

I DANCE LAND
AN APPRENTICESHIP WITH WIND AND WATER:
DEPATTERNING SOMATIC AMNESIA, REPATTERNING ECOSOMATIC SENSES

CHRISTINE BELLEROSE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN DANCE STUDIES
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

June 2021

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ABSTRACT

This doctoral research relates the somatic, sensory awareness, and eco-performative processes through which I seek to depattern my somatic amnesia and repattern my ecosomatic relationship to the land – a portal into what it means to move and think with the land and to ground knowledge by way of sensing and moving. EcoSomatics enlarges the notion of sensory motor amnesia by attending to ecosomatic disenchantment. This intuitive, site dance, performance as research bridges movement-based somatic art (somadance) with movement-based performance art (eco-performance). "I Dance Land" ecosomatic land-based epistemology is a hand-based philosophy founded on values of co-creation, reciprocity, mutuality, and continuity across differences, at the nexus of multiple somatic dimensions lived, apprenticing with wind and water, dancing and being danced by the land, and writing with mountain. The notion of somatic drives – senses of existing, awareness, attuning, and empathy –, delimiting a performance milieu, fleshing-out a notion of guesthood – arriving, waiting for an invitation, introducing myself and my art to the land, settling into, and not over-extending my stay –, sensing cold as texture, stepping into a place-of-not-cold, moving at the speed of ice, and finding ease in tension, are living and growing methods and techniques developed during this research journey. These lessons are methodologically rigorous and generate a renewed intimacy with the land as they manifest in the somatic architecture my body dances. I include twelve autoethnographic case studies performed during the winter season's cold and summer's heat in Canada, the continental United States and Hawai'i from 2013 to 2019. Not all make sense at the threshold between the

real and the imagined, however, "I Dance Land" challenges the colonial legacy of Anglo-English culture of distrusting the body, sense, land, and meaning-making relationship. From the process of unwinding my aesthetic research journey emerges grounding in movement | rooting and moving, a praxis of relational eco-wellness that can be taught to dancers and non-dancers alike. Depatterning somatic amnesia, repatterning ecosomatic senses has rich implication for not only Somatics and EcoSomatics, but also for Phenomenology, Ecofeminism, Dance Studies, Performance Studies, and Settler-colonial scholarship, as well as laying the groundwork for research and community ecosomatic wellness projects involving somatic attentiveness.

Keywords: apprenticeship with wind and water, Dance Studies, depatterning somatic amnesia, ecofeminism, ecosomatic land-based epistemology, EcoSomatics, eco-performance, grounding in movement | rooting and moving, living and growing methods and techniques, performance as research, Performance Studies, Phenomenology, praxis of relational eco-wellness, sensory awareness, Settler-colonial scholarship, somadance, somatic architecture, somatic attentiveness, somatic drives, Somatics, moving-thinking, repatterning ecosomatic senses, sense-based and land-based, unwinding aesthetic journey.

DEDICATION

Je dédie ma thèse de doctorat à ma fille-de-chien, *Lilas-blu* 🐾❤️🐾

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the support from the land itself, water and wind in all of their expressions. The nurturing support my parents Diane Cloutier Bellerose and Pierre-Paul Bellerose provide continues well into my adulthood! My dog Lilas-blu, to whom this dissertation is dedicated, reminded me to walk outside, three times per day. Without her canine hugs, I would have lost my sanity, my mobility. Jeannine Lundgren and Richard Eurich, Bogey-dog and Minou-cat, welcomed me in their home on Ka'a'awa, O'ahu offering me a place to sit and write. Ko'olau mountain range opened my heart and held my pen while I took a dive ever more so deeply into the lived experiences of my soma-body. I am forever grateful to the Somatics and eco-performance community, artists and researchers, educators, scholars, and teachers across nations. We have, and continue, to weave a brilliant friendship together. To my two movement teachers – Sondra Fraleigh and Sylvie Tourangeau – who believed in me from ground zero. Dear, dear, the way you look into my eyes, connects our breath together. Aanii, Ronald Momogeeshik Peters. Miigwetch for our long walks, long talks, and loud laughs. The path of least resistance is a path of enchanted wonders even in the most ordinary way. Mon amie Mei I Yu, *je t'aime* 我爱你.

Many, many thanks for CUPE3903 Union at York University, together with the AMPD Dance Studies Program funding package, and l'Aide financière aux Études (Québec). The freedom financial support allows cannot be under-estimated. Unlike my American peers, I have accumulated under 100 thousand dollars of higher education debt. And while the current economic market makes stepping into an academic career a much less cozy affair than decades

ago, I acknowledge the privilege of making career choices based on my passion and beliefs. Let me be ever so sincerely honest – without medical insurance, I would have had none of the rejuvenating psychotherapy, physiotherapy, therapeutic massage, shiatsu, acupuncture (naturopathy), and Feldenkrais sessions. Your hands and your ears kept me alive through the thick and thin of a doctoral journey. I support allopathic healthcare.

There is a special place in the pantheon of my soma for teachers who go the extra length in mentoring, supporting, and trusting students. The highlight of my journey at York University has been to assist with archival research for *The National Choreographic Seminars 1979-1991* through the "Collective Historical Acts of Social Memories" (CHASM) project lead by Dr. Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt and Carole Anderson. Dr. Ursula (Ulla) Neuerburg was my first ever Theatre and Performance history teacher. Oh, how much she impressed on me with the breadth of knowledge across time and places continues to drive my love for the big picture! I am grateful for holding the role of co-facilitator in the Somatic Engagement Working Group at the Canadian Association for Theatre Research (CATR) since 2018, with you. Per chance and with radical kindness, Dr. Bridget Cauthery stepped in on my doctoral committee at the tail end of my journey – already in the swing of things – trusting our relationship since you have been my course director for three years already, during my tutorial teaching work at York University. To space and time, and to place: I strongly believe in sharing, rolling on the floor together, and mentoring through listening and kindness to be a most potent remedy for these shifting times. Finally, I am thankful for the alphabet dance, for the scholarly contribution of the many women, and those gentle souls who know how to paint in movement and with their thoughts, the sense of the world. I now own more books than clothing! ~ Christine (cricri) Bellerose

DANCING LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT¹

Danse, et la reconnaissance des territoires

Je débute ma reconnaissance des territoires en *parlant* ma langue maternelle, ainsi qu'en reconnaissance de mon privilège de danser. Terre est ma professeure, et ma partenaire de danse. Mes somadance éco-performances prennent place sur différents territoires. Je reconnais que le partage des cérémonies, de la danse, et ainsi que des performances artistiques sont un fondement de l'expression culturelle. Je danse aujourd'hui sur la l'Île de la Tortue, sur une terre qui vit la mémoire vivante de l'héritage colonial du Canada ayant interdit cette expression fondamentale, de 1876 à 1951, aux peuples des Premières Nations du Canada. Je reconnais également que les systèmes de connaissances issues des savoirs autochtones, et transmis de génération en génération, ont façonné le monde de manière durable, me permettant de jouir aujourd'hui de la pratique de mon art. Pour cela, je dis merci. « I Dance Land » est un pas vers la reconstitution de ma connexion avec Terre.

1 I begin my land acknowledgement by way of writing in my mother tongue, and acknowledging my privilege of dancing land. Land is my teacher, and my dance partner. My somadance eco-performances take place on various territories. I acknowledge that ceremonies, dancing, and artistic performances are fundamental to the expression and sharing of all people. I dance today on Turtle Island, a land which remembers, and lives, the colonial heritage of Canada having forbid this fundamental expression from 1876 to 1951 to the Peoples of the First Nations of Canada. I further recognize that generations of Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge systems have shaped the world in a sustainable way, allowing me to enjoy her earthly gifts today. For this, I am grateful. "I Dance Land" is one step toward repatterning my connection to the with Land.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"I Dance Land" documents depatterning somatic amnesia and repatterning ecosomatic senses,¹ allowing access to my fundamental relationship to the land. Through an autoethnographic research approach and an evocative phenomenological description of my somadance eco-performance fieldwork, this dissertation discovers means to an enchanted kinship with the land, wind and water. My ecosomatic approach to autoethnographic inquiry reactivates a relationship between dancer and land, effectively repatterning a land-based meaning-making approach. This ecosomatic land-based methodology, and associated methods, techniques, and philosophy, emerges from my apprenticeship with wind and water. These site dance fieldwork's somatic and sense-based evidence are further theorized into a moving-thinking paradigm, and a theoretical articulation of grounding in movement | rooting and moving. Moreover, depatterning somatic amnesia and repatterning ecosomatic senses can be taught to dancers and non-dancers alike, for them to access their own sense of enchanted kinship, their own fundamental relationship to the land. By way of moving-thinking through a hybrid artistic, intuitive, and improvised site-dance, this research further bridges movement-based somatic art with movement-based performance art. Furthermore, "I Dance Land" is a document advocating for the merit due to movement performance artists (dancers, somatic movers, actors) for their contributions within academic

¹ Somatic amnesia is a Somatics concept naming the disrupt between soma and movement. The term is derived from Thomas Hanna's observation of his patients afflicted by poor patterns of muscular activation (Sensory Motor Amnesia).

scholarship. The physicality and the sensory awareness required of movement performance artists is important for all researchers, not only those who have stage goals.

This performance as research employs a Somatics' praxis of healing the body of somatic amnesia. From this hybrid research modality emerges my theoretical approach of moving-moving, with which I inquire on the somatic dimensions I experience during somadance eco-performances with wind and water. It follows that my research takes issue with the imaginary silo separating body and mind, and disputes this divide presently normalized and internalized at the personal and the cultural levels. The separation of body and land (nature) interrupts the continuity of a fundamental sensuous wisdom which our history testifies, we, as a culture, have relentlessly pushed aside. A performance as research inquiry makes sense, as my dissertation attempts to demonstrate. How has somatically sensing a connection to the land transformed me?

Through repatterning trust in my felt real and imagined senses, my research thus aims to reconnect the body with senses, land, and knowledge. "I Dance Land" is the outcome of unwinding an aesthetic research journey,² depatterning somatic blockages felt real and imagined in the process of doing somadance and eco-performance, and repatterning fluidity expressed through site dance fluidity. Accordingly, I ground my research within a processual approach of sensing multiple somatic dimensions by tuning-in to my somatic abilities and unwinding somatic amnesia so as to generate an operative – functional and experiential – ecosomatic connection between my dancing body and the land. My Somatics movement-based performance art action as research addresses not only my artist-researcher's relationship to the land, but a relationship that is at the core of my existence. This doctoral research began with an inquiry into the layered concept of a fundamental relationship with the land, inquiry prompted by a lecture Ktunaxa

2 Aesthetics: from Greek *aisthētikos*, from *aisthēta* 'perceptible things', from *aisthesthai* 'perceive'.

nation and Secwepemc nation Arthur Manuel gave at York University in 2017. By way of further readings, I learned that a fundamental relationship to land is at the core of Indigenous' relationship with all of creation (McNeil-Seymour 53), and I was motivated to know more about my own fundamental relationship to land. According to Anna Wierzbicka's cultural and linguistic research, senses and sensing are fundamental to the Anglo-English way of thinking, relating to, and functioning in the world. Concurrently, in 2017, the Canada Council for the Arts made a press release announcement urging artists within "Canadian society," to re-examine their relationship with Indigenous land (Brault and Loft). My overarching doctoral research question took shape by way of the overlap these key interest points produce: "What somatic dimensions do I experience during somadance eco-performances with wind and water through an approach of sensing a fundamental relationship with the land?" Having further defined the scope of my research, I asked, "What methods and techniques can I develop to sense my dancing through this sensuous fundamental relationship with land?" (see: chapter three); and "What sensuous experiences are revealed in the action of somadancing eco-performance with the wind and water?" (see: chapters four, five, and six). The research questions delve into the personal informed by my settler colonial culture – dominated by an Anglo-English culture but also informed by a European heritage – historical, and currently lived.

The gap my research fills reveals itself by way of deconstructing my own working assumption: that it is feasible to depattern my somatic amnesia and repattern my ecosomatic senses so as to sense my fundamental relationship to the land. I argue somatic amnesia blocks me from fully connecting to my own sensing abilities, and thus, blocks me from fully living a fundamental relationship to the land. Somatic amnesia becomes the gap my somadance eco-performance praxis tackles to heal the disrupt between my soma and my movements. By way of

re-examining my somatic abilities of sensing the relationship between my movement research and the movements of wind and water, I aim to reveal a fundamentally sensuous connection between my own body and the land. "I Dance Land" contributes research to Somatics' area of studies, and to embodied research and arts-based research's methodologies, methods, and techniques, to think-move toward unsettling personal somatic amnesia. The aesthetic, depatterning somatic amnesia and repatterning ecosomatic senses' outcomes of the research, furthermore, produce ecosomatic gestures in the form of dance and in the form of thinking somatic activism and social wellness. Moreover, as I explain in the Conclusion, in chapter seven, these contributions may be applicable to challenging policies pertaining to the body(ies) by way of depatterning structural colonial biases and repatterning ecosomatic wellness policies and aiming for the clearing of our cultural somatic amnesia. The overall contribution this research produces: 1) addresses the gap in embodied research making sense of the world by way of acting with sensory attentiveness on the somatic amnesic sensuous body in its relationship to the land; 2) as well as attending to repatterning trust in ecosomatic evidence as scholarly testimonials. Along the doctoral journey, I also took action to share its processes by way of integrating discussions with other Somatics researchers and with our shared scholarship communities by way of creating and facilitating a Somatics and Theatre research working group and a mentorship initiative, as well as sharing my ecosomatic methods, techniques, and philosophy by way of creating and facilitating workshop for dancers (to be further fleshed out to accommodate non-dancers).

The series of twelve autoethnographic case studies performed during the winter season's cold and summer's heat in Canada, the continental United States and Hawai'i from 2013 to 2019 explore encounters of wind and water through a somadance eco-performance modality. The

performances are documented using a low-resolution video camera on a tripod, and by way of professional photography (not for all of the fieldwork). The choice to let the writing do the speaking is based on my standpoint as an artist-researcher that I move to know. Therefore, the fieldwork narratives are evocative phenomenological descriptions of my somadance eco-performances. The descriptive writing is informed by recalling my somatically inhabited bodied memories, combined with reviewing visual documentation, and through movement reactivation of embodied memories. I also have developed an ecosomatic relationship with mountains during the writing period – a relationship that I have termed *writing with mountain* approach. Moreover, the evocative descriptions of fieldwork are meant to allow the readers access to their own funds of lived somatic memories, in effect, allowing the readers to find their own relationship to the theories proposed, to find their own way to a somatic rekindling to land. Each somadance eco-performance lasted for an average of two hours, climate permitting. Furthermore, the body as a site of research holds together the place of movements attuning to the environment. This embodied modality allows for a direct conversation, somatic and sensuous, with the land, wind and water. Very soon after having established the methodological research lens with which to frame the sensuous and somatic evidence collected during somadance eco-performances, I realized that I was apprenticing with the wind and the water on the ways with which to repattern my fundamental relationship to the land.

In somadance eco-performance as research, emerging danced stories are theories danced while apprenticing with the land, and further supported by an amalgam of established scholarship – intellectualized and embodied – presently: Somatics, EcoSomatics, phenomenology, and ecofeminism overlapping with land-based epistemologies. One chapter at a time, I describe the repatterning of functional, experiential, operative, and fundamental personal somatic connections

with the land. According with the motivation for this research, I adopt a methodological approach based on identifying sensibilities in order to make sense of my ecosomatic inquiry informed by my experiences of senses, sensing, sense-perception, and sensibilities lived. In this approach, I contextualize the multiple somatic experiences lived through the various sensibilities experienced. Presently, this research is set within the personal experience of the somatic amnesic body – though it bears repeating, my somatic body is patterned by its somatic cultural heritage.

Throughout this research, I demonstrate my working assumption that somatic amnesia can be punctured by way of a Somatics approach. Sondra Fraleigh writes this, in *Researching Dance: Evolving Modes of Inquiry*, a handbook that gave me early direction to shaping the framework of my inquiry. Her words also gave me the courage to dive into an unexpected field of academic research:

. . . DANCE HAS BECOME A FIELD, more than its descriptive parts, yet all of them, [and] still more. Its identity is nevertheless composed through A FIELD OF DIFFERENCE – different ways of moving, expressing, and being-possible-in-the-world, even being-beyond-this-world, entranced. . . . A field is bounded, if not by territorial markers by our sight (as we drink in the land) or (in the case of dance) our insight. The modern / postmodern 'field question' has been highly focused on what might qualify as art – or more roundly stated – what are aesthetic phenomena? The dance field continues to stretch its scope and inquiry as though it were a foreign language that would presume to give us back our own (without prejudice). Its questions are limited only by our surroundings and namings of movement: body, expression, spirit, and form. . . . As we summarize our evolving understanding of dance, our actual dances and evolving modes of inquiry are creating a field of participation and studies of interest in the academies where DANCE ENTERS into disciplines of more historically established fields. . . . Dance is something we do, also a way of studying ourselves: *a way of knowing*. . . . (Fraleigh and Hanstein 352-353, caps, parentheses, and italics in text)

My field question is processed through a series of iterative sensuous interpretations of my encounters with the body, sense, land, and knowledge accrued, by way of: 1) creating a methodology of somadance eco-performance as research supported by an emergent theoretical

framework of moving-thinking; 2) writing with mountain – a critical and creative writing approach emerging from a four-month writing retreat between mountain and ocean, in Ka‘a‘awa (2019); and finally, 3) by a praxis of depatterning and repatterning embodied habits trusting the senses. The three steps lead into a post-doctoral project attending to disembodied policies. In this research, I have provided the jumping board for a future research project attending to social activism and wellness, having demonstrated the feasibility of depatterning and repatterning somatic clarity within the moving-thinking body.

Moving-thinking is the *de facto* leading theory. While I began this research, moving-thinking served as an intuitive frame of mind to merge existing theories with emerging theories while my body moved with attentiveness to its own body and that of the land's. I understand that moving-thinking is the focal framework serving my research question and aim, the primary set of principles and values on which my praxis is based. How I identify with moving-thinking's theoretical cadre is two-fold: 1) the operative processes of connecting communication channels, and installing trust, between intellectually minded thoughts and bodily felt real and imagined lived experiences; and, 2) through experiencing first-hand, the healing of the disrupt between mind and body. I cannot say that I have attained the *place* where mind and body / thought and movement feel as one and the same *unit*. I tend to give more space to the *mind* when it comes to critically laying out the evidence my research produces, having in mind attending to an academic audience. I tend to *get in my body* when attending a movement performance art training workshop and surrounded by other movement performance artists in training. While I realize the discrete roles body and mind play in the hosting of my artist-researcher's journey, I also am consciously attending to somatic healing processes: unwinding, clearing, depatterning, and repatterning. In this research, the healing attends to a legacy of internalized, normalized cultural

body-mind duality. There are a number of theories problematizing the theoretical articulation of thinking and moving. In the literature review, chapter two, I cite the note-worthy contributions to moving-thinking scholarship by Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, and Erin Manning. The inspiration for my scholarly framework of moving-thinking is inseparable from the experience of creating dance / movement performance art.

Methodologically, this research emerges from a series of self-reflective descriptive narrations of my somadance eco-performances' sensuous experiences with the land, wind and water. And the research is furthermore supported by a mixed methods approach informed by a hybrid movement-based ecosomatic performance art research approach utilizing a heuristic inquiry focused on exploring human experience from a holistic perspective, and a hermeneutic interpretation – reconstructing the meaning of the sense of a body of diverse discourses debating knowledge emerging from a sensibility to the body in relationship to the land. The iterative critical and creative interpretation is done in temporal slabs, acting on the embodied, somatic and sensuous evidence collected during the performance. This means that all case studies' fieldworks research is self-reflected in time with the performance (emerging gestures and dance), post-performance through the functional (movement description), the experiential (the experience of moving; the experience of encountering land through dancing), and interconnected modalities (witnessing from an insider's perspectives the world I live in / with / through; thinking along diverse scholarship).

I ally with Fraleigh to place Somatics within a phenomenological lifeworld framework – experiencing myself, the world, and myself in the world. As I demonstrate throughout, the layered ecosomatic performance art and phenomenology of the lifeworld approach reaches into diverse lens framing land-based epistemologies: site-dance, approaches to land-based meaning-

making, Indigenous law, ecofeminism, and multidisciplinary definitions of the concept of enchantment. I adopt a standpoint of non-duality with nature while honoring differences.

Admittedly, even as this process is clearly broken down in a linear, sequential operative whole, not all the eco-performances made sense upon first self-reflection. And, neither are these processes equally wrestled with at each turn of their iterative arc. Some of the somadance eco-performances' meaning-making came vividly strong at the time the performance took place. Some of them took a longer time to come into words due to their living-dream nature hovering in my soma's lifeworld for some time until its meaning-making reveal. And I concede, many times, a modicum of bravado came in handy in order to open up about the full story of some of these somatic encounters. The latter came to be facilitated by the lived experience of writing with the mountain, as I shortly explain.

Performance as research is not only an aesthetic representation of critical thinking. This type of aesthetic research is the means with which I access and process critical thinking, even as some of its evidence is based on the liminal chasm between the felt real and the felt imagined. During the *Inaugural Lecture for the First European Conference on Arts-Based Research* in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in June 2005, Elliott Eisner gave a lecture paper entitled, "Does Arts-Based Research Have a Future?" These statements spoke to me:

How do we argue the case that research is an activity that takes place in the arts just as it does in any of the sciences? By 'just as it does,' I don't mean that research done in the sciences and research done in the arts are identical. They are not identical. . . . I think that initially one might conceptualize research as a broad 'umbrella' process intended to enlarge human experience and promote understanding. (9)

Could there be, I asked myself, an approach to educational research that relied upon the imaginative and expressive crafting of a form of representation in ways that enlarge our understanding of what was going on, say, in teaching, or in the school's cafeteria, or in the high school mathematics classroom? (10-11)

The approach to arts-based research Eisner refers to, shares affinities with my own approach to somatic wellness research in that "it relies upon the imaginative and expressive crafting of a form of representation in ways that enlarge our understanding of what was going on" (10), say, in the phenomenological gaze to the everyday ordinary and extraordinary encounters between a dancer and the land, all of us dancing water and wind:

Indeed, what makes phenomenology so fascinating is that any ordinary lived through experience tends to become quite extraordinary when we lift it up from our daily existence and hold it with our phenomenological gaze. (van Manen "Phenomenology in its Original Sense" 812)

In this line of thought, I share presently a thoroughly impactful event which took place in the form of a writing residency. Without this unforeseen (and luckiest!) interruption, I am sure that the present dissertation outcome would have read like a much less evocative, and truly, a less intimate depiction of my somadance eco-performances. The emergent writing with mountain approach to remembering and writing down my fieldwork stands as an important human and land relationship testimonial. The experience contributed to enlarge and promote understanding of my own human experience. In the scope of this research, I place writing with mountain as an autoethnographic writing system (see: chapter three). I include as an Appendix (A), a fuller account of my lived encounter with the Ko'olau mountain range.

