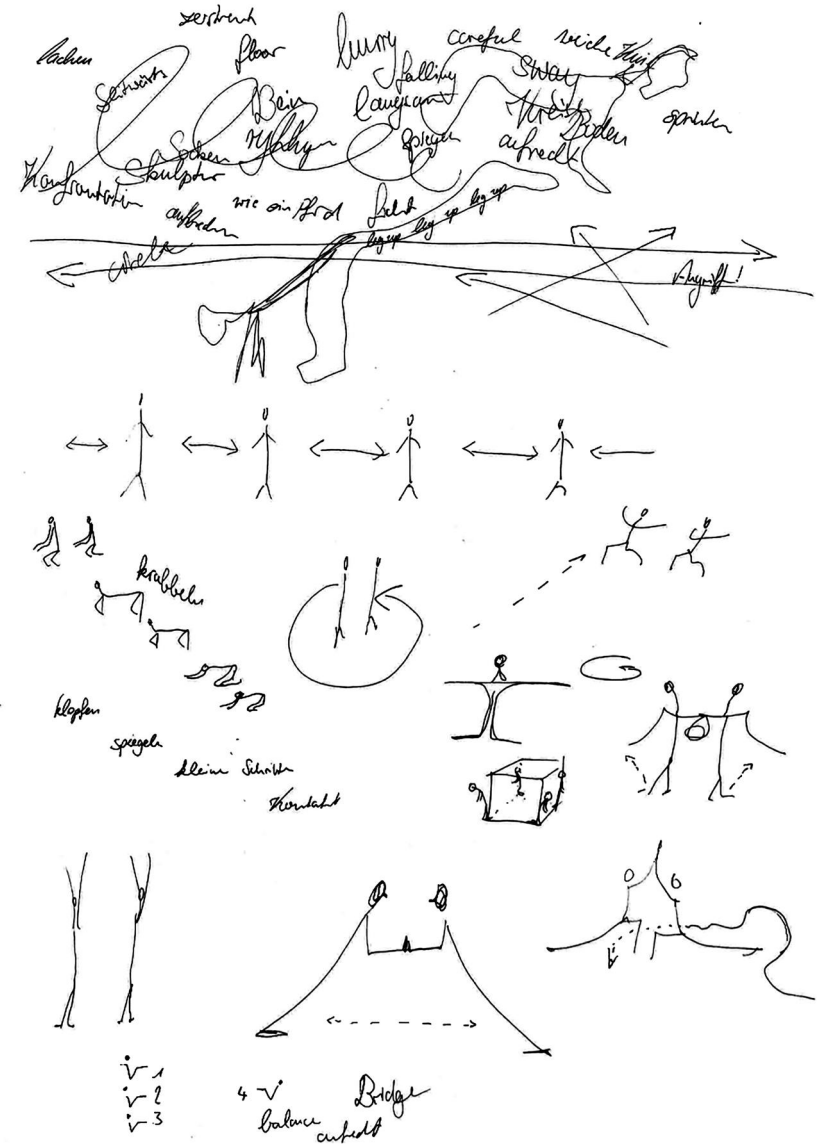


Photo by Ava Will. Movers: Luisa Kunth and Lea Champagne.

F/G—FALLING/GRAVITY^{exercise}

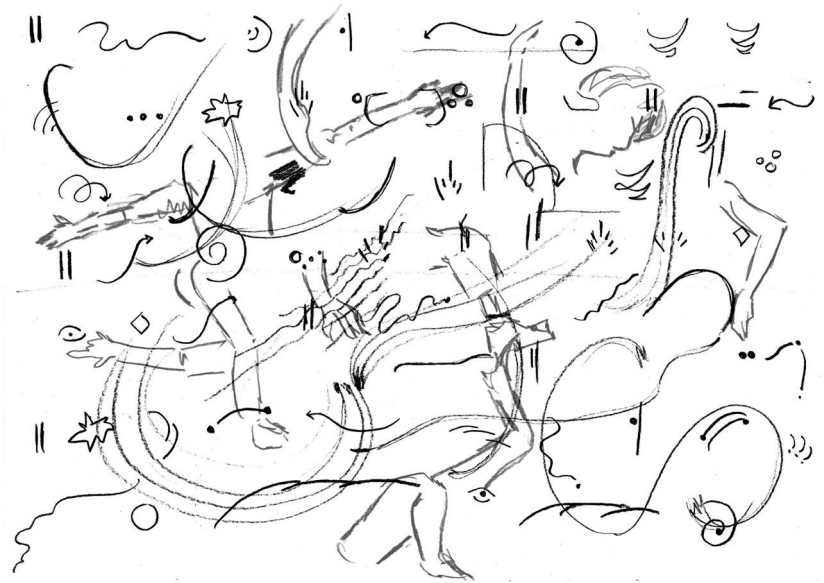


Walk through the space, noticing each step as a small fall and a dance with gravity. Walk backwards and sideways, changing direction often. Let other bodies alter your path. Gradually increase your pace. Find ways to fall or come off your axis that feel daring yet safe. Notice how the sensation of falling intensifies.



