# MAKING SENSE OF NO BODY

**This exegesis is submitted to Auckland University of Technology for the Masters of Art and Design, [Spatial Design]**

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# ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signed

Dated 6 July 2010

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MAKING SENSE OF NO BODY

'What can the body do?' Deleuze  asks.

Can 'thinking bodies', 'bodies of thought', 'Bodies without Organs', 'virtual bodies', 'hollow bodies' converge with the digital screen image to transcend the body's perception of a performed reality?

04

FIG. 1 > TEST SITE 04 AUGUST 2009, DADLEY BUILDING, MOUNT ST, AUT

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT> FIG 2-5 > STUDIO TEST JUNE 2009  'SCREEN BODIES'

# ABSTRACT

**This Masters in Art and Design investigates a performance strategy for the deterritorialization of the body, mind and space as they intersect the digital screen image.**

The reconfiguration of the sensing system as the body encounters the digital image deterritorializes the body's everyday modes of proprioception and spatial orientation.

The assumption here is the increasing 'instability' of the body in a contemporary world where the digital screen image mediates and renegotiates our physical encounters. In prioritizing the body in these screen environments, there is potential for rethinking a body politic for performance and somatic practice.

My strategy is to reconfigure the multi-modal processing where the screen dominates the visual faculties in the mind/body/screen relationship. Using wireless cameras attached to the body and improvisational structures for performance, divergent spaces are connected and collected through the body, screen and the camera. As the body and screen intersect, the corporeal and the image converge and manifest through the imagination and screen.

This investigation into the screen/body opens up new possibilities for the spatial and corporeal, as the body and the screen fold into a mesh of multiplicity and 'in-between-ness'.

# INTRODUCTION

**How do we establish a relationship between the body and the screen, that engenders the screen image into a somatic practice and the 'thinking body' into the screen?[1]**

This project employs methods of subtraction and substitution for testing limits of physicality and possibilities of proprioception via spatial negotiation. Interrogation of space, body and representation through dismantling and reconfiguring the sensing system borrows notions from established methods of training for Butoh dance, which organizes itself around the virtual body. These modes of subtraction and substitution reorganize the physical, the 'eyes listen', language recalibrates the body, movement composites screen and live space, the body becomes the site and the moving screen image the dancing body. The corporeal and screen meet, hybridizing a 'prostheticized' body and shifting spatial and temporal margins into the liminal. In employing the conditions of the screen to deliberately disorganize the body new methods for practice begin to emerge.

To position this investigation the historical and social contexts of both body and screen must be identified. This exegesis does not attempt to create an overview of the history of the body (or the screen), but it can indicate some key notions around western theatre and dance pedagogies that position the body specific to this practice. There are three key areas that assume a point of departure for this study.

1. The Cartesian body; a binary position of mind and body, dualistic, 'concrete' and a commodity.
2. The performing body in an historical context embodies 'discipline' for 'productivity' through specific training synonymous with western modern colonist doctrines.
3. The dancing body - a 'being-towards-movement', where there is a continuous 'agitation' aligned with displays of 'spectacular motion', produced by a 'fit to dance, ceaseless motility' in a passing of 'one form to the next'.

These ideas problematize the body I am attempting to dismantle as it intercedes with the conditions of the screen in search of a new body politic. There is a tension and slippage in reconceptualizing the body, a defaulting to body as material - subject and binary. Antonin Artaud's 'Body Without Organs', and Tatsumi Hijikata's 'thinking body' fold into Deleuze's body of thought and offer new possibilities for the body throughout this exegesis.

The body operates in continuous 'multi-modal' transitioning between haptic, scopic, sonic, and proprioceptive tendencies. In his chapter 'Thought and Cinema' Deleuze suggests 'a suspension of the world' (Deleuze 1997:168) and the 'visible to thought' in the experience of cinema. In the relentless 'arising and being revealed', the image ceases to be 'sensory-motor' (Deleuze 1997:169) The collective modes from which we form perception of a moment (of screen) are substituted and the 'mediated' sensory experience dominates both the scopic and the sonic registers. If we can reorganize these registers the body has the potential for a new sensory experience of the screen.

My concern as an interdisciplinary arts practitioner with a dance background is to develop an approach that embodies conditions of the screen through performance and somatic principles to mobilize my practice. The negotiation of the screen in our everyday living mediates our social, physical and sensory encounters. While the notion of screen is not new, our use of the screen as a prosthetic extension in everyday living is accelerating as we connect to networks using language, symbols and image in a variety of formats. In the use of cell phones, and screen based electronic devices, the eyes, the ears and language take precedence and the proprioceptive experience is compromised and diverted through the externalization of the sensing organs. We defy distance and time and connect with other 'minds' in diverse social and spatial arrangements through such social networking tools as Facebook, Twitter and Skype. What occurs to the body and our proprioceptive capabilities in these environments? It appears that while we once relied on our sensory-motor responses to navigate distance, in more recent years we have substituted the eyes and semiotics to 'defy distance'. Time, space and the body relations have entered a genesis.

The question at the centre of the work is to consider how we can strategize new possibilities for performance and somatic practices, shifting the perception of body as we encounter the screen in multiple spatial and temporal arrangements.

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1    'Thinking body' is used here in reference, firstly to Antonin Artaud's inscription of a new kind of body where 'the pain of life would burst out' (from To Have Done With the Judgement of God)- this notion was taken up by Hijikata in his inception of a Butoh body. Hijikata does not take the body as given; in his Butoh body there is an interrogation of the perception of materiality and a constructing of the body specific to its qualities.

**04**

FIG 6 TEST SITE 04 AUGUST 2009 DADLEY BUILDING, MOUNT ST, AUT
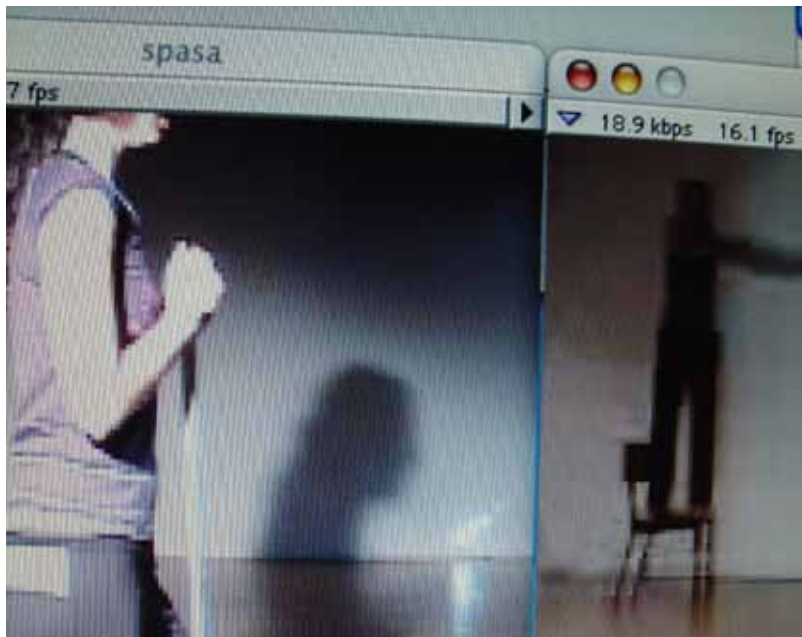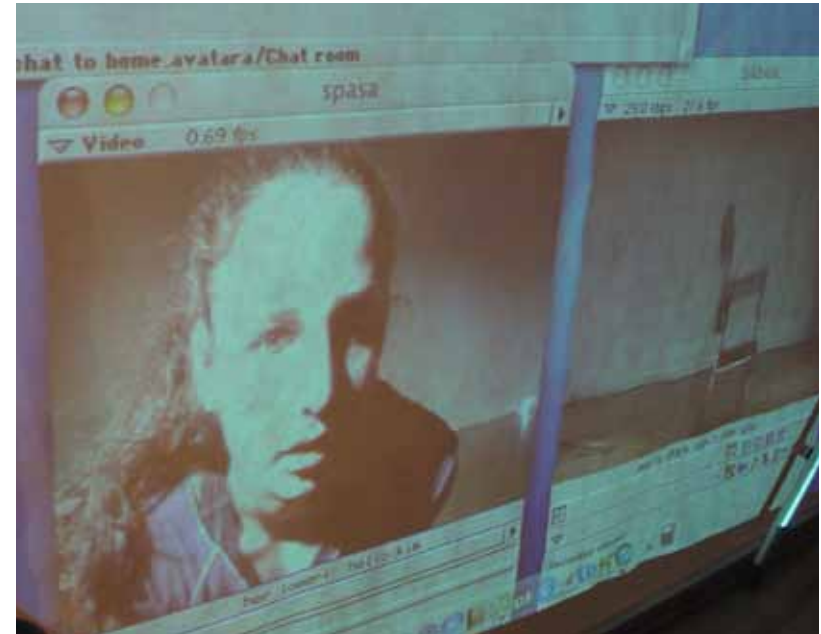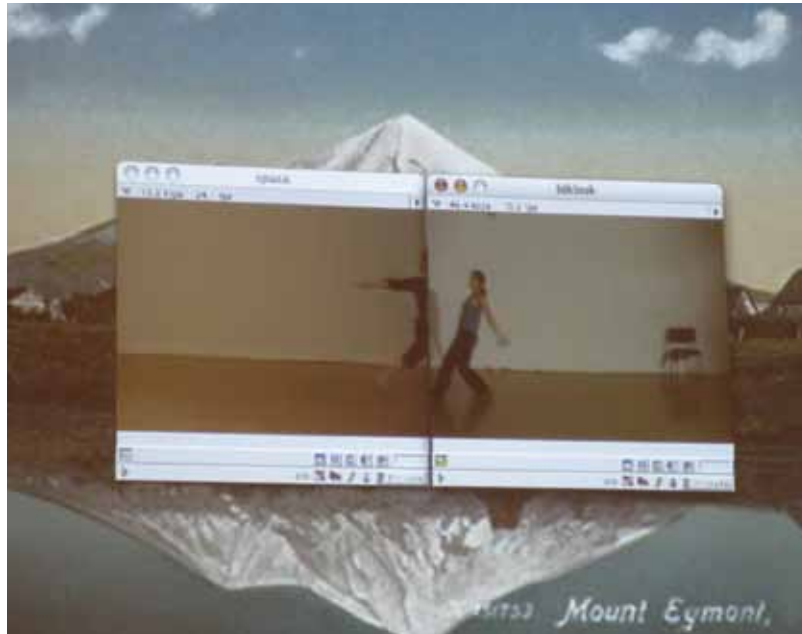
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT> FIG 7-10 > 'FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT' SCANZ RESIDENCY 2006
FIG 7 - LIVE SCREEN PERFORMANCE AT WITT, NEW PLYMOUTH SHOWING AUCKLAND AND NEW PLYMOUTH
FIG 8-10 REHEARSALS DANCE STUDIO, UNITEC, AUCKLAND

# METHODOLOGY

In this research practice, performance experiments have helped to establish a method for interrogating this indeterminate screen, body and spatial relationship. Adapting improvisation methods from Hijikata's 'thinking body', a Butoh body and specifically from 'Body Weather Training'[1] I have been applying performative and improvisational methods for embodying space, transcripting moving image and transmitting the findings using the body, the imagination, wireless cameras and the digital screen image. 'Lo-res' security camera footage describing sites are interpreted, intercepted, embodied and performed. Modes of seeing, hearing and feeling these 'body-scapes' are explored through 'mappings' of the space, which are made via the senses and converted through the body and the screen.