The primary human authors most influential in fleshing out my inquiry are: Sondra Fraleigh, Martha Eddy, Sylvie Tourangeau, and Sharon Blackie. During my graduate studies in the Department of Dance at York University, Patrick Alcedo introduced me to Fraleigh's writing via *Researching Dance: Evolving Modes of Inquiry*. The book served as our primary handbook for the "Research Methodology" graduate course. Since then, I have read most of all of Fraleigh's other works. Fraleigh has become my Somatics teacher, phenomenology mentor, publishing editor, and dear friend. *Moving Consciously: Somatic Transformations Through Dance, Yoga,*

and Touch on which an image of my eco-performance series titled *Healing my Mother* appears, and *Back to the Dance Itself: Phenomenologies of the Body in Performance* in which my master's thesis "Being *Ma*: Moonlight Peeping through the Doorway" appears as a chapter contribution, continue to influence the development of my Somatics inquiry. These works focus on the relationship between Somatics and phenomenology by way of situating the lived body's experience of the dancer in its somatic relationship with the lifeworld. Fraleigh's critical analysis with personal history and poetry, her earlier work *Dancing Identity: Metaphysics in Motion*, is also influential in sorting out my sensuous experience of a body as research site method.

Tourangeau witnessed the development of my movement art expression in her role as my movement art action coach over a period beginning in 2012. She continues to be attentive and supportive of my intent to perform at the meeting point of presencing my sensing of my own body and sensing the presence of elements dancing together with me (indoors and outdoors) even as these presences are at times invisible. Tourangeau guides me through her own techniques and my own developing techniques with the aim of presencing my embodied sensuous research, performance art action vocabulary. Most of my learning with her was done through workshops. The chapter contribution in TOUva collective's first monograph, *Le 7e Sens | The 7th Sense*, cited within is merely scratching the surface of her pedagogy.

Eddy's *Mindful Movement: The Evolution of the Somatic Arts and Conscious Action* is a landmark resource for Somatics, its history, its culture, pedagogy, and vocabulary, while clearly laying out Somatics motor sensory theories. Her influence has far-reaching implication: from Somatics wisdom of understanding the central nervous system and the experience of sense awareness, to hosting community Somatics wellness activist events. The field of Somatics today exists as a diverse yet cohesive scholarly field because of Eddy's work. The book *Mindful*

Movement informs my Somatics vocabulary and supports concepts of Somatics, movement senses and the sense of movements.

The concept of the enchanted is ever present in my artistic and scholarly work. In performance practice and writing practice, enchantment manifests when I do think / move in a way that I open myself up to trusting the felt real and imagined somatic dimensions lived. Much of my ancestral lineage's land-based wisdom has been made invisible by the massive colonial capitalism, religious dogmas, and patriarchal science turn, completed by the eighteenth century in Europe (Federici *Caliban and the Witch, Re-Enchanting the World*). This means that a long-standing heritage of traditional land-based wisdom was lost in the making of my contemporary Canadian-Québécois identity. The inability to allow being enchanted is a symptom of this land-based wisdom erasure (see: chapter six). Blackie's scholarship on the concept of enchantment via Celtic mythology gave me the courage to disclose having experienced unexplainable phenomena during and post- performance. Blackie's published works, particularly, *If Women Rose Rooted: A Life-Changing Journey to Authenticity and Belonging*, and *The Enchanted Life: Unlocking the Magic of the Everyday*, as well as her series of online courses, *The Mythic Imagination* series as podcast and online course packs, inform in parts, my own meaning-making from enchanted encounters.

Through my practice, my readings, and trying to explain the field of Somatics and EcoSomatics to practitioners and non-practitioners alike, I have come to define those areas of studies as 'worldviews'. As my fieldwork's narrations attest, a Somatics / EcoSomatics approach to making sense of an event lived allows playing with various views – attentiveness to gravitation, attentiveness to orientation, attentiveness to cold as texture, etc. This place where views overlap is also where I can practice mutuality by engaging in a relationship with a larger

than my human body's ecology, and in this sense, echoing Marie Bardet et. al in, *Écosomatiques: Penser l'écologie depuis le geste*. By way of Somatics / EcoSomatics worldview, I practice eco-performance in the form of improvised solo dance in nature (somadance). I make sense and meaning of my lived experiences in this worldview approach in what phenomenology terms the lifeworld where / when my performances are made possible by their being informed through tuning-in to the somas of my body and that of the land. Trusting my lived experiences is integral to a moving-thinking methodology. This trust extends to the felt real and imagined somatic dimensions experienced – those of the ordinary and the extraordinary encounters. These foundational concepts are at play throughout my performance as research, and are further fleshed out in the Literature Review, in chapter two, and the Methods and Techniques, in chapter three: Somatics (body-mind praxis), praxitioners (practicing theory and theorizing practice), soma (akin a living spark enlivening the body), the body as a site of research (embodied autoethnography), EcoSomatics (Somatics concerned with the wellness of the body in, and with, its environment), eco-performance (short for: land-based movement performance art action in nature), somadance (intuitive dance informed by somatic drives), the felt real and imagined, in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception (*Phénoménologie de la perception*), enriched with the 'touch' of the Somatics' imagination, the Husserlian concept of the Lebenswelt (lifeworld), a concept of transformational 'place', the lived body, in its English translation of Merleau-Ponty's *le corps propre*, Husserlian's *Erlebnis* (lived experience), land-based epistemologies, and the lived experience of senses.

By the nature of how Somatics healing works, I must revisit my own lineage if I aim to unwind it and repattern it with operative wellness. Somatic amnesia exists within the tradition of a colonial academic and Eurocentric settler culture, and along its Euro-American

cultural historical heritage. Being Canadian of European ancestry, and currently living in Canada, this lineage of somatic amnesia concerns my cultural, embodied heritage. In finding the motivation to take on somatic amnesia in its relationship to sensing my fundamental relationship to the land, I must credit the several First Nations' scholars who impressed on me the urgency to rekindle a fundamental relationship to the land, primarily³: Mississauga Nishnaabeg Leanne Betasamosake Simpson,⁴ Nishnaabeg John Kegeponce Borrows,⁵ poet Sto:lo Coat Salish Lee Maracle,⁶ and Sto:lo Q'um Q'um Xiiem OC | Jo-Ann Archibald,⁷ and Ktunaxa nation and Secwepemc nation Arthur Manuel.⁸ Finally, the land itself, wind and water, and the Ko'olau mountain range during the 2019 Ka'a'awa writing retreat, have stirred my thoughts and movements.

My practice does not belong in a museum nor in a gallery, no more than a river would. Like wind and water, my practice belongs with the land. "Je l'ai vu dans le sol,"⁹ says one of the participants during the *Solidité / Fluidité / Solidarité* workshop with Tourangeau, in 2018. My work has an iconographic, *tableau*-like quality. Nevertheless, I call it dance because I think dance is defined by its intent to move with grace in place and through space and time. The value

3 Particularly, the works of: Barbour's *Dancing Across the Page*, "Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness;" Barbour, Hunter, and Kloetzel's *(Re) Positioning Site Dance*; Eddy's "A Brief History," *Mindful Movement*; Fraleigh's *Back to the Dance Itself, Dancing into Darkness, Moving Consciously*; Fernandes' "Somatic-Performative Research," *The Moving Researcher*, "When Whole (ness) is more;" Fortin's "Looking for Blind Spots;" Hanna's *Bodies in Revolt, Somatics, The Body of Life*; Johnson's *Body, Spirit, And Democracy, Diverse Bodies, Recovering Our Sensual Wisdom*; Mullan's "Somatics: Investigating," "The Movement Cure;" and Williamson's "Reflections on Phenomenology, Spirituality, Dance and Movement-Based Somatics."

4 Particularly, the works: *As We Have Always Done*, "Being with the Land," *Dancing on Our Turtle's Backs*, "Land as Pedagogy," and "Being with the Land."

5 Particularly, the works: *Drawing Out Law, Law's Indigenous Ethics*, and *Recovering Canada*.

6 Particularly, the works: *Celia's Song, Memory Serves, My Conversations with Canadians*, and *Ravensong*.

7 Particularly: *Indigenous Storyworks*.

8 Particularly, the works: "Aboriginal Rights as Economic Rights," *The Reconciliation Manifesto*, and *Unsettling Canada*.

9 English translation: "I saw your performance reflected on the land."

system I embrace in my tableau-dance drives this research. Tourangeau has this to say following observing one of my eco-performance during the same workshop:

C'est pas ça ton affaires, une succession de mouvements. Tu as un extrêmement grand charisme dans la vie et dans la performance. Tu as le charisme d'un arbre. D'un élément très fort qui ne cherche pas à le montrer. C'est le fait que tu sois forte comme un arbre. Je le vois quand tu décides de me le montrer. C'est ça ta performance à voir. C'est de la présence iconographique dans la durée.¹⁰

I will return to this 'tree as my family' analogy in the three case studies, chapters four, five, and six, dedicated to the post-performance self-reflection of my many fieldworks.

My movement performance art and somadance apprenticeship journey to moving-thinking through land further took shape by way of encountering two teachers – Tourangeau, and Fraleigh. They gave me the techniques to move my thoughts and the language to describe and theorize my movements. Their teachings continue to enrich my artistic and philosophical development toward my Somatics scholarship, and my somadance eco-performance's signature expression and research. I did not learn through books how to move the knowledge of the Somatics' functional and experiential anatomy. In turn, this motivates me to render accessible to dancers and non-dancers alike, Somatics and performance art as research as a feasible methodology with which to process in the moving body, theories absorbed intellectually. The task then, becomes choosing the theories that adequately translate into words those theories emerging through an active non-verbal soma.

Finding scholarship engaging with the practice of Somatics is not a problem. Dance scholars have been publishing Somatics-related research in peer reviewed journals and university

¹⁰ English translation: "That's not your thing, a succession of movements. You have an extremely great charisma in life as in performance. You have the charisma of a tree. Of a power which you do not try to show off. The thing is, in fact, you are as strong as a tree. I see it when you decide to show it to me. That's the performance to have. It's an iconographic presence over time."

presses, for decades. However, there is more work to be done. A program dedicated to Somatics ought to focus not only on kinesiology, movement analysis languages, and its own history, but also on producing intellectual knowledge by way of moving into theories / emerging theories by way of moving. And this means that Somatics will contribute a Somatics lens to re-examining history, culture, and so on. A Somatics theoretical approach is a non-dualistic body-mind praxis, where movement and thinking enrich one another in a back-and-forth dynamic. For this reason, the study of Somatics may be a cross-appointed specialization bridging dance, performance studies, theatre, women and gender studies, environmental studies, communication and culture, political science, techno science studies, health, anthropology, history, archival studies and more. In academia, Somatics is very much aligned with practice-based research / research action, but it has specificities that make its research breadth unique: Eddy's functional somatic and somatic activism vocabulary,¹¹ Fernandes's movement and somatic as research model,¹² Fortin's practical EcoSomatics, Fraleigh's Somatics and phenomenological contribution,¹³ and Williamson's Somatics and spirituality contribution.¹⁴ Somatics theory must include the functional and experiential from the inner body first while connecting functional and experiential structure (conceptualization and aesthetic outcome) interconnected with a subject of study / activism. Somatics theory makes things happen AND knows that things are happening so it can relate to other bodies / movements and make the connection make sense (or meaning making) for the benefit of a better functional and experiential experience.

11 Particularly, the work: "A Brief History," and *Mindful Movement*.

12 Particularly, the works: "Somatic-Performative Research," *The Moving Researcher*, and "When Whole (ness) is more."

13 Particularly, the works: *Dance and the Lived Body*, *Moving Consciously*, and *Back to the Dance Itself*.

14 Particularly, the works: "Reflections on Phenomenology, Spirituality, Dance and Movement-Based Somatics," *Dance, Somatics, and Spiritualities* with Glenna Batson and Sarah Whatley, and *Spiritual Herstories* with Barbara Sellers-Young.

My motivation to engage Somatics with anti-colonial praxis is informed by the timeline my studies span from – undergraduate studies to doctoral studies (2009-2021). I graduated from a B.A. Honor's program in Theatre and Development at Concordia University in 2012, and by then, had already encountered the works of performance studies' Diana Taylor through *The Archive and the Repertoire*, cross-cultural studies' Richard Schechner and his collaboration with anthropologist Victor Turner through *Between Theatre and Anthropology's* scholarship on the liminal dramaturg-like process of transformation of being, and soon after with performance studies' Rebecca Schneider's scholarship salient to cross-temporality through *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment*. Together, the field of performance studies and these three artist-researchers affiliated with the Tisch School of the Arts, the performing, cinematic, and media arts school of New York University, forged a lasting impression on me and impacted on the direction I took with my academic research. I entered my master's studies at a time of Indigenous "new emergence, resurgence" in Simpson's *Dancing on Our Turtle's Backs: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence*, and producing scholarship across many fields, in Canada and abroad. Indigenous resurgence movement seeking to unwind colonial oppression and to repattern its Indigenous sovereignty provided me with a Somatics model with which to mold my Somatics' quest of repatterning a mutually enlivening relationship to the land.

With concern to unwinding my own Euro-American settler trauma's heritage and patterning into my praxis an ethic of settler responsibility, I was called to ecofeminism, particularly the scholarship contributed by Val Plumwood through *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*; sociologist and feminist Maria Mies and food sovereignty advocate Vandana Shiva through *Ecofeminism*; writer and documentary filmmaker, Greta Gaard through her many

works,¹⁵ and feminist Silvia Federici.¹⁶ In preparation for my master's program application at York University in Theatre and Performance Program, I studied the writings of influential theatre innovator Jerzy Grotowski, through the writings of Richard Schechner and Lisa Wylam's *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, and Eugenio Barba's *The Paper Canoe*, as well as Virginie Magnat's body and voice in theatre research at the intersection of Indigenous research methodologies.¹⁷ The readings brought to my attention, discourse of settler responsibility at the cross of Indigenous (American and Occitan) land-based systems of knowledge; land and place are common concerns shared with performance studies and performance art. Magnat cites Opaskwayak Cree Shawn Wilson's *Research as Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Wilson's genre of storytelling his academic research influenced in parts, my writing of evocative narratives. Then followed my readings of the poetic work of Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Dancing On Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence*, and the ethnographic and historical non-fiction work by Candace Savage written in a storytelling genre, *A Geography of Blood: Unearthing Memory from a Prairie Landscape* describing her encounter with Cypress Hill (Saskatchewan-Alberta) which I have a sense, is a manifestation of a Somatics research by the evidence that the author followed an enchanted call to a place. I also became acquainted with Sto:lo nation Q'um Q'um Xiiem OC | Jo-Ann Archibald's *Indigenous Storyworks: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit*. Her work gave flight to my operative concept of the body-mind-spirit-heart. The circular,

15 Particularly, the works: "Approaches to Sustainable Happiness," *Critical Ecofeminism*, "Ecofeminism Revisited," "New Directions for Ecofeminism," and "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," but especially through *Critical Ecofeminism*.

16 Particularly, the works: *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*, and *Re-Enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*.

17 Particularly, the works: "Conducting Embodied Research at the Intersection of Performance Studies, Experimental Ethnography and Indigenous Methodologies," and "Honouring the 3 R's of Indigenous Research Methodologies."

or spiral, conception of learning *at each turn* is common to land-based wisdom, performance as research's iterative modality, and Somatics pedagogy. In the midst of my coming to land-based epistemologies, and ecofeminism, I encountered the dance scholarship of Fraleigh through *Researching Dance: Evolving Modes of Inquiry* which gave a model in which to insert movement performance methods and techniques, and my own body as the primary site of research, as I make mention of at the beginning of this chapter. And then I encountered the seminal works of Sheets-Johnstone through *The Phenomenology of Dance*, which came to reinforce my motivation to think-move my research.

In my second year of doctoral studies, I read many Maracle's work. Her award winning historical (non)fiction, *Ravensong* and *Celia's Song* inspired me to practice the role of 'witnessing' during my eco-performance research – similar to the somatic practice I am familiar with, "Authentic Movement," developed by Mary Starks Whitehouse in the 1950s as a method of "movement in depth" (Pallaro). Maracle's non-fiction, *Memory Serves*, gave me hope to re-inhabit / remember some of my cultural heritage memories flattened by imperial colonialism. Maracle, by way of describing the Sto:lo model of remembering along a web rather than a linear structure, validates my own practice of remembering through Somatics interconnectivity with lifeworlds. I had the good fortune to spend time under her mentoring's guide for a one-year period while she guided me through my non-human ethnography's doctoral comprehensive reading journey. To sit by a river, is the first task she gave me, thus guiding me to a deep and intimate approach of learning from the land. When I shared with her my concern over accessing the language a river speaks, Maracle turned me to my own Somatics practice, telling me to look inside of me. This prompt of listening to, and observing the world from the subjective first-person experience puts me at odds with the popular academic position at the time of my earlier

journey with higher studies because the subjectivity of a first-person's embodied perspective too often gets confused with anthropocentrism, a problematic I aim to demonstrate in the literature review, chapter two.

I spent long hours getting acquainted with areas of studies that ultimately did not serve this research. Nevertheless, my understanding of the following scholarship further convinces me that anecdotal, qualitative evidence has a place in academia. I came across post-qualitative inquiry's area of studies' pioneer Elizabeth St. Pierre through her co-writing with Laurel Richardson, "Writing: A Method of Inquiry." St. Pierre co-developed the methodology termed creative analytical process (CAP) ethnography to fill the gap empirical data cannot fulfill. St. Pierre and Richardson write: "Any dinosaurian beliefs that 'creative' and 'analytical' are contrary and incompatible modes are standing in the path of a meteor; they are doomed for extinction" (1962, quotes in text). CAP ethnography is a pre-cursor of the Centre for Imaginative Ethnography's (CIE) thinking-walking-writing research method. CIE co-founders Denielle Elliott and Dara Culhane published their monograph, *A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies*, one decade after St. Pierre and Richardson's CAP ethnography model. Both approaches share affinities with my own autoethnographic process. A similar research initiative to the CAP and CIE's, the "Thinking Wild" Summer Institute of the Antipodes, took place in November 2016 at the Western Sydney University. Elizabeth Somerville is the founder of the "Thinking Wild" research cluster, a collective of shared post-qualitative inquiry scholarship. Furthermore, the prolific post-qualitative inquiry ethnographer produced landmark works in collaboration with her students, many of whom are tribal members, Australian Aboriginal peoples: *Body / Landscape Journal*, *Water in Dry Land: Place Learning Through Art and Story*, and *Riverlands of the Anthropocene: Walking Our Waterways as Places*

of Becoming. During the American Education Research Association (AERA) conference in New York City in 2018, I became acquainted with Jasmine Ulmer whose award-winning post-qualitative inquiry paper "Critical Qualitative Inquiry is/as Love," in the Division D – quantitative, qualitative, mixed measurement – is testimonial that qualitative and anecdotal evidence are valid measurements for a critical inquiry.

In the journey to identifying my affinity with schools of thoughts, I took a class with one of York University's anthropology and science and technology's professor, Natasha Myers. I resonated with the scholarship of Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Indigenous-feminism Kim Tallbear's "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry," Helen Verran's "A Postcolonial Moment in Science Studies: Alternative Firing Regimes of Environmental Scientists and Aboriginal Landowners," and performance and multimedia artist and sociologist Jackie Orr's "Enchanting Catastrophe," an article that I return to over and again in this dissertation. Post-qualitative inquiry and science technology studies live at the edge of my own autoethnographical approach but depart from mine by their theoretical affinities with new materialism. I retain the practical overlap these scholarships have with Somatics. However, as I explain in the literature review, in chapter two, in view of a Somatics approach to research, it makes no sense employing theories unless they can be embodied in practice.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

The research and the writing of my eco-performances as research are further teased apart and supported by scholarship highlighted in chapter two. I establish alliances with mover-thinkers through overlaps in points of views regarding co-storying human and land together. Themes pertaining to somatic amnesia and the repatterning of somatic sensory awareness are explored mainly from Somatics, EcoSomatics, and phenomenology, with support from ecofeminism, and

Anishinabek Natural Law. I tease apart differences of perspective of the *bodied* mind, situating Somatics as making practical sense of a philosophy of the *embodiment*. The literature review includes working definition of Somatics and EcoSomatics, an overview of a phenomenology of the lifeworld, the lived experience, and the lived body, contrast similarities in land-based epistemologies in terms of relational kinship with the land. Finally, I situate my site dance practice within an existing performance art movement.

"Methods and Techniques," in chapter three, lays the framework to understand the vocabulary, defines concepts which are at the center of shaping the movement of my dance and those that drive my performance as inquiry. These methods and techniques developed side-by-side with moving-thinking through the practice and my reading. I describe somatic methods and techniques of establishing the performance milieu, moving consciously, presencing presence, somatic drives – a sense of existing, awareness, attunement, and empathy –, and writing with mountain, as well as techniques of performance listening, stretching skin, following the path of least resistance and responding to a sense of calling.

Somatics is as a lived and internalized practice, extending the driving concepts of functional and experiential as well as interconnected as a lens through which to observe the world and make sense of its wisdom (poor patterns, somatic amnesia, wonders included). This double ontology – the inner wisdom and the outer wisdom; the functional and the experiential; the solo dance in a movement performance art form and the hermeneutics of cultural history – is met through sensuously moving consciously. The senses here, including the sense-perception afforded from a somatic standpoint, is the bridge between experiencing and knowing. My sensory awareness to moving-thinking research approach further defined itself by way of moving consciously through enchantment, and by way of sensing the felt real and imagined.

The three fieldwork chapters narrate my somadance eco-performances in how the moving-thinking approach activates body-to-theory translation. The process itself requires I stand witness to felt phenomena. In this listening presence practice, I begin the somadance eco-performance research. The theories emerging in place are informed by deep observation, and post-performance, are situated self-reflection – my own experiences as an artist and enmeshed in the lifeworld and explored through various scholarly lens. Each fieldwork case is prefaced by details pertaining to the geolocation and seasonal information, making clear my intent prior to committing to the eco-performance, and identifying the principal experiences of the senses. The first of these four fieldwork chapters is "EcoSomatics Senses, Sensitivities, and Situations" (chapter four), the second is "EcoSomatics Nonsense, Sensitivities, and Situations" (chapter five), and the third one is "Spellbound" (chapter six).

In this first fieldwork chapter, I write of multiple "EcoSomatics Senses, Sensitivities, and Situations," experienced while in the performance research milieu, and via somadance eco-performances with the wind and the water. These include: arriving (at a place) and waiting, introducing myself to the land and being welcomed and then sent off with an exchange – a little bit of me with the land for a little bit of the land with me, walking / swimming in rounds, finding my center inside and outside of me, and orientating differently. The narratives of this chapter are a collection of description from four eco-performances, performed between 2013 and 2019.