21





Drawing by Laís Gruau

Choose a few images that intrigue the group. Look closely at the details. Is there movement or a gesture present? How is the space composed? Does the image imply a quality of time, a social situation, textures, or emotional information? What is visible, partially visible, or not visible? Let movement unfold from here.

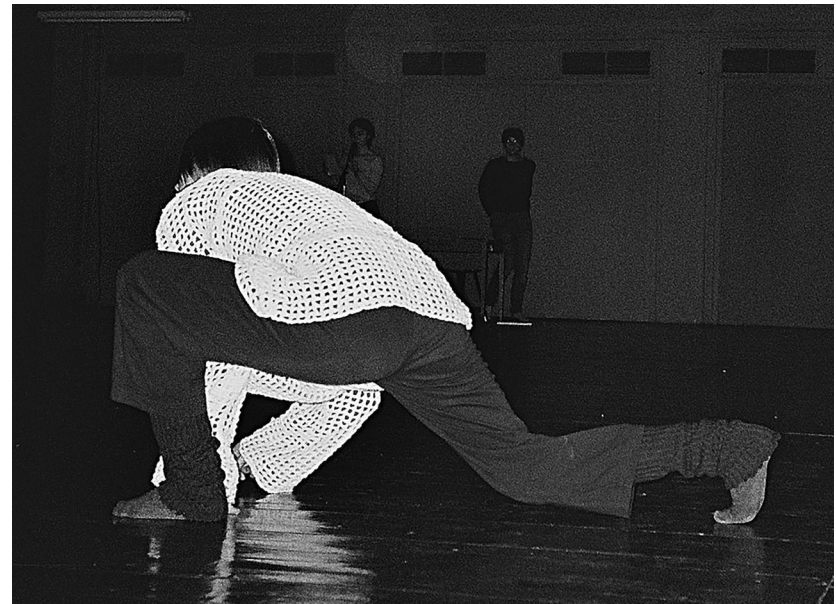


Photo By Ava Will. Mover: Lea Champagne.



Drawing by Ava Will

Explore the range and possibility of movement in each joint of your body. Let one joint become the point of initiation, such as an elbow, knee, or wrist, and let the rest of the body follow. Experiment with moving two or more joints at once while maintaining attention to each. Observe what happens when one joint leads and another resists.



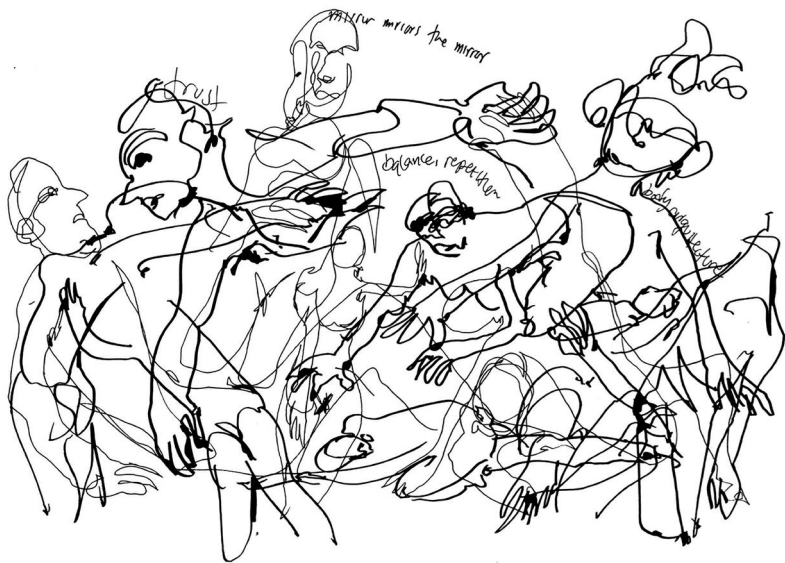
Drawing by Mira Traub

Tune into the sounds around you. Notice what arrives through your ears and what is felt in your body. Let listening expand beyond hearing, into sensation and awareness. Listen to your own impulses, to others, and to the space itself. Allow what you perceive to guide your movement choices. What kind of knowing emerges when you inhabit a fully embodied state of listening?



