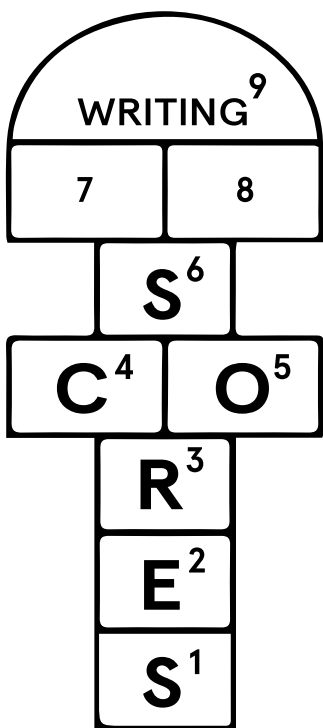


SCORES
GLOSSARY



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ATTENTION

Attention is an undeniable part of the process of artistic research. It is the moment the researcher places a 'frame' around her interests that makes it possible to gradually zoom in and out, laying bare microscopic details as well as meta-logical connections. Attention can take the form of an obstinate 'score' for the research, the embrace of a particular habit or a repetitive gesture, the adoption of a specific space or time-frame. By 'paying attention' to what announces itself in the first, often intuitive or naïve interest of the researcher, the rewriting of 'work', 'life' or 'research' practices becomes possible. This 'state of attention' is what makes things appear that were not visible before. Or were there before but dragging under the surface. By the sheer process of spending time with the research, through the simple procedures of sitting next to it, talking to it, listening to its sometimes incomprehensible utterings, a pattern appears. A question, an inclination, an intuition or a clear and distinct idea. A grown-over path that leads the researcher into previously unknown territories. It is the state of attention that links the 'inside' to the 'outside', the bodily affects to their political reverberations, the personal to the global movements. It is in the attention that a space of resonance opens up in which the world can echo its desires.

DREAM

“(...) we dream all the time, not only at night. Night dreams are just some of the images that pop to the surface of our conscious mind. This amazing wide river of dreaming continues even while we are awake and fully conscious. We dream all the time because we have a body, which is constantly experiencing. The body is exposed to an incredible influx of information, both from within and from the outside, which it is processing all the time. We have lost the connection to dreaming as a form of knowing. But dreaming is the knowing of the body with everything that the body is. (...) dreaming is the body experiencing itself and everything that is in relation to it, whether it is close or far (knowing distances does not make a difference). With the use of diagrams and diagrammatic writing I am looking for a way to invite back dreaming as a way of knowing. This is a way of knowing that inextricably engages the body and imagination as agencies of knowing. For all I have said of it, the diagram makes for a great tool for dreaming. Dreaming itself is diagrammatic. Dreams are diagrams or constellations of forms, movements, directions, colors, moods, and emotions.”
(Mala Kline)

KNOWLEDGE

To know or not to know, that is not the question. Artistic research is not about knowledge production: it is not a practice of shaping neat, seductive, smoothly polished packages of pre-digested overrefined commodities. Knowledge objects that have become neutralized through procedural demands, academic formatting, or popular cravings for clarity or short-term titillation. Much more than a production chain of reproducible goodies, knowledge in an artistic research environment can be considered as a practice of relating, a common social project of assembling and reassembling bits and pieces of left-overs lying around. These assemblage practices do not start from a preliminary architectural plan. In the practice the one thought links into another object, an image merges into a gesture, a political phrasing turns into an aesthetic bending of truths. Knowledge in this sense is always already situational and relational. It can not be reproduced without morphing in the process. It can not be passed on without transforming in the act. This kind of knowledge recognizes and affirms its embeddedness in the knowledge practices that produced its claims. Questioning the ideological lines of flight that reach far beyond its current situation. Artistic research brings knowledge back to its concrete practice of situational bricolage. Of affective rather than effective gestures, not aimed at transparency or fetishization of the new. But insisting on uncovering the unknown, the gaps in the Plan. A non-deliberate act, a procedure that allows for confusion, an act of reassembling what constitutes our togetherness.