"EcoSomatics Nonsense, Sensitivities, and Situations" is a description of experiencing senses in nonsense, by unusual and extraordinary means and encounters during somadance eco-performances. I tell of encounters of place, time, and action that are not supposed to make sense in the modern way of life. I challenge myself to sense the world outside of my habitual sense-perspectives. This inquiry is driven by seeking to reveal what it is that I might be missing by

remaining within my habitual patterns of perceiving the world. These include experiences of sensing cold as texture, remembering thoughts post-performance by listening to memories stored in my body, experiencing geological and elemental time, experiencing not being cold when I ought to be, dancing at the speed of ice, having a sense of being transported through time, stepping into a time portal, and becoming a time portal. These experiences live at the threshold between the real and the imagined. Furthermore, to access and connect deeply into a real and imagined sentience, I practice the suspension of judgment (Husserlian epoqué) which allows for perspectives of time and space to emerge. As an artist-researcher, I make use of these lived experiences to: 1) dance my dance; 2) reconnect to a fundamental relationship with the land.

The Spellbound chapter engages with the poetic living through dancer-land relationship through sensuous mutuality, with performance art action method and techniques which allows access to living through these somatic realms. The writing of this chapter is made possible by way of the writing methodology of *writing with mountain* which allows for a deep and unabashed remembering of somadance eco-performances experiences with the intent to be translated to text. Performance art action methods and techniques to access spellboundness include: affirmation, contour, tension, ease in tension: a story of seeking balance, building trust between the land and I, presencing choices, and keening. This last journey concludes with the grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory emerging from this doctoral research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Somatics (theory) / somatic (adjective) and EcoSomatics (theory) / ecosomatic (adjective), I contend, are non-dualistic body-mind praxes, where movement and thinking enrich one another in a back-and-forth dynamic. In a somatic sense, body and mind are shared experiences.

Our task is the ancient one of looking deeply into our shared experiences, and telling, like recovering addicts, the stories of how we got here, not simply in words, but in gesture, song and image; sharing the way we have healed ourselves and learned to cultivate states of consciousness which transcend everyday banalities. (Johnson *Body, Spirit, and Democracy* 15)

My literature review begins with a quote from *Body, Spirit, and Democracy* by one of the founders of the umbrella praxis termed Somatics. Don Hanlon Johnson's statement on moving, dancing, and Somatics frames my research and this present literature review. Dancing to connect, to heal, and to celebrate is ancient medicine (Mullan "The Movement Cure" 71). Furthermore, dancing to learn is the story of my research performance art. Stories, like theories, can be danced and do emerge through dance, as demonstrated in the literature scholarship I bring together for this chapter. In somadance eco-performance as research, emerging stories are theories lived, and furthermore, supported by an amalgam of established scholarship presently discussed within: Somatics and Phenomenology overlapping with land-based epistemologies defined through Indigenous Anishinabek Natural Law, EcoSomatics, and Ecofeminism. Somatics is a wide area of study and practice, branching out into the therapeutic, pedagogical, epistemological, and movement art fields of knowledge and practice. Each area of expertise further is layered with focused interests: spirituality, wellness, social activism, deprogramming poor somatic (inner body

and social) patterns,¹⁸ overlapping with what Somatics has termed one branch of its field as "EcoSomatics,"¹⁹ and further informed by ecofeminist paradigms.²⁰

My research delves into a nondual body and mind modality by way of practicing theories / theorizing in-practices. In accordance with my moving-thinking driving theoretical framework, I move consciously, collecting somatic evidence emerging from living felt real and imagined sense-perceptions. The literature I review within are not bound to the theoretical concept of *embodiment*. Even as I ground my research on inquiring into my body from within, I have allied with few of the popular contemporary embodied discourses because I found them to be disembodied, as I will demonstrate later. Furthermore, in a literature review supporting doctoral research in the field of Dance Studies, it may be confusing to find so few critical observations of influential dancers' contribution to the History of Dance. I dance as a way to know, from an experiential, first-person standpoint. I have spent more time observing my own body in its many transformations and liminal experiences, than studying those of other dancers. In the critical and self-reflective writing period taking place post-performance research, I have habitually turned to the practical language and theoretical paradigms outside of Dance Studies proper – ecofeminism, land-based epistemologies, and phenomenology – while also employing the Somatics language established vastly by dancers, and documented in the extensive work that Eddy has pulled

18 Particularly, the works of: Barbour's *Dancing Across the Page*, "Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness;" Barbour, Hunter, and Kloetzel's *(Re) Positioning Site Dance*; Eddy's "A Brief History," *Mindful Movement*; Fraleigh's *Back to the Dance Itself, Dancing into Darkness, Moving Consciously*; Fernandes' "Somatic-Performative Research," *The Moving Researcher*, "When Whole (ness) is more;" Fortin's "Looking for Blind Spots;" Hanna's *Bodies in Revolt, Somatics, The Body of Life*; Johnson's *Body, Spirit, and Democracy, Diverse Bodies, Recovering Our Sensual Wisdom*; Mullan "Somatics: Investigating," "The Movement Cure;" Williamson's "Reflections on Phenomenology, Spirituality, Dance and Movement-Based Somatics," and *Dance, Somatics, and Spiritualities*.

19 Particularly, the works of: Fortin's "Looking for Blind Spots;" Fraleigh's *Moving Consciously, Back to the Dance Itself*; and Kupperts' "Letter."

20 Particularly, the works of: Federici's *Caliban and the Witch, Re-Enchanting the World*; Gaard's "Approaches to Sustainable Happiness," *Critical Ecofeminism*, "Ecofeminism Revisited," "New Directions for Ecofeminism," "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism;" and Plumwood's *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*.

together for her book, *Mindful Movement*. This research explores the fundamental relationship between dancer and land, from a first-person's experience. In this research, I focus on the gestures emerging from the experience – no longer with an intent to round them up as material for a later choreography. I listen to their stories unfold at the encounter of the stories unfolding within me, and to share these entangling stories with others. Maracle explains that in her culture, theory is inseparable from stories. Removing stories from theories takes their breath away. In the chapter, "Dancing my Way to Orality," Maracle writes, "[w]e are transformers. We arrived through transformation and our stories are documents of the historical transformations we have experienced" (*Memory Serves* 225). The shape these stories take are communication with nonhuman dancers – the wind and the water –, theories emerging and those overlapping with existing ones, while attending to depatterning my numb sentient modern disembodied mind-body-heart-spirit.

Therefore, my literature review establishes alliance with mover-thinkers, through our overlaps and counter-claims from nearby areas of studies. As I discuss within, other dance scholars have turned to complement their own scholarship with transdisciplinary scholarship, many of whom presently discussed, ally with Somatics, phenomenology and, or feminism. I find affinities with site-based, place-based dancers and eco-performance artists from the recent past until today, each one contributing their unique way of existing / presencing their art at the nexus of their performing place. My contribution to somadance eco-performance as research stands in their midst.

I follow in the Somatics-Phenomenology-East/West lineage of Fraleigh's pedagogy and scholarship. Furthermore, the genre of intuitive dance I practice in my performance as research is termed somadance – a term Fraleigh employs in her pedagogical somatic yoga book titled *Land*

to *Water Yoga*. In my master's research, I explored the Eastern *ma* space-time concept, much informed by Fraleigh's butoh scholarship and her own lived experience of the Japanese praxis.²¹ Having done so, I can see similarities between a *ma* lens and a Somatics-phenomenological lens in how the suspension of judgment (Husserlian epoqué) allows for perspectives of time and space to emerge.²² However, currently, I focus solely on the Western lens Fraleigh teaches, through an examination of the scholarship defining the fields of Somatics and EcoSomatics, and informed by Fraleigh's use of Husserl's concept of *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld), *Erlebnis* (lived through / experience), Simone de Beauvoir's *l'expérience vécue* as a lens making sense of the lived experience as a woman, and through Merleau-Ponty's concept of *le corps propre* (the lived body), in *Phénoménologie de la perception*.

I attend to my driving theoretical framework of moving-thinking through the scholarly voice of Sheets-Johnstone's concept of moving-thinking present in many of her works published but specifically as it informs my own research, in *The Primacy of Movement*, and through a few counter-views problematizing the embodied thought. Moreover, I review definitions of embodiment through Phenomenology, EcoSomatics, and New Materialism. I then attend to Somatics, phenomenology, and ecofeminism in their overlap in situating sense experience.

Lastly, I situate my movement aesthetic within the Western art world, and affiliated with site-based, place-based dancers and eco-performance artists. In order to further situate land-based performing arts, I dedicate a portion of the literature review to a reflection on the overlap of two areas: ecosomatic activism and Anishinabek Natural Law.

21 Particularly in her works: *Dancing Identity*, and *Dancing into Darkness*; and also in the co-authored work, *Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo*.

22 "Being Ma: Moonlight Peeping through the Doorway," published as a chapter contribution in Fraleigh's edited anthology, *Back to the Dance Itself*.

SOMATICS, ECOSOMATICS, AND SOMADANCE

I use EcoSomatics as an epistemological lens through which to make sense of my Western culture of patterning sense awareness apart from existing our relationship with land. The performance as research is in line with what Eddy terms, an "artistry of somatic thinking" (*Mindful Movement* 40), combining aesthetics of thinking with aesthetics of moving. My eco-performance inquiry is guided by tenets of Somatics' praxis shared across schools of Somatics. We begin by taking "the time to breathe," "feel," and "listen to the body" (Eddy "A Brief History" 6). I employ a Somatics praxis of moving-thinking awareness. Moving-thinking is a term recognizable in the works of Sheets-Johnstone.²³ How she defines moving-thinking in *The Primacy of Movement* makes it sound like common sense: "All animals – humans included – could hardly survive much less reproduce if intelligence in action were not instinctive" (442)! Somatics, the intelligence in action, is a functional inquiry,²⁴ experientially understood, and interconnected within and across bodies, and informed by cross-cultural movement philosophies – "for "social health benefits" and "personal somatic inquiry" – which commonly have inspired Somatics practitioners (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 86).

What would become known in the 1960s as Somatics began as a conglomeration of somatic practitioners each with their discrete methods and techniques of healing movement, effectively challenging mind-body dualism. Somatics inquiry emerged alongside other fields of studies concerned with a sense of living, "existentialism," "phenomenology," as well as "through dance and expressionism" (Eddy "A Brief History" 6). While Thomas Hanna coined the term

23 Nevertheless, 'moving-thinking' is a shared theoretical articulation among Somatics' practitioners, particularly in Sheets-Johnstone's the *Primacy of Movement*, but also notably in the works of: Fraleigh's *Moving Consciously*; and Fernandes's *The Moving Researcher*.

24 Sylvie Fortin uses the vocabulary "processual" instead of functional, in her article, "Looking for Blind Spots in Somatics' Evolving Pathways."

somatic education, he named an existing field he observed as having common healing aims, philosophical beliefs and values, and hands-on techniques

(Eddy "A Brief History" 6). My Somatics lineage follows the line of Fraleigh, and before her, Fraleigh's teacher, Moshe Feldenkrais, and his teacher, Rudolf Laban, all pioneers of the Somatics field as we study and practice it today. In *Diverse Bodies, Diverse Practices*, Johnson writes:

Nearly fifty years ago, a handful of us joined in using the Greek-rooted term *somatics* as an umbrella designed to coax together a fragmented community of innovative and revolutionary teachers who had managed to craft methods of sensory awareness, touch, breathing, sounding, and moving to address the healing of old and widespread traumas, and to enhance human functioning. (16)

Hanna had chosen an old term – soma – to name a practice concerned with healing contemporary, and yet age-old inherited traumas. The practice of Somatics inquiry echoes the Somatics practice of healing the body of inhabited trauma. It is a layered nondualist, self-reflective, practical methodology, "responding through movement to external and indeed some internal sensory stimuli" (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 298). My own Somatics movement inquiry stems from an intuitive eco-performance movement research and a curiosity in finding new gestures that began back in 2013. I eventually undertook a somatic education certification through Fraleigh's Eastwest Shin Somatics Institute. My impulse to move in somadance and eco-performance remains spontaneous; however, I am now educated in the functional and experiential processes of somatic education. Somatics philosophy is grounded in its mindful physicality, a lived connection between the various bodily systems and various experiences of time and space – kinesthetic, proprioceptive, and gravitational systems. Somatics inquiry is self-reflective. Sheets-Johnstone states that the Ancient Greek prerogative to γνῶθι σεαυτόν: "[k]now thyself has remained a consistent biological built in; a kinetic corporeal consciousness," an

internalized undercurrent that is at the core of contemporary Somatics (*The Primacy of Movement* 63). My somadance eco-performance inquiry is an actualization of my living, embodied systems sensing the personal and the world, thereby situating myself within. This approach to practicing Somatics inquiry is not frozen into cerebral thinking, but rather, moves thinking through dance, as Amanda Williamson demonstrates in her article, "Reflections on Phenomenology, Spirituality, Dance and Movement-Based Somatics:"

The unlimited possibilities, potentialities, nomadic wanderings, spiraling meanderings and far-off travelling of the moving-imagination, intentionally crafted and explored within moving fluids and tissues of body enable students to loosen contingency, crafting forth new possibilities and freedoms. (292)

Somatics as an epistemological field is moved through dance and moved through words.

Williamson strings evocative words together in the description of her experience of teaching Somatics. In the above citation, Williamson demonstrates words dancing and from that process, one way of the many, for the possibility of body-mind concepts emerging from moving-thinking.

Contemporary somatic education and practices draw influences from a variety of thinking and movement approaches. Somatics (though not yet known by that name) takes root in Western physical therapy in the mid-1800s informed in part by Eastern mindful philosophies and martial arts. "Post-colonial critics" put Somatics on trial (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 18), allying somatic education and practice with colonial practices enforcing homogenization, and normalizing cultural appropriation. And while "transmigration of people and ideas" have moved ideas and practices from one place to another (Eddy "A Brief History" 7), so has "dislocations of people" and the destruction of "passing on old stories" impaired "[o]ur capacity for story-telling" (Johnson *Body, Spirit, And Democracy* 191). Somatics is an imperfect conglomerate of ideas issued from cross-cultural and cross-temporal sources. I resonate with the practice of Somatics scholars that care, and action must be taken to cite lineage and to "develop our works within a

broader, more inclusive social arena" (Johnson *Diverse Bodies* 17). Fraleigh applies a citation practice of lineage, as do so many authors in Somatics, Dance, and Theatre scholarship. From *Dance and the Lived Body* to *Back to the Dance Itself*, she dedicates a section of her introduction to honoring her lineage – her teachers and her teachers' teachers. In *Researching Dance: Evolving Modes of Inquiry*, Fraleigh begins with a chapter intitled, "Family Resemblance" (in Fraleigh and Hanstein 3-21). I also resonate with Johnson, "feeling the enormous creative possibilities of joining with those with radically different perspectives to create a more intricate and interesting social order" (*Diverse Bodies* 2).

And yet, I am mindful of what Eve Tuck and Wang Yang have argued in "Decolonization is not a Metaphor,"²⁵ how the authors warn of *a settler's move to innocence*, problematizing settlers normalizing an "attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity" (2). While Tuck and Yang's settler's move to innocence paradigm identifies problematics of neocolonialism – more of the same colonial structure in the guise of empty promises –, I posit contemporary Somatics problematizes settler's move to innocence as a symptom of somatic amnesia. Understanding the cultural history of settler's move to innocence allows for processes of unwinding and depatterning "philosophies and legal systems based on the doctrines of *terra nullius* and Discovery," and unsettle the legitimate "fantasy of certain

25 When Tuck and Wang write of "land," the reader must understand the difference between the American and the Canadian colonial structure of land dispossession. "Decolonisation is not a Metaphor" is set within the context of the Homestead Act, which The National History Day, The National Archives and Records Administration, and USA Freedom Corps define thus: "enacted during the Civil War in 1862, provided that any adult citizen, or intended citizen, who had never borne arms against the U.S. government could claim 160 acres of surveyed government land. Claimants were required to 'improve' the plot by building a dwelling and cultivating the land" (www.ourdocuments.gov, quotation marks in text). Colonial settler history is re-written to celebrate the discovery of the Americas. *Terra nullius* and the *Doctrine of Discovery* are cultivated through an American foundational Homestead Act; in Canada, it is settled through Land Treaties. In *Unsettling Expectations*, Eva Mackey echoes Tuck and Wang's argument of land back / decolonialism requiring depatterning systems of Indigenous land and Indigenous people's exploitation, in how Mackey terms, "[a] major source of settlers' fantasies of entitlement" (38).

entitlement to Indigenous territory" (Mackey 38, italics in text). In turn, this cultural poor pattern of wellness is inhabited and normalized on the personal plane. In the process of repatterning somatic mutual wellness, I remain mindful that even as I perform with land, I dance on land nurtured by first care-givers. In Canada, Indigenous land is a place where and whence Indigenous peoples have been forbidden the freedom to dance, by the rule of *The Indian Act* of 1895, forbidding ceremonies. The ban was lifted and re-introduced until finally revoked in 1951, but, not in Canadian prisons. Incarcerated Indigenous traditional dancers and those wishing to rekindle with their native American Indigenous cultural healing practices through ceremonial dance, had to wait until the 1980s to be allowed to do so (Joseph). The gap created by the destruction of "passing on old stories" (Johnson *Body, Spirit, And Democracy* 191), impacts people, communities, and cultures. My immediate concern in operating a research through dancing land is to break free from this cycle of oppression. My belief is that within a process of somatic healing, an awareness of settler's responsibility and a motivation for mutual wellness will emerge. I understand and agree with Tuck and Yang's warning that an intention of goodness is not enough to make a practice – however healing – a guarantee for it to turn into an ethical practice. As a settler artist dancing on occupied land, I have an ethical responsibility to situate myself as such. In my article, "Ancestral Bodies Dancing Snow," I describe a concept of guesthood which I employ presently in my doctoral research's fieldwork, informed by a principle of *standing with*, argument made by Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Kim TallBear in, "Standing with and Speaking as Faith." It is my premise that as I somadance eco-perform with wind and water on land, I *perform with*. In Johnson's words, like "recovering addicts" (*Body, Spirit, And Democracy* 15), making our way into a culture devoid of a practice of "cultivat[ing] states of consciousness" (15), re-pathing Somatics wisdom is a radical wake-up call. Williamson proposes

to make meaning from "moving-imagination" (292). My research focuses on my body recovering sensual wisdom. As such, I attend to the felt real and imagined. In this approach, I cultivate states of moving consciously through moving-imagination. And yet, does this silo Somatics as a literary fiction? "What is the value of my own experience of my body in relation to scientific knowledge possessed by experts," Johnson asks, in *Body Recovering our Sensory Wisdom*. And while in my own inquiry, I find no reason to compare arts and sciences' knowledge production value. I aim to share my experience of my body as a methodology for others to access the experience of their own body. Sharing knowledge accumulated from an insider's point of view is possible through practical transmission, the kind of felt real and imagined storytelling, where "theory unravels in moments of experience" (Hahn 7). I understand from Tomie Hahn, Johnson, and Williamson that even as re-pathing our Somatics wisdom can be a private journey, it can nonetheless be a sharing of journeys, one enriched by others' journey and enriching others' journey, by way of "knowledge transmission" (Hahn 1), between one another. This knowledge transmission journey is not one of essentializing shared experiences, but one that can and should be a journey of connecting with shared, overlapping, and different experiences.

I believe one of the most potent contributions of Somatics is the creation of a toolbox of sorts, to navigate tension. Somatics has developed through time, and by spreading its application to a number of areas of interests, tactics, methods and techniques to thrive (dance!) through, how Sylvie Fortin refers to as, "a site of normal conflict" (150). As a Somatics practitioner, I thrive in the complexity of layers intertwining. In the last fieldwork, in chapter six, I write of finding ease in tension. Fraleigh describes paradoxes in dancing through tension, the "expression and meaning emerg[ing] in dance through various kinds of oppositions" (Fraleigh *Dance and the Lived Body* 78). The tension extended to its co-construction, however, is testimony to the

durational learning process Somatics requires. Founder of a somatic-performative research (SPR) model, Ciane Fernandes, clarifies further:

Although they [students of Somatics] need long periods of merger for a complete learning, these techniques do not imply training manners, and even less on modes of gestural colonization. On the contrary, their repatterning principle, common and fundamental to all somatic practices, works precisely on decolonizing usual and limiting expressive manners, and expand our movement possibilities through re-experiencing the phases of the phylogenetics development (evolution of species) and on to genetic development (evolution of the human embryo). ("When Whole (ness) is more" 18-19, parenthesis in text)

The reason why it does take long periods of merger for a complete learning of Somatics' techniques, methods, and praxis, is that the student not only learns to internalize the lesson, but also adapts the learning to her own body. As her own body transforms over time, so does the learning shift. This living, growing Somatics process exists for the student as it exists for the field. Somatics emerges as a Eurocentric praxis:

Jacques Dalcroze, Rudolf Laban and Mary Wigman taught new forms of movement and dance that were based in expressiveness, rhythm and harmony. Their movement schools and programs emerged in diverse European locations to teach new adaptations of expressionistic dance while others explored new approaches to exercise or gymnastics. (Mullan "Somatics: Investigating" 65)

Mary Wigman's expressionist dance was taught to Sondra Fraleigh, her student, and eventually passed on to her own student as a phenomenology of dance. Knowing body and mind of Somatic's Eurocentric history gives access to unwinding its blind spots, allowing its framework to live and to grow with each new generation, thereby serving the somatic needs of each new generations. The ability to unwind its own centric history, learning from it, and moving the broken pieces into patterns adapted to meet the need of the present society. A Somatics repatterning principle works on motivating a part finding its potential, finding a network to access the support from other parts in order to reach its full potential when that is required. And

furthermore, Somatics is a principle conceptualized as a supportive and supported model operating in a "decolonizing" manner, unsettling "usual and limiting expressive manners" to move, and think, and imagine, and play (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 18)! The ability to meet at the intersection of tension(s), ways of living movement in ease, is what makes Somatics a productive field of inquiry. In re-intersecting disparate sections, Somatics reclaims the union of the body and mind, and in recent development, unabashedly reclaims the spiritual as well as the heart.