Photo by Rachel Gill. Movers: Ceren Okumuş and Mira Traub.

Find a partner and mirror each other's movements. Move attentively, balancing leading and following. Try to move as one body. Can you mirror not only the form but also the quality or essence of your partner's movement?



Drawing by Paula Maria Landa Hartasanchez



Drawing by Paula Maria Landa Hartasanchez



Photo by Rachel Gill. Mover: left to right: Luciano Mazzo, Ava Will, Luisa Kunth.

Bring one or more objects into the space. Let them become part of the improvisation. Allow their role to shift beyond everyday use. Notice how your movement changes in relation to them and how they might produce or invite sound. Remove the object and continue moving as if it were still present.



Photo by Rachel Gill. Mover: Luisa Kunth.

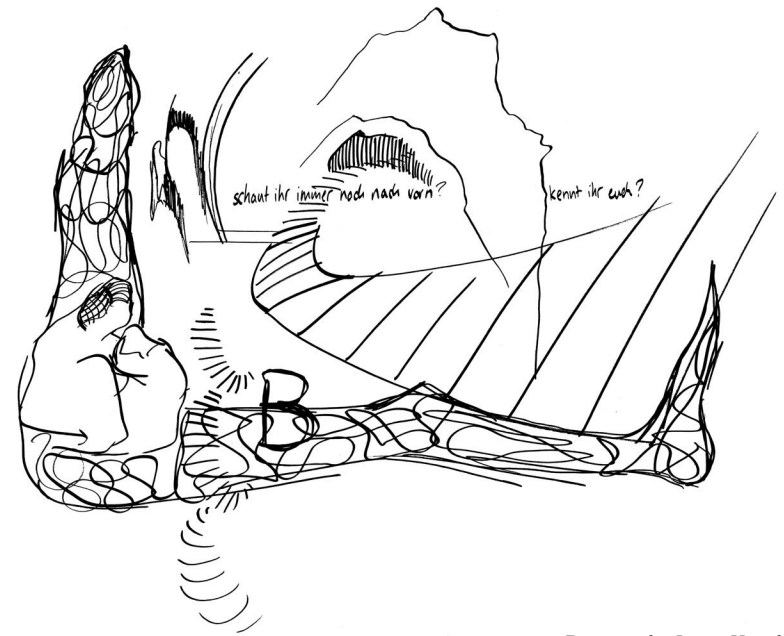
Alan Good (1954–2025) taught me the importance of pausing. In 2019, he invited me into his improvisation practice with musician Allen Fogelsanger. Alan treated pauses as equal to movement. Rhythm was made not only through steps, but across the arc of a performance, with pauses acting as musical punctuations of the body. Now, when I watch performance, the moments that stay with me are often the quiet ones: a body suspended between stillness and motion, where the performer's inner world is momentarily exposed.

As you consider composition, duration, and listening in your practice, find moments to pause within your movement. How does the introduction of stillness support composing in real time? Does varying the length of a pause reveal rhythm? How do you listen for the moment to stop, or to begin again?



Alan Good (center) in *Beach Birds for Camera* by Elliot Caplan (1991).

Each person writes down three questions they want to explore through movement. Fold the pieces of paper and place them in a pile. Anyone in the group can read a question aloud as you improvise, letting it shift the group's inquiry. Can you imagine the questions layering upon one another as you move, or even contradicting each other?