In the first explorations that attempted to interrogate the coinciding of the screen and the body, the experience was a bodily destabilization. The first work developed in 2006, inspired the trajectory for this research. 'Foreign Correspondence' was a live remote performance experiment developed at a two week residency SCANZ or (Solar Circuit Aotearoa New Zealand). This practice investigated the potential in the kinaesthetic between two trained and somatically conscious bodies using the networked screen image as interface.

Shifts in kinaesthetic judgment were experienced, and altered physical consciousness between the digital and the concrete world. Visual input dominated our exchange. Working through the screen image and the lens of the camera we were forced into a new virtual system for figuring our bodies 'together' in two separate 'spaces' united by the screen. Concurrently, the locations were rearranged as a configuration of pixels of varying shades, the 'cellular' arrangement of the screen image one 'whole' image (made up of many changing particles) framed beside the other, recalibrated into singular units and in a binary relationship. The performers defy the 365km distance between the locations through an exchange of moving body and moving image, using the borders to converge space.

To engage with kinaesthetic awareness in this arrangement of image and body, our proprioceptive sensing had to shift and extend beyond the flesh, through space, reaching outside of the physical, to relocate responsiveness within the image. The destabilization experienced in this work I perceive as close to Artaud's credit to the cinematic image, as a 'dissociative force' introduces a 'figure of nothingness', a 'hole in appearances'. (Deleuze 1985:166)

It was from this project that the idea of 'destabilization' of the body within the digital screen image became a focal point. The shifts in sensing abilities experienced in this work, seeded many questions around the concern for reconfiguring physical conditions in digitally driven experiences. Proximity in these early experiments was a major condition and the screen was used as both a mediating surface and a conduit for collaboration and communication. The idea of 'destabilization' has evolved as a re-sensing or reconfiguring of the body's kinaesthetic responses, modulated by interaction with the screen image. Recalibrating the balance of the sensory system through technological interference subordinates the body's mediated proprioception. Brian Massumi refers to this mediation in his discussion around perception and awareness. He suggests 'perception is an intensive movement back into and out of an abstract "space" of experiential previousness'. (Massumi 2002:197) Movement recognizes its full potential in this modulatory affect. Destabilization is rethought into deterritorialization as shifts in awareness and encounter occur through the modulating boundary condition of intersecting screen and body.

The questions that propel this research process are teased out in a series of live performance tests. The binding politics of the body as commodity and the screen image as fixed by symbols or language establishes the ground from which these questions arise. Referring to Deleuze's question 'What can the body do?' the potential for rethinking a bodily discourse for performance practices via the screen conditions has shaped these histories and their politics.

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1       'Body Weather' training was started in the 1970's by Min Tanaka and eventually established itself as a Laboratory based on a farm in Hakushu. Here, Tanaka developed training for dance and artists, motivated by an investigation into imagery and the imagination, about the potential of the inner body to transform the body.

# THE PRACTICE

Beginning with candid, private tests recorded in stairwells and in a studio behind closed doors, these experiments were eventually brought into public spaces. These tests sought a language of both the body and digital screen image that could be engineered through a practice which examines a discourse in the intersection of both.

In the most recent public test sites, Test Sites 02, 03 and Test Site 04, the questioning of the technology of 'seeing' is used to shift the performer's engagement with the space and the screen. Modes of negotiating space and testing proprioception are brought into play through a process of subtraction and substitution by forging physical limits and extensions.

The performing body, with headphones and a monitor strapped to the body, ventures into a transitional space, a non-theatrical place. The headphones transmit a passage of text, converted to audio using 'text to speech' software from the Mac Operating System. The text is devised using an improvisation method from 'Body Weather Training' to 'image' an abandoned studio space (in J block on the AUT campus) via my improvising body using the wireless camera attached. The recorded footage was then transcribed, abstracted through the framing of the lens, fragmenting the 'scape' through the tones, shapes, lines, angles and textures. The effect is a disassembly of conventional temporal and spatial boundaries and a re-imagining of the space. In the 'live' event the body is augmented through the screen image and the space enters the body through a kind of metaphrastic process from image to text. The limitations of software prevented the possibility to make 'still' or 'empty' audio 'space or pauses' in the monologue. To overcome this I composed 'pauses' into the text, which developed into 'somatic pauses' that performed as a reminder for being 'present' with the improvisation practice. At points in the text where there was stillness, the voice sounded words like - 'pause and breathe, soften' – 'soften the ribcage'. The sound-scape created both a 'virtual' mix of proprioception and body, space, and a compositing of the 'past' space and the 'live' space. Working with the method of transferring the audio into the imagination and putting the images inside the body, the embodied state comes into what could be described as a 'being present' or a what Hijikata terms 'thinking body'. In the most recent performance for the Porte-Cochere Exhibition opening I ventured forth into the foyer of the Dadley Building and working with my body and my imagination 'performed' a 23-minute score based on a distant space played back to me through the headphones.

The wireless camera, attached to the body, transmitted a live image, which was projected on the wall in the secondary space. The sound, intercepted the process of imagining and was invisible to the spectators, giving them a primordial engagement with the language of the body, outside of the ability to express through the symbolism and associations attached to semantics. Artaud expresses this notion in a similar way, preferring to use abstract sounds, gesture and imagery for 'primal theatre sensed and experienced directly by the mind, without language's distortions and pitfalls in speech and words.'(Artaud trans 1970: 83) The audience could assume that there is a sound-score being heard through the headphones worn by the performer, which is significant, implying another space, time or body.

The body dances the 'place' that it hears on the headphones, which is also played back on the 'body monitor' and immediately the places start to fold into the body and the body into space. This 'performing' screen/body performed the space not only in the corporeal, but in the 'live dancing screen performance' projected in a secondary space, also the starting and ending location of the performance.

Occupying, filling, drawing and recording the divergent spaces and proximity for the duration of the performance, the body eventually returned to the 'screen/body' space, heated and physically exerted through making and describing the recorded space using the sound score. The breath, the pulse, rocks the body in a rhythm that is echoed in the projection, the tiny camera amplifying the automatic movements in the body. Here the body and the screen connect at a most primitive level. There was an unavoidable 'end' or exit in this performance and awkwardness in the transition between the performing body and the everyday body in a space where coding had become confused, and expectations unknown. This test brought the notion of divergent places and time into a folding of 'live' space and 'recorded' space to make multiple spaces via the body.

In the context of a crowded 'opening' event in a narrow foyer, proximity to the live audience reminded me of the impact spatial coding has on our physical and social behaviour. Placing the primordial language of the moving/performing body, (often observed through distance by architectural structures such as theatres or external modes of representation) in this small and transitional space can be confrontingly intimate in its close proximity. In addition to the metaphrastic readings of the composite spaces and the body there was an ongoing determining of clarity, interference and static by the proximity of the body as it moved in and out of radio frequency, effecting both sound and image.

Like the relationship of the screen and body, there is a chasm between the performer and the spectator - perhaps a necessary gap in making the unattainable desirable or the desirable unattainable. Artaud speaks of 'bringing cinema together with the innermost reality of the brain' but this 'innermost reality is not the Whole, but on the contrary, a fissure, a crack.' (Deleuze 1985:167) Artaud's notion of this 'crack' or fissure is the fluxing of the not quite perceivable, the 'potential' in the unattainable of time, space and the body in the meeting with the screen.

