



Here, a nut falls twice
echoes under the pillow

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Introduction — The Emergence of Here

Yen Chun Lin

'We were composed of 靈¹ (ling) of all kinds. 靈 of sky, ocean, land, forest and the 靈 of memory. How we treat the ocean is reflected in the ocean part of us, when we damage the land, the land part of us is affected. Once we die, all the different 靈 in our bodies return to their origins of sky, ocean, land and forest. Except the 靈 of memory. They travel to the White Island not far from Orchid Island. The island where all the 靈 of human memories stay. Which we are asked not to disturb.'—a story told by Si Javitong of the indigenous Tao people in Iraralay Village, Orchid Island, Taiwan in 2020.

The seed of *Here, a nut falls twice* was found in 2020 on the shore of Orchid Island in Taiwan. An island where I encountered spirit and spirits who brought me memories that have been kept in ocean dreams, washing up to the surface of consciousness wave by wave. Once, in their dream, two of them saw me sleeping in a membrane capsule underwater, like the eggs of an ovoviviparous animal. Since then, the wish to learn and revisit ocean memories has spawned various collective dreaming experiments. Slowly, the circle of participants expanded into the collective falling *here* together..

After the third collective dreamscape listening workshop, early in the evening, a participant took me to an abandoned greenhouse he had dreamt of. On the way back, I met a dragonfly.

The dragonfly climbed onto my left hand, refusing to leave. We cooked together, had dinner together, had a phone call together, went to the bathroom together, sat next to fire together, watched stars together, made a drawing together. They rested curved against the shape of my left hand, finding comfortable postures throughout the evening. Late at night, we had a long walk by the river. I was walking on my feet, they were walking on my

hand. I could feel their little hands held tighter when I walked slightly too fast, as their wings were catching winds. I have no clue at all why they insisted on staying on my hand.

We went to sleep together.

They lay on my left hand, my body resting on the left side with my head laying on my left arm. During the night, we fell in and out of sleep, into dreams and each other's eyes. Before dawn, I started slowly noticing their life gradually leaving their dragonfly shell. The moment at which the dragonfly's life left entirely was ambiguous, it felt like a slow, gradual, infinite and non-linear process. This was the third time I was closely and intimately holding a physical body fading into death in my bed.

The dragonfly visited again in October 2022 during a week-long collective dreamscape listening workshop at Performing Arts Forum (PAF) in France, which was the rehearsal for the overnight performance at the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts London) later in the winter. In August 2023, the dragonfly returned on the day of another dreamscape listening workshop near Angermünde in Germany.

Accompanied by spirit and spirits of the dragonfly, *Here* became a sculptural sound installation at the ICA from the dusk of 27 November to the dawn of 4 December 2022.

At the dusk of 27 November, Lou Drago and I activated the installation with a sound performance, *Here, a nut falls twice: Absence Here*, a whispering of ambient stories and a dripping of memories from our ancestors. From the midnight of 3 December until the next morning, audiences were invited to sleep in the installation. The night *Here, a nut falls twice: Drift(in)between* featured live performances by artists Lithic Alliance. Marijn Degenaar, Lou Drago, Cee Füllemann, Tzuni Huang, oxi peng, Felix Riemann a.k.a leslie, Berglind Thrastardóttir, Matilda Tjäder and myself. During the eight hours, we traversed imaginary landscapes of inaudible frequencies, sleep-inducing rhythms, dream echoes, a lullaby of nightmares, shimmers of darkness, nocturnal wanders, and bedtime tales. The installation and performances were illuminated by Charlie Hope's lighting design, set on a floor installation that held us softly by Cee Füllemann, and interspersed with dramaturgical and text sparkles by oxi peng. Most importantly, *Here* would not have born without the generous

1. 靈(ling) : The decision to keep this word in Chinese is to acknowledge the untranslatability of it. 靈 is broad and contains the concepts of soul, spirit(s), energy, ghost, intelligence and others. There is no hierarchy between forms of 靈, they are neutral and horizontal.

invitation and trust of Sara Sassanelli, production help by Natasha Chubbuck, sound and love support from Gediminas Žygus, encounters with Si Javitong, Min Jou Lee and Hanbao Lin on Orchid Island, fabrication support from Luke Felstead, and the ICA's technician team: Patrick Brett, Nicky Drain, Francesca Penty, Ben Moon, Michele Bianchin and Cam Deas.

There, the dragonfly appeared in the absence.

This publication, *Echoes Under the Pillow*, is a little journey back to the installation, performances, and bedtime stories that invite you to fall asleep freely. This publication was brought to life through Marijn Degenaar's website design and Dylan Spencer-Davidson's kind and inspiring editorial support.

Including text contributions by those who were part of the collective falling and dreaming:

Lithic Alliance
Jared Davis
Marijn Degenaar
Lou Drago
Cee Füllemann
Yen Chun Lin
Louis Maison
Sara Sassanelli
oxi peng
Felix Riemann a.k.a leslie
Berglind Thrastardóttir
Matilda Tjäder

Here, a nut falls twice is wishing, learning and practicing to be a place that gently holds the fall. A place of holding collective dreaming and falling through listening experience. It was a place gratefully composed of and by the trust of every contributor, every participant, every being, every material that was part of the journey. It was and is still a trust cocoon that holds imagination, darkness, dream, risk, failure, transformation, experiment, friendship, and love.

*We finally met
Right before you leave again
dive again into the world beneath
At a thin time-space between life and death*

Deep in my open source

Cee Füllemann

This is a song to sing in your own soft melody
This is a song shifting in between
Together we are standing
To gather tonight in sleep in
You brought some equipment
Ready for the full experiment
And you left your ego at the door
Becoming one with the floor

When you fall, I catch you
When you sleep, I hold you
When you touch me, I smile

A drop dripping from the ceiling
Brings bliss, attention and recordings
I don't see you
But I think it is you
Heavily breathing
And showing me the portal of deep streaming

When I fall, you catch me,
When I sleep you hold me
When I touch you, you smile

It's more than us
It's an infinity of touch
Resting, crying, meditation, humming
And listening
The ultimate moment of impact
Is the time we all react

When they fall, we catch them
When they sleep we hold them
When they touch us, we smile

We are slowly merging into an infinity of particles
Absorbing the same lights and tentacles
In the deep of sea oracle
We agreed on miracle
For what we all long for
The beginning of extensive support

When we fall, they catch us
When we sleep they hold us
When we touch them, they smile

We are now connected
To the here and wherever
Drip to drip
We slowly fall
And
See

All in procession

Louis Mason

First it is dark and your body is in darkness. You cannot see anything around you at all. If you use your hands to explore the floor you will find that it is rough and cold, like unworked stone. You can hear your breathing and the other natural processes of your body, and these provide a minimal structuring to this lightless, stone-floored world. The steady expansions of your chest, your heartbeat and digestion, the roughness against the pads of your fingers, the chill in the air around you as it moves over the skin of your chest and face—you feel these deeply and clearly. In the darkness, with nothing to contain them, your senses expand outwards from your body into black emptiness. This is easy and natural; in fact, it feels like losing consciousness. You expand and expand, until your chest rising and falling and your heart beating become the anchors for the part of you that moves outwards at incredible speed. Your centre is small and very far from you. Gradually you become aware of other breathing in the darkness around you, and this awareness comes with complicated feelings; of joy because the others are here too, but also of trepidation, because in this instant the scope of your expansion has become relational. When you reach out your hand, they are there to welcome you with mutual touch. Already you can distinguish between them. Their characters are obvious. You think that nothing has ever spoken as loudly as this first cycle of touching. When you press yourself into the chest and belly of any of them, you can feel their breath swelling and escaping, their heartbeat and digestion. You think that, over time, these processes might synchronise with your own, and that, if you could modulate your body and slow down its natural rhythms, you might be able to fade into this strange system of equivalence. You think that the others must be doing the same thing. Eventually you lose consciousness.