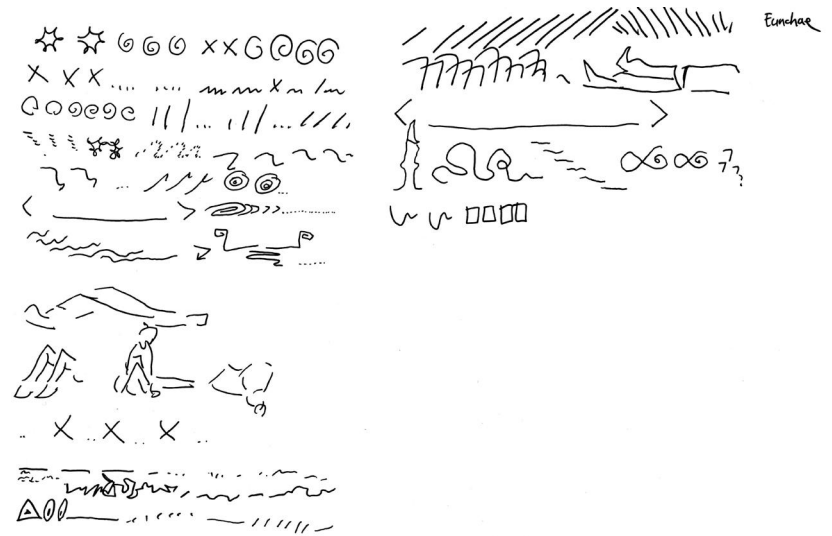


Drawing by Luisa Kunth

Collective questions

are you sisters? can arms be round? can time move backwards?
can we get inside there? can we still enjoy walking in the
midst of destruction? can you paint the wall with a tiny brush?
creatures in blue, have you seen them? do i have to choose a
color? do you think about how it would be to meet a creature in
blue? how do we notice the details? how far can your arms
stretch? how tall will my shadow be? is there movement in the
walls? should i choose what is in front or behind me? stehst du
nur? what happened? what story do you tell? what would it feel
like to join them? what's under the surface? what's the differen-
ce between dogs and humans? when do we get home? where are
we? where are we going? who told you this story? will you look
after me? wo führt die mauer hin?

R—REPETITION ^{exercise}



Drawing by Eunhae Kim

Begin moving and as you're moving, identify a gesture and repeat it. Let the repetition change the movement. Alter the tempo, size, or texture of the movement and notice how your experience with the gesture shifts. Does rhythm begin to emerge? Does meaning accumulate or fall away? Stay with the loop until it transforms into another repeatable gesture.

S—SHARING WEIGHT^{exercise}

Inspired by the practice of Contact Improvisation initiated by Steve Paxton, this entry explores weight as a dialogue between bodies and structures.

Three ways to practice:

¹In solo – Begin with the floor as your first partner. Roll, fold, and expand, using it to both soften and push away. Let your weight disperse through the body like grains of sand shifting in a bag. Explore different levels and notice how proximity or distance from the floor changes the exchange. As an extension, you can explore other structures like a wall, a chair, or another stable object to partner with.

²In pairs – When it feels possible, invite another body into the space.

^(a) Stand facing each other, feet close, and hold hands. Lean back, straighten your arms, and let your centers of gravity pull apart. Move through space and levels, trying different grips while maintaining a shifting counterbalance.

^(b) Let the trunks of your bodies make contact—back, side, or front. Reduce reliance on the hands and explore how the torso can carry, slide, and receive weight.

³In a group – One person stands in the center with eyes closed. Keep the joints soft and pour weight off your axis. The group catches and returns you to center. As comfort grows, try to remain in a state of falling, avoiding verticality.

Engage in one or as many ways of practice you desire.



Photo by Ceren Okumuş. Movers: Lea Champagne and Laïs Gruau.



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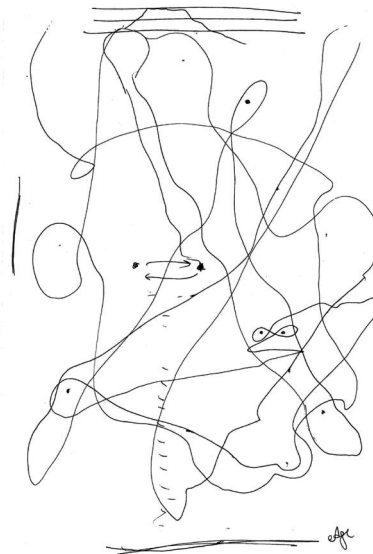
Collective thoughts

a way to measure real time. atmosphere of the situation. can feel the muscles and bones. cannot do it alone. dense space. disappointment. don't think. expectation. extremely slow. from the outside you sense a real clock. gatherings. i feel differentiated. i wasn't thinking, i was just moving. in the middle. intuitive to catch someone who is falling. layers. more difficult to let go. new body with four legs. new level of communication. open the vision. open the world of possibility. partner vs group. pre-judging. pushes a decision in a small amount of time. reluctant to touch. see everyone simultaneously. similar to drawing. surprise. takes time to build trust. time can elongate. tracking and turning the body. transmitting. unconscious situation. waiting was stillness. when you feel trust, your movement changes.

Memory of past judgments tells me that pre-judging is not secure. And memory can't function consciously, because at these speeds I can't think my way to safety. If thinking is too slow, is an open state of mind useful? Seems to be. — Steve Paxton, Chute (1972)



Photo by Ceren Okumuş. Movers: Lea Champagne and Laïs Gruau.