This performance test proposed questions around duration, beginnings and endings, social codes and performance conventions in time and space. If we accept the established order for timing and spatial traditions and audience - performer relationships in 'theatre' and 'performance' there are expectations and behavioural 'maps' within these conventions. In this liminal space, (liminal spans multiple contexts) of foyer or corridor/ gallery/event location, opening event/performance, screen/body, performer/spectator, image/movement; codes for behaviour are dismantled and confused. The three previous test sites also presented the problem of a dismantled configuration of spatial codes. Theatrical conventions contain mechanisms for indicating beginnings and endings, codes for how to 'act', for how to respond. How quickly we presume these as a given - and at what point do a group of spectators decide what it is they might be observing and thus how to behave? It seemed as though some of the spectators defaulted to conventional theatrical codes, which created a tension amongst the audience in not quite knowing how to respond. Many offered a formal response and assumed the role of 'audience' behaving quietly and clapping at the end, which is seen in the footage made via the body camera. This appeared to me as a default back to binary conditioning, in assuming an ending and projecting a subject. The beautiful bi-product of this performance was the playback of the audience observing, and the foyer space (choreographed through the architectural features of the past space). This footage was transmitted in a large projection in a contained room adjacent to the 'live' space, in which the spectator inadvertently became performer. Here the camera subverts the role of the spectator to performer. This footage was recorded and presented later as a looping documentation of the performance event, folding the space in on itself once again.
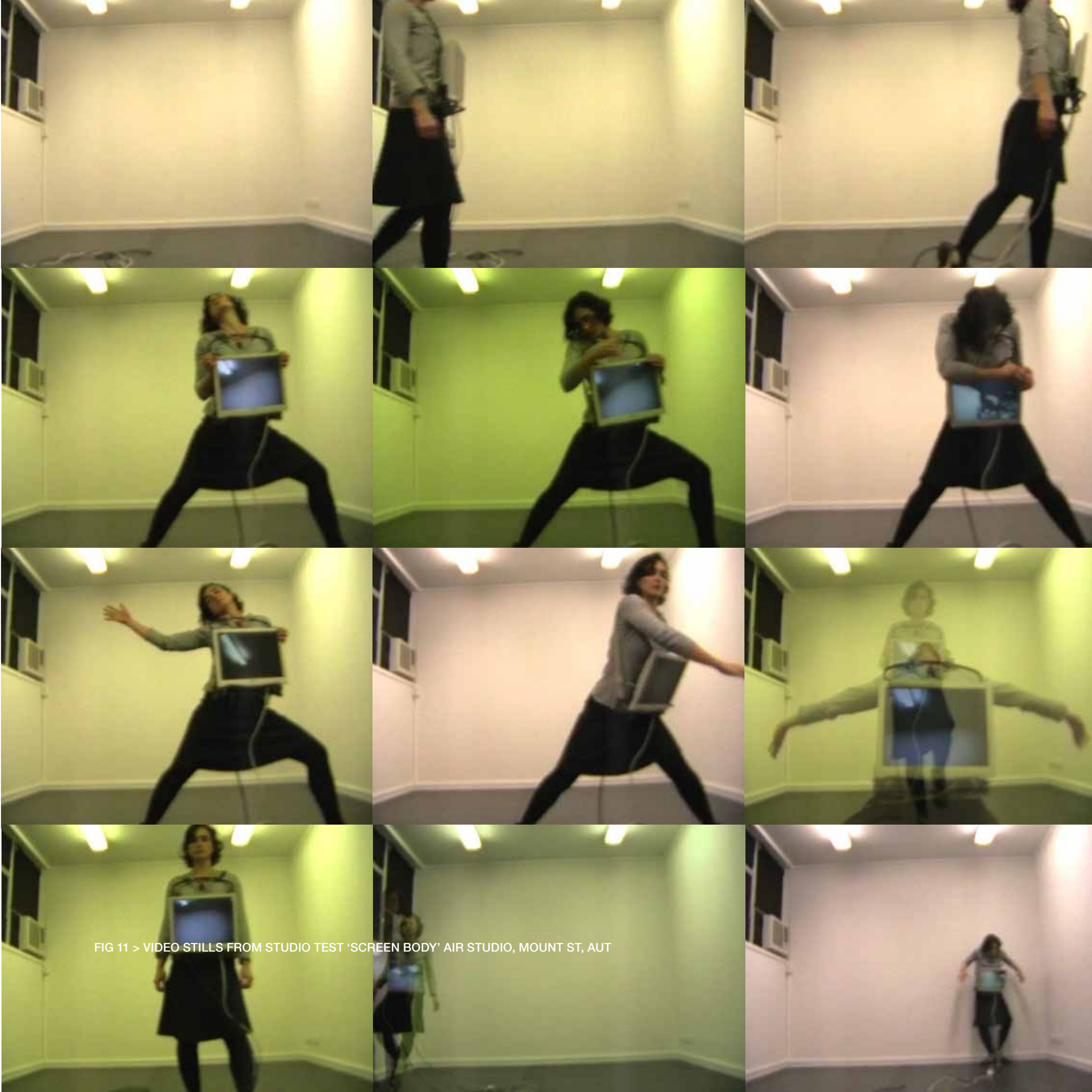
FIG 11 > VIDEO STILLS FROM STUDIO TEST 'SCREEN BODY' AIR STUDIO, MOUNT ST, AUT

02

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FIG12 > TEST SITE 02, LEVEL 1, DADLEY BUILDING, MOUNT ST, AUT

# THE  DIGITAL IMAGE GAP

The seemingly irresolvable 'gap' between the digital image and the body is contrasted to the significant spatial distance between the analogue image and the viewer by techno-theorist Lev Manovich. In the digital image and in new models of communication the space between viewer and image 'is tenuous and always shifting' (Jones 2002:19) and the spatial distance or this 'gap' is mutable. The analogue photographic image challenged the function of art in the 19th and 20th centuries, as Benjamin put it 'transcending the perspective of the century'.  (Benjamin 1999) Benjamin helped to illuminate the crisis that the photograph created in the art world.  The photographic image imitated the 'real' more accurately than previously conceivable. The idea of a perfect representation and the truth translated via the image emerged (Lovejoy 1997) and with it a liberating of the art form as it reached the masses through reproduction, thus breaking from the exclusivity of the bourgeoisie.

Digital simulation has created another shift in the paradigm of representation. Sound, image and text converge as they simultaneously dismantle into the digital. Images are portrayed by a coded arrangement of lights and darks to convey an image. Therefore the image becomes an information structure, and it can be argued that the digital image has no 'concrete' structure or presence.  Thus the digital age brings another crisis of perception.  The interrogation of what is real, authentic or true is prevalent as content and image seamlessly change, undermining the very notion of what is material.

The possibilities for interaction and intervention with the image lead to new territories in art and authorship, and present new possibilities for the artist and also the relationship with the spectator.

# PROCESS

The methods explored here, experiment with the potential for activating this amorphous 'gap' through various configurations of the camera, the screen and the body. In the Test Site for the Porte-cochere exhibition opening, new conditions were tested in the work based around the method of substitution and subtraction.

1. Substituting myself for the performers I had been working with in Test Sites 01 - 03 (in order to view the work from the outside), it was time to put my own body at the centre of the work. This created a new set of parameters to be figured by way of negotiating a 'live' event folding multiple spaces with a 'single' body'.

2. In Test Site 02 and 03 a blindfold was employed; testing the technology of 'seeing' and disempowering the domination of the scopic. The intention was to facilitate a greater focus on the proprioceptive senses as well as haptic, and sonic perception for the performer. While this was successful in achieving an embodied presence from the performer's perspective it shifted the relationship between the spectator and the performer, to object and voyeur. The imbalance in power between the two bodies dominated the work. In Test Site 04 the blindfold was removed, allowing the performer (myself) to 'see' the local space, whilst continuing to work with subverting the technology of 'seeing' using the audio recording.

3. Documentation of the work was made so that a 'trace' of the 'live' work remained in the performance space after the event. Another folding of time, space and place is manifested via the footage displayed on the monitor.

In Test Site 02 and 03 the spectator assumed voyeuristic status in observing the blind folded performer. The voyeuristic gaze dominated in a mimicking of 'networked screen' environments, and created a passive mode of viewing. For the performer, the focus gained sonic and proprioceptive sensation. This radically shifted the power of the gaze to the spectator. In removing the blindfold the balance shifted and the spectator and the performing body entered into a candid negotiation of status. Anticipating the intimacy of this setting I worked with a 'performance focus' on the space 'between' the audience and myself, allowing the audience to see me, without me 'seeing' the audience. In a sense I created an invisible screen in the space between the performer and spectator. The inconsistent spatial relationship created a fluctuation of proximity, motivated by either the performer or the observer, which created a shifting of experience from spectator to encounter.

In Test Site 01 and 03 the performer worked with the prosthetic screen attached to her body. In Test Site 04 I entered the space wearing the monitor as a prosthetic extension and delivered it into the foyer, leaving a remnant of my 'body' and its memory lying in the foyer space which was connected by its long 'umbilical cord' to the room where the 'live' screen dance was occurring. The monitor played back prerecorded footage made for the transcription, and of the remote space, embodying an extension of my memory.

This 'performing' screen/body performed the space not only in the corporeal, but in the 'live dancing screen performance' projected in the contained space. In these tests, space and the body fold, corporeal and representation become interchangeable and manifest through imagination and screen. By bringing the body into a state of flux and transition it becomes a vehicle for determining proximity as conditioned by the space. The fluctuation in proximity between the performer and the spectator as opposed to a static or fixed position creates a dynamic scenario for the spectator's experience of the work which interfaces outside and inside, or from spectator to encounter.

FIG 13 > STUDIO TESTS STILLS FROM VIDEO IMPROVISING WITH CAMERA FRAMING AND MIRRORING



FIG 14 > STUDIO TESTS STILLS FROM VIDEO IMPROVISING WITH CAMERA ATTACHED TO BODY



FIG 15 > STUDIO TESTS STILLS FROM VIDEO IMPROVISING CLOSE UPS ON BODY

In these actions, technology assumes the role of revealing or exposing hidden aspects of the work. There is a revealing and concealing that continues to occur in the work and within this a dismantling of the 'concrete'. This creates a fluxing of visibility and invisibility through space, distance, time, the body, framing and interference.

This is an on-going practice that questions choreographic and screen conditions as the body intersects with new technologies in a dynamic contemporary world. The process of 'testing' conducted in the studio and for live audiences in informal sites is crucial for this performance practice.

The development of a performative 'language' has become paramount in this inquisition of reframing or reconfiguring the body through the negotiation between the real and the signified. Artaud also identified the importance of a rigorous physical practice as crucial to the development[1] of shifting perceptions in performance. 'The overlapping of imagery and moves must culminate in a genuine physical language, no longer based on words but on signs formed through the combination of objects, silence, shouts and rhythms.' (Artaud trans 1970:83)

Drawing from the provenance of my own movement training, and through examining the avant-garde of dance and performance arts, concepts of Butoh dance and improvisation practice are used and are innately influential to this practice.

Based on Hijikata Butoh practice, methods for 'imaging' the body are adapted, using characteristics of the site, through representation via the digital screen image. Methods of training for Butoh dance are organized around the notion of a virtual body, so I borrow systems from this to dismantle and reconfigure the sensing system, interrogating the space, the body and modes of representation.

In this method the body is mediated through the screen image and the site shifts into the body through processing moving image into text. The text as a movement score is transfigured to audio and is imaged in the body by somatic expression. In this case the screen image mediates the internal imagery, or modulates the imagination. The focus has been on developing new possibilities for working with the body and the screen. The Test Sites were located in different places, while the method has evolved with the changing conditions of the interfaces and the sites. Each site has featured separated rooms or corridors, so that divergent spaces can be folded into one another. In Test Site 04 an 'alien' space (the footage of the derelict studio in J block converted to audio and seen on the monitor worn by the performer) was also folded in.