While my inquiry aims to reconnect to my somatic potential of sensing a relationship with land, I made clear, in chapter one, that I operate through an intent of puncturing through somatic amnesia. The term surfaced to label a sensory-motor's impoverished ability impacting not only our sense of movement but also, our sense of ourselves, through movement: "Our image of who we are, what we can experience, and what we can do is profoundly diminished by sensory-motor amnesia" (Hanna "The Stories of Sensory-Motor Amnesia" part 1). Hanna observed the blocks internalized within the body (*Bodies in Revolt, Somatics, The Body of Life*). Fraleigh speaks of "somatic amnesia, the psychic numbing of the body" as a phenomenon which dancers will go through when they continue to dance even as they sustain an injury because they can no longer feel its pain (*Dancing Identity* 27). Somatic amnesia does not live in a person as if locked away within an isolation chamber. A society suffers from this pain by way of inhabiting somatic amnesia transmitted through generations of practicing somatic violence. I posit EcoSomatics overlaps with Ecofeminism in that the study of the relationship between violence, human, and land can shift from essentialisms, as these fields of knowledge "turn[] to the possibilities that are opened up by genealogical analysis" (Moore "Eco/feminism" 286). Johnson writes of engaging through somatic praxis countering the "virus" that makes our Western culture

ill (*Diverse Bodies* 17). To which Fortin echoes by positing that "despite [S]omatics being an inward-looking practice, it has the potential to question and critique the dominant social discourse and practices of neo-liberal societies" (146). Somatics holds space within its praxis to reflect on the personal within the personal / within the social (historical-cultural-politic). There are many paths that somatic awareness can take to transform the personal within. Dance historian Janice Ross notes that Anna Halprin danced her cancer remission and transformed it into "healing dances for larger communities" (310), ". . . map[ping] psychological well-being and health, through choreography" (300). Of interest to my research, Hanna argued in *Somatics*, that somatic – sensory-motor amnesia – can be unlearned and sensory-motor skills, remembered

Sensory-motor amnesia can be avoided, and it can be reversed. You can escape it by making direct and practical use of two abilities that are the unique properties of the human sensory-motor system: to unlearn what has been learned; and to remember what has been forgotten. ("The Stories of Sensory-Motor Amnesia" part 1)

My working research assumption rests on this unique ability humans have of shaking off the learned, and diving in to recuperate the forgotten. As I move in my somadance eco-performance, I reverse the damage to my sensory-motor amnesia, such that Rebecca Barnstaple demonstrates is possible, through her neuroscientific research which concludes that, "dance has shown potential to foster adaptive neuroplasticity" (Barnstaple et al. 78). Unwinding, clearing, depatterning and repatterning, making choices, and perpetuating, challenging, or letting go of harmful habits "result [in] new behavioral choices . . . of which somatic education is one way to unlock these blocks" (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 7). The personal and the social "[r]elearn to learn through relational movement, . . . a key process for growth and differentiation towards creative autonomy with/in the whole" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 19). Accordingly, I believe I access blockages when I move with curiosity, reawakening sedimented layers of sensory awareness through somadance eco-performance. But what do I make of sense-based

connection with the wind and the water? My expertise is not in measuring empirical degrees to which land is able to sense my intent to connect together, nor even I to her. I do experience, however, a primordial sense of engaging in a call and response exchange during somadance eco-performances. "Our experience may indeed be a variant of these other modes of sensitivity; nevertheless, we cannot, as humans, precisely experience the living sensations of another form," eco-psychologist and phenomenologist, David Abram, writes in *The Spell of the Sensuous* (14). As Abram explains, I do not experience the unique experience of the other sensuous forms. I experience my own lived sensations, in connection with these other forms living through their own modes of sensitivity.

This is where my felt real and imagined somatic, sensory awareness approach makes its brave entry on the academic research stage. Throughout my fieldwork narration, I write of lived experiences in terms of spirited, magical, wonders / wonderment, enchanted, and spellboundness. Italian feminist Federici argues that a disenchantment of our relationship to the world has led to a blockage. "This 'blockage' has many sources that prevent the misery we experience in everyday life from turning into transformative action" (*Re-Enchanting the World* 188). For Abram,

Magic, then, in its perhaps most primordial sense, is the experience of existing in a world made up of multiple intelligences, the intuition that every form one perceives – from the swallow swooping overhead to the fly on a blade of grass, and indeed the blade of grass itself – is an *experiencing* form, an entity with its own predilections and sensations, albeit sensations that are very different from our own. (9-10, italics in text)

Blackie, writes that, "[E]ven here in the 'modern' West, I think that many of us – whether we are aware of it or not, or would admit it publicly or not – still retain a residue of this aspect of *participation mystique*" (*The Enchanted Life* 49, emphasis in text). For Federici, Abram, and Blackie, enchantment is a state of being alert in the world. This state of alertness to the sentience of the world – sacred, mystical, magical, enchanted – is the thread that weaves us, land and

people, into a shared web of life: "The only thing sacred about the earth is that we can help make and care for it" (Federici *Re-Enchanting the World* xvii). My fieldwork descriptions are full of testimonials of the wonder and the enchantment, what I also term magic, at times. I demonstrate "participation mystique" (Blackie *The Enchanted Life* 49), through evocative writing informed by concepts found within ecofeminism, Somatics, and phenomenology. This manner of phenomenological writing is "attempting to shrink the distance between us – myself the writer, and you the reader," writes Karen Barbour (*Dancing Across the Page* 101). Phenomenological writing is descriptive. In its description, it portrays lived experiences in a way that is satisfying for the writer to taste the experience anew.

This way of re-living *anew* a prior lived experience in its specificity, different than its original experience, is what makes research *new*. In this way, I stand in opposition to the "repeatable" principle which Ben Spatz argues as the basis for his technique in the process of practice as research. In "Embodied research," Spatz writes:

Practice is a fundamental concept of embodied research, but it is not repeatable. Each moment of practice is unique. To begin framing a research project, we therefore need to distinguish practice from technique. In this context, technique refers to the knowledge that links one practice to another. The most important feature of technique is that it is repeatable. Thinking about technique allows us to compare different moments of practice with each other. (7)

Spatz's definition of technique is outcome-based, while Somatics serves an aesthetic expression but in its application, it is process-based. I argue that the most important feature of Somatics technique is that it will grow with the practice, a practice that is "fundamental" to "embodied research" (7). Even as repetition forms the basis of contemporary evidence-based research, I posit rigor is not achieved through stifling life, but rather, through the ability to move in time with its ever-morphing soma. In this way, research is unpredictable in parts because techniques

have growth adaptability, and yet, research is able to demonstrate the full potential of a lived experience. Instead of repetition, I posit drawing from a lived fund of lived experiences.

Techniques, too, are alive. Techniques are repeated and repeatable but always adaptable and indeed, each body will adapt the technique with an aim to match the artistic and form's desired aesthetic. A technique then, can be seen as an expression of what is intuitively, somatically and sensuously, internalized. Federici writes at length of the rationalist and empiricist schools that will contribute to crushing sense-based intuition and land-based wisdom – making the sensible unintelligible. Federici argues that, bound by a closed system of compartmentalization, labeling, and repetition, "the body emerged as the main protagonist in these medical scenes" though existing as "the degraded conception they [rationalists and empiricists] formed of it" (Federici *Caliban and the Witch* 139):

Descartes and Hobbes express two different projects in regard to corporeal reality. In Descartes, the reduction of the body to mechanical matter allows for the development of mechanisms of self-management that make the body the subject of the will. In Hobbes, by contrast, the mechanization of the body justifies the total submission of the individual to the power of the state. (140)

But "the body is not a set of definitional limits or mechanical processes" (Fraleigh *Dancing Identity* 57). Unlike Hobbes, Locke, and Hume who move through research by way of observing repeated patterns (Wierzbicka), and unlike Spatz who grounds research within a process where technique must be repeated and repeatable, my research lens observes the familiar ordinary and the extraordinary. A phenomenological, enchanted and wonderment approach to research is no less rigorous and yet much more adaptable than a method of bound repetition. Indeed, for Somatics, ever more so when informed by a phenomenological lens, techniques are known and mastered, but, not mechanically imposed to the submissive body. Soma, the body alive, may be suffering from an injury on this day, in which case, techniques have to be adapted to meet the

full potential of the soma-body without injuring it further. Or, the soma-body may be in a state of exalted joy which makes it perhaps free and boundless (in Laban's Movement Analysis' language), and in this state, will benefit from a measure of adaptive techniques, some of which will be grounding techniques. Because techniques must adapt to the lived experience of today's body and of today's context, a somatic practitioner exists in a state of hyper-awareness to its own body and to the practice of the gamut of techniques available to her. A technique that is lived, somatically listens to the body of the dancer and the life of the land (see: chapter three). This approach to storying theory is what makes a repeatable technique a *cul de sac* for Somatics praxis. In Somatics view, technique is not mechanical; technique is lived.

Furthermore, a phenomenology of writing is a form of evocative writing that is useful in framing enchanted stories for readers who might never have had the experience of a somatic, enchanted encounter. Therein lays the evidence of a phenomenologically lived somatic research: the reader / audience lives the writing and makes senses of it through her own funds of lived experiences – felt real and imagined (van Manen "Phenomenology in its Original Sense," *Phenomenology of Practice*). This form of writing might alert readers to experiences of a lived enchantment nature. The writing of dance is an act of trusting the imagination combined with a skill to flavour words so that they taste like they feel in the body. Fraleigh describes this flavoring I seek in describing my experiencing form trusting the enchanting nature, as a philosophy in movement, "the metaphysical starting point for our relationship to the world" (*Dancing Identity* 10). Somatics' perspective of the body within is about connection, consciousness, and experience. In his chapter contribution to *Dance, Somatics and Spiritualities*, Ray Eliot Schwartz writes:

Somatics is like magic. Magic and Somatics concern themselves with connection, consciousness and experience. When one engages in magical or somatic practice, one activates spirit in the world, and this can be a very powerful thing. (311)

Framing evidence of lived encounters as spirited insights and magical intuition is a hard sell within the academy unless one is a dedicated scholar of religious studies or folk history. In the introduction to *Dance, Somatics, and Spiritualities*, co-editor Williamson further develops the problematic of *spirituality* as a historical and politically fraught concept:

Historically the word [spirituality] is associated with socio-cultural abuses, such as the exclusion and subordination of women. It therefore is naturally subject to scrutiny and suspicion in a field where women's voices are strong, and where the fleshy body is so visible and central in academic discourse. (Williamson, Amanda, Glenna Batson, and Sarah Whatley xxviii)

Scrutiny and suspicion have done away with an enchanted worldview, as Williamson cites presently, and as Federici demonstrates at length in *Caliban and The Witch*. Furthermore, phenomenologist Max van Manen reiterates that the pathos of a phenomenological method allows "being swept up in a spell of wonder about phenomena as they appear, show, present, or give themselves to us" (*Phenomenology of Practice* 26). Ever attuned to life, and to phenomenology, Fraleigh reminds us to remain curious and to "invite surprise in the form of unexpected ideas or insights" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 17). In this approach, Fraleigh echoes the pathos that a phenomenological method of moving along through amazement and wonder suspending judgement allows (van Manen *Phenomenology of Practice* 47). Site dance is also a genre of movement research creation which takes place where enchantment and wonder generate discoveries. Barbour, Hunter, and Kloetzel write in the Introduction chapter of *(Re)Positioning Site Dance*: "In bracketing a lived experience such as dancing in a site, dance phenomenologists attempt to suspend their common interpretations and pay attention to what may be 'taken-for-granted'" (12). And while suspending judgement allows us to experience

wonders, there is no need to seek beyond the ordinary a spectacular landscape to perform with because "the most ordinary experience may bring us to a sense of wonder" (van Manen *Phenomenology of Practice* 31). In their article, "Introduction: The Practice of Enchantment: Strange Allures," feminists Ann Burlein and Orr situate the taboo of marveling at the extraordinary, at the "so-called modern passage to disenchantment" (15), echoing the main argument Federici builds on in her book, *Re-Enchanting the World*. Burlein and Orr argue that the "extra-ordinary from the ordinary," the "irrational from rational," and the "spiritual from material" have been cultivated apart (15). The co-authors aim to present:

. . . enchantment as an invitation to think hard and differently about the force of all that which escapes our critical apparatus, including our own everyday escape routes that nourish our dream bodies, while perhaps never satisfying our deepest hungers for change or justice. (22)

"To nourish our dream body" (22), aligns with Williamson's "moving-imagination" paradigm (292). It also is a motivation for me to continue plodding along a rigid academic system with dreams of nourishing my body-mind-spirit-heart, for what I expect will turn out to be a contribution to research that will become available to those who dream of such unsettling, enchanted scholarship. The simply ordinary, the enchanted and the extraordinary will return again and again in my fieldwork narratives and self-reflections.

ECOSOMATICS

A feminist standpoint frames research observation from "how a person is positioned in the world" (Fortin 146). This feminist standpoint Fortin suggests informs an ecosomatic view of the lifeworld, making it appealing to me as an inquiry praxis because it frames the place of my somadance eco-performance as research in an existential felt real and imagined place.

EcoSomatics allies with ecofeminism in making "nature political" and challenges specifically the

ideology of *master identity* which "conceives of nature as a wife or subordinate other" (Plumwood 3). Peace activist and environmentalist Satish Kumar further defines in *Soil, Soul, Society*, the war against nature in terms of: "[T]his arrogant world view [which] led to the demise of reciprocal, mutual, respectful, reverential and spiritual relationships between humans and the rest of nature" (ch. 1). The social advocacy aim of EcoSomatics may be said to be one of reparation to nature and to women. By framing EcoSomatics this way, I invite further development of this area of study towards repatterning a relationship to the land – one that engages in direct action against somatic amnesia. In Somatics, the *eco* is brought back to its relationship within sense awareness:

Put simply, Somatics is about the awareness of both our internal milieu, our external milieu, and the reciprocal action between the two, including the belief that our body and planet share the same living process (both need oxygen, water, etc.). (Fortin 148, parenthesis in text)

Though I find the prefix *eco* superfluous in practice, in theory it is necessary in that it focuses on the fundamental connection to an ecological consciousness, "raising awareness of ecological interconnectedness" (Fortin 148). It may be that an EcoSomatics philosophy edges toward *a settler's move to innocence* (Tuck and Yang), in how Fortin defines its quotidian practice through "leaving room for self-forgiveness" (150). Indeed, disability culture activist and community performance artist Petra Kuppers scrutinizes EcoSomatics' "undertones of neoliberal self-care," "a bit New Age-y," what can transcend as "White settler appropriation of Indigenous practices" (6). And yet, Kuppers admits to the entanglement between settlers and land, situating herself within its tension, and practicing an approach of EcoSomatics through her "somatic sensing that invites political and cultural knowledges" (6). Ecosomatic awareness manifests in multiple arrangements – education, somadance, Somatics as research, and in the everyday life as well (Fortin 148). As a research modality, ecosomatic awareness informs my writing methodology,

writing with mountain, which I describe in chapter one and chapter three. Abram speaks of the "experiencing form" (10), how I situate the sensing body as the site of research, an EcoSomatics-based movement performance artist's research where my somatic momentum drive emerges from ". . . a kind of pulsing of everyone and everything in themselves in interaction / integration, beyond power relationships or body(ies)" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 14).

PHENOMENOLOGY, SOMATICS, AND ECOFEMINISM

This literature review is an abridged description of the lifeworld, a pillar of Husserl's phenomenological articulation. Scholars have dedicated a lifetime of hermeneutic engagement with the concept of *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) itself. In this section, I introduce my coming to the concept of *Lebenswelt*, Somatics and lifeworld, and lifeworld and spirituality.

My primary reference in phenomenology is Husserl, especially from his last writing, *Die Krisis* (1936) ("Vienna Lecture" ch. 73); my primary reference in Somatics-phenomenology is Fraleigh, especially in *Back to the Dance Itself*; and my primary reference in ecofeminism is Plumwood by way of her landmark *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. Phenomenology, Somatics, and ecofeminism are not different lens speaking in the same way on one and the same idea. As I employ their lens, I make sense of how each field of study shares similarities and overlaps with one another, in their contextualizing processes and encounters. By way of a phenomenological lens, I imagine really living in-my-body the experience of dancing with wings, even as I am not a bird; by way of a Somatics lens, I move my imagined wings in ways that activate sensory awareness throughout my body; and by way of an ecofeminist lens, I allow the continuity between my being a wingless human and witnessing birds I see through the window of my apartment, to nourish my care for mutual wellness. With all three lenses, I move my body in dance and my thoughts on paper. As I somadance eco-perform, each of these lenses

provides theories I imagine and embody during the fieldwork. Not all of these lenses carry throughout an experience. But all of these lenses are called on, at one time or another throughout an experience. Furthermore, phenomenology, Somatics, and ecofeminism make productive the idea of difference. On the premise that my work builds on learning from within as much as learning from encounters – with wind and water –, the overlaps these fields of study contribute to my research are, in part, the flexibility to express in recognizable academic language, what is happening! Each field of study comes from its own knowledge lineage. However, they all address making sense of rifts, breaks, chasms and enfolding, and differences in a way that each makes productive the patterns they observe in life and nature (environment) so as to make the parts work together for the better good of the whole – and this happens, I observe, without necessitating the removal of a dangling part to make the whole *make sense*, or by necessitating flattening differences into a homogeneous whole. Phenomenology, Somatics, and ecofeminism promote the idea of entanglement as an aim for the self/body/human to reach its full potential in the world.

Furthermore, a Husserlian *Lebenswelt* concept makes sense in my movement-based research praxis as an idea of a place where my somatic, lived body processes transformation within itself. This happens because in Husserl's lifeworld phenomenology, the lived body is always in a state of transformation – from receiving information to processing it and to expressing its outcome. This lived body will encounter other lived bodies (and their lifeworlds). Encounters are experienced through the lived body. This intra-action (within-lifeworld) and inter-action (between lifeworlds) can be framed in Somatics' terms as the experience of internal stimuli and the experience of external stimuli. What emerges is an aesthetic language via movement, a making-sense / making-meaning of the transformation. There we have it, the

moving-thinking theory unites as movements and thoughts within a phenomenal and Somatics articulation.

Lifeworld is a concept that binds the lived experience of a lived body to its environment (including history and culture) and moreover, a lived body in a process of coming to its full potential. Note that my use of lifeworld is informed by how Fraleigh uses it in combination with Somatics. Therefore, in Somatics, lifeworld is a concept that binds the lived experience of one (lived body) to its environment (including history and culture) and moreover, a lived body in a process of coming to its full *somatic* potential. Furthermore, in Husserl's last writing published in English as the *Vienna Lecture* (ch. 73) in *Die Krisis* (1936), the philosopher included an idea of experiential cross-temporality by way of including culture and history. For this, he was harshly criticized. Even as he set clearly that souls are bound within the corporeal, Husserl makes a clear distinction between the lifeworld and the world of spirituality ("Vienna Lecture" ch. 73). Somatics accepts and indeed works with spirituality, especially as a catalyst for transformation. Therefore, I add the world of myths – the Otherworld – which is a world existing among us, the lifeworld-people. Otherworld is populated by the unseen and yet living beings within a world of myths (Blackie *If Women Rose Rooted, The Enchanted Life*). The lifeworld-Otherworld [capital O in the original spelling by Blackie] meets the contemporary, functional place where Somatics lives the body-mind-spirit and its cultural history. It is not unreasonable to include the spiritual dimension in the world of life since the lived enchantment, perception through a "wonder" lens is part of the Husserlian phenomenology. I write in a phenomenology of practice of my somadance eco-performance apprenticeship with wind and water. My performance milieu sets the stage for a lifeworld dimension that lasts the length of the time where and when I engage in co-dancing the

land. Phenomenologist Max van Manen describes "[w]onder and the [p]henomenological [q]uestion" as:

Doing phenomenology is becoming infected with a certain pathos that creates an openness to the world and a wondering attentiveness that is the trigger for phenomenological inquiry. But that pathos still has to be disciplined to become productive phenomenological reflection. (*Phenomenology of Practice* 36)

I posit that Somatics, and especially EcoSomatics inquiry of the sense-based, land-based pathos provides this discipline to become productive reflection. Indeed, the reflection is moved through the body, processed as gestures for the time of a dance, and post-performance, written down as moving-thinking reflection. An openness to wonder allows for the inquiry of phenomena populating the lifeworld-Otherworld existing, and the lifeworld-Otherworld activated and accessed for the time of a co-dance with wind and water.

A phenomenology of lifeworld argues having to adapt to differences, and so does ecofeminism. In phenomenology, it is done through transformational processes within; in ecofeminism, it is done by imagining continuity beyond duality. Both worlds are capable of meeting differences. The lifeworld is a place where adaptation takes place within the lifeworld, and by way of meeting another lifeworld. Transformation is aimed at a state of consciousness. Plumwood's concept of continuity speaks of two differences meeting, and without breaking the circle of life, requires adapting enough to hold a common, shared world. The phenomenological model and the ecofeminist model are unlike one another, and yet, being differently experienced, these models of existing operate in a manner with which ability and adaptation orient on the good of both (or all) for the good of the one (self/body/human) and the whole of which it is a part of.²⁶

²⁶ It bears clarifying that the better good is the state of existing to its full somatic expression, which in phenomenological term is the lived body, and in somatic terms, the soma-body.

Ecofeminism keeps phenomenology in check by way of feminist standpoints reclaiming the woman's body-experience within the concept of the lived body. A phenomenology of the lifeworld, Somatics, and subsequently, ecofeminism movements rose to question social crisis "rooted in the human body" (Johnson *Diverse Bodies* 14). But of what body? Feminists, Dance, and Somatics scholars criticize phenomenology for its patriarchal stance.²⁷ In her "Feminist Phenomenology Manifesto" chapter included in the anthology of the *Feminist Phenomenology Futures*, Helen Fielding explains that the task of feminist phenomenology is grounded on the advantage of being:

. . . well positioned to take a leading role, not simply in terms of consolidating existing feminist methodologies but also in engaging in the difficult task of thinking through the actual in the fullness of its relational, agential, ontological experiential, and fleshy being, thereby opening up future possibilities (vii).

Fielding builds on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's contribution to the paradigm of the *enfolded flesh* experience, the "embodied perception underl[y]ing the production of knowledge and grounds politics" (Fielding ix). Fielding writes of "fullness" in terms of relationality (vii), how I employ Somatics to complete a phenomenology of the lived body.

Latina feminist phenomenologist Marina Ortega notes that even as the contribution from Merleau-Ponty aims at the importance of investigating the phenomenal body, the embodied philosophy falls short of describing the everyday life and struggles of "[p]eople of color, immigrants, exiles, border dwellers, those at the margins . . ." (1). Ortega proposes paying attention to: "the lived experience," the "embodied everyday experience," "intermeshdness of race, sex, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, age, ethnicity, and so on," contesting "the white male experience as the norm" (10). By advocating on behalf of non-white bodies, Ortega

²⁷ Particularly, in the works of: Barbour's "Dancing Epistemology, Situating Feminist Analysis;" and Fielding and Olkowski's *Feminist Phenomenology Futures*.

clarifies the body as political, an "[a]ttunement to historical and cultural processes," and denounces a homogenization of the body's experience (10). Therefore, within lifeworld, a concept that binds the lived experience of a lived body to its environment (including history and culture) and moreover, a lived body in a process of coming to its full potential, the body is not a universal body experience.

LIFEWORLD, LIVED EXPERIENCE, AND THE LIVED BODY THROUGH A SOMATICS LENS

Lifeworld is a place to be; a place to be seen; a place to *see* through – a worldview for my eco-performance as research, where 'view' is perceived as felt real and imagined.