* Move, gesture, queue, children, person,
running, main focus, wide & seek, pause,
awakening, reaching out, stretching, walking on air,
portal, body as focal point, rhythm, radial,
change, mood, attention, silent communication,
trust, urgent, caring, touching the mirror,
prophet, sailor, fast pace, friction, contrast,
brain fog, finger instrument, body as instrument,
spiders, game, contagious, rough, uncontrollable,
support, cat support, frog, flexibility, tree, balloon,
body copy, puma, ghost in the mirror-trail,

Drawing by Bilge Dursun

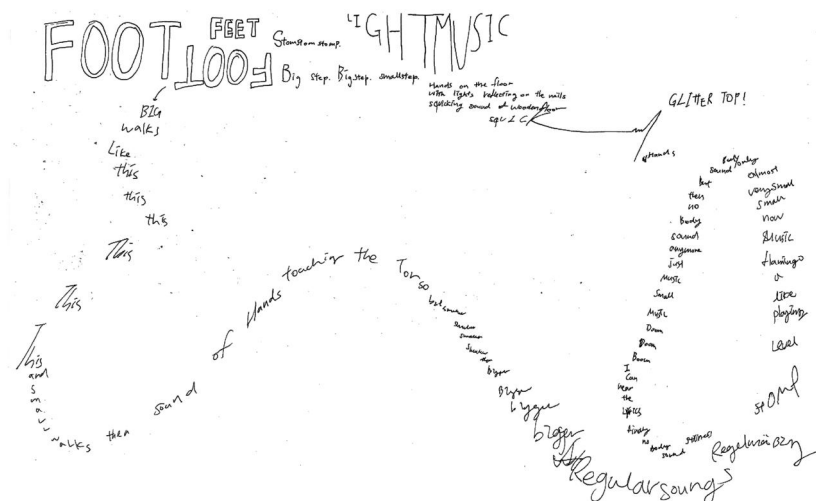
A practice inspired by *Authentic Movement*, exploring how movement, language, and perception circulate between bodies. There are three roles: *mover*, *witness*, and *transcriber*.

Mover Begins moving from material, concepts, or impulses determined together or individually.

Witness Observes and speaks continuously in any language, describing what is present: motion and stillness, spatial relations, tempo, repetition, and sound. The task is to stay with what is witnessed, not to interpret.

Transcriber Listens to the witness and translates their speech into another form such as writing, drawing, or another notation. Keep transcribing, even if the language is unfamiliar.

Rotate roles so everyone experiences each position. The resulting transcriptions become traces, material for reflection or for generating new movement.



Drawing by Eunchoe Kim



Drawing by Ava Will



Drawing by Lea Champagne



Drawing by Mira Traub



Photo by Prof. Dr. Cristina Gómez Barrio

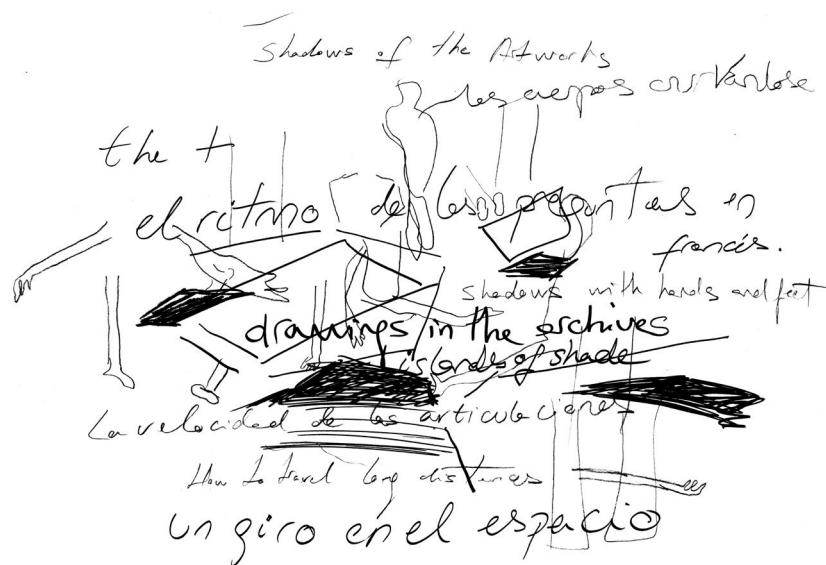
Transmissions with Survival Kit

During the week of December 1, 2025, we brought the Sound & Body Seminar to ifa Gallery Stuttgart for an embodied interaction with the exhibition “Survival Kit”, curated by Ken Aïcha Sy (Dakar).

“Survival Kit” focuses on pioneers of Senegalese modernism and functions as both an exhibition and a curatorial method that invites collaboration and transdisciplinary exchange.