The 'performance' for the final end of year exhibition is located in the front of the St Paul St Gallery. This features three separate spaces, the 'hidden' corridor, the display window and one wall of the gallery. (See drawings pg 34).

In Test Site 04, duration, the beginning and the ending proved problematic. If we draw on Deleuze to help rethink movement, there is no longer a focus on passing from one form to another form; there is no longer an outcome or end goal. If there is no desirable outcome then there is no beginning or end point. If movement is perceived as being a folding of one equal moment into the next, and all points on the trajectory have equal status, then with it the space becomes indeterminate. Deleuze's movement-image folds into the methods I am exploring by presenting time as intersecting spaces, through connecting 'mobile points' as opposed to the movement of a body. In the exhibition at St Paul St duration is examined and temporality rethought.

In the gallery, vision is transposed through the body from the screen image and projected, flattened, separated and amplified by distance. The performing body makes a network by entering the interstitial through limitation, space, screen image, sensing, and language as (re)presented. This network is determined by proximity, where radio waves working in conjunction with the characteristics of the site and site-specific interference determine the behaviour of the network space. The recalibration of the body's proprioceptive system via these prosthetic extensions and a process of substitution explore the potential of reconfiguring the 'screen/body'.

1          'Body Weather Laboratories' began with Min Tanaka's training programme for Butoh and are now being practiced globally. I have practiced Body Weather Training in various forms through choreographer/dancer/performance artist Charles Koroneho, choreographer/dancer - Michael Parmenter, choreographer/dancer - Lyne Pringle, and choreographer/dancer - Frank ven de Ven)

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FIG 16 > TEST SITE 02 'TRANSCRIPTING THE IMAGE
ONTO 'POST IT NOTES' FROM LIVE CAMERA FEED
WHICH WAS PROJECTED IN A SECONDARY SPACE

**03**

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: FIG 17 & 18 > TEST SITE 03 AUGUST 2009 DADLEY BUILDING, MOUNT ST, AUT

**01**

**SECONDARY SPACE**

**BIRDS EYE VIEW**

LX

PROJECTION

CAM

PROJECTOR

**PRIMARY SPACE**

TRANSMITTING AUDIENCES BODIES INTO A
SECONDARY SPACE TO BE PROJECTED LIFE SIZE
AND TRANSLATED AND RETURNED BACK TO THE
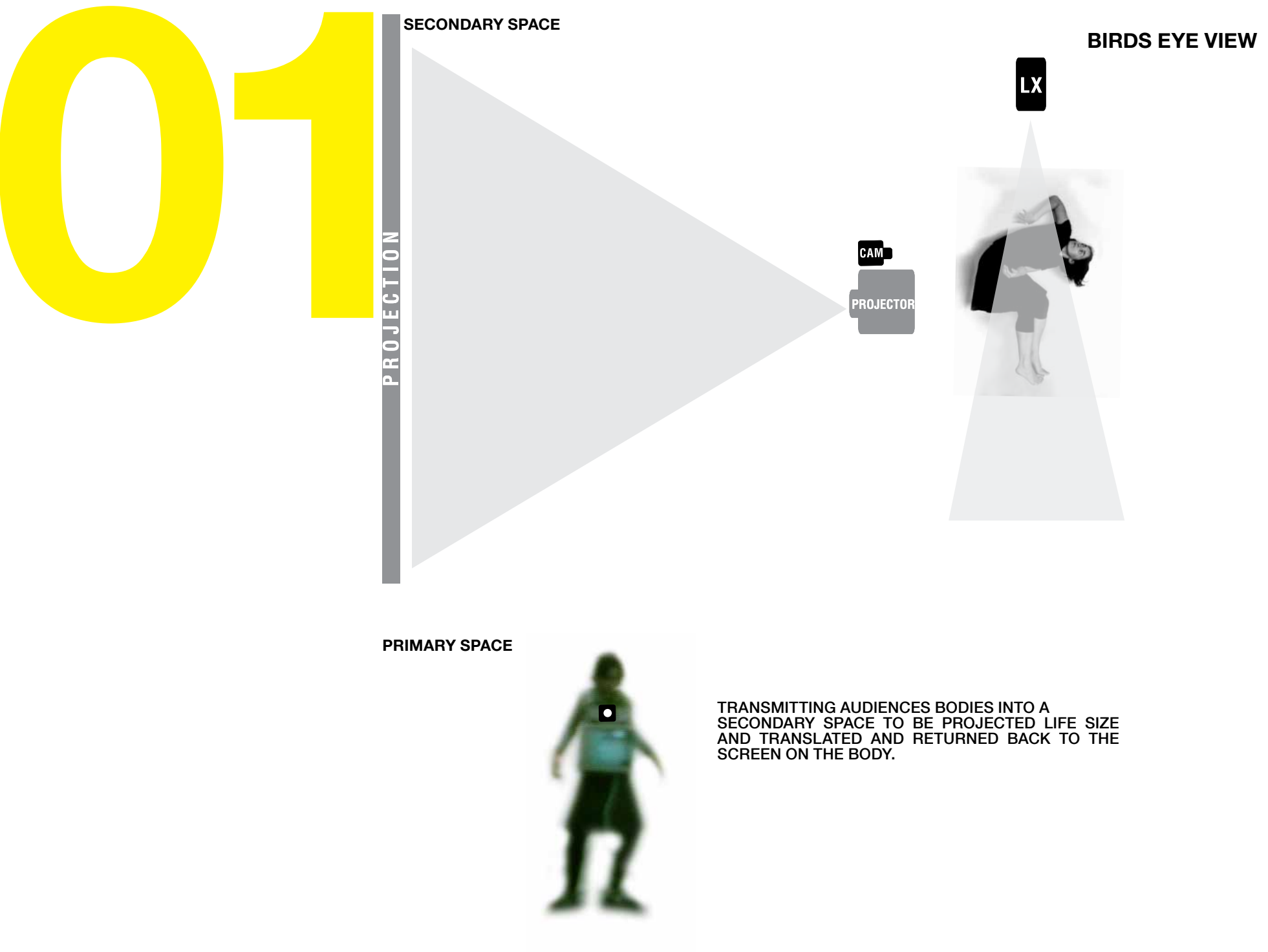SCREEN ON THE BODY.

FIG 19 > SKETCHES FOR TEST SITE 01 JUNE 2009 LEVEL 1, MOUNT ST, AUT

# TEST SITES 01 > 02

Earlier tests in this study focused on technological conditions. The results increased the gap between the body and the screen, forcing a binary condition. These 'tests' sought to overcome this through arrangements that brought the body, camera and screen together.

This process initiated significant shifts in my methodology through observations and questions around key ideas outlined below:

1) Performance in an historical context embodies 'discipline' and 'productivity' as a pervading notion through discipline specific training. Examining this doctrine more closely has become an essential facet of the work and foregrounds a more recent resolve in the potential of the unsolved and unresolved 'performance'. This liberates theatrical and performance codes, dismantling conventions around the temporal, duration, space, place and the body.[1]

In the discipline of theatre the shift from entertainment to efficacy occurred through a shift in focus from the play script (or narrative) to the actor's body; 'in dance, attention moved from formal choreography to movements of everyday life; and in both dance and experimental theatre, there was a shift away from theatrical to environmental spaces. In the visual arts, artists and critics turned away from the art object to the art making process itself.

2) Substitution or subtraction. Through testing and 'sketching' (sketches in this context are made live in space with either camera, screen or body, or all three) the process in these sketches has been to reconfigure spatial and temporal compositions through substitution and subtraction. This has become a key characteristic in the method. For example, in more recent test sites, in my search to reconfigure the senses via the body, I have subtracted sight by blindfolding the performer and substituted sight with a wireless camera located at the eye line. Developing this further, a sound-scape provides an internal visual terrain and the sight is reconfigured.

3) A return to my body politic, by interrogating and incorporating the ontological backbone of my own body tactics that already exist as a tacit somatic history and practice. My training is filled with contradictions - a dance training with an emphasis on form that starts with the subjective body, and the paradox - training in holistic disciplines (such as BMC, Skinner Releasing, Contact Improvisation and Butoh) that are informed and manifested through the experiential. Deleuze's movement-image assists in this shift from perceiving movement as a passing from form to form.

4) Inhabiting a borderless territory. Western thinking and conditioning dominates and while I profess to have an 'interdisciplinary' practice this is questionable as I continue to be seduced by the overwhelming desire to 'overcome difference' instead of embodying the space between or the boundary condition and existing in the liminal.

These initial performative tests introduced 'the spectator' to the construction and testing of this work. In these 'public' tests the spectator's body is brought into the centre of the work via a wireless camera, attached to the performer's body as well as a 'body-screen', also attached to the body.

The spectator negotiates the transition between passive observation and encounter as they enter into an exchange of transmission and representation via the camera, participating in real-time transformations of the body and making visible and invisible an image of self. A 'remote' performer is framed via a second camera and reflected as a prosthetic extension back to another performer on the 'body-screen.'

The audience only ever sees themselves as a mediated representation reflected through another body, creating a loop, a circle of feedback that deflects the voyeuristic and covert eye of the surveillance camera.

Divergent spaces are connected using the body, the screen and the camera, resulting in a kind of embodied space. The negotiation of space and matter is experienced as a collection of sensations fed back to the viewer via the entire sensory system, touch, sight, sound, smell, and kinaesthetic awareness. When this feedback is prioritized to the visual through technologies of seeing, the remaining sensory feedback fades into the background.

The feedback through the visual system is cognitive and we enter the realm of a kind of visual prosthesis, and an extension of the body through the eyes. Marshall McLuhan would assume a kind of 'blindness' or limitation to our vision through this extension. In this interstitial space of seeing ourselves as object, and feeling ourselves as subject simultaneously, the sensing system extends outside of the body, rendering the insufficiency of the represented.