The next time you wake someone has made a space for a fire, and the scene is illuminated by warm, crackling light. The fire is small and guttering, really it looks as though it could go out at any moment. But every time the flames die down and the light dims, someone leans in to blow on the embers or to

feed in more fuel, or moves their body to shelter it from the wind. In the dim light, the contours of the stone space are concretely revealed. It is a small and natural-looking cave, that extends off into subterranean darkness in one direction and opens onto the black and empty outside at its mouth. So you have your territory. Any expansion now will need to take place in another space, brought into being by an act of hallucinatory will, with eyes firmly closed. Everything that you encounter from this moment will be definitively either eyes-open or eyes-closed. Visions and dreams. You think that maybe the dream will find its true form by cycling between these states, moving from one to the other, in and out of consciousness, with each transit working to embellish and excavate new and deeper dream spaces. In the light of the fire you can also see the bodies of the others, and they are monstrous, barely human. One has their chest broken open and when they sing, the sound is a scream of deep psychic pain. One has a face that is just one long, thick proboscis, no eyes or mouth visible. They snuffle along the ground, walking in slow, aimless circles around the fire, whispering to themselves. One is only the outline of a human, an outline that flickers with blood-red light and buzzes like an insect. You look at them all (there are maybe twenty), and then you look down at your own body, which you realise is in a constant cycle of dissolving and re-cohering. Your skin, bones, and musculature bubble and deform, fly away as gaseous emissions, and then reform again. You cannot feel this happening and there is no pain: it took looking down and focussing your vision on your arms and chest to notice. And when you reach out to the others, their touch is the same as it ever was—warm and gentle, full of love and curiosity. So the dream is layered over this interface of communal touch, just as it was before. In the dream any body is possible.

In the dream all the bodies flow together like water. They are hijacked by strange intelligences from outside the circle of firelight; they perform songs that tear them apart; they associate with the wind that scatters them, or with the sky. When they see the sky for the first time, they will fall vertically upwards into the stars and the blackness and expand outwards again to the point of obliteration. But no matter what happens to them, no matter how completely they dissolve, they will always be able to find their way back through this system of communal touch, which forms the essential grammar of the transformations, and lets them exhibit (even if only between one another) something essential about themselves.

After the first fire there is a long period of sleeping and waking, thousands of transitions between the two, so that you become accustomed to the slippage between them, to distinguishing between the visions that are proper to each. This

is also a period of consolidation. The cave goes through important changes, and so do the bodies that inhabit it. The rough stone is smoothed and carved into a large proscenium stage, and furniture is constructed and installed; large folding screens and flats that can be used to block vision to specific areas of the platform, a scaffold structure that supports a latticework of thick timber framing above, trapdoors and false walls that lead into hollows and tunnels carved into the solid stone below. They install mirrors and lenses and complex lighting systems: spotlights, strobe lights, and amplification machines. Still pools of water and thick black oil, tangled piping and pumps to move liquids through the space, to flood or to drain it, to fill vast transparent tanks. Furnaces to heat these to boiling point. Cranes and other pulley devices that allow for the suspension and movement of bodies and other heavy objects through the negative volume behind the arch. All this takes decades or centuries, it is difficult to tell. The passage of time is ordered by the cycling of opacity (unconsciousness) and existence in the dream that they all share. As the grammars for complex expression multiply, the bodies cohere into more or less standardised human forms. There is no longer any need to break yourself into pieces or to dissolve—the same effects can be achieved with elaborate costuming and careful linguistic invention. The songs are no longer screams; the scream is notated and complexified, discovering its own capacity to remake the world as form and representation.

One day you wake up beneath the glare of the spotlights as the others are beginning the night's performance. Each takes their place on the stage, marked in advance in relation to all of the others, and with its own lighting and associated suite of special effects. You watch the performance, and perhaps you also perform with them, and understand yourself relative to their expression, which is true and clear. The stage allows you to say things about yourself, very specific things; you can talk about love and fear (for instance) in ways that are extremely precise. The first language of touch is still present beneath things, but it is more private now and more intimate, touching takes place away from the stage and the lights and mechanisms. When you say something about love or fear you sometimes speak for the other bodies too, because they are now so much more like you. Your body is no longer exactly itself and has become more lucid and more eloquent. When you speak for yourself, it is in private. When you speak for yourself, you are almost asleep or just waking, in a dark space, somewhere away from

the performance, and the old systems of touch and breath emerge again, at the edges of opacity. You associate them with the blurred half-thoughts that crowd the mind before sleep. And meanwhile the dream that you all share spits forth its life-literature of saints and monsters and heroes, of struggle and compromise, of recursion; funny and abject stories, stories of terror. The same stage can be used to tell the story of the body broken apart, the body with its chest caved in, the body that buzzes like an insect and moves beneath red lights, and also the story of the first touching, the story of infinite expansion, the story of the kindness of the others. It can tell you all of these and infinitely more. They all make use of the same props and the same mechanical systems, the same mirrors, the same masks, the same vibrating and negative volume that extends backwards behind the vertical plane of the proscenium arch.

During this period your sleep is often induced by another, and the method that they use to render you unconscious is obscure—hypnosis, anaesthesia, soporifics, massage, whatever it is works quickly and it is absolutely effective.

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When you wake again it is inside your own dream, for the first time that you can remember. In this dream the theatre and the cave are gone. They ended a long time ago—no great apocalypse or crumbling, only stories packed into stories until all reference to the original bodies was lost. In the dream your eyes have been opened outwards into something that looks like a hall of mirrors, in which scenes and characters are nested in infinitely repeating formal arrangements. The scenes repeat, moving backward away from your opened-out eyeballs in an endless stream, and they are fractally complex, so that when you focus on them each unfolds into infinite permutations, and each of these does the same and so on. You could spend your entire life chasing these images, recombining them, ordering and sorting them, making them play by the rules of narrative that you developed together; you could stuff the stage with them, you could drag each of them through the space behind the arch and you would have a new story every time. Something similar happens in miniature in the empty space of your opened-out eyes. After a brief period of confusion you decide that these eyes are no longer of much use to you. They can tell you nothing, though you could easily search through them for images of anything. The specificity of placement and relation that is proper to the stage has been erased. In your dream you find that you cannot close your opened-out eyes, so instead you choose to ignore the visual data that flows through them into your

brain. The infinite stream of images is placed at the same level as the other automatic processes of the body.

Once this is done it is easier to focus again on the other senses inside your dream. You find your way across the rough stone floor of the cave by touch and smell. As you move nearer to the centre there is the warmth of the fire on your face. This is how you orient yourself, warmth on your face and chill on the skin of your back. You know not to venture too close, since without usable eyes you might overstep and hurt yourself. Your hands find another body, unconscious, dreaming its own dream. You think that if you explored its form you would find it cracked open, vibrating under red lights, its face would be the proboscis, its song would be a scream. It dreams of the theatre where it can tell stories about transformation and equivalence. The space that affords it lucidity. Or maybe it dreams of something else, you have no way of knowing, since this is your dream, your first alone, and there is nothing that intrudes here from any outside. You think that if you are to remain in this place for some time you will need to find some new way of recording your history and your own transformations. The stream of images flows through you uninterrupted, harsh and brilliantly white.