Ken Aïcha Sy brings together artworks and documents and allows the voids and gaps of the scattered Senegalese archives to resonate. These gaps highlight the historical and emotional materiality of locked and unlocked documents and the immaterial acts that nourish them.

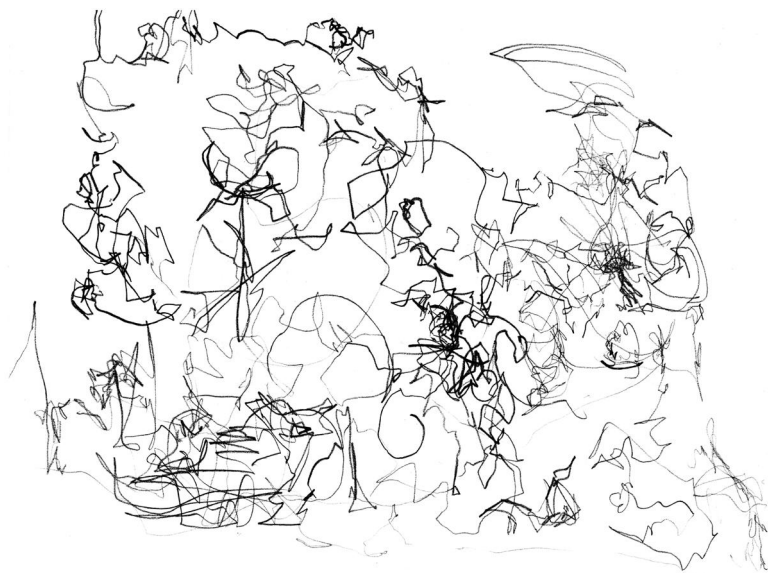
Across three encounters we explored the distance between these archival documents and the subterranean force of artistic legacies that remain alive and in motion. In embodied interaction we witnessed our own attempts to engage and understand, moving in space, reading, and dialoguing with “Survival Kit” and with Ken Aïcha Sy. Text by Prof. Dr. Cristina Gómez Barrio



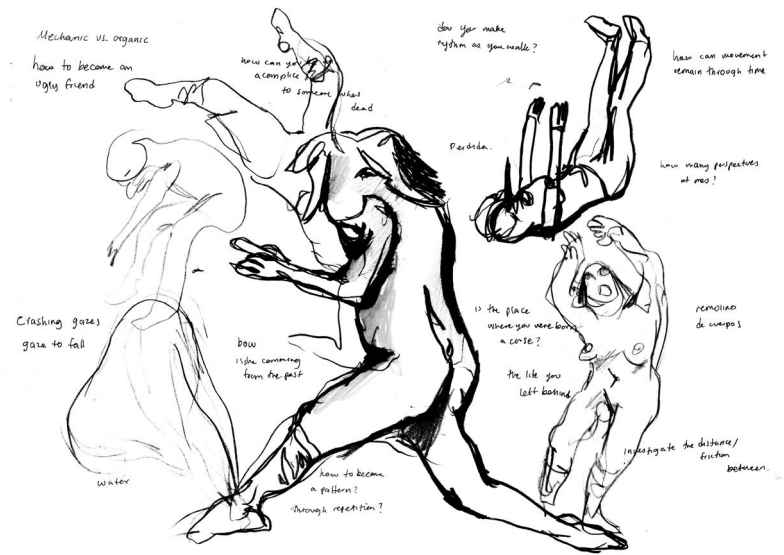
Drawing by Prof. Dr. Cristina Gómez Barrio