In the natural desire to bridge this 'gap', the viewer steps beyond the boundary where there is potential for intuitive inter-action with the artwork. The viewer's experience of the body becomes dominated by the somatic, encouraging a slippage beyond cognitive response and allowing the provocation of a primitive mimetic game between the screen body and the live body.

1        The traditions of cultural performance have shifted from the historic theatricality of the vaudeville stage and melodramatic narratives to a hybridization of disciplinary fields, from anthropological studies of cultural ritual and tradition, sociology and symbolic interaction. 'Performance Studies' has become a paradigm, as 'an embodied enactment of cultural forces'. (McKenzie 2001:9)

# BURSTING BODIES

Surfacing out of this investigation is a key text 'Bursting Bodies of Thought', by ex patriot performance artist Michael Hornblow who examines Deleuze and Guattari's concepts around the body without organs (BwO) and the virtual and actual body as a mechanism for examining Hijikata's practice of Butoh dance. This text arrived at a turning point in the work and offered crucial possibilities to the practice. Hijikata's intensive explorations of the Butoh body perform a sense of the 'virtual body' through kinaesthetic arrangements of 'matter and movement' intercepted before the moment that external physical articulation takes place. Hijikata's intensive explorations of the Butoh body 'creates a sense of virtual presence through an experiential interplay of matter and movement, intercepted prior to the external physical expression.' (Hornblow 2006:27) The body undergoes a process of transformation, 'through the use of internal imagery, proprioception (internal perception of muscular position, contraction and release), expressive restraint, and the imaginative yet no less precise tracing of somatic phenomena at the molecular level of sensation, circulation and pressure.' (Hornblow 2006:27) Hijikata's improvisation methods are adapted, incorporating politics of representation via the digital screen image. The body is augmented through the screen image , internalized and modulated through proprioceptive responses into the somatic expression of a 'virtual body'.

Hijikata's process for the dancing body is remarkably synergetic with the conditions of digital media. The meeting of Hijikata's virtual body and the virtual body of the screen are a crucial aspect of this process.

Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty' and Hijikata's 'Butoh Dance' both brought the concept of a 'virtual body' into a theatrical practice and physical form. Adopting these ideas of the 'virtual body' and folding this into a practice employing the body and the screen offers a tactic for rethinking the potential of a 'screen/body'.

Guattari and Deleuze help to decipher these ideas and Hijikata's work is influential in finding a practice for working with the body in these 'virtual' environments. This becomes the process of the 'thinking body' or the 'virtual body', or the BwO as it coincides with the screen image .

Artaud asks for a reworking of the body 'who can then be taught to dance inside out…' for a 'feeling, sensing, thinking body'. (Artaud trans 1970) The Theatre of Cruelty was a programme devised by Artaud in the 1930's for reconfiguring theatre. He protested that theatre and cinema had become a means for maintaining a state of 'intellectual stupor'.  In his use of the word 'cruel' he was referring to rigour, and a  'hunger for life', of bringing the 'real' , with all its 'lacerations'  to the theatre.  Artaud's concern to 'transgress the ordinary limits of art and words' (Artaud trans 1970: 71) in order to 'wake(s) us up heart and nerves'. (Artaud trans 1970:64) Artaud was striving for a new look at life.

## A FOLDING OF SPACE AND BODY

In Butoh, the body and the space are of equal significance, which resonates with the Deleuzian notion of the body's relationship with matter and our minds. Kinetically, Deleuze suggests that the individual body is defined by 'the relations of motion and rest, of slowness and speed between particles'. Deleuze's question 'What can the body do?' brings thought to the body, not unlike Hijikata's notion of the 'thinking body'.  Thereby, the body is not defined by form, rather it is the potential of motion and rest and the effects of the body's motion and rest in relation to other 'bodies' (this body could be screen). In this case, a body is considered to be an 'infinite arrangement of particles', (Deleuze 1992) which could be anything; an animal, an idea a collection of things or people.

The 'body' thought of as a collection of particles, liberates the potential for (re)presentation. With this proposition in mind, consider the (re)presentation of the body via video or digital technology to the screen where the body 'becomes' an arrangement of another set of particles. Here Deleuze's epistemology helps us reconsider the body's representation on the screen as being on the same 'plane of immanence' as the corporeal body.

In the 'Theatre of Cruelty' it was Artaud's vision to subvert the conditions of theatrical space, to put the audience in the centre of the work, on swivel chairs, the performers roaming, mobilizing both the spectator and the performer, opening new potentialities in the relationship between the two. In presenting new codes for the theatre Artaud was creating ways to break convention, to change the role of the audience, and move away from the mind (and body) numbing narratives of theatre for entertainment sake.  He wanted to awaken people to the concerns of life, of the issues and current affairs of the now. Artaud's 'system' for a rethinking of theatre was never brought to fruition.

In this work I am responding to the conditions of the screen, to my current concern of the inertia and sensory numbing capabilities of the screen as an interface and profound influence on our everyday bodies. Just as Artaud states in the 'Theatre and it's Double', 'Cinema in its turn, murders us with reflected, filtered and protected images that no longer connect with our sensibility, and for ten years has maintained us and all our faculties in an intellectual stupor'. (Artaud trans 1970:64)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP> FIG 20 - 23 > TEST SITE 03  AUGUST 2009 DADLEY BUILDING, MOUNT ST, AUT

# THE BODY

In this work the body is seen as in a terminable discourse with technology. In order to refine the argument around the deterritorialization of the body in the screen image we must examine the notion of body. Through this research the body is reconsidered through practice in the terms of a BwO, or a 'Virtual body' as Artaud first proposes, a 'thinking body' by Hijikata and then later Deleuze and Guattari pick up this idea in response to Capitalism.

An historical understanding of the 'dancing body' and the discipline of dance as it moved through the last century help to contextualise the 'body' as a 'mode of expression'. The dancing and performing body is centered on an ontology that is founded in movement, aligned with displays of 'virtuoso motility.' In decentralizing this positioning the dancing body shifts potential and expectation.

Elizabeth Grosz cites the body as incomplete, ' indeterminate, and amorphous'. (Grosz 1992:243) The potentialities of this body lie in the 'activation of social, cultural and psychical relations' that shape and coincide in space determining a shifting subjectivity. Grosz problematizes the binary conditions of the body. In her paper 'Bodies-Cities' she attempts to dismantle the opposition of the inside and outside (similar to Hijikata) by examining the inside from the point of view of the outside and the outside as the inside. In referring to the body and the city she suggests, (like Deleuze and Massumi ), a state of hyperreality, of simulated modes of 'introjections and projections' (Grosz 1992:242) that become a complex feedback loop of transformations and potential.

'Is it really so sad and dangerous to be fed up with seeing with your eyes, breathing with your lungs, swallowing with your mouth, talking with your tongue, thinking with your brain, having an anus, a larynx, head and legs?  Why not walk on your head, sing with your sinuses, see through your skin, breathe with your belly;'
(Deleuze and Guattari 1984)

# THE VIRTUAL BODY

Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty' and Hijikata's 'Butoh Dance' both brought the concept of a 'virtual body' (which I perceive as different to the virtual reality body) into a theatrical practice and physical form before the advent of the 'virtual' body as we know it in new media. Japanese writer Kurihara Nanako suggests the influence of Artaud's 'virtual body' on Hijikata's work .

The 'virtual body' is examined in this work as a body 'imagined' that exists within us as much as it is also a modern day extension of the digital and the screen. Artaud introduces the virtual body in his work 'The Theatre of Cruelty' where the imagined body has the potential to be turned inside out in a process of imagining, or imaging the 'virtual' body through the thinking body. (Artaud trans. 1970) Transforming the virtual body into a 'physical' manifestation began with Artaud's desire for bringing a 'live' volatile 'body' to theatre.[1]

Hijikata developed the potential of imaging, or turning the body inside out in his dance work. He also brought form to Artaud's notion of a 'virtual body' or the BwO. Here Artaud's vivid imaging skills could be seen as a forecast for virtual encounters as we recognize them in today's digital world.

Deleuze and Guattari offer a further reading of the 'virtual' as "real and abstract": as an intense, torsional coalescence of potential individuations.' (Massumi 2002:190) Massumi also determines a notion of the 'real and abstract' as he introduces the concept of an orientational mapping of movement and experience as a hypersurface .

Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of the body combined with Hijikata's methods for experimentation for the BwO or the 'virtual body' offer useful models for approaching both a conceptual and physical practice that intersect the body and the screen. Adopting the ideas of the 'virtual body' and folding this into a practice of the body with the screen offers a tactic for rethinking the 'screen/body'.

Hornblow goes on to outline the conjunctions between actor, director and writer Artaud's practice and that of Tatsumi, whilst using Deleuze and Guattari's ontological view of a body without organs. Hijikata rejected the modernist movement that grew out of a post war Japan, of consumerism and a focus on materiality.(Hornblow 2006)

This tendency towards production still proliferates in a world where technological devices adorn our bodies to augment a more 'productive' living. They have become extensions of our physical form, defying the limitations of our corporeality. The paradox is that in the urgency for extreme motility through prosthetic extensions, the body experiences hyperreality and a numbing of sensation. The seductive nature of capitalism targets the efficacy of new technologies over the potentiality of the carnal.

In 1977 Hijikata stated, 'Now is the very crucial moment when the world has become filled with all kinds of materials. Even when there are obstacles and resistant things in the past, we did not necessarily grasp what was lacking and within you vividly' (Nanako 1988: 25) He recognized the need to present the 'real' in a time when our sense of 'real' is still transforming at an accelerated pace through technologies expansion.

Hornblow describes Artaud's idea that the theatre is a place where the 'virtual' and the 'real' exist simultaneously, an interstitial space where incorporeal relations morph with the 'thinking body', and as Hijikata describes, 'can be born, can appear, living and dying at the same moment'.

The body could be described as an ephemeral skin that is occupied by space, the body itself is not seen as a mass[2] that fills the space, but as a mass of single particles relating with one another. The digital screen can also be defined in this way, as an arrangement of patterns and randomness, which Katherine Hayles suggests in her text 'Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers'. The body is fragmented and transformed and like a 'virtual skin' (Hornblow 2006:32) this outer membrane (the conditioned social body) is rejected for the inside, or the layer beneath the surface and in accessing this hidden layer the body is in a sense turned inside out.