You scramble along the rough floors blindly, looking for something that you can use, and sometimes you find sleeping bodies and bedding, splayed out around the central fire in concentric circles. Your blind movements are clipped and oddly birdlike. After a very long time, you find a section of floor that is softer and more yielding than the stone you are accustomed to. It is just as cold, but when you press into it you can make imprints on the surface with your fingers and nails. Which you do, moulding handfuls of the soft, cold matter into a small collection of disks and vertical cylinders, which you then press into and mark with your nails. Since it is only you in the dream, the marks are not a language, but there are repeating groupings and touch-images that you return to as you work, as the mood takes you; there are jokes and expressions or loneliness or warmth. You are not afraid, since this is all just a dream, and soon you will wake up and be back in the collective dream of the theatre, with the others. Your opened-up eyes will regain their capacity to distinguish, and you will tell stories about touch and breath. In the meantime you sculpt these small objects, thousands of them, from the obscure material

that surrounds you, cold, soft, yielding, and stretching off from where you sit in an unending surface. The warmth of the fire is at your back, and the soft sleep sounds of the others. You work and work and wait for the dream to end.

But then something strange happens. As your blind fingers move across the floor, they find something other than the flat, soft, cold stuff that you gather up—they find a small, round object, like a sculpted disk, impressed with the complex markings and indentations from another hand and another set of fingernails. You run your hands over it in shock, but there can be no doubt about its essential form. The harsh light hums in your eye sockets. You try not to panic. Is it possible that you have found one of your own creations that you forgot was there? Maybe you have traced a wide circle around the fire, and this is an early prototype from when you first encountered the soft surface? But when you run your hands over it you know that this system of marking, obviously specific and coded, is alien to you, that it must have been created by another, by someone else moving around out here in the dream, at the edge of the circle of warmth. For the first time you wonder if the cave really is as you remember it. If the floors are stone and the light is firelight, dim, guttering, warm orange. There is a flash of a hideous image: the cave lit up in white light so harsh and so bright that everything around you is reduced to black shadow or burning glare, and of you squatting in the brilliance, blind, pressing your hands into the soft, cold surface and pulling them forth, again and again. In the vision the white electric light is fixed inside your skull and spills in a torrent from your eyes. You are paralysed; you cannot reach forwards because you might find more of these alien objects, more evidence of this other. You strain your ears for movement behind you, from the sleeping others, but there is no movement at all, only breathing, and the soft heat on your back. You think that you need to wake up, and slowly move to replace the small, soft thing where you found it. And then you feel a new warmth, exactly like that of the fire but instead coming from in front of you, washing over your face, slowly approaching, extremely slowly, and realise in a crystal moment of panic that you need to wake up before whatever it is reaches you. And you do wake up.

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In the theatre the bodies all move in procession. They cycle between the opacity of sleep and the lucidity of the collective dream. They sing about the early period of touch, breath, and monsters, of infinite expansions, and they sing about the building

of the theatre and its mechanisms and devices. They sing about their own physical transformations, about what they have in common. The audience is enraptured. The collective history of the bodies is beautiful, and the audience is discreet and appreciative. They smile to one another or simply lie back and enjoy the show. Sometimes the songs are about what will come after the theatre, what will happen when the machines rot and break down and are made obsolete, but these are more obscure, and there is little firm agreement as to what can be said.

When the performances finish for the night the audience will mill around in the darkened rooms and entrance foyers and corridors of the theatre and discuss what they saw. Sometimes they make their way up onto the stage. It all takes some time to process; to correlate the performances with their own lives and their own struggles and triumphs, and it can help to talk things over with others. But over time, generally several hours, they will begin to exit the old stone building and filter outwards into the sleeping city, slowly at first, in twos and threes or singly, and then in larger groups, until each has made their exit out into the mist and the softly swelling morning light and disappeared from view.

Method for the suspension of time

Marijn Degenaar

imagine time

imagine time as a liquid. like tiny droplets of dew.

falling, floating down

until they reach the very top of your eyelash

staying there, suspended.

these tiny beads drip slowly down and multiply

touching your neck, your shoulders

all the way down to the tips of your toes

imagine the moon and its oceans

its silvery glow shining through the droplets of time

the bright moon is a pearly liquid

a wedge of silvery light, dividing the darkened ceiling above you

like the cross-section of a blade, whose edge rests between shadows

cuts through and gleams in twilight

this is where time ceases.

a crystallised shimmer envelops and carries you.

Ravedrift

Sara Sasanelli

*Drift(in)between*¹ is a shape-shifting landscape. It is a floor, a cave, a swamp, a non-Euclidean black hole and an optical illusion, using nighttime as its core material. Working with 'the nocturnal' as a spatial proposition requires precise artistic gestures in order to avoid a one-note engagement with its vastness. In the case of Drift, the anchors are seven sculptures that double as a spatial sound system combined with a sculptural foam floor, the sound of melting ice, contact mics and a varied mix of sonic and visual contributions by ten artists. In order to experience Drift fully, you need to become suspended within, or fall into, its dark hues. In Drift, the falling happens multiple times over the course of eight hours. The landscape changes unpredictably, through the subtle co-creation of a shared 'here' through the communality of its auditory experience.

Drift is a dancefloor. Even though no one technically dances, it does request similar engagement. It requires a low-key commitment to falling into strangeness and unfamiliarity. Its distinct dissociation and reassociation with time and location, places it in the same orbit as the practice of raving. When empty, it is a cold spacious surface, when full, a dense space of unpredictable interactions. Drift exists firmly within the rave continuum.² For McKenzie Wark, the rave continuum is where 'every good rave that has ever happened or will ever happen makes contact with the continuum, which is a time that exists outside of every other time'. Much like the rave, the performance's main components are its genre-bending sonic dimensions and the subtle relationships amongst strangers that fuse the seemingly oppositional experiences of togetherness and aloneness. The rave never requires your full attention, and neither does Drift, it asks to engage in a form of attention that is less directional, a peripheral one that can often feel more absorbing.

The performance contributions form a seamless selection of overlapping frequencies rooted in a wide ranging mix of rave references alongside

moments of stillness and silence. In this blend of varying intensities, the darkness is the equaliser, a consistent element to rely on as the auditory and visual landscape changes all the time. Performances become impossible to distinguish as their rising and falling intensities blend throughout the night. The resounding feeling is a non-linear experience of sleep. As the night progresses, and people fall into varying stages of slumber, attention sharpens and dulls as the night ebbs and flows between silence and loudness.

Drift requires a quieting of the mind as well as a rhizomatic relationship to attention. It both facilitates and obstructs sleep, its currency being a low-level infiltration through sound, light and movement. As a philosophical project, Drift asks questions about what kinds of desires could be generated by harnessing a disparate set of genres in an unfamiliar framework. Its strategies include simple acts like sleeping in a public space with strangers during a time that is normatively reserved for retiring to private space. Or practicing aliveness,³ by privileging interrupted sleep, and sleep deprivation as a stark reminder of time as a tool for domination. For eight hours, you are asked to practice your way out of time.

The practice of raving is about urgency and immanence, an imaginary of a shared 'here' and a co-creation of an environment that is—crucially—not utopian, but desire-filled, messy and in close quarters. The ravespace⁴ that is sought by many to experience another form of selfhood is a constructed situation. It requires labour, artistic gestures, a sonic dimension, infrastructure and space. The rave requires someone to set up speakers, someone to drag in crates of drinks, someone to rig lights, to clean, to run the bar. The practice of raving can happen anywhere if those key factors are sufficiently provided, and the kind of assemblages that happen amongst ravers in ravespace blur the boundaries between the producers of the conditions and its consumers. Similarly to the rave, Drift was work for some, and leisure for others. The relationship between labour and free time is further entangled as the process of work is organised through forms more closely associated with leisure. The nocturnal, a time usually reserved for rest and recuperation—and physiologically for repair—is at stake. Free time and social time are the material for the rave to construct its existence on, constantly undermining and reinventing its meaning.