LIFE

Life is the playground on which the research takes place. It is the information that disturbs the quietude or the presumed objectivity, the academic isolation of the research. "The curiosity keeps flourishing, the other is a surprise, motherhood happily embedded, the sensation of me peaceful, the dance is wonderful, insomnia dreadful but no sleeping pills, nature rules in whatever way, paying attention to attention a political act, looking twice a tool for change." (Lilia Mestre). Life understood as the energy that connects all to all, - also (un)known in its different discursive drag performances as Love, God, the All, or DNA - is what is always hiding under the carpet or scuttling in the wings of the research. But Life is only able to enter the actual research and contaminate it, if there is enough breathing space left within its self-organization, if there is an openness to live *in* the research. In some ways the research is mainly about creating these empty spaces, these black holes of knowledge, in which Life can express itself more eloquently. As the breeding ground for mutations, the surrender to Life is what gives the research its power for transformation or change. Both on the individual as the societal scale. When liberated from expectations, pre-set limitations or obstinate truths, Life liberates the swarms of thoughts and actions that open up these breathing spaces everywhere in society. These pockets of air, lightness and desire that remind us of what it is we are (not) doing here.

MOVEMENT

What moves me when I move? What do I move through moving? Does movement need a body to exist? Or can any kind of energetic ebb and flow suffice to come, to become movement? Maybe movement is to be considered in its most basic capacity as a space for experimenting life. "Maybe we should develop warm-ups for life. I like this idea. Let's warm up life! Maybe we, as citizens, are lacking rituals that touch upon affectivity, attention, displacement, agency. Or rules for resisting an overpowering system that dilutes desire and increases consumption." (Lilia Mestre)

Then could these warm-ups be considered to be the basis for our understanding of movement: the capacity to induce an energetic, situational or perceptual change? In the domain par excellence to talk about movement, choreography, a strong shift occurred in the last 30 years. "In our days, choreography is a term that has been used in the most diverse disciplines and its field of action is not just the domain of dance but any domain attentive to the movement of things or to the movement of physical (and maybe also para-physical) elements within a given context." (Lilia Mestre)

Movement is what connects things and people, spaces and affects. It is through movement that a transindividual body of thoughts, associations and vibrations can become tangibly experienced. That thoughts can break out of their shells and start to (dis)associate freely with the amorphous qualities of being.

PRACTICE

The practice is the activation of the research, the moment the research is put out into the world, allowed to breath and breed with what surrounds it. The research only comes to life in the practice, demanding nourishment, nurture, and attention in order to thrive and transform. Every practice produces an offspring in the form of consequences, traces, that in their turn demand attention to transform into new practices or mutations of the old ones. The research can only be kept alive by experiencing its presence in the present, in the doing. Through repetition its potential appears, until it grows legs and starts to move away from you, walking right out of its case into the world. The power of the practice is measured by its capacity to survive this move from its in-vitro setting into other environments. For example, by being adopted by other researchers, entering into the public domain, or inspiring cross-breedings, monster ideas or breaking long-encrusted habits. A practice is always moving, even if standing still. A researcher's relation to the practice is often a dysfunctional one. In other words, if the practice doesn't talk back, it is probably time to try another one. The concreteness of the practice is what constitutes its unexpected twists and turns. Its resistance and inflexibility to adapt to the ideas or intuitions that produced them is exactly what excites the friction needed to bring out the unthought thought.

PRESENCE

To be present is to be and breathe *in* the practice. To be aware of where you are with your research, of the circumstances that produce the current situation, and to heighten this here-and-now - this situation- as a product of circumstances, by embodying it with full bodymind awareness. To be present is therefore always an ethical exercise, in the sense that presence is concretized through its mutual dependence on the circumstances that call it into being. To be present is to allow for the crossing lines of relations that go through the body to speak out, in and through that body. Regardless of that body being physical, virtual, organic or nonorganic, or simply a body of work. Regardless of the quality of the relations that cross this body: economic, aesthetic, geographic, historic, affective, energetic, or otherwise. To be present is to open up "a multi-fold non-place of wonder, hesitation,(...). It is practicing thinking, but thinking without permanently collapsing into fixations, identities, meanings, or subjectivities" (Mala Kline). The ethical quality of this presence is expressed both in its emptiness, that allows for these relations to affect its being-in-the world. As in its minimal claim on agency, that is always performative, in the sense of amplifying or muting some of these relations that cross its body. Presence understood as such is both an affect and an affection, a being in its non-being, spiriting the world.

SCORE

"The score allows us to create a conversation outside the frame and the conventions that 'usual communication' proposes, but at the same time within the structure of a contract. So, could the score be understood as a tool of control?"
(Cecilia Molano)

Scores are frames that allow us to see what is actually already there. And, although framing can be disciplining thoughts and habits into preconceived pigeon-holes of imagination, in a creative artistic research a score more often than not functions as a tool to create the attention and intensity needed to let something of the unexpected enter into the social field of the knowledge and practice process.