When facilitating somatically engaged movement, for example, one does not facilitate through words and theories alone, but rather through lived experience, alone and with others, and often in bodily silence. (Williamson 281)

The lived experience of my somatic body engaged in dancing with wind and water, experiences transformation. My lived body will experience the transformation of wind and water. This relationality is a form of bodily silence communion. Moving in stillness, the act of attending to ice-time for example (see: chapter five), or the act of attending to waiting (see: chapter four), are moments of meeting without words, lifeworlds, in their own time / space / place / readiness. As the experience of dancing expresses "livingness" (Fraleigh *Dance and the Lived Body* 172), so too can a lived experience be experienced, transformed within one's lifeworld and transmittable to other lifeworlds. Furthermore, Husserl places intuition and moving into consciousness as a theoretical articulation of suspension of judgement, the process of which takes place within a lifeworld ("Vienna Lecture" ch. 73). This processual pre-verbal, nonsense naiveness leading into the conscious meaning making sense, overlaps with the methodology of Somatics' processes. The perpetual *in-movement* transformation process with which Husserl envisions lifeworld

begets a direct sensory awareness in movement, how in movement-based somatic arts, "our intentions towards the natural world" forge "consciousness" otherwise said as "enworlding" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 109). It is through this enworlding of the personal and the natural in movement, that the "values of the society in which we live penetrate the complex intermeshing of our sensing, feeling, moving and thinking" (Fortin 146). In movement taking place in lifeworld, we access the stratum of culture and history, dancing with, through and beyond limits and constraints, until we transform to meet present horizons. Lifeworld makes sense of adapting to the present.

The concept of the lived world is enriched by Fraleigh's dance and somatic scholarship, always grounded in the original Husserlian *Lebenswelt* concept, but nevertheless, firmly demonstrated and lived, through the experience of moving through life and world(s) by way of existing the worldview, the place / presence of dance and thoughts (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 13). The disposition towards a phenomenological lifeworld articulation employed by many of us who dance as a manifesto to the quality of life stems from having the *room to move* – body-mind-spirit-heart – that a phenomenological method of writing allows, and that being in movement affords. Lifeworld can be described through words, and by extension, dances' lived experiences taking place in the lifeworld can be narrated onto text. The overlap with the phenomenological lifeworld and the Somatics practice further comes together through the repatterning possibilities.

EXPERIENCE – ERLEBNIS

"Experience is one language and culture-specific interpretation of reality," writes linguist Anna Wierzbicka (28). It remains that the cultural experience is lived on the personal level even as it also is personally situated in the lifeworld (culture-specific reality). In this way, experience is

"experiential concreteness, vividness, and descriptive with details" (van Manen "Phenomenology of Practice" 810). A lived experience is an open-ended experience because more details can emerge with each remembering. The German verb *Erleben* literally means "'living through something' – lived experience (*Erlebnis*) is an active and passive 'living through' of experience" (810). These kinds of experiences we live through on a daily basis, are part of living a human existence, Scott Churchill writes in "Phenomenology" (39). And the significance of the idea of lived experience, for van Manen, is that "we can ask the basic phenomenological question, 'What is this (primal) experience like?'" ("Phenomenology in its Original Sense" 811) Somatics through movement art is aptly framed within the phenomenological articulation of the lifeworld because of its primal aliveness. *Living through* awakens our potential for transformation. The body takes the shape of the transformation through somadance – a somatic architecture –, and the moving-thinking harmonizes through experiencing layers of perspectives and levels of intellectual synthesis available in the sediments, and the transformational process of the lifeworld.

De Beauvoir, pioneer of modern feminism, situates *l'expérience vécue de la femme* from the perspective of the lived experience, from the woman's lived experience as a woman. *L'expérience vécue (Le deuxième sexe II)* is the title of the original work in French, published the same year as the second volume to the landmark work *Le deuxième sexe I*, published in 1949. English integral translations combine both of these works under *The Second Sex*. De Beauvoir's treatise on women is a profound and informed critique of the place of 'women' in a men's world; the focus of *l'expérience vécue* takes this experience from the perspective of the woman. The woman is multi-faceted; each experience is unique. The lived experience of a woman is not only different from one woman to another woman, but also from what the men believe / expect women's experience to be. In de Beauvoir's case study of *Sainte Thérèse et les sœurs mineures*

(*La mystique* ch. 8), de Beauvoir describes a woman in the exercise of reclaiming the experience of being a woman – albeit not in her sexual capacity, but rather in a narcissistic capacity where the experience of life is returned to her through being seen / perceived in the manner in which she demands as lovers do of / to each other:

La femme cherche d'abord dans l'amour divin, ce que l'amoureuse demande à celui de l'homme: l'apothéose de son narcissisme; c'est pour elle une miraculeuse aubaine que ce souverain regard attentivement, amoureuxment fixé sur elle. (ch. 8)²⁸

This framework of the lived experience is informed by the works of the transcendental phenomenology of the *Leib*, Husserl's *experience-able* body, in how the French philosophers of the era discussed an enlarged body paradigm, that which is perceived as well as perceivable – the premise of Merleau-Ponty's lived body paradigm. In doing so, de Beauvoir calls on the "redemption" of the female's social image / identity / authority within society itself (ch. 8). She places the experience of *woman* on par with the place *man* holds in the total experience of a society (lifeworld) which has erased a place for anyone *not man*. The lived experience defined by de Beauvoir is more than an experience of the phenomenal body, it is also an experience of a political body of flesh, made visible to herself (*woman*) and to the *man*. Not only is de Beauvoir's lived experience of the lived body undeniably sentient, but it is also a body that claims to be seen not under a gaze simply, but as a statement of revealing itself to herself and to the world as herself.²⁹

Echoes of de Beauvoir can be traced in the works of the Somatics scholars I employ in this literature review. In *Moving Toward Life*, Halprin challenges a culture of disbelief vis-à-vis the so-called irrational, choosing to write personal messages to the readers of her book: "As you

28 English translation: "The woman seeks first in divine love, what the lover asks of that of man: the apotheosis of her narcissism; it is a miraculous godsend for her that this sovereign gaze is attentively, lovingly fixed on her."

29 The French original statement spells "narcissism," but I believe a 2021 reformulated language would elect to spell 'sovereign' (1986 579 loc 9254).

read this, you may wonder, what is a *Myth*?" (128). Regarding her development of the "Myth," score for *Trance Dance*, Halprin writes in *Moving Toward Life*, that "*Myth*" emerges from "collective energy and group consciousness" (128). She reassures the readers of the potential of the lived experience. In the description note of trance dancing; she writes, "[*Myth*] will happen, and when it does, you will know" (128). By way of exercising the body to move through myths, Halprin invites the lived experience of the lived body to release and reveal the myth that is locked within. The *trance dance* exercises give access to the phenomenal lived body through direct means of experiencing the body. The body's experience of itself and of its lifeworld is not only through a gaze, but through sense awareness activating the many processes that makes a body dance. Its result is the body knowledgeable of its own experience through having experienced itself.

In the words of de Beauvoir, a narcissist body politics means how I would reframe this claim as the sovereign body politic. In Halprin's myth making lived experience, the pen our body dances, empowers us to claim our sovereign (narcissist) body. If we, who experience these emerging stories, do not advocate for our embodied voice to be heard, then the patriarchal and anthropocentric culture will move unchallenged along their myth-making narrative. Somatic amnesia risks numbing. Blackie reminds us that "Indigenous cultures around the world may still respect and revere the feminine, but we, Western women lost control of our stories a long time ago" (*If Women Rose Rooted* 5). I believe it is especially urgent to affirm lived bodies experiences, writing new stories to reclaim body-mind-spirit-heart sovereignty.

LIVED BODY – LEIB – LE CORPS PROPRIÉ

My theoretical ground for this research is through moving-thinking, through depatterning my assumed somatic amnesia, the legacy of Western culture 'de-sentient-ing' which has devalued

and disempowering the lived body. But what is the *lived* body? In Anglo-English scholarship, the lived body is thought of as an embodied concept arising from a phenomenological Husserlian articulation (*Leib*), interpreted and enlarged by French phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty (*le corps propre*), and into the debate over situating the concept of *embodiedness* as discussed in diverse current scholarship. I explain within this literature review, why this amalgam of cross-cultural translation is in itself, problematic. The lived body I speak of when describing my fieldwork is a phenomenological concept enriched by Somatics. The body alive, in Fraleigh's scholarship, continues to evolve in its definition – from her landmark work in the late 1980's, *Dance and the Lived Body*, to her most recent work, *Back to the Dance Itself*. Fraleigh constantly explores the livingness quality and its potential through the means of the practicing dancer, the mover's heightened sensory awareness tied with the intent to move along an artistic expression of the movement. Often, the lived body paradigm is mindfully moved through the boundaries of a delimited body, its patterned body – cultural, personal, and dance training. But the experience of a lived body can be simply a mover using her full potential to move in time and space with her own sense of the body's aliveness in a world alive. The contribution to the phenomenological concept of a lived body through the scholarship of Fraleigh is further informed by her ability to shift the Western perspective of time-place-body to a lived experience of an Eastern glimpse into a perspective of time-place body and a lived experience of bodies living with chronic illness which oriented Fraleigh's work in many ways; and moreover, the spiritual lived body much informed by attending to the wonders of a life lived in diverse environments of potent magic.

What Husserl posited as the lived body is wholly embodied in the lifeworld, made of movement and gifted with ability, ongoing, morphic, and connected to the earth as also the making and doing of human production. (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 21)

In a Somatics view of the lifeworld, the ongoing, morphic, and connected to the earth's live body is informed by way of the Husserlian idea of the lived body: *Leib* (German: body). In French phenomenology, *Leib* is translated as *le corps propre*. In *Die Krisis* (1936), the body arrives at its communal definition:

Personal life means living communalized as 'I' and 'we' within a community-horizon, and this in communities of various simple or stratified forms such as family, nation, supranational community. ("The Vienna Lecture" ch. 73)

The idea of the 'I's metamorphosis into a communalized 'we' has informed a plurality of theoretical claims, some of which I engage with, shortly. Prior, I wish to bring in the concept of a non-Anglo-English cultural interpretation of the *I* communalized as *we* informed by Opaskwayak Cree scholar, Shawn Wilson, in *Research is Ceremony*. Wilson situates Western culture's understanding of the relationship between learning and knowledge of nature as an "individual" quest (38). In an Indigenous land-based epistemology, "[research] is seen as belonging to the cosmos of which we are a part and where researchers are only the interpreters of this knowledge" (38). Shortly, I come back to an Indigenous tradition of a communalized world, through the writing of Borrows, how Wilson speaks of land-based epistemology from a perspective of mutuality. I make this caveat into non-Western culture understanding the relationship to research because even as Husserl sets the "I" as "we" ("Vienna Lecture" ch. 73), I critique the phenomenological standpoint in which the holder of this research is inferred to be the researcher. Let us walk through mid-twentieth century development of Western culture (re)appropriating concepts of entanglements in the philosophy of the body and its world.

Later, Merleau-Ponty broke new conceptual ground in his use of the term of the *entrelacs* (chiasm / enfold / fold) to describe bodily capacities of perceptual reversibility, an ability concerned with the intertwining of phenomena such as touching and being touched, perceiving

and conceiving of the visible and the invisible, and the responsive enmeshment of the body and its world (*Phénoménologie de la perception, Sens et nonsense, Le visible et l'invisible*). In my own fieldwork, the enfolded bodily lived experience describes my dancing at the speed of ice (see: chapter five). My body is transformed by the sense of the other's body, and the reverse happens too. *Le corps propre*, or, *le corps phénoménal* will be further developed by Merleau-Ponty in his landmark *Phénoménologie de la perception*, in 1945. Merleau-Ponty's signature contribution to the concept of embodiment in phenomenology is translated in English as the concept of the *lived body*, and further enlarged in Anglo-English scholarship as concepts of the vibrant, energetic body in new materialism through Bennett (*Vibrant Matter*), Hunter ("Sharing the Site"), Deleuze (*Francis Bacon, logique de la sensation*), and Deleuze and Guattari ("The Body without Organ"). In brief, the Husserlian concept of the transcendental's lived body exists as the *personal* within its *cultural* and *historical* body ("Vienna Lecture" ch. 73). Merleau-Ponty enlarged Husserl's perception of the *Leib* with the term of *le corps propre* (of its own / of itself / knowledgeable of its own self within the world), a phenomenal body with potential to reach beyond the perceptual visible, beyond the touch.

'Soma and the lived body' is a somatic cosmological approach to an embodiment discourse. The somatic body is a process, one that is defined by Somatics developmental techniques. In Somatics, the body is not perfect, nor set, nor expected to be one set of defined theories. It is a body encouraged – through practice, techniques, education, healing – to move into its own full potential. The somatic body, then, is never a final achievement, but rather a life-long metamorphic experience. In Somatics, the lived body is sentient and sensorially aware. The body aware of itself, aware of its environment, aware of its own body in movement, and moving in space is more than a mechanical body. It is more than a motor sensory body. Ross speaks of

Halprin's contribution in challenging body and mind dualism: "Her work grapples with the prevalent mechanical, reductive view of bodies in Western culture . . ." (Ross xvi). What somatics practitioners do is to ". . . celebrat[e] 'the body' as a thing, a temple, an instrument, an erotic force, a part of nature, a construct, a living organism, and a social being," such that Richard Schechner writes of Halprin's relationship to the body, in his "Foreword" chapter of Ross's *Anna Halprin: Experience as Dance* (x).

Soma in its multiple roots is a bodily-based experience involving acts of sharing, transformation, healing, and celebration. Soma is a term found in the Bible (Galston). *Soma* was identified in the New Testament by Hanna; the Greek word σῶμα very soon was interpreted by Somatic practitioners-scholars thus: "(I) the body, and (II) the body regulated from within" (Fraleigh 2015 xx); "body in its completeness" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 12); "the living body in its wholeness" (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 6), "relating it to the kinds of work that numerous people were doing with bringing awareness to the process of living [a first-person experience of its] human body" (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 5); "*somatikos* (lived body) as the body experienced and regulated internally" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 12), "the 'living body' as distinct from 'body', emphasiz[es] the soma's alive and changing status as a process, rather than an object" (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 6). The Apostle Paul calls σῶμα [soma] the risen body, πνευματικόν soma-pneumatikon, or, a breath-body (in I Corinthians 15:44, Galston). Soma Veda meaning "inspiration," "motivating force," Ciane Fernandes observes, corresponds with what Laban terms "*Antrieb* – momentum or internal impulse" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 14).³⁰

³⁰ "*Antrieb* translates into English as effort, not with the sense of exertion, but of expressiveness or expressive dynamics" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 14). Fernandes choses a cultural translation, terming *Antrieb* as momentum or internal impulse.

I understand the soma in its ancestral form of conscious awareness, a transferable yet formless spark, a consciousness that is visible by its display of qualitative sentient-spirited-inquisitive aliveness. It is more than a textual understanding; it is how I live my soma's experience. Experiencing the consciousness of the body as a sort of somatic spark – *Antrieb / soma ' lived body living through an experience within the lifeworld* – is an experience shared across Somatics and phenomenologist.

In my fieldwork research, I move in time and space with the dance already existing its own lifeworld – our lifeworlds meet. In this statement, I assume that my body is alive and somatic; it is a soma-body. I also assume that land is alive and somatic; it is a soma-land. "The land is alive," a Michif artist Christi Belcourt writes, and "it contains knowledge" (Belcourt 2). The ecosomatic body lives at the interface of the early twentieth century Husserlian lifeworld. The result is that a somatic body is not defined by a hierarchy of bodily importance over other somas, an EcoSomatics perspective of the lived body is a body with soma potential – human and nonhuman lived bodies. To this effect, Fortin speaks of a somatic approach through the lens of eco-centrism, one that contests ego-centrism (Sparwasser et. al). In my research, I compound ideas of the body and soma and the land and soma. In this framing of the body and land, soma is assumed sovereign, one that defines itself by knowing itself within and in the world. Furthermore, the soma-body lives its limitation. Herein lies the rift between Somatics definitions of the aliveness of the body with other theories of embodiment.

In Somatics, the human body's aliveness is confirmed by the reversibility of the breathing action, inhale and exhale, and the felt understanding of the living necessity to breathe. The limit of the somatically aware body lays in existing alive within its delimited world – I am not a fish; I do not breathe under water. In Anishinaabe natural law, to know yourself as part of a sacred

creation is to live with an understanding that "[h]uman agency can always be exercised to alter our thoughts and change our environments. However, in making these choices, we never act with complete independence" (Borrows *Law's Indigenous Ethics* 119). A somatic understanding of the limit of our lungs (and not of our gills) does not make us the center of the universe, contrary to critics of Somatics' standpoint. Being centered must be understood as being driven to honor the limitation of our own agency. The Anishinabek / Ojibwe gift four of the Grandmother / Grandfather's teaching is dibaadendiziwin (*humility*). Borrows describes:

Dibaadendiziwin counsels us to measure our thoughts in a certain way: *dibaa* (measure), *endam* (thoughts), *izi* (state or condition), *win* (making the verb into a noun) – to measure our thoughts in a certain way. . . . This would mean the humility is making our thoughts lower than others' (not being self-centered). The teaching surrounding humility is that, ultimately, we are not greater or lesser than the people, animals, plants, rocks, and waters that surround us. We are part of the world, and not separate from it. (*Law's Indigenous Ethics* 19-20)

That we are part of the world, and not separate from it is how I live the experience of a conceptual *Lebenswelt* as a natural place where / when to exist. My center is populated by my organic body – my lungs, my skin. My center is also populated by the environment I live in. In a phenomenological, EcoSomatics, and ecofeminist awareness to place where I exist / where my dance takes place, the wellness of my center depends on the wellness of my environment. In this conglomerate of these theoretical views, I can see a place for the dibaadendiziwin (*humility*) principle. It is humbling to believe at the core of my existence that my center is irrevocably linked to the environment I center myself in. Herein is the difference between ego-centrism and eco-centrism.

As for the centered human body as seen through the Somatics lens, a body-soma makes decisions to move consciously within and through the world based on somatic momentum (*Antrieb*) informed through sensory awareness. The somatic body stands its ground

(situatedness). Furthermore, since the lived body in somatics understands its situatedness (ground) within lifeworld as already a life within a life, a somatic body wishing to remain alive does so by also wishing its lifeworld alive. "The ecological body has been and still remains a large part of phenomenologies of performance. Our human body relates to earth as the living earth," Fraleigh writes (*Back to the Dance Itself* 25). Mutuality and kinship are woven into the somatic lived body / soma-body theoretical articulation.

This assumed definition of the soma-body builds on Husserl, then Merleau-Ponty's sensible body, said-*lived body*, in its original French language: *le corps propre*. The lived body concept of the Anglo-English scholarly literature is trapped in a discourse of the "embodied." The trouble is that Merleau-Ponty did not write of the lived body textually translated from *le corps propre*, meaning a culturally different body than the problematic of the boundary-bound body (embodied). Furthermore, embodiment as a concept and as a term, does not exist in the French language. The idea that water has a body, for example, is a measure of the empirical culture of the Anglo-English language (Wierzbicka). Perhaps I understand from a lived perspective point of view, the oddity of some scholarship pertaining to embodiment, striving to demonstrate that the body is indeed not trapped in its *bodiement*. In French, we do not need to be concerned so deeply into peeling a meaning of a body away from its skin, because, well, water is not a body, but water. Merleau-Ponty writes of *le corps propre* (the body in / of its own, i.e.: the sovereign body, in Merleau-Ponty's sense, the objective body), *the body personal* (the personal 'I' and 'we' of the Husserlian body), *le corps qui est mien et le corps à moi* ('my body and the body as mine'), the body in the first person / from the first-person point of view from which a multitude of perspectives are experienced, theorized in *Phénoménologie de la perception*, in 1945. The lived experience of the body in Merleau-Ponty's paradigm is the body that experiences

layers of perspectives – the up-verse and the sub-verse / the visible and the invisible / the sense and the nonsense ('pre-meaning sense'). From multiple perspectives, *le corps propre* is a paradoxical processor in the flesh, processing intuitively the felt real and imagined experiences, moving toward consciousness, and without judgement but with wonder, within the lifeworld. The lived body is enfolded in its lifeworld, gestating its ever-transforming lived experience. This is the lived body having a lived experience *in* the lifeworld. In contrast, the embodied life is trapped in having to make connection to its environment because it is isolated from its world, ideologically cut from it by its embodying membrane. Accordingly, Anglo-English scholarship has emerged in the later part of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, contesting the phenomenal Merleau-Ponty 'body'.

I have a sense that philosophers of the early twenty-first century challenge the concept of bound body / embodiment, but on the way, infer sense-meaning that Merleau-Ponty could not mean of his *embodied* philosophy. I believe this explains the fascination for objecting to the perspective from the point of view of *le corps propre*, what philosopher Manning refers to as "a vicious circle of subjectivity" ("Wondering the World Directly" 170). Manning suggests that if Merleau-Ponty had lived longer (he died at 53 years of age) he may have "shift[ed] [his] work from the focus on primordial lived experience to the question of the act in its relation to an infinite infinite" (173). From a Somatics lens, Manning's perception of an "infinite infinite" bodily relationship stands as a disembodied and intellectual perception. Why would Merleau-Ponty leave the *Lebenswelt* paradigm where phenomenological perception is made possible through a lived experience of enfolding and reversibility – the sensuous perception of his signature case studies of touching and of being touched? The living through of a sense-based phenomenon comes from a self-reflective continuum possible within a defined, finite lifeworld.

Furthermore, the Husserlian lifeworld's finite world makes centering possible. I argue that this centering is what makes possible a sense of accountability, the meeting of a principle of mutuality even across the lived differences of sensuous forms of bodies. When I dance the land, even as I am giving into my impulse to dance, the land and I touch our own distinct, finite lifeworld in one dance. I am grounded in this shared encounter within my own lived body. Our dance is bound by earth's gravity. Furthermore, in a sense-based, somatic-based lived experience, "experiencing the impact of gravity of the body in movement" (Eddy *Mindful Movement* 6), is part of our dancing reality. Glenna Batson and Margaret Wilson termed this somatic principle, graviception, the earth-bound sense that makes it possible for the body to find its grounding place in space while in movement. Johnson echoes my assumption of a practical understanding of an earth-bound bodily relation, in his chapter, "Coming to our Senses," in *Recovering Our Sensual Wisdom*. Johnson states the unavoidable practicality of transforming our body-mind dualism: "We can't loosen its grip on our muscles simply by rational analysis; a true transformation requires practical strategies that help us recover a sense of our authority" (153). How is lived experience possible in the *infinite infinite* if there is never a practical point that grounds self-reflection? I cannot see a paradigm of accountability in Manning's proposition. And, I am further supported in challenging Manning's position, by the response Sheets-Johnstone posted shortly after, in "Thinking in Movement: Response to Manning." Sheets-Johnstone takes exception to Manning's interpretation of Merleau-Ponty's lived body phenomenology, and to Manning's own mis-interpretation of Sheets-Johnstone's own phenomenological and somatic arguments. Sheets-Johnstone "wonders" about Manning's "understanding of the experienced realities of thinking in movement" (198).