This unclear relation between production and consumption is harnessed by Drift as the group shares the responsibility of both creating and maintaining the space, but so does the audience. As a project interested in new socialities, it asks questions

1. An eight-hour performance as part of the research project *Here, a nut falls twice* that took place at ICA London in December 2022.

2. From McKenzie Wark's 'Raving', 2023

3. As used by madison moore in Issue 132 of e-flux titled 'Black Rave', suggesting that 'rave points to a politics of aliveness'

4. From McKenzie Wark's 'Raving': one of at least three needs that drive ravers to the rave as constructed situation.

of desire, of what is permissible not only in the rave, or the gallery, but also in a more entangled and collective experience of the nocturnal that prioritises pleasure. It highlights that the production (material and conceptual) of the project cannot exist without the contribution of encountering the strange. It seeks comfort in this other experience of selfhood that happens at the point of collapse between togetherness and aloneness. It harnesses a low-key and much softer form of confrontation with other people, a more abstract form of collectivity that doesn't rely on consensus or agreement but rather on the auditory processing of a similar sonic landscape. As a research project it sits within the longstanding practice of assembling and processing together in sound.

Pasta mnemonics

Matilda Tjäder

Have you ever tried
dreaming with someone else?

Is that the wind?
Or is it just one of those giants breathing again
Pumping their bodies like inflatable bubbles
the rabbit asks the hare
as the winter
tucks all the flowers in
with a frosty kiss
—a little on the sentimental side
The hellebores responds to it
'Let's be romantic', it says
Pouts a little
Kiss kiss, you know they don't call me
Frostkiss
For nothing

Wake up, wake up

II: Just like a dream, I don't want to escape this :II

We've now buried our dreams
Together, forever
Along a path
Of ear-shaped pasta
Next time we close our eyes
We dream together, forever
Floating
Like in a pot of boiling water
Below the surface

We thrive

We're like bubbles
That sail away

II: Just like a dream, I don't want to escape this :II

I wake up soaked in sweat
it's the middle of the night
but I already sense the brooding heat of the soon-unfolding day;
I'm like an astronaut
gazing through her thin veil
separating me from the starry sky
I wouldn't call my bed a vessel, that's a bit lame,
I kind of more feel like one of those people
in saunas

who once they enter
and sit down
they freeze in their pose,
apathetically welcoming the heat
to scale off their thin skin barriers

Sweat is like tears
it cannot be contained
in extreme situations
some people love crying in showers
I love crying in the sauna

Scaling (whispers)

You cannot furnish a dream
It's destiny
my friend tells me
I shake my head
Look, I've got all the materials we need
Destiny won't build this house for us

But perhaps they are a little right
These things we dream up together
Are like bubbles
First when they've popped
The excitement bursts into reality

I feel like dancing
But this espresso is taking its toll on me
My eyes are blinking real fast
Hey look at me
Flirting with the espresso machine

I've just woken up from what best could be represented
in broken verse

But I don't feel like poetry
I don't feel like capturing it this time
Rather I want it to encapsulate me
Here, in this bed made of ice
I feel like the only person on the planet
Like as if darkness was all I knew,
I attune myself to its shades
A solitary moment and immersion
into a world that cannot be shared past the experience

We've now buried our dreams
Together, forever
Along a path
Of ear-shaped pasta
Next time we close our eyes
We dream together, forever
Floating
Like in a pot of boiling water
Below the surface
We thrive

OK you win
This beauty contest
So I conserve you

Here, in this bed made of ice
I can see you through it
You remain just the way, I see you
Once animate now just pure, image
It's a cycle of life
In the wind
Or breath of someone's
There's the passing of a secret
You know what they say;
The lower the voice,
The higher the stakes

II: Words, recovered, nurture your sacrifice :II

Some people love documenting,
Frame after frame
After frame
frozen kisses
Build yourself a world
Created from
a frame
I just fall asleep
Not to forget
But to forage
Because breathing,
secrets into life
Because pulse
slowing down

II: Words, recovered, nurture your sacrifice :II

Look, I am just as scripted as you are
The fairy tells the little gnome
Over a cup of tea
In the deepest of valleys,
I've ever traveled to
Always halting,
Just barely tripping

never longing,
always believing
In what to come
to come

Just lemme fly for a moment
the little gnome asks the fairy
A tiny bit pushy
And as the fairy reaches over
To hand the gnome their wings
They pop, just like a bubble

II: Imagine darkness :II

A child sees the circle of light
And asks for permission to join
To become one with the swivel
To swirl too

'You must not,' the child is told
'Or they will make you sick,
Make you loop until your soul leaves you
Dance in their circle so that you loose your grip'

Crushed into a million
Samples, or frames,
Here's one;

They may breathe on you
Dust from their bones
It too, shall make you sick
Your bile, intestines,
Soon in the forest glade

'See those mushrooms, over there'
Multifarious, luminous
'They are deadly'
That's why the creatures dance around them;

it's their survival
their potion, your poison
It's beautiful, isn't it beautiful
To watch the sacred
Hold my hand, and you'll be safe
From these devil's creatures imitating light
They look so free where they dance
But the illumination conceals
their ropes,
holding them
oh so tight
In bondage to our belief
As they dance in the artificial light
You may never believe
or think
that you can be like that
This light will guide,
But you may never yourself think that you yourself
can be the light that guides
Instead—you may bribe them
With milk or honey, and they will give away
See that's our potion, our survival
The loving priest says to the child
As they stroke their cheek
Ice cold is the wind that now sweeps over my dreams

Perhaps our dreams carry the flavours
we dare not taste
And as we wake up
they are coated in some bitterness
washed away in our morning routines
Your dirty tongue, at sleep at night, gathering filth
I like tongue scrapes
in copper
How about you
What do you do,
in our department of reality?
You know the one behind the glass door

Over there
Like that warped glass door
The headmaster's office, with the beige door frame

Don't take me too seriously
I obviously wrote all of this
When I was asleep
Forgive me
If I'd tell you something absurd
Within the framework of a dream
I'd be forgiven real quick
Bit too quick
But if I told you something
Without the shield of the warped glass window
Of the headmaster's
The unsentimental sadness of a cold bed
You wouldn't laugh,
You'd just look—
Waiting for a relief
We like relief
Relief after suspension
Our dreams are like our most real BDSM-moments
Body in bondage
Tongue in ropes
I know one or two things about this,
The rabbit tells the hare
In another frame
Leaning over to purse their lips, to whisper
Because I dream a bit too much

Their words are like
tiny tiny
fluffy clouds
Wake up, wake up
Let's fly our times like arrows
Through this linear madness
So that the broken verse can continue
At dawn again

Ripples of falling whispers

Yen Chun lin

I (the dragonfly)

*I saw a thin line of light separating a wall and the ground beneath,
trying to fly as slow and low as possible into this gap.
The moment right after my head entered this gap,
I am in an ocean.*

*There, gravity is confusing,
gravity exists in fire,*

I fell into the flame.

*Falling, witnessed by two dolphins on their first date.
My body did not burn,
stayed in the coexistence of fire and water.*

There, the borders are spacious. Borders are not walls between spaces, but like breathing translucent skin made of fluid densities of dust. The earth's surface is not the border separating the world into above-ground and below. There are pores in the soil breathing in air and dust above the ground's surface. Nor does the ocean's surface divide the world, as there are air bubbles underneath the water and water particles in the air. Sounds travel through spaces, dimensions, borders and memories. Like immersing in darkness, we don't see where one sound ends.

Can we hear?