In the scope of this publication and the a.pass scores block, scores were used as 'collective dispositives': as set-ups that would allow for the emergence of unexpected connections, creating through their merging or allergic reactions unexpected bits and pieces of knowledge. Knowledge created through the rearrangement of relations, through the process of diplomacy and negotiation, without a preconceived norm for agreement or misunderstanding.

"By framing the field of action and rendering visible the agency of all elements in play, the score becomes a tool for acknowledging knowledge in process. (...) I see scores as triggers for accidents that instead of being avoided are embraced. It's a call for risk taking on unstable grounds, for the imagination and the manifestation of emotions, ideas, and states of being, not as ideologies but as an awareness of being in the present. It's the state of attention mingled with the desire to play."
(Lilia Mestre)

TIME

The time of the research is the time that unfolds throughout the practice of the research. Every research dictates its own time frames. In a society that often pushes its citizens towards 'accelerationism', both as a capitalist as an anti-capitalist gesture (<http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/05/14/accelerate-manifesto-for-an-accelerationist-politics/>), artistic research seems to thrive best in 'slow practice environments': resisting ecological systems of mutual transformation that come into being through insistence and attention. The time of the research is a time experienced practicing, be it walking, reading, moving, sitting, sleeping, cooking or arguing. Time unfolds simultaneously in the moment and in the resonance with what came before or what is projected into the future; moving through time means negotiating the different porous experiential time layers of bodily experience, intellectual coming-into-understanding, the long-term affects of history, the transversal interpellations of contemporary politics, social ecologies and the wooings of the artistic/academic scenes you are relating to. The time of the research is invading the territory of what is not-yet, of what there is yet to come. This understanding of time can be fuelled by the motor of utopian imaginings as well as by hyper-subjective rearrangements of beliefs or preconceptions in the now. Not so much a logical narrative, unfolding through causal connection, the time of the research often has a quixotic, surreal, or quantum-esque character. Its unfolding takes on a whimsical rhythmicity that moves the research into being, like a snake dances to the eerie tunes of the flute.

WRITING

Every act of writing is an act of inscription, of inscribing 'reality' into the fabric of stories, of thoughts, of narratives. At the same time, every act of writing has a violent character; it always implies an act of erasure, obliterating that which has not been acknowledged in its gouging out of the things that matter. There is a prescriptive quality attached to the decision made on what matters enough to be addressed. In the Scores process though, writing became more of a relational performance than the act of creating an alternative 'history' for the community. What was of interest in the process was not so much the writings themselves as the transformative movements that were created on the way. The gaps that appeared in the logical uncoiling of a shared argumentation. The intricate opacity of misunderstandings, avoidances, abrupt redirections in the comings and goings between questions and answers. Much like the diagrammatic writings proposed by Mala, or the Tarot logics of connection, the writing is what it is not. More than the engraving, the gaps between the signs is where the true colours of the researches peep through. Rarely do the texts in this book come up with clear-cut narratives to 'explain' the researches and their connections, but in the stumbling over the materiality of language itself, the misinterpretations due to discursive, geographical and language-based differences, something appears of the process of thought as it clumsily unfolds in the 'doing of the writing'. A writing that rather points at the gaps of the unsaid than at the fullness of its own prowess.

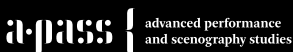
SCORES GLOSSARY

DISCLAIMER:

This Glossary is a very subjective interpretation of some of the key terms that kept popping up in the Score Writings.

This Glossary does in no way necessarily represent the frame of thought in which these concepts were used in the different participant's scores. Nor does this Glossary represent an 'objective' view on artistic research as applied in the a.pass research environment.

Elke Van Campenhout



This is a publication by the a.pass research centre, created from the Scores Writing practice proposed by associate program coordinator Lilia Mestre during the a.pass block January - May 2014

a.pass (advanced performance and scenography studies) is an international research and training centre for artists and theoreticians, based on the principles of self-organization, collaboration and trans-disciplinarity.

Out of the notions of performativity and the performative space, a.pass offers researchers the possibility to develop their skills as independent artistic researchers in a collective learning environment, constructing their individualized curriculum in constant dialogue with the other inhabitants.

a.pass wants to develop, archive and share tools for a qualitative and societally relevant research practice.

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a.pass is supported by the Vlaamse Gemeenschap