I posit that this sort of misunderstanding of the *bodiement*, the body trapped, sets the stage for theories of a disembodied nature, thinking the body from the neck up, laying paradigms of *Relationscape* by Manning, and 'thing-power' in *Vibrant Matters* by Jane Bennett. Manning, and Bennett's scholarship, are informed by a Spinozist lens through the writing of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in that *bodies collect collectivities* (Bennett "The Force of Things" 349) – a fundamental aspect of the Husserlian *I* and *we* concept ("Vienna Lecture" ch. 73). The compound idea of bodies, relationships, and a propensity towards collectivity is not in itself false. Bennett endows *things* with agentic vibrant matter in her brand of new materialism: "Thing-power materialism figures materiality as a protean flow of matter-energy and figures the thing as a relatively composed form of that flow" ("The Force of Things" 349). Bennett contributes further thoughts by way of a concept of assemblage, of matters *danceable* once they are known to the body and the body knowing their affect, "drawing on a Spinozist notion of affect" in Deleuze and Guattari (xii). Bennett employs Deleuze and Guattari's paradigm of assemblage, "a living, thriving confederation" describing a "space-event" ("The Force of Things" 23). Certainly, new materialist Victoria Hunter has written on site dance and the affect between the space of the site, and the choreographic insights – demonstrating according to her, that a new materialist standpoint is danceable. In "Sharing the Site," Hunter describes a condition of "[P]lacing dance in real-world locations [which] necessitates a relationship of co-existence between the dance practice, site and the community with which it engages" (385). By her own saying, Hunter develops arguments that are "reflective" but also "analytical" (386). Perhaps it is the finality of an analysis that I find unsatisfactory, in Hunter's dance description. Perhaps it is that co-existence is not enough to be dancing together.

Feminist phenomenologist Fielding writes of the Deleuze and Guattari school of thought upholding "a view from without" (xv) and the phenomenological point of view, "a view from within" (xv). Deleuze and Guattari's body exists without organs, as a system of levels. Sensation is vibration and no longer determined by form, or organ, informing the body of such sensations. In Deleuze's logic of sensation informed by his critical analysis of sensation, in *Francis Bacon, la logique de la sensation*, the body is an embodied assemblage of levels, the whole of the body experiencing sensation as material reality:

Le corps n'a donc pas d'organes, mais des seuils ou des niveaux. Si bien que la sensation n'est pas qualitative et qualifiée, elle n'a qu'une réalité intensive qui ne détermine plus en elle des données représentatives, mais des variations allotropiques. La sensation est vibration. (ch. 7)³¹

EcoSomatics and New Materialism overlap in a desire to "tie to an ecological project of sustainability" (Bennett "The Force of Things" 349). Where I find the quest for a porous, co-existing body incongruent is not in the *thinking* of these other philosophies, but in their *practice* which do not account for the situated vulnerability of each body. As I demonstrate throughout my research fieldwork, I have to be humble in the face of extreme weather to stay alive. I cannot walk barefoot in snow for very long, however much my feet want to compose a flow of vibrant matter in an irresistible pull to gather with other vibrant matters piled with snowfall, for infinite infinite. I cannot impose my co-existence out of vibrant agency. As an artist-researcher, I have to listen and mediate to my body's cravings to do things it desires because I have to remain alive throughout the somadance eco-performance. And for this elemental reason, my body existing in

³¹ English translation: "The body therefore has no organs, but thresholds or levels. So much so that the sensation is not qualitative and qualified, it has only an intensive reality which no longer determines representative data in it, but allotropic [material] variations. Sensation is vibration."

the lifeworld adopts a living perspective of *seeing* the enchanted (Churchill 139), developing hypersensitivity to the felt real and the imagined.

I am aware that new materialism will define my view of the felt real and imagined as naïve – I do prefer naïve imagined wings shaping me into a felt real and imagined somatic architecture over, throwing my agentic vibrant body *without organs* off a cliff. As Hunter says, "placing dance in a real-world situation" ("Sharing the Site" 385), my body will not survive a flight off a cliff. My somatic body flows by touch, a sense awareness of the ordinary and the extraordinary sense-perspective. I am already in the world. I am already one collective within my own body, within my environment, and existing through historical legacies revealed as culture and as cellular memory (Cohen). A somatic body is a body that lives to remain alive. But because "we are led to feel that we are not in immediate contact with the palpable world" (Johnson *Recovering Our Sensual Wisdom* 154), we run into trouble. We become dis-empowered, certainly, disembodied. The trouble is that re-empowering the body to think cannot be done from the neck up. To regain its authority (Johnson *Recovering Our Sensual Wisdom* 154), its narcissism (de Beauvoir), its sovereignty, it needs to claim its somatic, sensual wisdom. But too often the lived body is afflicted by somatic amnesia and does not sense its place within the world.

SENSING DIFFERENCE AND CONTINUITY

In *Experience, Evidence, and Sense: The Hidden Cultural Legacy of English*, Wierzbicka demonstrates the cultural meaning of *sense* from the perspective of the Anglo-English cultural universe (3): "Undoubtedly, *sense* is a cultural keyword so important to English ways of speaking and thinking that both its centrality in English discourse and its uniqueness appear to

have gone unnoticed" (153). Not only is sensing fundamental in organizing Anglo-English thought, but sense stimulation and the perception of sense is also fundamental to organizing movement. *To sense* is a unique English verb that has no semantic equivalents in other European languages (159). When I let that statement sink in, I began seeing in what manner I could approach the writing of my experience seeking a fundamental relationship to the land. My somatic momentum drives – a sense of existing, awareness and attunement, and a kindred sense of empathy – tune me in to biological and cultural historical *sense* prompts. In its process, I make choices, experientially lived through. The wheel of processual choices turns until the following eco-performance where the fund of sensorial experiences awakens, unsettling sediments of accumulated cultural historical trauma. A lived experience builds on "what is happening to me now" (44). From cumulative knowledge gained by experiencing 'on-the-spot' experience, the lived body will draw from a fund of its lived experiences. In this "introspective" analysis (45), the lived body accesses knowledge in the manner that, "I know what it was like' based on an earlier thought that 'this is happening to me now'" (62). Wierzbicka demonstrates in this way that "experience becomes largely a matter of sense experience" (45).

Senses, nonsenses, and sensitivities – I frame my fieldwork case studies through each of these perceptual awareness lenses, shaping knowledge. "If there is a single constant in human history, it is that we engage the world through the agency of our senses," sense anthropologist David Howes cites in *Empire of the Senses* (4). The experience of sensing, what it means in relationship to our sense of existence, and our relationship to the world has fluctuated in many ways throughout the history of Western culture. Ultimately, information about life is multisensory, harmonizing bodily sensations (intero-reception) and external sense-perception experiences (extero-reception). While sensing is a "mechanical" sensory process, "[p]erceiving is

about one's personal relationship to the incoming information. . . . about relationships – to ourselves, others, the Earth and the universe" (Cohen 114). Eddy explains how I approach my somadance in nature through a series of performance techniques where "[e]very voluntary movement also begins with some sort of stimulation (an experience or a thought) and most sensations result in some sort of movement" (*Mindful Movement* 211, parenthesis in text). This process of call and response is the spine of somadance eco-performance gestural decision making. Sheets-Johnstone calls it being "involved in the world":

We move spontaneously on behalf of our senses because we are animated creatures. We turned toward things to begin with because we are existentially, by nature – 'organically', if you will – involved with the world. (*The Primacy of Movement* 82)

Our human, animated, sensate body is a living integrated organism, a part of which is "cellular consciousness" (Cohen 158). Integrated, while recognizing difference between lifeworlds, and our encounters: "[T]he world we sense around us moves in and through us, making us part of itself" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 4).

The ecofeminist concept of a double articulation of difference and continuity appeals to me because Plumwood supports communication and connection by way of a dance vocabulary term, 'flow' (Laban Movement Analysis, in Fernandes *The Moving Researcher*). Thus, the language of the concept of continuity as flow is included in my own research. Fraleigh writes in *Researching Dance*, that the field of dance is a field of differences (in Fraleigh and Hanstein 352-353). Key concepts that Plumwood outlined in her pioneering ecofeminism studies are *difference* and *continuity*. In 'difference', Plumwood situates *radical exclusion*, differences built to "mark out, protect and isolate a privileged group" (49). The concept of continuity comes in to repattern equitable connection between "dualized spheres" (49). The notion that differences have to be flattened in order to reach harmonized polarities makes no sense in eco-performance as I

have said. I need to know my limits – which does not imply a power imbalance between one or the other dancer. In Somatics, "perceptual awareness . . . dismember[s] dualism" (Williamson, Amanda, Glenna Batson, and Sarah Whatley xxv). I find these words effective. In a broad survey of ecofeminism and feminist phenomenology paradigms, I posit differences enfold an enchanting relationship. Here, *enfold* in the way Merleau-Ponty perceives touching and being touched, reveals the concept of *réversibilité de la chair*, or *chiasm*, in *Phénoménologie de la perception*, published in 1945, and later. The sense-perception surrounds and envelops the sensing of the hand, skin-to-skin. Enfold not meant as *entrapped*. Rather, it is through enchanted *continuity* that the experiences of differences are met. In a term ecofeminist Plumwood coined, such *continuity* "overlaps qualities and activities" (49). The call and response a dancer engages with, is one between human and land as an overlap of actions in a framework of trusting the felt real and imagined. From there emerges co-storying – a renaissance – effectively unfurling into continuity the enchanting relationship between human dancer and land dancer (see: chapter six). For the artist-researcher, learning to *stay alive* the length of an eco-performance in extreme weather and landscape – dancing an agitated sea, ice, cold and snow – is dependent on her ability to *see* the enchanted. The entanglement between difference and continuity, and enchantment is supported by overlaps of major themes of ecofeminism and performance through scholarship, both fiction and nonfiction,³² engaging with the themes of: (dis)enchantment, difference and continuity, at the interface of ecosomatic-performance art: (social / personal) somatic amnesia, somatic

32 Particularly, in the works of: Blackie's *If Women Rose Rooted, The Enchanted Life*; Federici's *Caliban and the Witch, Re-Enchanting the World*; Fortin's "Looking for Blind Spots;" Fraleigh's *Dance and the Lived Body, Dancing into Darkness*; Gaard's "Approaches to Sustainable Happiness," *Critical Ecofeminism*, "Ecofeminism Revisited," "New Directions for Ecofeminism," "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism;" Orr's "Enchanting Catastrophe," and Burlein and Orr's "Introduction: The Practice of Enchantment;" Plumwood's *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*; Simpson's *As We Have Always Done*, "Being with the Land," *Dancing on Our Turtle's Backs*, "Land as Pedagogy;" Sheets-Johnstone's *The Primacy of Movement*; and Styres' "Land as First Teacher," and *Pathways for Remembering*.

awareness, somatic architecture, moving-thinking, and land-based epistemology. Dancing with the wind and the water is based on challenging myself to meet another world so as to transform my own (dance and thoughts).

My stubbornness with upholding difference, is due to my belief in the benefit of acknowledging and humbly respecting difference, as well as finding ease with it, and not ease beyond differences. I live in Canada where an awakening to the damage by colonial indoctrination gives rise to the urgency for settler responsibility in many segments of our societies – university studies and scholarship, but also grassroots activism, governmental initiatives, courts of law, etc. Not all initiatives attending to the trauma of colonization are successful; not all of them come from a place of kindness and healing. However, in my place as a settler artist-researcher, I cannot but somatically engage with what differences mean in a mutual eco-wellness futurity. I think, it has been and continues to be a struggle to reawaken my land-based wisdom by way of intuitive dance and research, always informed by teachers – humans and nonhumans – who come from culturally sovereign, different groups. I advocate pushing myself to levels of unfamiliar grounds because I know this is part of my somatic reawakening. I do not push through – as I describe as part of my Methods and Techniques, in chapter three, by a measure of will over nature. Neither do I seek to unearth unfamiliar ancestral rites I have little chance to dig out whole. Nor do I plagiarize someone else's' histories:

In our Western societies, we are seeing more calls for a return to native wisdom, but we cannot live by the worldviews of other cultures, which are rooted in lands and histories that have little relationship to our own. (Blackie *If Women Rose Rooted* 19)

Rooted within my histories, I push myself in dance to different and unfamiliar sites and senses by attending to a somatic momentum of inscribing my ever-shifting life narrative with the ever-in-motion sentient nature. I imagine this methodology gives me access to native wisdom of the

kind that is rooted in land where I grow attentive to co-habiting with existing stories, and in this way, existing stories with land presently. Difference and continuity concepts are supported in ecofeminist discourse. The discourse of difference and continuity also finds voice in Indigenous cultures – here I cite an Anishinabek law of nature. I quote from Borrows' article, "Wampum at Niagara," demonstrating with a historical marker, that the Royal Proclamation of 1763 is a "fundamental document" in First Nations and Canadian legal history:

First Nations faced a pivotal period of choice and decision-making between 1760 and 1764, after the British had asserted control over the French in North America. The options then chosen are important today because the principles agreed upon form the foundation upon which the present First Nations / Crown relationship rests. (169)

The difference and continuity discourse arcs back to my original motivation to proceed with my current research, inquiring a fundamental relationship with the land, inquiry prompted by Manuel's lecture, "Aboriginal Rights as Economic Rights," given at York University in 2017, Wierzbicka's cultural and linguistic research on senses and sensing as fundamental to the Anglo-English way of thinking, relating to, and functioning in the world, and the 2017 Canada Council for the Arts press release urging artists within "Canadian society," to re-examine their relationship with Indigenous land (Brault and Loft).

It is in this capacity – *equality and respect for difference* – that I understand *difference* in the lived body, a body able to sense, make sense of the choices emerging from what difference informs, and take action. I argue that by re-sensing direct connection to the land – and thus, to myself, and growing into connection to others which becomes a sense of community, reciprocity and responsibility – I am equipped to understand what it means when I hear, "[O]ne of the loudest and most frequent demands of Indigenous people in the relationship with settlers is for the return of the land" ("Land Back" 8).

DANCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE / SITE DANCE

I resonate with an approach to dance and Somatics as a means to think in movement. In *Why We Dance*, philosopher, homesteader, and dancer, Kimerer L. LaMothe, writes:

This idea that humans are mind over bodies compounds the devaluation of dance that we have already seen occurring within a materialist paradigm. In a world where humans evolved to think, dance not only appears as one way in which a material body can move; or as a form of social cohesion; or as a nonverbal knowledge. Dancing also appears as a means by which a thinking mind proceeds to attain a rational end – losing calories, access spiritual state, seduce a mate. Thus, if we aspire to acknowledge and practice dance as a vital art, we must dislodge the riddled concepts of ourselves as minds living in bodies that has been engrained in us by our own movements in modern culture. . . . Once we do, the implications for our understanding of dance are profound. (82-83)

We, movers, are pulled to moving expressed through dance and performance art for many reasons. I have been doing eco-gestural research since 2012 – since I walked out of the studio to reap *new* gestures to bring back into the studio. As I describe in chapter four, I took to co-dancing with the land. My movements are informed by a constant circular research: move and think and sense and back to moving. Somewhere in there is writing, when dissemination is required among non dancers, or for an audience not present at the time of the dance. The thinking in the lifeworld is processual and experiential of a "profound" and "nonverbal knowledge" nature (LaMothe 83). The "deeper awareness of 'the self that moves'" is at the core of the Somatics praxis (Eddy "A Brief History" 6). In this sense, the dance form I practice is informed by an existential ecosomatic momentum. Moving-thinking is the driving force in my EcoSomatics scholarship and practice.

The dancer is not doing two things called moving and thinking, two things called dancing and making meaning. She is doing one thing, which is dancing in the moment of its execution, her movement is of her thought; if it is thought of before or after, she will not be in the middle of it. She will not be centred in action. But she will still not be doing two things – she will simply be dancing poorly. (Fraleigh *Dance and the Lived Body* 169)

Movement-based somatic art is a praxis of moving-thinking awareness. In this approach to movement, "I do not think 'move' then do move," as Fraleigh reminds us (*Dance and the Lived Body* 32). My body is "intuitively and imaginatively" moving-thinking through a plane of existing as a "kinesthetically awaken[ed]" soma-body, with a "whole body consciousness" (Fraleigh *Dance and the Lived Body* 183). I would want to write yet another dissertation on the importance and the benefit of dancers' wealth of knowledge both functional and experiential in negotiating thinking out-of-the-dance-realm.

Eddy has set up such meetings between artists and politicians, for *The Dancing in the Millennium* conference in 2000 in Washington DC:

. . . bringing together eight different associations and their membership to do Arts Advocacy with American politicians, sharing the expertise of dance educators. It was a call to action, emphasizing the importance of building networks and supporting political action from diverse body-based perspectives. (*Mindful Movement* 243)

Eddy's work motivates me to take mine into the realm of social activism. Indeed, the conclusion of my fieldwork chapters always point to how the experience has shaped my dance, and by its process, how it has shaped my thoughts. Tourangeau urges performers to contextualize our beliefs as means to grow rather than truisms to hold on to (21). And by endowing movement art with the power to impact society, we see that movement performance art is a social practice (*in socius*):

L'art performance s'exerce aux croisements des catégories . . . traditionnellement, les pratiques artistiques tendent à tracer une frontière entre l'art et le monde . . . cependant, ces pratiques *in socius* – pratiques furtives, immatérielles, intangibles, ou invisuelles – qui mobilisent l'art comme outil de transformation de la vie sociale ont, d'une certaine manière, toujours existé . . . de l'œuvre ou du geste d'art ont régulièrement interrogées, nonobstant le contexte socio-historique qui les a vus naître. (Michel Collet et André Éric Létourneau, 2019 8-9)³³

33 English translation: "Performance art is practiced at the crossroads of categories. . . traditionally, artistic practices tend to draw a line between art and the world. . . however, these *in socius* practices – furtive, intangible,

Pioneer modern dancers and pioneer somatic therapists have contributed much research to making the body move-think better, as well as developed the area of study, education, and practice of consciously re-sensing the body. The present state of Somatics studies is informed by an amalgam legacy, in part from the twenty-first century understanding of the body by those highly trained dancers puncturing movement dance codes, moving 'forward' the lived body in its present Somatics-phenomenological-feminist lived body norm. Dancers involved in the Judson Dance Theater group (1962-1964) explored new ways to engage with a classically trained modern body into post-modern dance (Banes). Others ventured outside of their land and into other cultural modalities of movement, such that Fraleigh let herself be taken by the Butoh experience (*Dancing into Darkness, Dancing Identity*, Fraleigh and Nakamura *Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo*); creators of dance improv movement technique and philosophy – Steve Paxton, Nancy Stark Smith, and Lisa Nelson ("Jumping Paradigms"), dancers played with a variety of codified movement forms, informed by their own rigorous dance practices, and a desire to depattern norms of the body in movement. Barbara Dilley writes in *This Very Moment: Teaching, Thinking, Dancing*, of Naropa University as "a place of convergence" (17). I borrow from her words to describe the emergence of Somatics and postmodern dance, with entangled philosophies, in and out of the studio, as a space-time of convergence where the *new* lived body is born, "*the beginning of teaching thinking dancing*" (17, emphasis in the text). Halprin is a pioneer of post-modern dance in the 1960s, collaborating and creating with dancers and students. Many of them would become influential dancers and teachers themselves. Halprin termed her improvisational dance, "'instant theater' and 'immediate dance'" (Ross 117), "[a] dance as a

intangible, or invisible practices – which mobilize art as a tool for transforming social life have, in a way, always existed. . . of the work or gesture of art have regularly been questioned, notwithstanding the socio-historical context that saw them arise."

medium for social investigation and activism" (xiv). These somatic-based and site based, land trusting dancers broke new grounds in dance in the Western tradition, "reappropriating the self as well as a freedom to create" (154). The somatic momentum drive to enter in conversational awareness with land through movement continues its journey into the present time, certainly through my somadance eco-performance research, and for Barbour as well, who writes of her research process for *Whenua – Land*, "In opening my awareness to the place, I experienced embodied insights about being cared for by this local place" ("Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness" 61). Barbour, like I do, feels "nourished" in her relationship to the land (61). The land becomes her "centring and grounding source" (61).

Dancing land, wind, water: movement-based somatic art befriends land-based wisdom.

My settler situatedness as a land-based / site dancer is a complex enmeshment of so many strands. One strand is the erasure of my ancestral traditions of dancing land. Another strand is the challenging task of relearning to dance land with grace, acknowledgement of learning from human and nonhuman teachers, such that Sandra D. Styres writes of the "Land as First Teacher," and *Pathways for Remembering and Recognizing Indigenous Thought*:

Land as theoretical and philosophical concept comprises circularity, understandings of self in relationship, language, storying, and journaling as a central model for interpretation and meaning making. (*Pathways for Remembering* 53)

EcoSomatics land-based / site dance requires a lifelong commitment, a willingness to risk and to trust, and a humble dose of having to adapt to the dance already existing. EcoSomatics land-based / site dance needs to spend time, "need[s] long periods of merger for a complete learning" (Fernandes "When Whole (ness) is more" 18), for the theory to live in the body, for the philosophy to become a pattern, a way of dancing with the land. One performance may be short – that it may, honoring meeting differences and continuity. Though, working with the dance

through dance is a continuous flow of commitment, development, nurturing. It is not so different from other forms of artistic production, but it has its unique arc back to nurturing the source of the dance insights.

Along the way, new learning emerges – some of my body in dance, some of my thoughts as a being in the world where I dance. In the chapter, "Landed Citizenship: An Indigenous Declaration of Interdependence," in *Recovering Canada*, Borrows begins with a description of the land, much in the way I chose to describe the phenomenology of my somadance eco-performance fieldwork:

As citizens with this land, we also feel the presence of our ancestors and strive with them to ensure that the relationships of our polity are respected. Our loyalties, allegiance, and affection are related to the land. The water, wind, sun, and stars are part of this federation; the fish, birds, plants, and animals share the same union. Our teachings and stories form the constitution of this relationship and direct and nourish the obligations it requires. (138)

Co-creation is a core-value of somatic-based and eco-performance art praxis, in part, learning from Indigenous land-based epistemology, and in part because it makes land-based senses. In the *Garden Awakening*, self-declared reformed landscape designer Mary Reynolds practices bonding with land in Ireland:

Land *can* bond with the people who worked with it, but that doesn't mean it always does. The special relationship between you and your land is the same as the bond that develops between a parent and a child. The parent can choose to love, cherish and support their child, or treat the child harshly and without respect. The quality of their bond will be forever shaped by the quality of love, care and attention the parents put into it. (124, emphasis in text)

Earlier, I wrote on the Anishinabek principle of dibaadendiziwin (*humility*) as a mirror lens with which eco-centrism can learn from, bettering the conglomerate "eco." Phenomenology, EcoSomatics, and Ecofeminism are equipped to nurture. Having identified this operative

ecocosm,³⁴ the act of holding space for a relationship to take place, and furthermore, the actions taken to foster mutuality will not *naturally* amount to a blissful relationship between all parties. The concepts of differences, and the methods and techniques with which to find ease in tension (see: chapter six), aid to live through the ebbs and flow of relationships. The idea is certainly not to control any parties at the other *end* of a relationship. Rather, by way of listening, attuning, practicing guesthood etc. (see: chapter three), the somadancer learns from the environment what it wants now by the story it tells now, and simultaneously. This sort of attentiveness to the environment as the dance partner takes place simultaneously with an internal sensory awareness inquiry. From there, a co-dance emerges. And if a dance does not emerge presently, the dancers can meet at a later time. Where environmental performance art, site dance, land (movement) art differ from my aesthetic of somadance eco-performance is in situating the aim of the artist. In "Responding to Site," Moebius founder Marylin Arsem speaks of the questions she asks herself in the moment of an experiential art performance:

Task as a means to understanding what you do in that context, what response might shift things into an altered state that might be considered performative or art response. If the shift is minimal, then what distinguishes that altered element from everyday life? (Arsem, in Klein and Loveless 202)

Arsem speaks of an "act in becoming assimilated in the environment" and of "points of integration" (202). I am still in the phase of inquiring the potential of my body's responses. Perhaps, my somadance is a private dance placed within. The performative quality transcends in how I presence my lived experience. Arsem performed "Adrift," at the *First Biennale Festival of Performance Art and Sound*, in 2013. On the photo of the performance – that one which is featured on the cover of *Responding to Site I* – she floats quietly on quiet water, so quietly that

34 "Ecocosm" comes from the Greek words "oikos" meaning "home," and "cosmos" meaning universe.

its surface reflects the sky and the surrounding forest. Arsem's body is slightly propped up in a way that makes me think she is balancing a full intake of air along her body. In my very similar performance on Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos (see: chapter five), my body sinks lower into the water. Aesthetically, our eco-performances are similar. We have both found a *point of integration* between human body and land (water!) by way of our performative journey.