The sound of falling before a nut touches the ground. The subtle sound when a nut touches dust, air, water and dream particles during the falling. The sound from last night's dream. The echo that appears prior to the actual sound. The same sound that drops unexpectedly in your and my eardrums simultaneously

even though we are physically and spatially far away from each other...

To hear these sounds, maybe we could practice falling gently and passionately—into sleep, into love, into the unknown, with gravity from the earth's core, gravity from the dreamlands, gravity from another being. And practicing being and feeling comfortable in this transient state, swimming with its elastic duration. Bodies, minds, hearts, ... might feel vulnerable in falling. Still, maybe this vulnerability is one of the elements of caring, of empathetically listening, of passing through in-between spaces, of experiencing the complexity of existing, and of ...

Falling asleep, falling into gravity from the dreamlands, is the fall that we practice daily. The body sinks into a vulnerable state in a safe space, knowing there will be a return to the awaking reality. It is different from falling completely one way into the void.

*One night I slipped into a pond full of Nymphaea Lotus
where Sleepy Ears grew out of the water surface, lying next to lotus leaves.
They fell awake when hearing the moon arise*

It was only in recent years that I remembered Sleepy Ears. Who accompanied me throughout my childhood and teenage years, every day at schools in Taiwan, where everyone naps collectively after the lunch break. When we met again after a long time, Sleepy Ears asked me, is it possible to practice sleeping as a state of active learning? Just like how we attentively sleep in the forest, sensing a vibrant soundscape.

Sleepiness is often seen as unproductive and useless, but maybe there is a misunderstanding in that point of view. The daytime mind might forget the inspiring state of the sleepy mind. This in-between-state could be a space for sensing, listening, and noticing from a not-fully awaking state. Like listening in dreams. Which allows memories that are kept in our body to emerge, memories that a body learnt from not only this lifetime, memories that an awakened mind not necessarily remember.

Listening in silence, trying hard not to disturb the most fragile ears around.
Let the body dissolve into air around, become translucent.

Like dust flowing and glowing from outer space to the most hidden corner.

As much as being a curious human being wanting to know more about secrets of environment, of life, of being; we need to leave as much space for secrets to remain unheard, unnoticed, untouched and unknown. As much as our desire to expand our sensuous potentials, to feel emotions before a physical touch arrives, to read shared memories through diving into one's eyes, to see the invisible sea, to hear silent waves, Fragile Ears need stillness and secrets need shelters. It's okay not to know everything, it's okay to just quietly notice without saying anything.

*On a hill, the sky was at the same time day and night
Seven people standing in a circle,
drawing seven red circles.
It was something like a ritual, more precisely, a funeral.*

*It sounds windy,
it was mountains singing melodies,
bedtime melodies for a longer sleep.*

Remembering, forgetting
Living, dying
Emerging, decaying
Awaking, sleeping,
Dreaming

Thinking about dreams and death is confusing, even though the experience happens every night. The word 'dreamy' might mislead one about the holistic aspect of the dream realm. Nightmares and darkness are both 'dreamy'. In darkness, landscapes have no edges, and the border between the body and surroundings dissolves. In darkness, it is spacious, immense, and full of potential. There, relations between objects are in gradients. There is no absolute good and evil. In darkness, things that are hidden in the shadows in order to accomplish an innocent utopia, become equal to the beautiful ones. May-

be a gentle approach to nightmares, darkness, the unknown, fears, and death is to recognise the in-between spaces, where multiple realities, feelings, and principles comfortably coexist.

*That one night, we looked at the sky,
our collective conscious attention
(or love) created a bright wide falling star,
falling with us together.*

*Another night after the dragonfly revisited this year,
I (we) saw a meteorite around a loop-shaped castle, maybe you
(the dragonfly) saw the same one from afar?*

Crossing visible and invisible landscapes, empathy fields are accessible through the mind, conscious attention and imagination. When listening together, whether listening in the same physical room or through radio that crosses the geographical limitations of a sonic space, we might be visiting a shared empathy field. It is an invisible field that hosts different spectrums of feelings, thoughts and emotions from all the beings that exist in and outside of the universe. In this impermanent field, through the tuning of sound, listeners visit fragments of places, landscapes, memories, imaginations, emotions and dreams that seem personal, but perhaps they are not. Perhaps through listening telepathically, intuitively and shyly, these fields would be explored and visited with respect, care, and trust. These fields that exist as multiple realities overlapping with this one. Here and there, there are here.

*There,
the dragonfly see us echoing in water caustics dreams.
will we meet again here?*

A nourishing course

Berglind Thrastardottir

my mind wanders

but never further than i want

for that

i think i would have to be better at letting go

of all this nothing that i'm still clinging to

and release to wander

knowing i may not come back

not ever

but for now i'm still not ready i'm still clinging to all this nothing, the nothing
that binds my limbs and my thoughts around the things i believe i see before
me, and my obsessions and my and my my my

but you know?

i saw the door

at the end of the thread of my mind wanderings there was a precipice and
to step through it all i had to do was release the thread, the way back to me,
the me i still believe exist as i throw my arms around my my my

i've seen the door now and there's no unseeing it

it was there in the big mess

a big mess is

a nourishment that has no beginning and no end, where a laugh begins and even
if it isn't yours it feels like it comes from inside you, the same is true for tears, we
hold it all together, it's just a collective of silly creatures melting together, anyone
can make one, and so we did~

u y o i o e e i y o i o a e m o o i i a
e e d a n i e l y e i y o y o y i a i o
y i o i o e f e l i x u y i m o y e n n
o i e y e y u a o i t z u n i i y i o a
a u e u o y a y a y u y a u m e o y e i
a e y i i a e i o a i o a y a e a o a
y e e e i a a y i i e a i o m i s a r a
a i e o u y c o c o e i u a y i u u o i
i e a u y i i y o i a y e e m i n d w e
u i e y a e o i a o e i o u y y a e a i
a e i c e e o u y y e y y i o u a i n i
o i e o y u a i u e i o i a o o u i d t
l o u a u y i o b i g m e s s e i o e a
u a y i o u a e a e m a t i l d a a r i
e e a a a i i o i y o u o u o e u i s o
e a o i o u u i n o d e h s i r u o n i
y o e y b m e s s o b o i o o i i o e a
u o i o i e a o o i y o i e a u y i o o
a e i a b y o i o u o u o i u o u y u i
o u a u a u i o u o u o l e a r n o i o
i y e i n y o d a n r l a u g h t e r i
a e u a i y o e o i u a o i u i o u a e
o n a e o a i o u y o a o a i i a o n e
a i a e g m a r i j n o e i u u r o d e
d o d o t e l o t n r a e l s r a e t i
y o y i a i o a y a i o a i e u a u i o

it's a game:

legend = yen dodo marijn daniel cee coco lou sara matilda tzuni felix

my my my mind wanders nourished by our laughter and tears

learn to let go

in a big mess

Listening for Orisha Ọ̀bà

Lou Drago

Emptiness,
anattā
Close eyes to see

cou, cou,
drip, drip

Murmurs in the dark. Are we in an infinite cave? A wormhole?
... and who is this 'we'?

a voice forms around something recognisable ... *see shell, sea shells.*

we are listening, only consciousness left

i lost my body ... only ...

— Yen Chun Lin

sea shell

Orisha Ọ̀bà, guardian of the drop, the stream.
Orisha of showers, a stream of water for purification

— Empress Karen Rose

Scent of soil wafts
as a whirlwind grows
The impression of being transported,
being swirled into abyss,
yet
there is no fear.

