



**LEEDS
ARTS RESEARCH
CENTRE**

'HEADPHONES' AND 'NOTES TO SELF'

DR RACHEL KRISCHE

OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:
'Headphones' and 'Notes to Self'

Output Type:
I – Performance

Venues: ICA, London; Tramway, Glasgow;
Arnolfini, Bristol; Kunstbau – Städtische Galerie
im Lenbachhaus, Munich; Frieze Art Fair;
Tanzquartier Wien/Leopold Museum, Vienna

Year of first performance:
2014

Output allocation:
Dance practice research



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

Headphones and Notes to Self are performances by Rachel Krische which were embedded within Table of Contents, a live movement installation performed between 2014-16 in the UK, Austria and Germany. The artists in Table of Contents used their own histories as choreographers/performers to question how dance is archived. Krische additionally researched alternative ways to address embodied cognition through improvised movement emerging from and in relation to embodied archival information. Resembling a movement laboratory, Table of Contents comprised multiple evolving choreographic works within a shared space. Intermingling between audience and performers was allowed, embedding opportunities for dialogue and exchange. In Headphones and Notes to Self, the body as an archival repository of embodied choreographic memory was proposed and interrogated. These works invite the audience to listen with Krische through headphones to spoken texts while she danced. Krische encouraged the audience to consider her movement as listening and thinking equipment, rather than as a physical translation of spoken ideas. Through Krische's methods, the audience is encouraged to connect, intellectually and kinaesthetically, the performer's historical and bodily archive with their own. Krische contributes to growing discourses on archive and embodied cognition in dance performance practice using the proposition of the body as an archive to challenge normative assumptions that movement merely illustrates thinking; Krische proposes that bodily movement is, in itself, a cognitive activity. Krische's work was experienced by over 7000 people, was reviewed in the international press including The Guardian, Financial Times and London Evening Standard, and was cited by Professor Sarah Whatley in the Journal of Choreographic Practices (2014). Krische published a related journal article (2016), presented papers at NUI Galway (2015), Leeds Beckett (2015), and Coventry University (2016), and joined a panel conversation with neurophysiologists Jonanthan Cole and Matthias Sperling at the ICA (2014).



Headphones

I am listening to a talk given by Gill Clarke, whilst I am moving.

My moving is what I describe as doing 'physical listening' –you could view it as 'extra listening equipment'.

I am also working with Gill's information.

I am meeting her process of reflection with my working practice and allowing it to temper what I am doing in front of you now.

If you choose to join me, we are listening to the same thing at the same time. But I also want you to feel free to take the headphones off when you wish. Maybe pass them on to someone else or leave them at the table or alcoves.

Audio Soundtrack: Gill Clarke Interviewed by Kirsty Alexander

Crossing Borders, Independent Dance London, October 2011

<http://www.independentdance.co.uk/programmepage/media/audio/>

Gill Clarke: Contemporary Dancer, Teacher, Choreographer, Director, and Advocate. Founder member of the Siobhan Davies Dance Company.

Co-Director of Independent Dance.

Printed programme information for 'Headphones' available in the gallery space during the performance



'In sharing these thought processes, we are made aware of the depth of physical memory we all have, and a dancer has a hundredfold. This personal exchange also reveals just how much each dancer has been, and is, contributing. They are initiating and driving the work, rather than merely performing someone else's steps'

Alison Gunn, Financial Times: 10.01.14

<https://www.ft.com/content/57591d74-786f-11e3-831c-00144feabdc0>



'The principal virtue of this project is its intimacy. If the dancers' commentaries occasionally veer towards the ponderous, they're more often illuminating and sometimes spontaneously funny'

'Table of Contents is engagingly ambitious in the questions it wants to provoke about what dancers do and how they do it, and it manages to speak to insiders and novices alike'

Judith Mackrell, The Guardian: 12.01.2014

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/12/sjobhan-davies-dance-table-of-contents-review>

‘The dancers chat as they move, telling us what they’re doing the brilliant Rachel Krische, a mercurial mover mixing twitchy articulations and smooth brushstrokes, dancing to the recording of an interview that we all listen to on headphones’