My own eco-performance shares with the 1970s series of performative body with land, *Earth-Body*, performed by Ana Mendieta, a certain aesthetic affinity. Dissimilarly, Mendieta's works are staged, thoughts thought through ahead of being transplanted to the land. The motivation accompanying Mendieta's work overlaps with mine in that we unwind and repattern expectation of the personal and cultural-historical body. Mendieta reclaimed the (her) body as a medium and art *object / subject* thereby challenging the patriarchal gaze of modern art (Blocker 10). Mendieta's *Earth-Body* plays with dimensions of the visible and the invisible but always felt. In one of her most poignant works, she lays at the bottom of a dug grave, her body partially visible under a patch of flowered grass. Other images of the series show the imprint of her body in this earth grave, artistically staged through using various elemental media: blood, fire, dirt, and ice. Mendieta's legacy makes itself felt in art, feminism, unsettling artistic expectations, and philosophy: "The trend [which Mendieta spurred on with her works] was later taken over by women artists working in the 1970s who saw it as an expedient way to examine female subjectivity and identity" (Blocker 10-11). Mendieta's legacy lives on. Our work meets in our shared desire to challenge an unbalance, a rift between body and land. Our intent and the living of our eco-performance meet in a validation of the power of magic, how I write of the concept of enchantment, and of my lived experiences through spellboundness (see: chapter six).

[Painting] wasn't real enough . . . The turning point in my art was in 1972 when I realized my paintings were not real enough for what I wanted the image to convey – and by real I mean I wanted my images to have power, to be magic. (Mendieta 12)

In the early 1970s, Mendieta rediscovered her Latin roots; she says, "[P]lugging into Mexico was like going back to the source, being able to get some magic just by being there" (citing Mendieta, in Rauch and Suro 44). Plugging into my fundamental sentient and sensuous somatic relationship to the land, wherever, and as a healing act puncturing through somatic amnesia is my aim. I aim not to possess the land by my act of plugging, but by plugging into the conversation I could possibly have with Earth and all sentient beings. And why not! The opposite is to be numb to my own body and senses and numb to sensing land. What knowledge, what medicine, what responsibility do I deprive myself of, in this habit?

My somadance eco-performance is situated in the area of arts-based research, but, it may be that the aesthetic I have developed over a decade may find a fit in the world of performance visual arts' heritage and performance arts audience. Presently, my movement philosophy remains affiliated with a radical sense of dancing with joy, how finding wonder with the land overpowers an expectation to perform to an audience. Very much attuned to healing her own illness, Halprin has choreographed dances and performed with the land (nature) in mind, in body, and in place, from *Pastoral*, in 1936, until today. Halprin lived to be 100, and only very recently passed away. Even at her advanced age, Halprin's work expanded to her community as a sense of collectivity. In 1987, Halprin created and led *Circle the Earth: A Peace Dance with the Planet*, adding iterations of the dance annually. In 2009, Eddy's *students* of Dynamic Embodiment created a "flash-dance-movement-choir amalgam" called *EarthMobbing*. The movement choirs (*EarthMob*) – formed as a choreographic structure modeled after Laban's movement choirs' model continue to perform, bringing awareness to ecological disasters through dance (Eddy

Mindful Movement 259). *Global Water Dances* is another manifestation of community dance for joy and to bring awareness to ecological crisis; "on 25 June 2015, dancers and the public performed in more than 77 countries water concerns for the third time since 2011" (259).

In his book, *Soil, Soul, Society*, Kumar writes, "[S]oil represents nature and sustains the entire life-system. . . . Through the soil we are all related and interconnected " (ch. 1). To let the Earth, soil, land, nature teach us about interconnectedness is part of the technique and the aesthetic of somatic-based movers. In *Body and Earth*, contemporary somatic dancer and educator, Andrea Olsen writes an evocative description of the land as she inhabits it to dance together: "Landscape: the natural and cultural rhythms of a place, including its soil and topography, plants and animals, air and water, people and their various creations" (xvii).

Contemporary somatics praxes are contemporary expressions of an ancestral drive to relate to the earth, the horizon, and the sky. Fraleigh describes her site dance, in the article, "Get Messed Up," an experience of attending to her somatic drives and in connection with "nature in its mud and messiness in butoh" (378). She writes, "[W]hen actions flow as of my own nature, I can unselfconsciously and pre-reflectively absorb the somatic life of my dance, saying, 'yes' to my body" (385). In my own somadance with wind and water, I engage in co-creation – mud and wet; scorched dry or moving at the speed of ice. "What I dance also dances me" (Fraleigh 385). My eco-performances are not only mine; I am part of nature's dance. Along the way, somatic movement performance artists continue to situate themselves within a colonial heritage seeded within a complex history of the experiences of the senses, a sentient relationship with the land, and land-based wisdom as it informs the dancer's intuitive dance.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

This chapter is a collection of the driving somadance eco-performance art action methods and techniques collected over a five-year period during which I reflected post-performance on my performance as research doctoral fieldwork. They comprise the functional ecosomatic philosophy teased within the dissertation. As well, the methods and techniques are teachable, but they are also a living, growing tool-kit, adaptable to my human body in non-homogenous situations that make the bulk of my various eco-explorations: extreme weather, playful wind, pouring rain, and diverse cold and warm bodies of water. As such, they represent also the experiential ecosomatic philosophy emerging from my fieldwork. The first eco-performance I write about was performed in 2013. The methods include delimiting the methodological concept of performance milieu; methods of: moving consciously, presencing presence, defining somatic drives, and writing with mountain; and the techniques of: performative listening, stretching skin, engaging on the path of least resistance, and leading to the place of calling.

I practice somadance eco-performance as research informed by Eisner's vision of arts-based practice, "the process intended to enlarge human experience and promote understanding" (9). The methods and techniques within were developed so that I could tune-in to a larger human experience, and of course, make sense of the experience. Some of the Somatics methods and techniques I describe below were already part of my methods and techniques approaching performance art action prior to my doctoral studies, others I acquired through trial and error during the performance as research period, others yet, are my interpretation of the teachings I

have received along the way in my journey through performance and life. All of these methods and techniques were further shaped through the journey. Some of my teachers are humans, others include the land, and the wind and the water. The functional, experiential, and interconnected approach an ecosomatic approach allows is demonstrated here through methods and techniques I employ in my somadance eco-performances to awaken a sensuous relationship of connecting from within the self, the others, and the land.

All of the concepts, methods and techniques below are experienced in movement explorations before finding explanatory language through theories, the scholarship of practitioners, and augmented at times through the creative use of word compounds – *praxitioner* is one such one compound, mixing the somatic explanatory language of praxis (practice-based theory) with practitioner. It follows that these methods and techniques have generated theoretical, practical, and creative insights by way of adopting an approach that I define as a praxis of learning by doing and thinking in movement, *moving-thinking*. All of these abilities to sensing ecosomatic situations existed in me prior to performance as research and are revived through a practice of learning about, and reinhabiting, cultural history, by making sense / unwinding ecosomatic gaps, and re-sensing / repatterning an amnesic soma.

Part of my task in this chapter is to language these ecosomatic experiences so as to describe to the readers who may not have experienced moving in a somatically conscious way, my lived experiences of ecosomatic encounters with water and wind. For those who are familiar with dancing lived somatic experiences, this chapter adds to our conversation.

THE PERFORMANCE MILIEU

The performance milieu is a layered methodological concept. An ecosomatic performance milieu is akin to "a somatic sense of place," how Karen Barbour speaks of a place where "creative

process" can be communicated, and expressed through dance ("Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness" 60). The performance milieu is the place where my performance as research takes place. The performance milieu is where ecosomatic movement phrasing emerges as co-created dance, and as autoethnographic research. Physically placed on land, it is a place that exists before my arriving to it. A performance milieu is a contained area where I sense my performance is taking place, and which contains the various elements acting on my performance as well. These elements include the wind and water, passersby walking by and those interrupting my performance, artefacts that I bring to *stage* the performance milieu, and so on. In studio, the performance milieu is delimited by the physical space of the studio. In nature, the performance milieu serves as similarly functional.

Experientially, the ecosomatic performance milieu is where I encounter the land's dance. I name such an encounter as *co-dance* and *entanglements*, which are narrated through the description of my felt real and imagined ecosomatic and sensuous encounters manifest in my somadance eco-performances with the land. The performance milieu exists physically but experientially, it but must be activated in order to be experienced as a more-than-quotidian place. A somadance eco-performance praxis activates such entanglements: me dancing, dancing the land, dancing in co-creation with the land, joining in dancing an already existing and eternal elemental dance, and being danced by the land.

In the methodology of performance as research, I move to know. The intent to enter into a performance milieu is not with an intent of making a show. The performance and research milieu is the point of entry into my methodology of somadance eco-performance as research. In this milieu, I am inquiring with open curiosity, a standpoint of pre-scripted action drive. It is a felt real and imagined place where I indulge fully in the performance as research experience. To be

'in the performance and research milieu' means to be immersed in the process of gathering insights, transformation, and shaping expressions. The description of sensing what is emerging in me and which has not transformed into artistic movement choreographed for an audience yet, is the segment that is the focus of my performance as research. As it stands for the purpose of my doctoral research, the performance milieu can be otherwise described as a study for warm-up and experimentation.

My own movement art improvisation is based on intuitive movement expression. I commit to trusting these creative insights, as well as moving through the movement methods of my various training backgrounds. In the performance milieu, I indulge fully in the process associated with a somatic-based performance art action. I train in performance art action with Tourangeau, and I have pursued somatic dance training with Fraleigh and the Eastwest Somatics Institute through Shin Somatics method.³⁵ The influence their methods have had, and continue to have, on my own hybrid somatic-based and performance art action praxis is described in the introductory chapter. How I practice performance as research means that the aesthetic outcome is raw and unpolished. The performance milieu creates space to explore the raw and unpolished outcome. In this milieu, a somadance emerges, motivated by an aim to research the process, the seed, and the roots and the branches of its emergence. As I have written earlier, I move to know, not for show.

The performance milieu is a safe zone where I protect my mortal body. I honor my human boundaries while pushing myself beyond the sensuous known – as per the query of my

35 Please keep in mind that I have accumulated various performance trainings throughout my life. They also inform my movement, from accessing insights to the aesthetics of my somadance eco-performance – from early age training in gymnastics, synchronized swimming, diving, ice skating, classical music, etc., to later training in butoh methods, Beijing Opera, Argentinian Tango, clowning, Body-Mind Centering method, etc., all of which I enumerate in my introduction, and are listed under the training and workshops, in my curriculum vitae. However, I refer consistently through this dissertation to the works of Tourangeau and Fraleigh because they are two major influences on my performance and research work.

performance research. I act responsibly in entering a performance milieu, making sure I can exit safely.

Accessing the Performance Milieu

The performance milieu is accessible through an ecosomatic, phenomenological lens. In an ecosomatic lens, the milieu exists as soma-body-milieu populated by somas. In a phenomenological lens, the milieu exists as a lived milieu, a milieu-lived-body populated by sentient phenomena. The encounter with these phenomena through the praxis of methods and techniques shapes my body into: 1) dance; 2) moving-thinking.

The living milieu is accessed through a reciprocal method of exchange between receiving the living milieu in my embodied dance, and expressing my movement in space in a manner of extending a dance invitation to the living land. Tourangeau speaks of "diving in" the performance milieu, how she writes in *Le 7ième Sens*, "se diriger vers l'action performative" (26). These are the steps I go through before diving in: I follow the *place of calling*, a space and time where it appears an invitation to co-dance comes from. Having *arrived* at the place, I *settle in*. From here, I adopt a protocol of *holding space*, *waiting* (shut up), and *listening*. The ecosomatic and phenomenological worldviews hold that a dance is already and always existing. Tourangeau speaks of the *déjà-là* (Eng.: already there). In chapter six, I expand on my experience of *dancing* and *being danced* by the land.³⁶ In this reciprocal approach to dancing the living-soma-land, I practice what I name as a *guesthood protocol: introducing myself and my art practice, asking for permission* to join in the elemental dance, and *not overstaying the welcome*. I have not adopted a rigorous theatrical form of ritual as such. Rather, my practice of the

³⁶ 'Dancing' and 'being danced' is a technique I have adopted from the teaching of dancer choreographer Benoît Lachambre, a teaching received while I attended workshops in 2015 and 2016. His framework of shaping somatic architecture relies on creating inner space and outer space.

guesthood protocol is performative, fluid, and adapted to each unique situation. By virtue of being attentive to the place and the form the invitation takes, my ritual of introducing myself to the lived milieu may be extended as dancing a little jig, or by murmuring my name to a lake pebble cradled in the palm of my hand. Even as I may return to a place, the performance milieu is never the same. This is because the performance milieu is alive. Each new dance requires I engage with the guesthood protocol anew. In this approach to entering a liminal space and time on place, I move into techniques of presencing myself – *presencing presence* –, *moving consciously*, and operate through a process of tuning-in to *somatic drives*. To these methodical conditions required to sense ecosomatic experiences, I add technical methods of performative listening, stretching skin, engaging on the path of least resistance, leading to the place of calling.

The process of performing in the milieu takes a scaffolding sort of design where at times, the act of dancing will reveal new methods and techniques in order to better access sentient and phenomenal encounters, or to shape a dance by way of applying existing methods and techniques at the encounter of these phenomena. Whenever I immerse myself in a performance milieu, I immerse myself in a situation of heightened sensitivity. Through time and time again, through hours of re-visiting the process of movement emergence, through many eco-performances as research, and in numerous places across various seasons, through experiencing qualities of water and wind, I have come to familiarize myself with an array of lived somatic experiences. As I grow familiar with a space that is the place where my somadance eco-performance takes place, I come to understand that place includes my body as a site for research. This understanding ultimately circles back to my research question inquiring a fundamental relationship with the land.

METHODS

Moving Consciously

Once in the performance milieu, I begin moving consciously through somatically giving into what is felt real and imagined. These sensuous experiences act directly on my artistic movement expressions. My contribution to the moving consciously paradigm is not a re-hash of Fraleigh's work and that of her immediate contributors, so vividly laid-out in *Moving Consciously: Somatic Transformation through Dance, Yoga, and Touch*. The landmark collection of essays supports how I make sense of my own lived expression through practicing moving consciously as a method through which I move and think performance as research. As evidence of my tuning-in to the moving consciously paradigm endorsed by the Eastwest Shin Somatics network of somatic practitioners, Fraleigh selected my somadance eco-performance of December 2014 in the Virgin River at Utah's Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park to feature on the cover of the book, well after the essays had been written (and before I had read them). But such is synchronicity between like-minded somas, that via my eco-performance, I had tapped into shared concepts of moving consciously with the many authors in Fraleigh's edited collection. In, "Ways We Communicate,"

Fraleigh writes:

When I dance freely, I am present in the moment, trusting a deeper source than I can consciously control. It can be useful to give up the quests for answers through intuitive dance or gentle yoga, letting the body be the guide, not the controlling mind. (15)

I will say this about moving consciously: I can live without consciously connecting to the inside. In performance, I can let myself be taken where an impulse leads me, albeit as in a daze. I can live without connecting consciously to the outside. In performance, I can let myself sink into a

trance. But a performative quality of moving consciously is not akin to performing in a daze, nor performing possessed as in a trance. Moving Consciously is informed by a phenomenology of setting intentions. "The method is 'existential' because it focuses upon experiences as they manifest themselves within the flow of human existence, defined in terms of how we transcend our circumstances toward possibilities of our own choosing" (Churchill 13). As I describe shortly, moving consciously though intentional choices informed by somatic drives shapes an experiential dance – a moving consciously dancing expression of my existence *within* lifeworld. Moving consciously requires engagement and a readiness to action, an engagement that is especially useful in framing taking action without following a script ('free' dance). Moving consciously is a method of purposeful awake-ness.

The method of moving consciously is also a method to conduct performance as research. "Moving consciously in somatic explorations produces ways of knowing that can be described or depicted" (Fraleigh *Moving Consciously* 19). As I am immersed in a performance milieu, I busy myself with taking somatic notes of somatic transformations, notes that will be somatically re-awakened post-performance at the time of writing down the fieldwork experience. From insights to expressions, the research observation processes through a chain of being somatically alert to sensing and to acting on these sentient prompts. In a moving consciously approach, I am curious about the processes of moving, activating movement possibilities, making connections and being moved, in preparation for becoming movement. The interconnectedness of moving consciously derives from a sense of touch felt real and imagined.

To move consciously is to move with a purpose and this supposes that we move in a world of others with others in mind. . . . What we touch touches us. Soma would simply be a floating unconnected sensation of self if we were not aware of others as also constitutive\ting consciousness of self. (Fraleigh *Moving Consciously* 42)

EcoSomatics and phenomenology employ the experiential concept of interconnectedness, in how what we touch also touches us. An ecosomatic phenomenological principle of interconnectedness defines moving consciously, in how "Husserl looked to consciousness itself as the source and matrix of all knowledge" (Churchill 4). In Somatics, *moving consciously* is moving *with* sentience populating the performance milieu as the foundation of the matrix of sensuous knowledge.

How I move consciously towards dancing freely is lived through dancing my place among the dancers in the circle of life – including the elements of wind and water. 'Freely' is complex. To dance freely does not describe mindless movement nor a detachment from lifeworld responsibilities. In, "Ancestral Bodies Dancing Snow," I speak of my experience while dancing and moving consciously through settler responsibility, collective responsibility, artist responsibility and my personal responsibility to the land. In "Ways We Communicate," Fraleigh points to 'freely' in the sense of allowing the body with mind, with spirit, with heart, and with the lifeworld to serve as guides, without an intellectual mind monopolizing all aspects of the decision process. While 'freely' discourages being overly controlled by bound dance forms, it nevertheless manifests as cultural body language and as my signature movement identity shaped by training acquired through various movement arts practices. And while I allow my dance to move me freely, I nevertheless engage with moving consciously as the foundation of my somadance. This foundation reveals a fundamental relationship to myself *within* the lifeworld in which I am one of the many dancers.

Presencing Presence

Presencing presence is a somatic process and outcome. Presencing is the process and the outcome together of manifesting a state of being more-than-present, committing to an act of doing-more-than-presenting. Presence is as continuous flow. Presencing presence is a sustained somatic action. Presencing presence is how I have translated my practice of "être présent à la présence," which translated to English as "being present to presence" – a method informed by the teachings of Tourangeau. I have adapted the method of turning into an active verb the static verb that is *present* by itself without *being*, and creatively naming my taking action of present-ing as *presencing*. Presencing with a 'c' points to more-than being present as a manifestation of physical being there through a modality of attentiveness. Presence-ing augments the existential present to becoming an existential participant. The performance of *presence* is then turned into a performance of *presencing*, an act at once identifying 'my' presence as well as those many 'presences' populating the lifeworld. By adopting an approach of presencing, I announce being present as one of the many somas existing in the lifeworld, being myself a presence within the lifeworld. Moving consciously is a way to presence being present, to presence presence. The reverse also is true: being present to the many presences allows moving consciously within the lifeworld. *Presencing presence* is how I experience somatically moving consciously. I manifest bodily presence, or as dancer-choreographer Benoît Lachambre says, *shines*. I experience this shining presence radiating from my skin for all to see via my somadance eco-performance.

Presence is therefore an aesthetic presentation and an attitude of readiness. Aesthetically, manifesting presencing presence can be practiced through performance techniques of contouring, inhabiting inner density as well as expressing outer density in levels of amplitude (see: chapter six). An attitude of readiness is informed by a modality of performative presenting of my

body in movement in space. Because in this approach, I announce my presence in such a display that makes it possible for lifeworld-dancers to take note of my presence. This, I have experienced in my eco-performances, presencing amplifies relationships. Presencing is felt somatically, that is to say, interconnected, and accessible to other presences in this inter-related lifeworld. I have a sense that the wind and the water take note of my shine because presence is relational. When the wind and water dance me, I am present to their presence. In a different way to describe this relation, Sally Ann Ness writes in "Ecologies of Falling" of her relationship building in hiking through mountains:

The performativity of falling is 'present-ing' in this regard. The action, because it occurs in a not-self-done, environmentally agentic manner, energetically and physically 'in-forms' and 're-members' the visitor self. It raises an awareness that is gained from action alone of the relation of the mass of the self to that of the earth (18).

When I dance water and wind, I presence their presence through eco-performance, in my state of relational awareness. I can do this because I am present to their presence and so are wind and water present to mine. The earth, as Ness writes, presents its own agency. By its agentic quality, presencing aligns with an Indigenous feminist situated standpoint, such that Tallbear writes on the concept of "standing with" ("Standing With and Speaking Faith"). Presencing even in a solo performance alone in the outdoors, is always co-situated. Presencing invites and hosts.

The degree to which a presence manifests intensity does not follow emotional intensity. Definitively, a powerful presence is not expressed by losing it, or throwing a tantrum. The spectrum of presencing is not measured on a frenzied scale. A deep sorrow, for example, may weigh heavy. But by expressing the subtleties of a spectrum of intensities through radiating powerful presence – moving at the speed of ice, for example, of traveling an impulse for a grand gesture with much splashing of water and thrashing of body into floating calmly on a running

water current – presencing presence will be powerfully charged. Even subtle presencing can be experienced as feisty and powerful. The delicate butoh ka Atsushi Takenouchi presences such intensity through his performance of Jinen Butoh. Tourangeau writes about joining into an eternal dance, with the surge of a "fleeting and unpredictable" series of gestures (31), how I perceive Atsushi's butoh dance. Every part of his visible body is finely chiselled with muscles puffed and ligaments twined, and bones and joints protruding through his skin. However, he is not locked into a tense overpowering effort. Atsushi, filled with vividly alive soma, is a master of morphing alchemy. He moves between shapes at such extremes of speed (both fast and slow) through excruciating momentum suspensions.³⁷ Atsushi's presencing presence is such that it stretches the limit of what humans can perceive, I would contend, because of his inter-related lifeworld-ness. In her article, "The Artist is Present," art historian Amelia Jones states that:

'Presence' is commonly understood as a state that entails the unmediated co-extensivity in time and place of what I perceive and myself; it promises a transparency to an observer of what is; at the very moment at which it takes place (18).