As soon as this absence of fear is articulated
a familiar sound acknowledges
a frog smoking a pipe
a herb spirit whiffs by
(*it's so good to finally talk to you Mother*)
an unknown ... streams through.
Wait ...
a prismatic entity

beep ... beep ... beep ...
wait, where are we?
chest tightens
is this life support?
are we dying ... ?
i know it's not fair
to leave before one's parents
only 33 turns around our star.
We're fading,
grieving
witnessing loved ones
pain
pain

pain
...

...
but now,
we're taking off ...

Rocket entities,
light +
vision

tension,
tension,
tensiiiiiiiiioooooooooon

pressure +
its release
the settling,
the rising,
the pleasure,
of pain.
Of pain

Scream +
wake up

Awake in a field,
crickets chirrrping
Yet, they're not earthling crickettas.
Metallic space junk
glued by slime of slug Whispering secrets
Sweet nothings as they make love
oozing their

...

.

...

we're back in the void
the other side of this
yinyang void.

Golden and purple clouds
as the sun shines through

.....

....

..

.

Slow down
in heaven
Yiouyiou, is that you-me?
Ping-pong
What?

Quoi? Waaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhh
cklak
Click, dock, clock, clck

six,
six,
six,
six,
siiiiiix
'Wake up!'
waaaaaaaaaaaaake up

We're on the infinite beach
Pariah 19
again.
There's an impression
of an old boat
i can feel
wairua
through our waters
Orisha Qbà
come through
us-you

The shore is drifting
the (sensation) of a body
gets fainter

...

out of ear-sight
mind's eye still blind,
Horus closed?
sensation of
doubt
shame
self—

...

yet
...
a prismatic drip entity
whispers,
these are only ego concerns

lucid-dreaming,
the entities seem grateful now.

We're now in a space,
a strange place,
drip,
drip
drip
a construction site?
Death Stranding
metal again,
metallic drips
echo in this concrete apocalypse
What are we gon' do with all this beauty?

— Fred Moten

Our older brother
drips in
Juruuu!
Oh spirits of this sonic landscape,
in this forever land
the abyss!
the nothing-everythingness!

We're ascending +
descending
at once,
infinite black hole,
a black-sheep-
shepard's tone

Or maybe we're not moving either way,
stuck,
suspending time
stretching into
the infinite
rug
of stars

The ship again!
We're saved!
floating in the infinite
Pariah 19
beach
Atlantic
Through the wormhole to
Aotearoa,
to Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa.

Alas,
the boat merely sails
this wairua
this spirit
to the next realm

a perfect tuning,
to practice for death.
A dream to learn to
traverse
the Bardo

We all died
in this first translation
A cat's got nine lives
Cloud
....
...
nine

Mor Monkey King
floats past on a
violet
cloud...
transforms before us
into
purple pansies

A flute sings in tune with
metallic
dinosaur-birds
Yenyen's angelic
Orisha Ọbà voice
whispers through
flora-nūbēs,
nūbēs

— *Raphael Lecoquierre*

.
. .
...

falling tears

— Yen-Chun Lin

don't cry for us Yenyen

falling tears .

.
. .
...

a procession
the body
is leaving
a whistle
as the ship departs

Oh, we're still dreaming,
feeling the sand,
black sands...

..

.

dragonflies swarm

until they drip, drip

.

.

.

....

the drips are getting closer,
the seventh
dimension calls,

it's so hard to see them

cry

falling tears

the yin-yang Princes

don't yet understand

they can still reach us

from the ninth

cloud

falling tears

an entity plays with

Orisha Ọbà voice

drips,

as the humble

wooden casket

lowers

An indigenous

taiwanese flute sounds.

All our relations
from all nine realms,
from *all five directions*

— Geryll ‘Dr. G. Love’ Robinson*

gather throwing,
purple flowers,
ferns,
harakeke
feathers from all their birds.

.
. .
. .
. .

...
a ships signal caught on a breeze
one of the ninth winds
caught on a cheek
The tūi sing from the
harakeke. . .

we arrived in the land
of milk +
honey

‘Look at the sunflowers, baby’

by Lou Drago, Iwa + all of their relations*

**all of their relations borrowed with gratitude from Fred Moten + Stefano
Harney (and all their relations.)*

the night unheard,
the silence unseen —on here, a nut
falls twice: absence here

oxi peng

*born in a sealed womb, where night is origin, i will say that something
always remains from anything, even from nothingness.*

—etel adnan

when i first received the invitation to write about ‘here’, i asked myself how to describe the ineffable? it is impossible, i thought, as much as it is to capture the moment when the nut falls for the second time. indeed, this piece of writing is challenging, because language itself often fails to comprehend experience, especially the kind of experience that is ethereal, flowing beyond the enclosures of cultural and semantic categories. and this could just be the case. i struggle to forage the precise words, with the ecstatic ambition of carefully describing the indescribable moments of ‘falling into ...’ without it being reduced, diluted, lost in the undercurrents of meanings. yet after numerous futile attempts, i realise that the ineffable *here* can actually never be reproduced through precisions but rather emerging (novelly and unexpectedly) from ambiguities—to encounter here, i must re-create the spaces in between, the orifices leading onto unclaimed terrains, invisible and visible. then it might (or might not) quietly arrive, like encountering the dance of fireflies, or the gradients of northern-lights or ... love at first sight—in chinese, we call such fleeting moments of magical encounter ‘可遇而不可求’¹. in this way, the only tangible approach to encounter *here* again through writing, perhaps, is to write with ‘here’—that is, to be ‘here’.

how to be ‘here’?

1. 可遇而不可求 / kě yù ér bù kě qiú : can be met but not sought after. in other words, one can only come across such moments serendipitously.

in her scribbled notes which she humbly refers as the ‘ambient background’ of the project, yen chun lin, the initiator of *here* writes,

*imagine immersing in a dark space, all of sudden a dim light shines in from afar.
a puddle on the ground turns into a moon, not a full moon, but similarly beautiful.
a nut appears in the puddle without its falls being noticed, unexpectedly, the sound of nut
hitting the water comes in delay, oscillating in the
spaces until the moment before silence...²*

these imageries, as ambient as they may sound, are the sensuous spells that have been cast into the happening of *absence here*. with and without my own absence, i step(ped) into the darkness (again). here, ground i(wa)s velvet; stillness and quietness gr(e)ow like sweetgrass. their vibrant presence slow(ed)s down my gaze, my movements. i tiptoe(d) among scattered breathing bodies resting in the space like constellations. wandering around, my vision beco(a)mes blurred definitions. in turn, the difficulty of seeing activate(d)s other senses. i smell(ed) scents of earth, and taste(d) the misty air. slowly, as i explore(d) the space with more care and attentiveness—something requested by the space itself—i notice(d) the pulsing lightness chanting in the seemingly darkness, and recognise(d) the subtle frequencies of silence shifting from within. as if inside a womb, these entities ta(oo)ke me into the fantastic realm where nightness was born: observing through stillness, everything move(d)s; seven lotus leaves rising from puddles of dreams; memory dripping into ripples of the not-full-moon; time melting with space where darkness i(was)s porous; then, i sense(d) the drop of a sound ... this i(wa)s how i enter(ed) *here*, an ever-emerging space(宇) time(宙)³ that i(wa)s both mythical and (pre-)historical: darkness unfurls, as well as its shimmers which one gradually discovers, collects, absorbs throughout the trip weaved by the puddle: the not-full-moon, the nut, the water, the dusts, the nocturnal creatures who murmur through lou drago & yen chun lin, the falling, echoes of the heartbeats ... and the sound of their animated silence.

*to be ‘here’ is to fall
at the very fringe of my awareness.*

in our ever-shrinking days we unconsciously learn to modify our bodies into cognitive machines for the purpose of interpreting data on screens. we grow faster, trying to catch up the speed of the automated optimisations of everything.