Hayles' proposition of an emphasis towards pattern/randomness in digital environments eventuates in a 'devaluing of materiality and embodiment', (embodiment as the corporeal). (Hayles 1996) What of the body or the embodied in the virtual (body)? In questioning presence and embodiment, Hayles reconsiders presence and absence (the basis of Renaissance to modern configurations of meaning and existence) in the digital world, which she redefines as positions of presence and absence in a conscious patterning of particles.[3]

Hijikata's process of embodying the space and the mind (space here is considered as part of the body), the imagery (or language) that flickers between emergence of a body-image and fading or dissolving back into the hollow empty body, oscillating between dying and living can be viewed as an embodied equivalent to Hayles digital patterning and randomizing. Through this the 'virtual body' can exist on the same plane of 'immanence' as both corporeal and a digital experience.

Extending beyond our human abilities through the use of technical instruments, as Manovich cites earlier, can make what is invisible visible. Yet Hijikata in the 1950s devised a system of making which brings the invisible into something that is visible, with the technology of the corporeal. His work almost precedes the expansion of space and the body through the use of technology. In collapsing the boundaries between the body and technology so that they appear on the same plane, more possibilities unfold subcutaneously.

---

2        'Mass' as the body and space as viewed via Cartesian principles, of a measurable, determinate and objective space.

3        Hayles entertains the possibility that 'pattern and presence could be mutually enhancing and supportive, rather than opposing one another and suggests that 'information, like humanity, cannot exist apart from the embodiment that brings it into being as a material entity in the world; and embodiment is always instantiated, local, and specific.' (Hayles 1996)

1        Artaud's idea of cruelty is not one for blood thirst, rather an uncovering of that which is real, the 'absurdities' of life, which he perceives as not only the dark, but the banal and the ordinary as opposed to a theatre for entertaining.)

# THE BODY WITHOUT ORGANS

While the virtual body could be perceived as 'unattainable' by Artaud, Deleuze and Guatarri recognize the potential in this re-organ-ization, dismantling and reconfiguring of the organs to defy the idea of 'organism' or a measurable, habitual and organized whole. The unattainable lies more in the impossibility of a fixed state which as a singular moment is always in a transitional slippage from past to future perpetually changing in a relational continuum. The BwO is an emptying, but not an emptiness of organs, rather a potential disorganizing of the senses so that we no longer assume how we perceive the world. In emptying the body (here I am referring also to Hijikata's notion of the hollow body, which requires an emptying - or in my practice a disorganizing of the senses) there is potential to become anything, to allow imagining reincarnate through a shift of the senses and images to become part of the flesh. But as soon as the particles of the body make up that thought in a perpetual state of becoming the thought is disassembled. The process disintegrates polarities such as past /future, or real /virtual, present /absent, internal /external and organism and body in favour of modes of utterances beyond the confines of symbols and language.

The reconfiguration of the body implies a boundary condition. In dissolving the limits of the body and the screen, we encounter deterritorialization , intersections and the collisions that occur as the two 'dance' in space and time. The exploration of potentially new encounters moves into the unknown, creating an unstable position that is 'live' and exists in a temperamental state.

## THE IMAGINATION

Brian Massumi's notion of the biogram helps make sense of the 'thinking body' that Artaud and Hijikata give form to. Massumi describes the biogram in terms of a proprioceptive mapping or cartography of movement that is a 'remembering' of a lived or re-lived experience. He suggests that these experiences exist in the space between the object and the eyes, the unperceivable space; 'liminal nonplace that has been characterized as peri-personal'.(Massumi 2002:187)

Dubbed as Massumi quotes in 'Parables for the Virtual' "seeing time in space" the biogram is experienced in the border territory between what we consider internal and personal space and external or public space. (Massumi 2002:187)

The body's space-time experience is explained as differential participation, where a letting go of a linear notion of time, and the dualistic paradigm of concrete and abstract and of subject and object in order to make way for the myriad of potentialities. Massumi draws connections in the biogram to Deleuze's ideas of the 'real and abstract' - virtual; as an intense, torsional coalescence of potential individuations.' (Massumi 2002:190) Massumi uses this process to unfold the process of imagination which we could liken to Hijikata's imaging in Butoh; these modes help to configure the 'minded body's' reality – evoked through many possibilities, living in transitions, existing inside relations and in between the modulations of concrete abstractness.' (Massumi 2002:198)

FIG 24 > 'ÆFFECT' MASTERS OF ART AND DESIGN EXHIBITION, ST PAUL ST GALLERY, ST PAUL ST, AUT 21 – 25 NOVEMBER 09

# THE HIDDEN BODY

Through the desire to reveal the hidden, to express the impossibility of our inner thoughts, to somehow bring these hidden realities and fantasies into the 'concrete' world there becomes a desire for the absurd.

Both Artaud and Hijikata's agenda for the inverting of the inner and outer worlds can be linked to a desire to reveal the hidden, or the shadow. In Brian Massumi's paper 'Strange Intruder: Towards a politics of Pure Feeling' he discerns 'between thought and bodily feeling as state of indeterminacy'.[1] The moment of consciousness that precedes recognition, in a field prior to determining object or subject. He mentions the term 'Umbrial Union' that he translates as latin for shade. This area of shade I perceive as the impossible moment of knowing without thought that occurs in the moment before knowing, a shadowing like Hijikata's of what is unknowable, a feeling that slips between the bodily and the thought.

*'They you will teach him again to dance wrong side out*
*as in the frenzy of dance halls*
*and this wrong side out will be his real place.'*
(excerpt from 'To Have Done with the Judgement of God.' Artaud, 1947)

Butoh and Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty' came together through the agenda of revealing a hidden violence or cruelty and through this, in the impact of creative action, to critique modern society and reflect the inner darkness (Hijikata) and the inner shadow (Artaud). Both Hijikata and Artaud looked for the darkness in order to reach beyond the illusory representation of modern society in order to expose the esoteric and uncover the 'hidden forces' from which, in Artaud's vision, theatre receives its power.

In this theatre the actual and the virtual transform and relate over thresholds where the real and the not quite there, or the disappearing are difficult to distinguish.


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TOP TO BOTTOM > FIG 25 - 28

FIG 25 > 'GLOW' CHUNKY MOVE
2006
BY GIDEON OBARZANEK
CHUNKY MOVE
WWW.CHUNKYMOVE.COM
RETRIEVED OCTOBER 2009

FIG 26 > 'GLOW' CHUNKY MOVE
2006
BY GIDEON OBARZANEK
CHUNKY MOVE
WWW.ABC.NET.AU/
RETRIEVED OCTOBER 2009

FIG 27 & 28 > 'TELEMATIC DREAMING'
1992
PAUL SERMON
BY PAUL SERMON
MEDIA ART NET
WWW.MEDIENKUNSTNETZ.DE
RETRIEVED MAY 2008

1        This paper was presented at the presented at "Time, Transcendence and Performance' Conference, 1-3 October in Melbourne

# (DE)FRAMING THE CHOREOGRAPHIC BODY

The perspective from which this work investigates notions of the body focuses on the intersecting conditions of choreography, performance arts pedagogies and new technologies.

Constituting the ontology of dance in pure movement facilitates a critical and theoretical framework for the dancer's body in this research.

Lepecki and Jones support the notion that dance's ontology continues to be located around this constant state of agitation or production, and thus stands with one foot in a modernist regime. In dance made for the conventional theatrical framework there exists a representation of the body for the consumer, for the consummation of displays of 'flexibility, mobility, youth, athleticism, strength and economic power' ((Siegmund, Gerald 2003:84) (Lepecki 2006:58)) (German Dance theorist) We could assume that in any dance motivated by capital gain there remains a tendency towards a 'modernist' position of a 'being-toward-movement'.

Throughout the last century dance artists and performance artists have challenged this 'modern' ontology of a relentless moving from form to form. Forging new ground and challenging theatrical and social conventions artists propose social and political polemics that question the framing of the body in contemporary society. 'Enactments' have been prioritized over modes of translation and arrangements of dramatic movement dominated by form have been replaced by bringing the everyday into the theatre in cries for a more democratic reach for the arts. In addition, the acceleration of technological developments in the past fifty years has forced new conditions on the body and society, pushing for a revaluation of our perception of corporeality, time, space and distance.

In contemporary New Zealand, dance appears to be grounded in action based displays to impress, or at least a 'being-toward-movement', with the exception of a few dance and performance artists that challenge these conventions; for example, Cat Ruka, Kristian Larsen, Anna Bates and Alexa Wilson. Kristian Larsen's recent MA presentation, is a 45 minute dancing and talking solo performance.[1] A reflection he makes that remains with me is the repeated comment from audience members 'I really liked that part where you were just still for a while'. Is the affect of the powerlessness of thought that Deleuze discusses also a reaction to perpetual motility? Is this a similar experience as in cinema, such as Artaud's notion of a 'theft of thoughts'(Deleuze 1985:166), that leads to a 'powerlessness to think at the heart of thought'. As I struggle with these complexities a few possibilities arise. Is the spectator looking for relief, a resting moment in motion? Relief from the 'theft of thoughts?', or is it the suspension of the pure potential of the still moment? Does stillness soften the 'amorphous gap', the unattainable, allowing the specator to imagine for a moment that anything is possible? This is perhaps apparent in Alexa Wilson's comments on a performance witnessed in Berlin.[2] The work, steeped in stillness and intimacy confronts this idea of the spectacular in dance.[3] Wilson provokes, 'if performance/choreography is putting itself on a pedestal of spectacular virtuosity or even deconstruction in the privileged western world at this time… to only the privileged (then) maybe its day is over- and it certainly pales completely in comparison, in my humble opinion, with an emerging underbelly of work worldwide- whether performance art or improv' based - which aims to meet and transform communities…'. (Wilson, retrieved 2009)

The cynic in me suggests that in dance the possibilities for engaging with the screen are limited by the notion of the body and steadfast traditions in dance making processes, which stifles potential to shift perception.