‘It’s cumulatively absorbing; it rewards your attention..... It’s a fun game but it also puts the viewer inside the choreography, you understand how every movement is a decision. It’s a peek inside the often baffling process of making dance’

Lyndsey Winship, London Evening Standard: 14.01.2014

<https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/theatre/siobhan-davies-table-of-contents-ica-dance-review-9045915.html>

This 'memory space' stimulates thought about how we access feelings, sensations and memories that reside in the body and resurface through the body in different ways. At the same time this moving archive comprises more than a century of experience when the dancers' years of dancing are added together. It is full with the unexpected, unintended, surprising and unforeseen that characterizes any preternatural performance event and seems to provide a tangible sense of the thinking and activity that coexists in a dance work and that escapes the series of films, images and words that comprises the determined 'boxed in' objects of an archive. It is the affective nature of performance practice, and its valuing of indeterminacy, that produces what I want to term a 'landscape of vitality'.

Whatley, S. (2014), 'Digital inscriptions and the dancing body: Expanding territories through and with the archive', *Choreographic Practices*, 5:1, pp. 121–38.

Table of Contents presents a way to rethink the notion of the dance archive — asking where, indeed, a dance archive is located, if not in the body itself.



‘Perhaps it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to state that discourses on the preservation, archiving and documentation of the live are oversaturated by the ephemeral-performative paradigm ... ‘Table of Contents’ engages with this oversaturation in a way that is beautifully candid, with minimalist sophistication and a complex understanding of the tenets that invite audiences into the archive in the first place: process and discussion’

‘Table of Contents engages in a dual exercise of presentation and questioning; here, the archive is politicised through site and body. Questions of oral history, or embodied knowledge, of the role and formation of canons and the legislation and ownership of dance history are foregrounded through the iteration of these 15 moments. The occupation of the gallery itself is an apt proposition that removes dance from a paradigm of materiality, placing value on a more complex set of archival iterations, and foregrounding the role of the individual and the body to preserve’

Diana Damien Martin, this is tomorrow: Contemporary Art Magazine: 20.01.2014

<http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/siobhan-davies-dance-table-of-contents>

‘During the space of an hour, I saw six vastly different reflections on works gone by, the creative process and how dancers remember unfeasibly large amounts of movement material ... Notes to Self found Rachel Krische improvising to another dancer’s aide-memoir’

‘With no set, costumes, lighting, music or context, all that remains is the choreography and a rare chance for us to climb inside a dancer’s head’

Kelly Apter, The Scotsman: 01.02.2014

<https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/review-siobhan-davies-table-contents-glasgow-1546300>

Just as Bel, Sehgal and co. greatly influenced the ways in which performance can be treated in an art context, projects such as these show dancers experimenting with the very idea of a museum, in a way that art museums simply aren't.

Because museums of dance still do not exist, there are still possibilities to experiment with the form they might take – but from experiments such as these, it seems certain that dancers want a vital form of museum that is always alive, and never a tomb'

Laura McLean-Ferris, Art Review: 12.03.2014

<https://artreview.com/march-2014-review-siobhan-davies-dance/>

‘The desire that we demonstrated to experience a genuine connection with new ways of working suggests that we recognised this biographical description provided by Krische, valuing opportunities to add to our internal and corporeal biography’



Rachel Krische, *Table of Contents*,
Siobhan Davies Dance

Photos: Courtesy of Pari Naderi









Rachel Krische, *Table of Contents*, Siobhan Davies Dance

Photos: Courtesy of Nicky Napier





VIDEO

DOCUMENTATION



<https://vimeo.com/84077352>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qYtxL2-E8w>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpN0w50gUME>

APPENDIX

ONLINE

Art Review: https://artreview.com/reviews/march_2014_review_siobhan_davies_dance/

London Evening Standard: <http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/siobhan-davies-table-of-contents-ica-dance-review-9045915.html>

Financial Times: <https://www.ft.com/content/57591d74-786f-11e3-831c-00144feabdc0?mhq5j=e1>