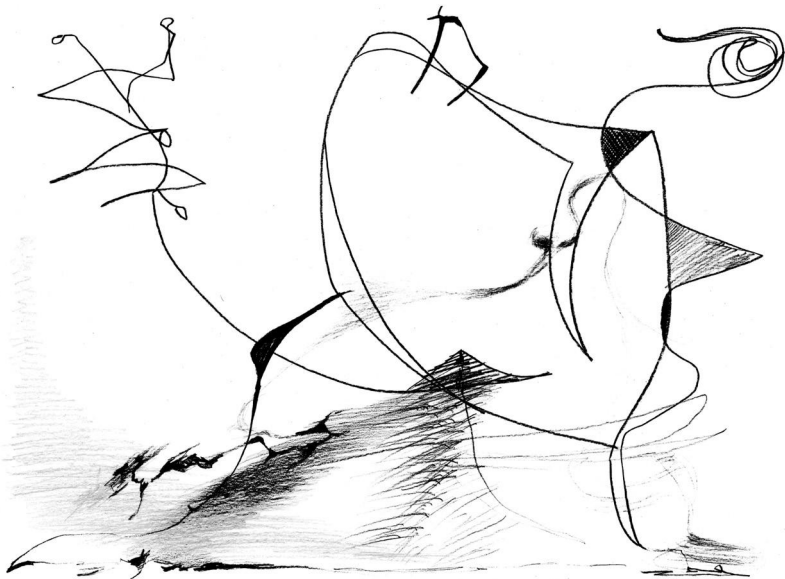
Drawing by Hwaseong Lee



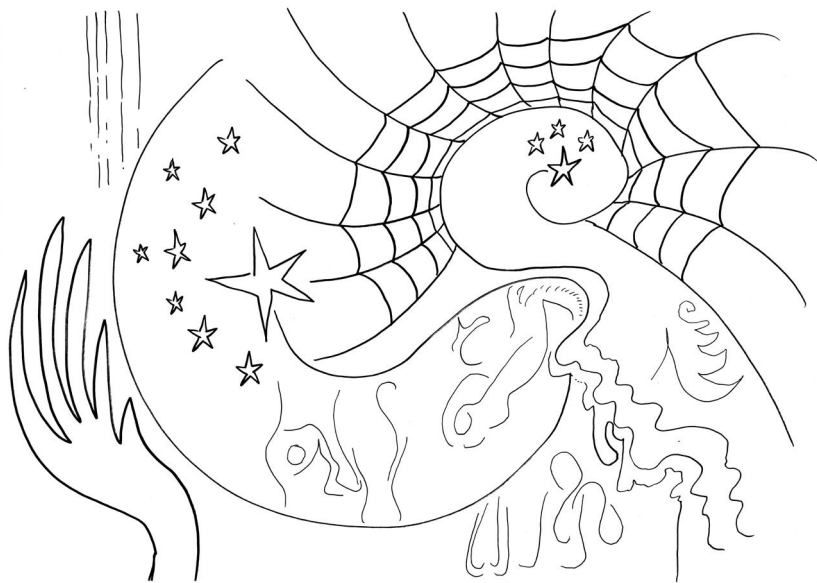
Drawing by Ilya Netyosov



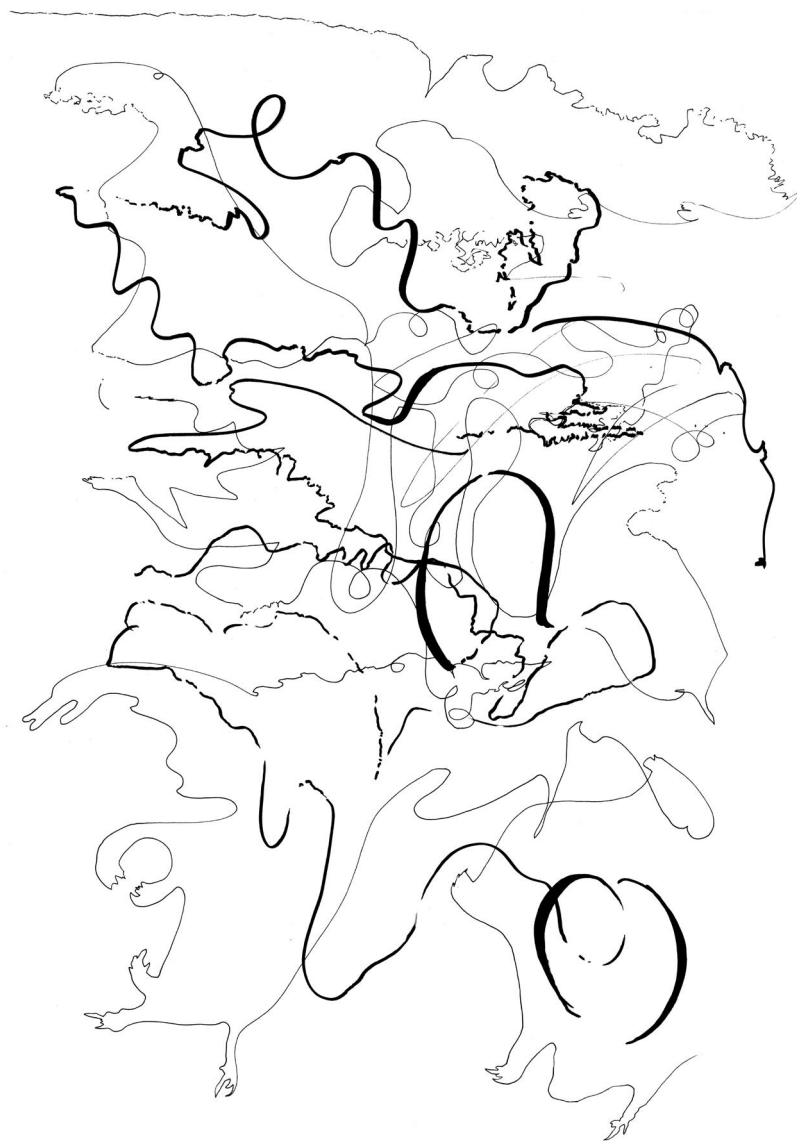
Drawing by Paula Maria Landa Hartasanchez