There are many artists worldwide who work at bringing a discourse to the screen and the body. Paul Sermon's 'Telematic Dreaming' (1992) (see fig 27 and 28) confronted audiences with physical agency and tele-presence simultaneously, prior to the use of internet as a communication mechanism. Recently, Gideon Obarzanek of Chunky Moves brought the interactive work 'Glow' (see fig 25 and 26) to the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts in 2008. Obarzanek comments that the 'joint venture forged in 'Glow' between a moving body and tracking light and (screen based) images ultimately reveals itself as flawed and in the end irreconcilable.' (Obarzanek retrieved 2009)

In this research the body is defined by employing methods and philosophies that dismantle contemporary choreographic practices. This thinking, writing, reading, seeing body is constructed through influences of contemporary choreographic conditions, Butoh practice, and remote interfaces that intersect the body and the screen. Theoretical discourse support arguments that examine the interstitial moments when the body, the screen and the space coincide. Through the coinciding of body and technology new regimes are forced into questioning beyond contemporary dance frameworks.

2    Yelling Mouth Blog is a Practitioner-based dance review/response blog site dedicated to providing text that comes from inside the culture making.

3    'Displacement' is a performance by Alice Masprone at the Okidoki Gallery in Neukolln on October the 3rd 2009. She lies naked in the gallery on a chart on the floor depicting what I can deduce is Leonardo da Vinci's 'Vetruvian Man'. Specators gather around her, waiting, expectant. Some reach out to touch her and she joins the spectators hands over her own body together.

1 Kristian Larsens's MA Performance 'A Performance Improvisation' was presented on the 12th September at the Kenneth Myers Centre after almost 2 years of research.

ght blurry white blob white light in the right frame middleSmudgy diagonal squares looking for focus, looking for focus, looking for focus, blurry flickering pulsing light blob, blurry on the edges, blurry on the edges,   Static crackling front of eyes, Static crackling in front of eyes, Static crackling in front of eyes,Corner and a 15 degree line, leading a black squareCorner and a 15 degree line, leading to a black squareThe bright circle of light, pulses and glow d blurs around the edges andeverything is smudged or out of focus and then suddenly everything is in focus and ecome crisp with sharp lines and edges. Black corner, a void of black nothingness in the corner of the frame, and ctangles in soft tones in the right hand corner and there are grey speckles on the floor, like moss but grey and har th feathery edges.

blank moment, A blank moment, A blank moment, A blank moment, A blank moment pause remember to breath member to breathe remember to breathe remember to, breath  moving fast, there is a black crickety line horizonta front of me and a cast a curve upwards to see white then diagonal diamond panels in white, there is a black cricket e horizontal in front of me and a cast a curve upwards to see white then diagonal diamond panels in white, pas blue perpendicular line and a blobby glowing light, not crisp, smudged and undefined, and a black rectangle on 5 degree angle on the floor – sharp and crisp. and a black rectangle on a 45 degree angle on the floor – sharp an risp.Grey space. Grey space, Grey space. Grey space with a white dot. Pause, breathe and think of centring you yphoid process,down and into the middle of your body. Bright. Bright.Grey space. Grey space, Grey space. Gre pace, Grey space. Grey space, with a white dot.A corner.  A grey square with  black,  face, and my feet, two fee en onefoot.  A red square with diagonal stripes, out of focus, unclear.  Pause, pausebreathe, and breathe slowly. llar vertical, a pillar vertical, a pillar vertical,  black squares in white lines and three diagonal white blobs. Right angles d a vertical line and a grey speckled texture,  Right angles and a vertical line and a grey speckled texture, Righ ngles and a vertical line and a grey speckled texture, Right angles and a vertical line,  and a grey speckled textur ainting and static, and a white light and angle.  Then a smudge shooting off towards the right hand corner of th ame. Then a smudge shooting off towards the right hand corner of the frame.

04

**FIG 30 > PORTE COCHERE EXHIBITION - FOOTAGE OF 'LIVE' CAMERA RECORDING - AUGUST 2009 DADLEY BUILDING, MOUNT ST, AUT**

FIG 31 - 34 (ABOVE) FROM LEFT TO RIGHT > SKETCHES FOR ST PAUL STREET GALLERY
FIG 31 > INSIDE THE GALLERY TWO PROJECTIONS LEFT - 'LIVE' BODY CAMERA RIGHT - REMOTE SPACE
FIG 32 & 33 > INSIDE THE SECRET CORRIDOR
FIG 34 > DISPLAY WINDOW - SOUND PERFORMANCE AREA

FIG 35 &36 (BELOW) FROM LEFT TO RIGHT > ST PAUL STREET GALLERY
FIG 35 SPECTATOR AT 'GLITCH' - PERFORMANCE AND MEDIA ARTS EVENT  28 NOVEMBER 09, ST PAUL ST GALLERY, AUT
FIG 36 PERFORMING AS PART OF  'GLITCH' - PERFORMANCE AND MEDIA ARTS EVENT  28 NOVEMBER 09, ST PAUL ST GALLERY, AUT
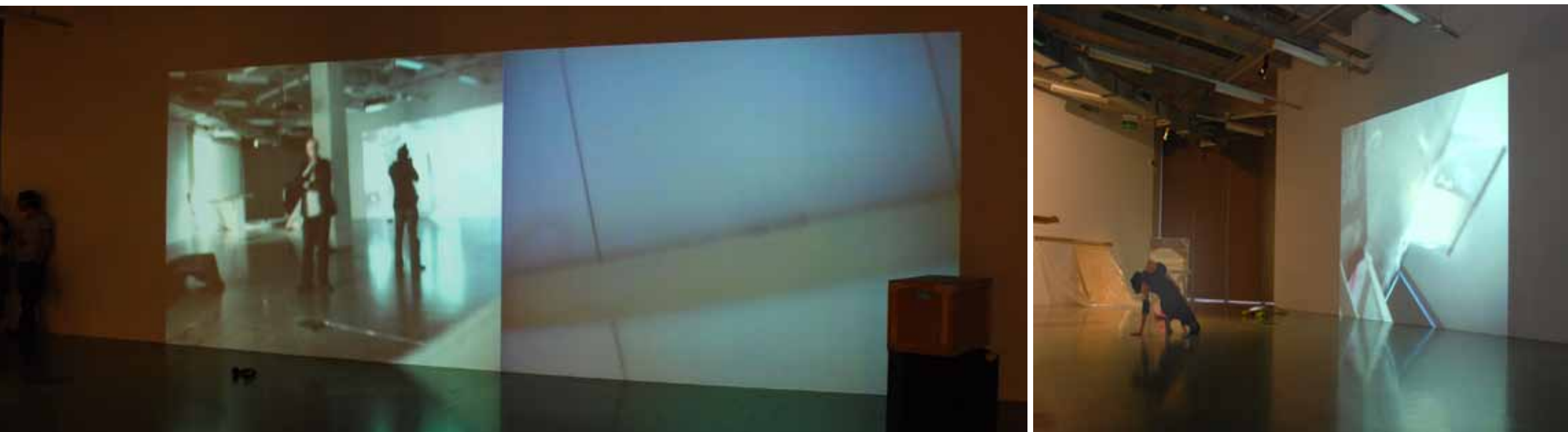
# THE EXHIBITION/PERFORMANCE

Constructing the work in a gallery context continues to test conventional 'performance' paradigms. The primary concerns of the work are reorganized in response to the configuration of the site and the social and spatial codes associated with the gallery space. The 'performing' or 'object' body is both seen and not seen by the spectator, determined by the spatial relationship between both participants - performer and spectator. The body could be read at most times as a live re-presentation, manifested only by its movement and the lens of the 'body-cam'. Projected on the wall in the gallery space live footage from the 'body-cam' is positioned adjacent to the recorded 'body-cam dances' which are documentation or 'mappings' of the body's movement pathways through previous sites - both images determine time and space through interruptive glitches in radio frequency which indicate the proximity of the wireless camera to the receiver. Real time and place become ambiguous. The space in front of the projections and the surface of the walls dominates through the sheer size of the projected image and also the disorienting sensation of the moving body's viewpoint, as opposed to its objectification. The wall surface forms a cut, or a fissure between the gallery space and the secondary space; the corridor located behind the projections embodies an inner space, a cavity that holds the hidden, seemingly private. This can be accessed both through the doorway and the live projection. The corridor space directly behind the projection would normally be concealed (the 'guts' or store room of the gallery) the space becomes ambiguous, is it a private or public space? This corridor space also serves as an entrance to the display window of the gallery, a 'non-place' space that would normally be used for transitions, for locating objects temporarily or for moving somewhere else. Temporary structures such as stored false walls and scaffolding remain in this space becoming part of the work – contextualizing and texturing the space. For the spectator, the projections could be perceived as a discrete video work, their 'live-ness' dependent on both performer and the spectator's level of engagement at the time of interaction. The dual projections form a backdrop and a light source for the live body as it ventures into the gallery space, simultaneously revealing the body as the source of the footage. The perpetually changing relationship between body, screen and spectator presents infinite configurations. The question, 'what is live' is conceived as a problem through shifting indeterminate relationships between time, place and the body. Spatial codes slip and slide and boundaries leak. Duration is deliberately ambivalent, the video and sound loop running for an hour and twenty minutes with no clear beginning or end, beginnings and endings fold over and into one another. For the spectator the beginning and end can only be determined by their activity.

The body continuously performs the one hour twenty minute sound score whether there are spectators in the space or not. This raises the question - who is the body performing for and what becomes of the body if there is no spectator? The indeterminate nature of 'performance' or 'performer' within this spatial arrangement challenges our perception of what it is to perform. The performer herself becomes unsure of what determines 'performer' and as discussed earlier in this text, asks what is it to 'perform'. With an internal focus, the sound score and the imagination create motility that is externalised through the body and the moving screen based image. The question arises around motility. In stillness what becomes of the body and the screen image? Without the performers body transforming the sound score the 'live' projection portrays a fixed frame. A shift in the 'live-ness' of the images occurs, in the flickering and glitching created by the radio frequency and the automatic movements of the body.

The actual radio frequencies, invisible to the naked eye are materialised in the image, and the subtle, automatic movements of the body magnified by the lens and the size of the projection. The technology used in these spaces reveals the hidden, allowing us to perceive that which cannot be seen by the naked eye. The body's role is elusive, it is flattened and reconfigured by the camera, existing simultaneously in two places at once as both body and arrangements of pixels.