The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/jan/12/siobhan-davies-dance-table-of-contents-review>

The Scotsman: <http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/culture/review-siobhan-davies-table-of-contents-glasgow-1-3289293>

Storify: twitter response feed: <https://storify.com/Arnolfiniarts/siobhan-davies>

Studio International: <http://www.studiointernational.com/index.php/siobhan-davies-dance-table-of-contents-video-review>

London Dance: <http://londondance.com/articles/reviews/siobhan-davies-dance-table-of-contents-ica-3/>

Blouinartinfo: <http://uk.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1000785/review-siobhan-davies-table-of-contents-at-ica-London>

This Is Art Contemporary art Magazine: <http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/siobhan-davies-dance-table-of-contents>

Aesthetica Magazine: <http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/interview-with-siobhan-davies/>

Bachtrack: <https://bachtrack.com/january-2014-does-dance-belong-in-museums>

Paul Hughes Blog: <http://paulpaschal.tumblr.com/post/161692782146/body-of-knowledge>

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

July 2014

Leeds Beckett University, Thinking Dance: Questioning The Contemporary in 21st Century British Dance Practices, Professor Sarah Whatley & Rachel Krische: Conversation/Presentation

The Body As Archive: Encountering, Making and Performing, Table of Contents with Siobhan Davies Dance

Professor Sarah Whatley led the AHRC-funded Siobhan Davies digital archive project (SDD REPLAY Archive) after a sustained period studying Davies' work. Rachel Krische has recently been involved as co-author (along with Davies and the artists Matthias Sperling, Charlie Morrissey, Andrea Buckley and Helka Kaski) in Table of Contents, produced by Siobhan Davies Dance. Table of Contents is a live performance and installation where each artist, using the SDD REPLAY Digital Archive and their own history as choreographers and performers, question how dance is archived.

Sarah and Rachel will be discussing (not exclusively) some of the following questions/areas:

- » The role of the 'archive' in how the work of dance artists is represented/ documented/preserved.
- » The role a digital archive can play in the reimagining of making the past 'present' and useful/ relevant/interesting in a live performance situation. How can we imagine what a 'Living/Live' Archive may look like or could be? (With specific reference to the REPLAY Archive and how it was used in the creation of Table of Contents)
- » The concept of 'co-authorship' encompassing the changing nature of the consideration of dance artists' 'individual practice' and how this in turn has a broader impact on how we think about dance being created, performed and credited.
- » The concept of the consideration of 'the body' as an Archive and how in Table of Contents the gallery space was utilized to facilitate the meeting of, and the engagement between, the 'Embodied Archives' of both performers and spectators.

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

July 2015

International NUI Galway Theatre Archive Conference: Performing The Archives

Together with colleagues Lisa Kendall and Dr. Laura Griffiths, presentation of a panel paper: Moving body as site, choreographic knowledge, data and evidence in the body archive.

Rachel Krische: Applying to the strand of: Archival Materials In/As Performance

October 2015

Leeds Beckett University, Thinking Dance: Questioning The Contemporary Symposium

Together with colleagues Lisa Kendall and Sally Doughty (De Montfort) presentation of a panel paper: 'Moving body as site, choreographic knowledge, data and evidence in the body archive'.

March 2016

Coventry University, Digital Echoes: (Re) Collecting the Past, (Re) Making the Future Choreographic knowledge, data and evidence in the body archive; new ways of thinking about archival encounters and dialogues.

This panel of papers responds to ideas of archive and the intersection of these with collectivity and co-creative practices, user and spectator relationships and the role of the body archive in enriching existing material sources through creative activities. In particular, the authors in this panel invite new ways of thinking about archival information and its relationship to the lived moment of practice. Considering that knowledge is generated in and through movement encounter, we each offer discussion around the dance archive and how this is informed by encounter, in performed and personal space and via digital platforms. This panel session consists of three 15-minute papers, each addressing the multiple forms of knowledge that inhabit the concept of archive, particularly through the body.