Drawing by Eunhae Kim



Drawing by Alex Nezumi Stecher



Drawing by Laís Gruau

W
H
HANDHER
CLOSE UYE
SUELO TOUÇE BEHIND RATHW ELBOW SOLAKPLEXUS LEAVING
FLURRY OF GRIMING IN ABEM PITS

GOV ALONG
THE LINE
THE LIGHT
SKIN SLOWLY SKIN

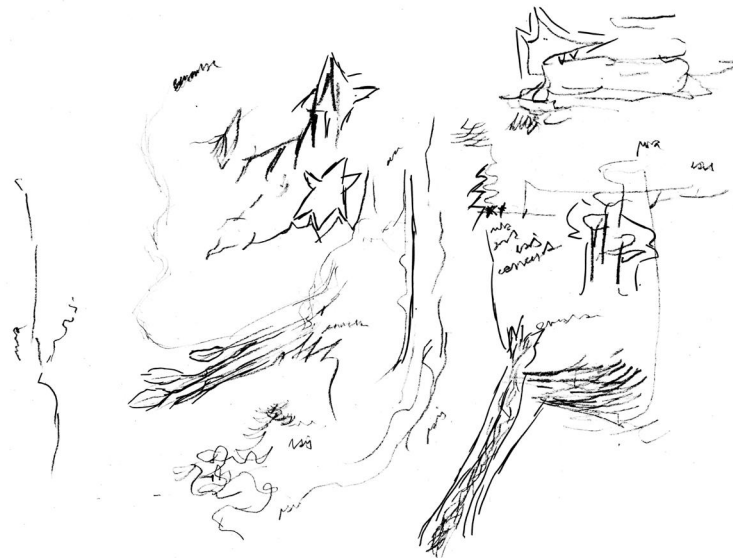
WHAT IS IT MADE OF?
MEMORIES, STAKS, TRIANGLE

Drawing by Maxie Lenz



CAN YOU
STOP MOVING?

Drawing by Ceren Okumus



Drawing by Bilge Dursun



Drawing by Mira Traub

The M.F.A. KTPP is a practical Master's program in art, that enables students to formulate deeper artistic positions within the field of the performance. The M.F.A. emphasizes working with material, linguistic productions, and theoretical reflections as independent yet inseparable components of artistic practice. The heterogeneity of the student's practices at KTPP enables to put in perspective what performance is and can be today; formulating -from a teaching and research environment- a multifaceted, inclusive and broad evolving definition of performance. One of the specificities of the M.F.A. is the engagement with cooperative formats and collaborations within the KTPP students, not so much as a way to reach outcomes -collective works- but rather as a conflicted process in which to think relations of publicness. Since 2018 Cristina Gómez Barrio & Wolfgang Mayer, a.k.a. the basis of the collective Discoteca Flaming Star, are the program directors (until 2022 in co-direction with Felix Ensslin).

Performance & co-teaching is a cooperation fellowship between the Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design, represented by its M.F.A. program KTPP and Akademie Schloss Solitude. This cooperation fellowship aims to make a crucial contribution to the practice and to the teaching of what performance is today.

The fellows have been so far: Cara Benedetto, Teresa Solar, María Salgado, Silvia Das Fadas, Niall Jones, Yon Natalie Mik, and Rachel Gill.

For cost reasons, the rectorate decided in spring 2025 not to re-accredit the M.F.A.

Many thanks to Prof. Dr. Cristina Gómez Barrio and Prof. Wolfgang Mayer, who I know as the collective Discoteca Flaming Star, for their support and for inviting me to translate my artistic fascination with movement improvisation into a pedagogical framework.

Additional thanks to Akademie Schloss Solitude, Carla Laumann, Karina Ferreira Torres, Ken Aïcha Sy, Bettina Korintenberg, Paula Kohlmann, Siegfried "Siggi" Kalnbach, and Mona Ulrich.

All my gratitude to the students of ABK for their openness, brilliance, and willingness to remain present within the tender and shifting topography of collective improvisation.