Positioning the body in a gallery space is a strategy for addressing conditioning for both the gallery environment and performance codes, played out in the production of the work, in the gallery context; beginnings/entrances, endings/exits and the body acting out duration provoke new possibilities. The work is made available with and without the live body making the continuous moving of pixels, light and dark shades, colours, textures and patterns of the space. In absence of the performing body the wireless camera is directed to the street, the external view of the gallery is transported to the inside walls, folding in another living space of passers-by and the continuous changing cityscape into a voyeuristic scene. During this 'state' the headphones that had been worn by the performer are left in the gallery space to be listened to, the looping sound score providing kinesthetic cues and imagery so that they may embody an inner performance experience, a transformative processing of the performer's body through inner space, and a somatic connection to the projected imagery on the wall. In the act of listening, the spectator's body becomes vicariously connected through the same radio frequencies that inhabit the space between the surface of the screen and the body, becoming part of and completing the network.

This configuration of the work in a formal gallery setting, determined the body's relationship to the space as an artifact, a live sculptural component of the work. The work undergoes three modes of presentation; opening night, exhibition, and performance event. The social context of these modes plays a significant role in affecting the reading of the work, for both spectator and performer. Within these variations, the reading of the body fluxes with the shifting codes of the space, from formal gallery to a live and responsive performance space.

**THE OPENING EVENT:** The opening event complicates modes of presentation, negotiating the suggestion that the body could exist as an artifact with no beginnings, or endings with the conundrum of the physical and mental preparation required to sustain a durational performance life. The solution involves twenty minutes of 'warm up' before the space is open to the public. This results in surrendering to traditional performing arts paradigms and sets up a 'timeless' continuum for the presentation. Spectator numbers are lower than anticipated in this event and passers by sporadic and dispersed. Technical difficulties hinder the consistency of the production, and a faulty battery knocks out the live projection for some time. This results in shifting in and out of 'performance' to rectify the technical faults, which challenges the objectives for the work. The opening night presents questions in managing the technicalities of the work, and the conventional desire for the 'production' to be free of 'flaws' and for the mechanics of the process to be concealed. The negotiation of these difficulties creates interesting tensions and poses further questions around the performative and beginnings and endings. This is the first test of significant duration in a 'live/public' space, and although there are periods when the Gallery appears to be empty the 'performance' is kept up for two hours - 'testing' the sustainability

of performing in these time frames for the next few days during the exhibition.

**THE EXHIBITION:** A performance framework of 11am and 1pm and then 3pm - 5pm is set for the exhibition days. The remaining time is used for resting the body and the live camera is positioned so that it looks out onto the street, transferring the exterior view into the gallery space.  Throughout the exhibition there are extended periods when the performing body is the only live body in the gallery space.  The 'performance' continues regardless.  Performance in this context provokes - who is the performance for? - the walls? the live video projection? for the absence of spectators? for the performer?  Motivation and energy levels are affected by the knowledge that someone might be watching or not watching, and performance conventions and conditioning are subjected to the notion of 'being watched'. This role of living artifact or performing subject gives way to a constant negotiation of being seen and not seen, slipping between performing and not performing while remaining present at all times to these fluctuations. The problematic of 'performance' and the productivity of the dancing body is brought to the fore. By the middle of the exhibition, maintaining consistent focus is becoming challenging. During quiet rest spaces (part of the sound score), the performer lies on the floor of the gallery, and persists in a half conscious 'almost' focused state. This stillness and deep relaxation, is disturbed by tension in the body and a readiness to 'act' every time the thought arises that a spectator might be entering the space. This responsiveness to the conditioning of performance codes through historic training is almost inescapable.

The exhibition version of the work offers freedom for both spectator and viewer to determine their own spatial and social parameters, unlike earlier Test Sites where the spectator and the performer were forced into intimate proximity.

**THE GLITCH PERFORMANCE EVENING - THE MISPERFORMING SYMPOSIUM:** The final performance context that 'Making Sense of No Body' is presented in dismantles the formal codes of the space by co-habitation with other 'live' performance works. Cohabiting the gallery site all the works test spatial and performative conventions of both gallery and theatre. This fosters the potential for leakage between the art works sharing the space; beginnings and endings become murky, borders and boundaries are lost and performing and nonperforming fold into one another.  Spectators and performers cue off one another, and their engagement with the space, the 'live' body and the 'artifacts' subvert the observers role, and at times the spectator and other performers become as much a part of the work as the rest of the space. Are they watching or being watched, or can they be both simultaneously? The deterritorialisation of performance and gallery conventions places the body in a successful dance of fluxing indeterminacy suggesting the potential reconfiguring of the body and the screen.
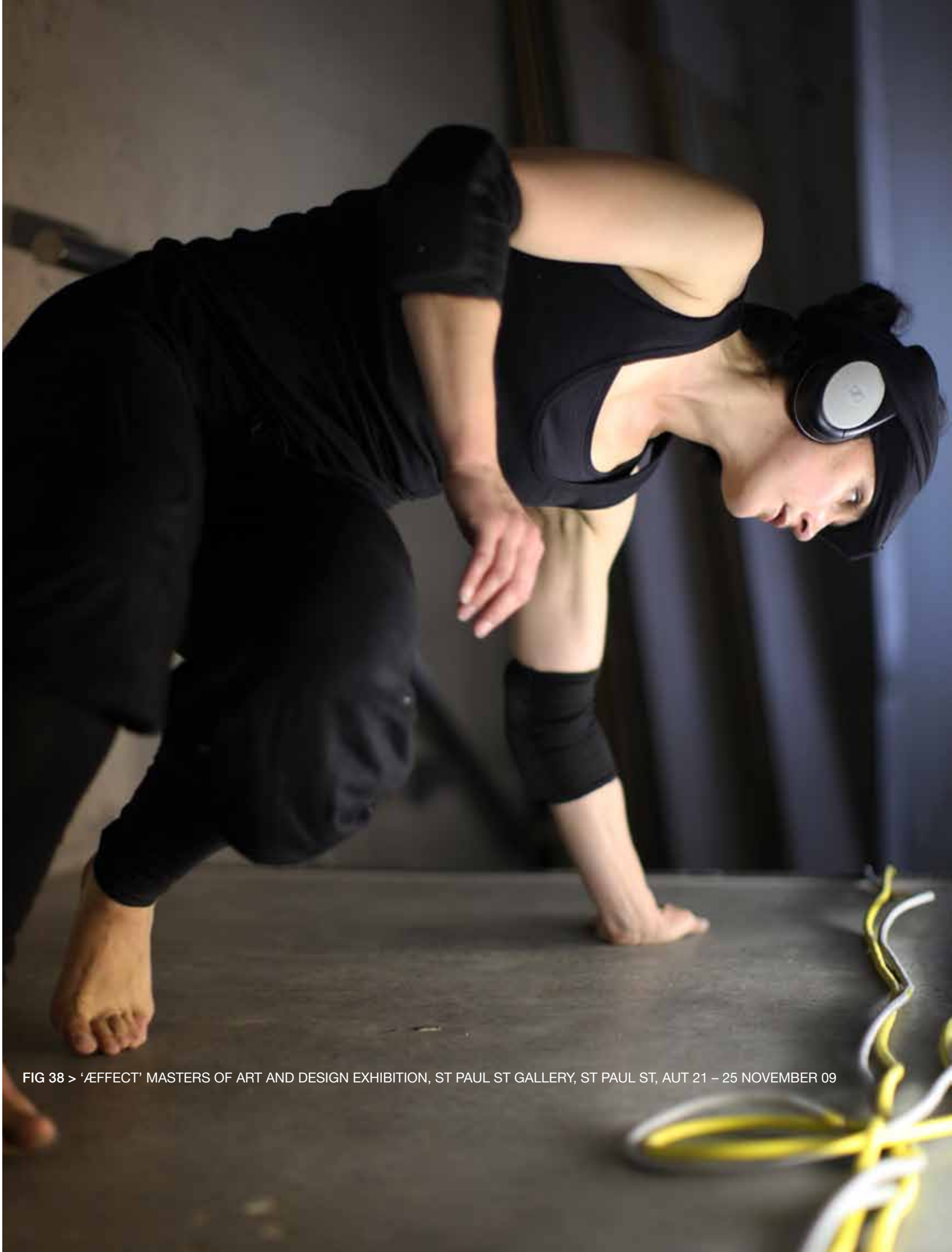
FIG 38 > 'ÆFFECT' MASTERS OF ART AND DESIGN EXHIBITION, ST PAUL ST GALLERY, ST PAUL ST, AUT 21 – 25 NOVEMBER 09

FIG 39> 'ÆFFECT' MASTERS OF ART AND DESIGN EXHIBITION, ST PAUL ST GALLERY, ST PAUL ST, AUT 21 - 25 NOVEMBER 09

# CONCLUSION

Unhinging the body and the screen, multiple possibilities emerge in an insoluble space between the flat two dimensional surface of the screen which is manifest by a patterning of pixels (Hayles1996) and the fleshy, breathing, feeling, sensing body, a complex possibility. This seemingly inconclusive chasm splinters into multiple spaces, intersections, borders and boundaries of body, image and imagination where time and place fold into one another. The 'concrete world' as we think we know it is recalibrated and we ask the question 'What now can the body do?'.

Lepecki suggests a political reframing (or 'deframing') of the body in which contemporary philosophers Deleuze and Guattari offer an account of the corporeal not as a 'closed entity, but as an open and dynamic system of exchange, constantly producing modes of subjection and control, as well as of resistance and becomings.' (Lepecki 2002:5) This is a significant notion that is explored by Artaud and Hijikata in overcoming the conditioning of the dancer's body that prescribes a history, a language and a discipline of kinaesthetic boundaries.

What can the 'body of thought' do to embody a discourse through acts of stillness, through decentralizing 'productive performativity' and reconfiguring proprioception?

'What can a 'thinking body' do' as it turns itself inside out colliding with the imagination and the image, fragmenting and multiplying into the liminal in a destabilized somatic experience of digital image.

How do we transcend the limitations of the body and screen and prioritize the question 'What can the body do?'

FIG 40> STUDIO TEST JUNE 'BODY SCREEN'

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