2. excerpt from yen chun lin’s notes.

3. instead of “time and space” as separate entities, timespace is sensed as one being in the happening of *absence here*.

timespace is distributed into a dominate linearity that standardises modern human's daily activities into accelerated concepts, consumptions, configurations of the glaring audio-visual algorithms designed to reproduce our senses into commodities. our psyches numbed; bodies disconnected; overflow of information replacing overflow of beings⁴. in this regard, within cultures that proliferate the perception of flamboyant cacophony through prioritising ways of seeing, *absence here* is a rare happening. it emerges as a gentle flow that softly, and at the same time radically challenges the instagram-tiktok-oriented audiovisual politics of our times—not with a voice that is louder than the glamorous, fast-forward spectacles but with a whisper, a whisper sprouting from darkness of the night, materialised into series of prolonged, embodied experiences that evoke our vulnerable state of primordial existence—returning to our mother's womb, a womb sewed by sound of silence where night comes into being.

...ssssssshhhh...

...
...f
a
|
|
i
n
g...
.....
..
.

... into such wombly frequencies of *absence here*, silence and night exist as pulsating forces that conjure 'magic'. here, magic refers to the fleeting moment when shifting one's sensory perception into a synaesthetic state. that is to say, the experience stimulated by *absence here* is not merely subjected to its live sonic acts but is rather transformative through variant entanglements of all senses. within a form of delicate slowness, silence becomes a space where sound emerges. here, slowness and silence are interlaced. in particular, slowness is less about an indicator of speed than it is about awareness—offering the in-between milieu that allow us to be

4. thinking about climate change, wars, the sixth extinction of species...

'empty', to observe more closely and listen more deeply. slowness turns into a form of silence which could be sensed in an expansive way. when the sensible silence expands into space, it also changes its relationship with sound. in shifting the silence, etel adnan writes,

*the universe makes a sound—is a sound. in the core of this sound there's
a silence, a silence that creates that sound, which is not its opposite,
but its inseparable soul. and this silence can also be heard.*⁵

adnan's poetry profoundly resonates with how the space of silence and sound, or rather, how the space of 'silencesound' (sssssssssh...) manifests itself in here. the ontological presence of silence is channeled through the happenings of lights, shadows, ripples, dusts, the lotus leaf sculptures and all the matter that forms *absence here*. just like the porous darkness that allows lights to travel through, silence in *here* is also permeable. it can be heard, seen, smelled, touched, blanketing the entire *here* where sound drops within. in this way, instead of creating silence and sound as separate sonic entities, the emergence of sound takes place inside of silence—it unfolds the interiority of silence, and at the same time transmits it back to the (outer)space.

while being held by the tentacles of night

tenderly calling for a return to our, using yen's own rhetoric, 'fragile ears', this 'sssilencessoundssssspace' harbours multiple rhythms and temporalities. marginal voices and the not-yet-hearable voices become crystallised, echoing shimmers of the stars. not because they are being artificially amplified, but because all of a sudden, we realised that we are able to 'hear' more through noticing the fine details and attuning to subtleties. all of these experiences could be described as synaesthetic because they engage us within a larger, more complex web of sensual relations from which we were born but to which we have become blind. yet, the idea of 'fragile ears' do not merely appoint to its material specificity. it proposes a different and ancient way of nakedly being in and of the world, that is, a 'fragile state of being'. and this is the moment when silence blossoms into nightness. night is a place where very little happens and at the same time everything happens; a place where mysteries and unknowns fabricate into fantasies and nightmares; a place not everyone is willing to enter as it is often associated with shade, darkness and terror.⁶ in *absence here*, night flows as foaming energy that inspires wonders. yet,

5. etel adnan, *shifting the silence*, new york: 2020, 39.

6. most-cliché portrayed by the human-centric narrative which i have grown up with.

the night is vulnerable here. it is vulnerable because it is easily disturbed, disrupted, torn apart, and simultaneously wet, elastic, transfusable between (in)visibilities. because all the bodies that participate *here* are holding it, while being held by it. connected by empathy, such strength binds softness and hardness together, penetrating the impenetrable armours that encapsulate these vulnerable bodies—it embraces these vulnerable bodies through its own vulnerability—to let them breathe, to let them transform.

being

here,

... night is formless, carried by tender matters of the porous darkness that tastes like an island. on this island inhabited by memory beings and spirits of all kinds, emergence and transformations of sound, as subtle and barely-perceivable as they may be, turn into a 'touch' that elongates the horizon. its shimmering slows down all other perceptions. within this impalpable slowness, i tremble, as i sense the wings of waves, the skin of winds, the gaze of a shy seashell; i sense a tectonic splash, caused by the echoes of their sneeze; i sense the drop of a crystal tear made by her dragonfly lover from past lives; i sense the untuned encounter, the images of forgetfulness; i sense intimacy, desire, confusion, resistance; i sense delayed love, entangled with pain from far and near; i sense letting go and coming back like the beginning of a fable 'serenade out' from finger tips ... i sense the polyamorous 'play' of yen and lou (—as they camouflaged into fractals of the silence night, they are played by the silence they cultivate, becoming the night they fabricate). in *here* where darkness is the awareness of light, silence drops a sound, night becomes the sun. when the wind veers to the east and the tides dip into the clouds, they whisper, drifting(in)between ...

o
n
/
y

here.

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A circle growing roots

Lithic Alliance

The call came from the environment close by
It brought together spirits yet unknown
curious, and gentle
the space was full of good intentions
A ground
gathered around a calm center
Soft magnetite
A dimmed light

We all felt that this might become an important journey
But didn't know where the connection will lead us
Nor the places we will visit

Trust into the unknown
Into the darkness
The far away
And into each other
Encapsulated in a safe place
With a tender wing beat
We close the eyes to bridge our minds
To find each other in an ethereal constellation

From every angle the shine reflects differently
Changing color, like a distant star
Becoming close
Correlate
Affect
There is no one perspective
but endlessly unfolding sides
portals to galaxies of emotions

the air is filled with vibrations
far beyond the audible
the world distilled into senses
waves
touch
our skin communicates
Exchanges
within the nonphysical realm
carried by frequencies
points of energy
invisible electric streams
led by love
for the very connection

We land on a spot where fly agaric decay
Where branches turn into horns
And the eyes of the wooden floor follow our slow walk
Our bodies grow roots
And sprout into one

We land in a place where the soil solidifies in gelatinous liquids
Metallic plants
Sending and receiving information on their planes
We sink in the ground
Falling together
The abyss opens, seems timeless
releases creatures
floating in the void

We land
closely crawled
protected in a portable shelter
words and worlds surround us
phantasmagorical fields
the brown elixir releases transient mist figures
we breathe into this moment
and hold it

we are here
for now

More and more a hive: Drift (in) between's overnight lullaby of imaginary landscapes

Jared Davis

A travelling oasis

Drift (in)between was a living world of fiction, a petri dish for audiences and performers that inscribed an altered sense of time, dreaming, biology and memories. As an overnight performance in the ICA's theatre space, the work presented our bodies as a site for calcifying narratives and stories. Evoking questions on the visceral, time, and the overlap of these threads through poetry, *Drift (in)between* was a journey through 'imaginary landscapes of inaudible frequencies, sleep-inducing rhythms, dream echoes, lullaby of nightmares, shimmers of darkness, nocturnal wanders, and bedtime tales.'