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

The Body As Archive: Encountering Archive in the Making and Performing of Table of Contents with Siobhan Davies Dance

We perhaps understand a traditional archive to be a repository of artefacts and documents – a collated, preserved and fixed body of evidence. With live performance, we immediately meet the established debate and obvious challenge of capturing and therefore archiving, as we are left with a document of the performance, not the work in itself. That the document may be a poor piece of evidence, as it is lacking the un-recordable, kinaesthetic resonance of the live encounter.

So how does one begin to approach and consider a performance archive in order to understand how it can be useful and relevant in the ‘now’? How do we realise that we can connect to another source of ourselves, that is shaped by the history and culture and activity surrounding us, through learning about the past within its’ material remains? Can we utilise an archive, not just for purposes of faithful reconstruction, but as a bank of information to feed future development – can we call it compost?

Therefore, let us also consider that within dance and choreographic practice, an archive is also more than a building or ‘facility’ that contains the evidence of dance works as captured documents. Data (choreographic) resides both within the human being, as well as within a container without a pulse, and that both ‘houses’ as such, can be called archive.

In the co-authored performance project Table of Contents, produced by Siobhan Davies Dance, six artists wanted to meet notions of Archive and more pertinently, consider the body as a portable repository of creative and choreographic information – a library or ‘human hard-drive’ of unfixed documents to be accessed in real time. We wanted to consider the body as a living, embodied, archive and we wanted to find out if it was possible to carry our archive into the space and make it available to an audience – for the body to be understood explicitly as a living document, and for the audience to meet our bodily and historical archive, with theirs. This paper will discuss how this was practically explored within the making and performance of Table Of Contents.

BOOK CHAPTER

ABSTRACT

The Holding Space: Body Of (As) Knowledge

Body Of (As) Knowledge (BOK) is a collaborative practice-based research project reflecting and expanding upon the practices of dance artist-scholars Sally Doughty, Lisa Kendall and Rachel Krische. BOK examines the body as a living archive, focusing on the collection, articulation and dissemination of the moving body as opposed to more traditional archival materials of artefacts and documents. This multi-stranded project engages with Derby Museum Trust to develop understanding of how traditional processes of archiving work, and includes performative outcomes presented in the museum space, NottDance (2017) and InDialogue Symposium (2016).

The three authors propose a radical contribution to the publication in the form of a link to an online holding space for the research project. The digital holding space is a repository for film, audio and written documentation of BOK and seeks to highlight and privilege the assertion that the moving body acts as a living resource of archival information. The authors recognise the inherent contradiction of constructing an online artefact of this living, embodied project, and therefore propose that the online resource, in correlation with the concept of the moving body as archive, has a finite life-span. The authors will utilise encryption technology that makes electronic data 'self-destruct' after a specified period of time: the holding space will 'erode' or 'rust' as time passes, and after a certain point the on-line document can no longer be read (Bleeker 2012: 1). Therefore, the content held on-line remains only in the memories, bodies and practices of the three artist-scholars and the readers who engage with the online artefacts within the identified timeframe. Challenging the traditional notion that 'the archive [is] that which endures' (Roms 2013: 45), this contribution promotes a time-sensitive archive which is 'subject to change, or even disappearance' (ibid), to reflect the condition of a mortal, corporeal archive.

References:

Bleeker, M. (2012) 'Introduction: On Technology & Memory', *Performance Research*, 17(3), 1-7,

Roms, H. (2013). 'Archiving legacies: who cares for performance remains?' In *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance* edited by Gunhild Borggreen and Rune Gade, Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Keywords:

Performance

Archive

Dance

Embodiment

Key Dates:

2014–Ongoing

Collaborators:

Produced by: Siobhan Davies Dance

Co-authors: Siobhan Davies, Charlie Morrissey, Helka Kaski, Andrea Buckley
and Matthias Sperling

Funding Credits:

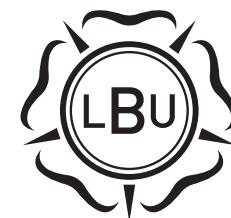
Table of Contents is produced in partnership with Siobhan Davies Dance,
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Email:

r.krische@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

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