Over the course of eight hours, ten collaborators melded into one performance body, and as a spectator, it became difficult to distinguish any separate membranes between one artist and the next. The artists and their live interventions joined with one another like synaptic connections in a new collective mind. In a darkened space—dispersed with dispersed synthetic-organic sculptural forms, and blanketed by sonic ambience as well as occasional light beams—the cast of the show took us to spaces ranging from gentle to tense, soft through to surreal. There was electroacoustic music with soft vocalisations, fantastical narrators telling tales through organic extensions of themselves, such as a light-up soft sculpture-cum-prosthesis. A slowly trudging being with screens protruding from their shoulders on a pole climbed through still listeners. Drone moments ushered the bodies scattered throughout the space into early sleep phases, only to shift into sonic climaxes of red strobe lights. Nordic lullabies, the gentle dripping of water onto metallic dishes, and acousmatic moments of environmental sounds all immersed listeners into a state of temporal suspension. One had the feeling that they had entered. It gave one the feeling of entering a humid

and dense forest ecosystem, growing on plastics and technological relics to form new symbioses.

Throughout the night, the performers' individual identities outside of the installation environment dissolved, and audience members slowly stopped wondering about the distinction between one performance fragment and the next. The artists had left their earth-bodies at the entrance to the theatre, adopting pseudonyms and fictionalised accounts of themselves. They became creatures and non-human forms: 'a big loud whale full of colours and brightness slowly waking up inside of a coconut shell', or 'a piece of dancing willow-leaf that travels with the wind', or 'a travelling oasis made of various shapes of love particles', etc. Poetry and poesis were the core generative tools of the show.

Drift (in)between's emphasis on collective embodiment and the organic spoke to current ontological upheaval, following a period of viral contagion in which communion was rethought. It evoked contemporary notions of our biological interdependence, as well as the malleability of time. Nothing makes sense as it once did: our somatic experience is increasingly dematerialised through communication technologies, and nature is not immutable. The present seems like an uncomfortable interregnum, in which we are undertaking a techno-organic metamorphosis. There is a general discomfort we have as a species when things are out of our control, or our sense of understandable order. We've solidified an ideology and culture, by basing our concept of humanity on a notion of free will, as well as a supposed mastery over nature. This was turned on its head during the pandemic, and while on a superficial level things have been wrenched back to an old order, what lingers is a kind of gothic horror of our environment: a fear of a landscape and ecology that we do not, and never have, ruled over as free agents.

The fevered acceleration of technological mediation into our daily lives brought about by the pandemic has not quelled. While we've returned to physical gatherings over livestreams, and talk of the 'metaverse' reads like an anachronistic gimmick, there is a general atmosphere that our sense of self as individual organisms is being ruptured by technology in a way that we don't yet fully appreciate. Take for instance the general apprehension around AI and the ontological crises of agency that it raises. We are becoming more and more of a hive, whether or not our minds are ready for it.

Every object an hourglass

One thread that runs through all this relates to notions of time and our histories, as well as the flaws and cracks in our organic understandings of these, which are elucidated by Yen Chun Lin. Philosopher Thomas Moynihan presents a dizzying thesis in his 2019 work of theory-fiction *Spinal Catastrophism*, that outlines the relationship of upright posture in human beings as a crucial aspect of the nature of our consciousness. For Moynihan and the authors he evokes, our body is a site of inscription for our history—like the rings in the trunk of a tree—and our phenomenological experience is bound to the evolutionary aberration of upright posture. Through a number of conjectural twists and turns, references to obscure citations that may or not have been fabricated, and an eerie fixation on the spine, the book provides a creative dissection of some of the ways in which we are due to rethink the fundamental elements that make us ‘human’. The book paints an evocative image of our central nervous system as a serpentine creature: a spine, brain and eyes, covered in an ill-fitting flesh prosthesis. *Spinal Catastrophism* mirrors the ungraspable and evocative style that we see in the performance-experience of *Drift (in)between*. It carries an air of scholarly rigour, however its sources cross between the realms of fact and fiction like soluble compounds crossing into fats. In terms of style, the book is not unlike the intangible storytelling of *Drift (in)between*. It too is concerned with our embodied sense of time, and reads as much like a fever dream of myth in a world that no longer makes sense.

Like a garden full of plants and a pond full of fishes

One of the more evocative sections of *Spinal Catastrophism* examines philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz’s writing in *The Monadology*, a text that proposes that the universe is made up of individual units called monads. Monads are like tiny, indivisible particles that are not physical, but rather have mental properties such as perception, consciousness, and will. Leibniz argues that these monads are constantly interacting with each other, but they do not influence each other directly. Instead, each monad is like a mirror that reflects the entire universe from its own unique perspective. This means that every monad perceives the world in its own way, and that there are countless different perspectives on reality.

Leibniz’s infinitisation of biology, a site of interest for Moynihan, brings to mind the unending sense of biological multitudes evoked in *Drift (in)between*. The German polymath notes: ‘Each portion of matter may be conceived as like a garden full of plants and like a pond full of fishes. But each branch of every plant, each member of every animal, each drop of its liquid parts is also some such garden or pond.’ (Leibniz) In an extension of this train of thought, he comments that ‘there is nothing fallow, nothing sterile, nothing dead in the universe.’ Moynihan elaborates on this idea: ‘if all life comes from other life, then, as far back as you can go, there is always life. What this meant is that the inorganic simply didn’t exist.’ (Moynihan 84-5)

Here is a theoretical precedent, or one of many, for thought processes on the collective biological interdependence that Yen Chun Lin’s work evokes. These weird linkages between biology and temporality are creatively sutured by Moynihan. When discussing Leibniz’s aforementioned text, he speaks of ‘an exploded-view cross-section of radically disarticulated moments of total time: each internal organ or external species a piece of suspended historical shrapnel.’ (Moynihan, 94) To the audience members of *Drift (in)between*, we were implicated as visceral markers in such an abstraction of the temporal experience. Our organs are at once individual units, but collectively breathing, seeing, smelling, listening together. We carried into the performance our histories and memories, our life chronologies, and were guided into a slowed and reconfigured embryonic state.

Part of this text was written in collaboration with ChatGPT

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spending a fortune_1

Felix Riemann a.k.a Leslie

faint-star-fellow-bewst
on the verge of acquisition flirting with absence
soft-raiding time
keeping intact
investing in myth
the big mess
translating meanings already given
finding validity in their translatability
love their instability
like
pattern-the-bood
comes first
comes last
never comes
secret fourth thing
you can rest now

About

Here, a nut falls twice is a place of holding collective dreaming and falling through listening. The project explores how the empathy field could be formed collectively by listening together and co-creating a shared 'here' through alternation in sensual perception and the vulnerable state of falling in and with sleep, love and gravity. Here stems from Yen Chun Lin's artistic research on soundust, ambient knowledge, sensory thresholds, in-between spaces and encounters of spirit(s). Through its different iterations and collaborations, Here continuously reforms, responding to the contexts it appears in – like an organic body that responds to its changing environments.

This PDF is published on the occasion of:

"Here, a nut falls twice"

at Institute of Contemporary Arts London
27 November to 4 December 2022

A week-long exhibition of sculptural sound installation with an opening sound performance *Absence Here* and a closing 8 hours long overnight performance *Drift(in)between* happening in the installation.

With text contributions by those who were part of the collective falling and dreaming: Lithic Alliance, Jared Davis, Marijn Degenaar, Lou Drago, Cee Füllemann, Yen Chun Lin, Louis Maison, Sara Sassanelli, oxi peng, Felix Riemann a.k.a leslie, Berglind Thrastardottir, Matilda Tjäder

Curator: Sara Sassanelli

Producer: Natasha Chubbuck

Technical management: Patrick Brett & Nicky Drain

Technicians: Francesca Penty, Ben Moon, Michele Bianchin and Cam Deas

Lighting Design: Charlie Hope

Floor installation: Cee Füllemann

Sculptural sound installation: Yen Chun Lin

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