As presence is perceived, presencing reveals. Presence, furthermore, is grounding, centering. Brian Bates writes in *The Way of the Actor*, "Finding a personal centre, a point of power, and linking it strongly with external action is the basis of an actor's presence . . . which goes beyond the mere physical" (5). The relationship between presencing myself to, and manifesting connections, leads to thinking on issues of being present and its ethics of coming into space that is already occupied. These ponderings are at the root of my motivation in understanding my fundamental relationship to the land.

37 In 2016, I dedicated four months of dance research by guiding movement exploration to butoh and contemporary dancer H el ene Messier. The movement residency aimed to translate Atsushi's *Skin* choreography presented at the Seattle Butoh Festival (2012) to the body of Messier via Laban Efforts cues, Bartenieff Fundamentals, and moved through skin in a Body-Mind Centering approach to moving-and-sensing-organs. The outcome was presented as a lecture demonstration at the 31st BMCA conference in Montr eal, 2016.

Somatic Drives

Simply defined, drives are urges to move that conclude in movement. 'Drive' is a functional term and an experiential term. Drive manifests in the somatic architecture my body shapes as dance, and as a collection of experiences. What is learned is functional – how my body moves, and experiential – what I learn through my body of the life I live is this world alive. In this dissertation, I make use of three types of vocabulary to describe movement drives: performance art action drives, Laban movement analysis action drives, and somatic drives.

My decision to settle on the term 'drive' is informed by an existing tradition of using *drive* in describing movement performance art processes as well as wording movement analysis. Tourangeau speaks of how I define drive, as a *pulsion* (in French Québécois language). I practice the method developed by Tourangeau, of thinking through the cyclical process of a performance art action: connexion / motivation / intention / amplitude / direction ou canaliser / action / entre action (30).

Performance art action's *action drives* also exist in the tradition of Rudolph Laban's conceptualization of movement of the body's effort and shape in space. *Antrieb*, Ciane Fernandes remarks, is the word Laban used to describe "momentum or internal impulse," meaning effort in the sense of its expressiveness ("When Whole(ness) is more" 14). The vocabulary template with which I describe the body engaged in dance movement is common language throughout the various somatic schools of thoughts. In Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), the body is divided in parts, as: upper and lower; left side and right side (Fernandes *The Moving Researcher* 83). This language aids in describing my postures in somadance, for example, a contralateral pattern is like a crossing over of members such that when the left upper (arm) and right lower (leg) advance together (93). I often move in a homolateral manner, raising both left leg and arm

together. *Antrieb*, or effort-expressiveness uses concepts of flow, space, weight, and time (142). Together, they comprise the umbrella of Efforts. When I term my somatic 'drives' as such, I depart from Laban's "effort drives," a combination of three of the four weight, time, flow, and space factor (170). I use 'drive' in the sense of effort's expressiveness:

'Moving' implies an intimate association between form and meaning, and turns movement into driving force of whatever we do or are (the verb or noun that it modifies, placed right after it). (Fernandes 66, *parenthesis in text*)

I use *drive*, a driving force that is as a functional and experiential (noun), and in its form as an action verb, to describe the whole of the various processes involved in receiving an invitation to move, sensing where in the body this invitation is played out, responding to it, tuning-in, traveling inwardly, and delivery outwardly the total outcome of the process driving an action.

Pioneer modern dancer Isadora Duncan wrote in *My Life*:

I spent long days and nights in a studio seeking that dance which might be the divine expression of the human spirit through the medium of the body's movement. For hours I would stand quite still, my two hands folded between my breasts, covering the solar plexus . . . I was seeking and finally discovered the central spring of all movement, the creator of motor power, the unity from which all diversities of movements are born, the mirror of vision for the creation of the dance. (75)

The late nineteenth- early twentieth century dance innovator had tapped into a somatic tuning-into method of exploring inner movement pulse, impulse, the inspirited body sensing inner and interconnected urge for movement, what I define as somatic drives.

In practice, somatic drive mixes the incoming impulse to an outgoing of expression. It is a concept that describes tuning-in to a gestural process. Experientially the somatic drive method is based on the lived body moving through a lived experience. Theoretically, the concept is informed by shared concepts of Somatics and Phenomenology. The somatic drive method is based on an assemblage of four interconnected lived body and lived through experiences: a sense

of existing, awareness, attuning, and empathy. Attending to *somatic drives* is a qualitative method I have developed to explicate senses expressed as movement urges. The vocabulary allows me to explain the common sense felt at the encounter of somatic drives, urges to move, in the moment of attending to a sense that something in me is stirring up to move my body in space. Tuning-in to a sense of existing, awareness, attunement, and empathy is a manner of describing the inner working of an embodied movement process – embodied in the sense of mind, body, spirit, and heart. The quality of the urge reveals a sort of personality of the inner working informing the performative quality of the movement expression.

EcoSomatics is founded on a principle of reciprocity, that I have said. Somatic drives are inter-dependent with one-another. Their inter-dependency also is manifest with the other presences in the lifeworld contained within a performance milieu. How I engage in the relationship of my dance with the elements of wind and water feed my action drives, and in turn, feeds out as a quality of co-dance. How I live in my body the existential quality of my movement drives will shape the quality of the connection to sentient presences within the living performance milieu, as well as the quality of my own performance presence. The somatic drives act on impulse from tuning-in to the soma-body and the soma-land. Somatic drives describe in felt language, impulses which make possible the expression of somadance eco-performances.

Somatic drives become visible through the performative quality of the movement artist's gestures: a sense of existing, "I" awake; awareness, a sense of self; attuning, a sense of the other; empathy, sensing the other's existence. In this approach, wonderment, vulnerability, curiosity are keys to live fully the many dimensions of experiences while being in / doing performance art action. A sense of existing is how I feel alive, a sense of existing through my dance. A sense of awareness and a sense of attunement are respectively inner and outer somatic experiences.

Awareness and attunement are two somatic principles that are akin to awakening within and awakening to connections. A sense of awareness and a sense of attunement complement each other in their respective roles. Finally, a sense of empathy is informed by my experience as a mover engaged in dancing in places populated by other movers. These somatic drives are unique yet interwoven. They are the drives which connect myself to myself; my body to my body; me to the lifeworld (including the Otherworld) and the lifeworld (including the Otherworld) into me. Somatic drives draw from a fund of historical, ancestral and cellular memory, as well as experienced as novel experiences. With each action, I sense the familiar through somatic drives as if for the first time.

These are the steps to tuning-in to somatic drives: I observe my somatic drives. Their resulting *coming alive* signals to my consciousness an urge to move. I experience sensing an action drive as a spark that charges me from within while also sprouting to connect with the world from the inside out. At the same time, a charge from the outside penetrates and travels through me, connecting me to the environment from the outside in. While a somatic drive connects, my movements seal the connection. The process of tuning-in and attending to the somatic drives act on the shape of my body. In the process, I make decisions to attend to this or that gesture. Internally, I meet my impulse by moving consciously; externally, I make my impulse visible through presencing presence.

Somatic drives are suggestions. How senses of existing, awareness and attunement, and a drive for empathic response shape me varies from time to time, according to what I tune-in to. I shape my responses like a sculptor shapes clay. Sometimes a drive is irresistible. There follows a series of negotiations to keep me performing with authentic allure, and also to stay alive. Other times, the somatic drive is dainty and nearly imperceptible. Those muffled somatic drives

(re)awaken as I practice connecting in various ways to the sensuous surroundings. A somatic action drive is negotiable. I act on my drive. I listen and observe, and I make choices. Of course, it is not a matter of only willing myself to a response. I allow being transformed from the moment I step into a performance milieu. I consciously observe the transformation. I shape my body consciously into movement. When the impulse stops, I may have hit a somatic wall. I probe this blockage gently but affirming that my intention is set on flowing the impulse through *all* of me. The tuning-in to somatic drives is felt real and imagined. The movement outcome remains within human bodily abilities. Some of the action drives are impulses to fly, breathe under water, and walk on molten rocks. In the article, "On the Lived, Imagined Body: A Phenomenological Praxis of a Somatic Architecture," I describe such experiences of learning to dance with imagined wings while my body is aware somatically of moving with wings that do not actually exist. My training in movement performance art allows me to indulge fully in those impulses however alien the possibilities permitted by my body. I will shape into a dance as if flying, as if breathing under water, as if walking on molten rocks.

A sense of existing, "I" alive: "I dance land," is a process rooted in this primordial existential drive. It is hard to deny the sense of existing during a somadance eco-performance with the wind and with water. Moving with water and wind connects me to the foundation of human existence – breath and water as life. The simple event of experiencing myself at the cusp of a performance milieu evokes the sense of existing. In its process, the drive to exist draws me into awareness, into attunement and empathy with my experience of myself.

One illustration of this sense of existing is the various qualities felt of the *things* touching me: sensing the heaviness of my prop and my clothes, shifting my body weight and balance, sensing the thickness of the white paste buttered on my eyes, sensing a breeze on my bare skin,

etc. At the nexus of my existence and the existence of all that is the lifeworld, I experience fully my own. Experiencing the somatic drive of existing is to experience the living world.

The technique I practice accessing a sense of existing is pure living instinct. As an artist-researcher, I am engaged with a perpetual sense of existential crisis seeking being whole – as a body-mind-spirit-heart, as a community, within history and a sense of becoming. What is my existential sense of a relationship between me and the land where I perform / between me and the sentient dancers on this place? This is the question I dance through my somadance eco-performances with the water and the wind. It is a rhetorical process; the process of inquiry carries me through multiple ecosomatic situations of felt real and imagined lived experiences.

Awareness, a sense of self: Awareness is the polar opposite of anesthesia. When the senses are numbed, repressed, mistrusted, inner-world and outer-world phenomena manifest but are lost on the receiver. Awareness is a direct connection to the felt real and imagined sensuous world. Without awareness, there is no relational drive to move; moving becomes reactive. I believe a relationship with a sense of awareness not only drives my dance, but brings me in contact with a much larger sensuous universe. Eddy writes in *Mindful Movement*, "Sensory Awareness carefully teaches how to slow down and pay exquisite attention to experiences using all perceptual channels" (30). Awareness is a shared concept among EcoSomatics, somatic health, and phenomenology of the lived body. "Dancing with an expanded sense of awareness developed through somatic attention, acclimatization activities and embodied reflection offered insight into the ecology of local places," writes Barbour in, "Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness" (60). In a sense, EcoSomatics is an excuse to paying exquisite attention to experience by way of "gaining greater self-awareness [which] occurs through receiving the physical sensations that accompany behavioral aesthetic and emotional choices" (Eddy *Mindful*

Movement 134). Eddy states that "when interoceptors, senses that pay attention to our inner experience, are consciously awakened, they allow for somatic awareness and bring mindfulness to movement" (6).

My case studies are divided between those that tend to make sense and those that tend to make no sense. The nonsense is taken in Merleau-Pontian's worldview of a sense emerging in its lifeworld. Even as a sense-perception does not yet live in the realm of consciousness, nonsense nevertheless is sensed through awareness:

The phenomenological concept of pre-reflective awareness holds that experiences have subjective, immediately embodied qualities, which we could also call phenomenal or lived qualities. Pre-reflective awareness is 'being aware' of what it is like to feel a particular way. . . . We might think of pre-reflective awareness as self-awareness; yet, at the same time through an experience, layers of consciousness connect us to a world beyond the self – *the lifeworld* – configured in the kinesthetic field of bodily self-awareness. (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 11)

A sense of awareness is the drive that picks up a call to perform in a place. Inversely, a sense of attuning drives an invitation to the land.

The techniques I practice accessing a place of awareness include practicing regular meditation, making time for idleness (vs. a non-stop willful control over body and nature) and an overall healthy lifestyle. Cultivating a sense of awareness is a difficult life-balancing act because awareness cannot be summoned *on empty*. A sense of awareness is not simply momentary lucidity but involves a regular practice. Only if I commit myself to a regular and daily practice of awareness will I be able to call on awareness when I am in a situation of somadancing and eco-performance. A clear mind and a healthy body, a loving heart, and a grateful spirit are the currency to buy-in to awareness. In times when I lag on my regular practice dedicated to keeping awareness alive, I can still perform, I can still sense awareness, but the urge will be muffled.

Attuning, a sense of the other: A sense of attuning drives an invitation to the land. Inversely, a sense of awareness is the drive that picks up a call to perform in a place. A sense of attunement is a shared concept among EcoSomatics, somatic health, and phenomenology of the lived body.

"Its [phenomenological] methods pay close attention to experience, showing how intentional attunement grounds perceptual processes and knowledge" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 12).

Attuning is allowing performative listening, to transform me. It is at once demanding and liberating. In the section 'Haptic Perception, Clearing and Repatterning' of the chapter "Somatic Movements Arts," Fraleigh lays out clearly my own experience of moving through attunement as part of a larger methodology of my eco-performance as research:

Life stories sometimes arrive as a result of somatic attunement through touch and in dance and movement processes. When they do, we [Eastwest Somatics Institute] encourage people to write them down, to be with them, and, let their theories teach them. (Fraleigh *Moving Consciously* 38)

Attuning plays an active role in the process of somadance expression. It precedes the dance itself. Between calling out (extending an invitation to the land) and receiving a response (a sense of being invited by the land.) At Eastwest Somatics Institute, this wait is also expressed as a time and space for clearing, one of the steps from unwinding, clearing, depatterning, and repatterning. In my hybrid somadance eco-performance art action, the wait manifests as attuning to tension, preparing to enter a performance milieu full of dancing tensions. By attuning to my sensuous surroundings, I hold a conversation with my surroundings.

For Barbour, ". . . touching body practices involved slow meditative walks and attending closely to sensations to attune the sense and acclimatize . . ." ("Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness" 58). The technique I practice accessing a sense of attunement can be described as pleasure presence. There are moments in an eco-performance when I work so hard

on attuning to the land that I forget the pleasure of dancing. Many times, in these slippery moments, I realize that I am actively attuning to fear. It is not an unreasonable attuning to. In eco-performance with water, there is much to worry about: drowning, the toxicity of the water, real and imagined sea monsters, hypothermia, rip currents, whirlpools, drifting into spawning pods, long gooey algae, broken glass on the water bed, and about my laptop perched precariously on a rock by the splashing water in an attempt to video document my performance research. Laughter is a way to fight attuning to the fear and worries. Attuning is an approach that involves playful communication.

Empathy: For Husserl, "empathy, intersubjective mutuality, is a cohesive aspect of experience. . . . Sensuous-intuitive experiences are dependent on each other" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 14). Fraleigh incurs that "connectivity can be cultivated relationality through the body . . . through dance and performance" (14). Empathy is a bridge and a mirror; it is also the vehicle to move between these multiple points of access to experiencing the world. How I experience empathy is as a somatic drive that allows me to imagine living as one, or as another, or through another's perceptive of the lifeworld, or of me. Empathy connects the previously described senses of existing, awareness, and attunement into movement action. Empathy is the drive that unlocks movement; ultimately, it is the drive which moves me from stillness into space so as to partake in the lifeworld's flow, how ecofeminist Plumwood defines the concept of continuity as "qualities shared together" even as each one is different from the other (32). "Both men and women must challenge the dualized conception of human identity and develop an alternative culture which fully recognises *human* identity as continuous with, not alien from, nature" (38

italics in text). The sense of empathy is a powerful means with which to tune-in to unwinding "construction [which] naturalizes dominant" over nature worldview (51).

I wanted to be an actor so that I could live many lives, each with their own stories. This empathic drive has evolved into my present doctoral inquiry – including trusting in the empathic and intuitive process – with the drive to act in and with many existing and co-created stories, across differences and flow continuity.

The technique I practice accessing a place of empathic drive is that of playful curiosity combined with a genuine interest for stories.

The Traps of Somatic Drives

Each of the four somatic urges may manifest alone or all at once. They manifest in measures of my ability to perceive their manifestation, as well as in degrees of intensity. Giving in too much into one or another drive, however, does not make the proceeding of the urge more potent, but less convincing (as far as presencing presence / shine goes). In my own practice, I have experienced that too much of a sense of existing leads to entitlement. An excess of awareness leads to trance in a manner where reciprocal behaviour is dimmed. An excess of attunement can turn into an obsession. Empathy needs to be balanced between serving the self and serving the others unless it leads to dis-ease and a lack of self-reflective grounding.

Making space for learning and taking the time to learn from somatic drives lived through eco-performance is important in performance as research. The learning is iterative, and the practice cyclical. It is a learning which has spilled over from performance art into my everyday living.

Writing with Mountain

Writing with mountain is the name I give to an ethnographic writing approach of deep ecosomatic observation, an autoethnography of the soma, the emerging land-based, critical and creative writing approach that I came to *naturally* during my residency at Ka‘a‘awa, O‘ahu (HI), in 2019. The peculiar-ness of this method is that the writing approach came from the mountain to me. I wove together with Ko'olau mountain range such a peculiar weave that became the lifeworld where the most ordinary and extraordinary details of my remembering past somadance eco-performances came to be. An important event took place during my stay in Ka‘a‘awa in the summer of 2019. This event, I have no doubt, excited somas near and far. I do not hold the authority to speak on behalf of the Indigenous Hawaiian sovereign movement. However, as an artist-researcher inquiring somas, I am ethically obliged to credit the Mauna Kea Protectors for the enlivening *energy* that basked the Hawaiian archipelago during this period. And, I am grateful to having been a witness to the potent soma activation having taken place at that time. My writing residency took place at time when the Mauna Kea Protectors set camp at the foot of the mountain on Big Island Hawai‘i. Native Hawaiians rose as a critical mass to protect their *kapu aloha* (sacred) land against the construction of an eighteen-storey high telescope proposed in a place where already thirteen observatories crowd Mauna Kea's summit. That the Protectors' prayers travelled far and wide is undeniable. Pua Case, Indigenous organizer and activist, would begin her morning address to the Protectors in place and present via social media livefeed, with these words: "From my mountain to yours." Every morning, I tuned in. This is as much as I will report, presently. It bears to imagine, however, that the love and spirited devotion, the physicality of their prayers through songs, dances, and the complex maintenance of the camp the Protectors attended to daily, activated *mountain soma*.

A writing with mountain approach is lived, land-based, experiential, and enchanting. It is a descriptive and non-judgemental approach to writing research. The mountain itself acts on my soma as a portal where creative insights might emerge from. She also acts as a catalyst to focus my thoughts, deeply so. The physicality of the mountain is deeply grounding. Its majestic presence is soothing. Although sharing place with the Ko'olau mountain range becomes habitual, losing sight of her (driving north or south along the coast), I immediately feel her absence. As soon as I see her green peaks rise in the skyscape, I let out a sigh. I know from having heard stories of the people inhabiting, or even simply passing by this land, that I am not alone experiencing a sense of relief at her being right there in sight. Her name is Ko'olau mountain range – a dormant fragmented remnant of the eastern, or windward shield volcano of the Hawaiian island of O'ahu, and she is as wrinkled as a bandoneon midway through a tune! There is an incessant low rumble populating the soundscape of thinking with mountain. The mountain connects me to my own communication channels and instills me with the trust to dive into the felt real and imagined lived experiences. Thinking with mountain punctures the skin of my somatic amnesic membrane. My body (re)members. The mountain moves my thoughts.

With the wind skating my shoulders, the deceptively calm ocean waves crashing on the shore, and the green of the green mountain folds tattooed on my retina, I saw the replay of my dances with the wind and the water from a different perspective. Ethnographic details emerged not only from memories, but by combining day-dreaming remembering with viewing archival footage I make of every one of my somadance eco-performances. I saw the dance as if it talked to me in words. But these words, they spoke the language of wind and water. The most extraordinary outcome of having spent all these months apprenticing with the mountain are the vivid description she whispered to me of my somadance eco-performances fieldwork. "Start

again," the mountain said to me. "Write your experiences from where wind and the water danced you and you with them." She urged me to look deep inside of me. She had no care for the shame I might feel at writing nonsense. Very sharp. Commanding. That is how I lived my relationship with Ko'olau from the start of my writing residency. I began re-writing the account of my case studies. I wrote my body-mind-heart-soul into the research's fieldwork (chapters four, five, and six).

TECHNIQUES

Performative Listening

Movements.

What is moving?

What has already moved?

What has shifted in the movement?

Performative listening was born as a technique for me to better communicate with the lifeworld through listening to stories of objects and place. Performative listening is an approach of listening without judgement, observing myself listening to and noting shifts in my body where the *stories* move me. This somatic tuning-in technique eventually led to developing listening to my somatic drives. Performative listening has also developed as an umbrella technique for: 'following the path of least resistance' to 'the place of calling', and 'stretching my skin'.

The motivation for developing a performative listening technique stems from a desire to listen to the stories of people, those stories imbedded on land where they lived or through which they travelled. I developed a first framework of performative listening in 2014-2015 with the intent to trace the stories of my Bellerose relatives' migration within Canada, from Québec city

in the province of Québec, to St. Albert in the province of Alberta.³⁸ My intent in developing a performative listening technique was to hear stories from objects and from the elements since I had not found records of the roads traveled / the road trip of the Bellerose migration from Québec to Alberta. I had decided to ask objects and elements, if they had heard of any Bellerose related stories.³⁹ Through a sort of affective communication, I had imagined *hearing* the stories of each artefact and their stories of encountering the human holder of the artefact. Performative listening is similar to listening to my somatic drives. In performative listening, I listen to objects and to place.

Performative listening is an approach which gives access to other ways of channeling creative insights. These insights are felt in their physicality even as the contact is not necessarily by way of a direct touch. The readiness to *hear* a communication flow between wind and water, and my body ready to dance, depends on my ability to sense subtle and normally imperceptible shifts in how the flow moves me. These perceived moving shifts transform through a methodological process I have described above – a series of tuning-in to four somatic drives: a sense of existing, a sense of awareness, a sense of attunement, and a sense of empathy. How I manifest these somatic drives into a dance depends on my ability to moving consciously and presencing presence. Where I move to is determined by my ability to follow the path of least resistance as well as going toward the place of calling.

If some of the performative listening tuning-ins manifest as magical space-time phenomena such that I might see the outline of a ghost, most of its manifestations are sense-based experiences existing in the quotidian ordinary world. I can hear water. Water flow has a

38 The project "Performative Listening of Métis Artefact" received financial support from the Canadian Arts Council (2014-2015).

39 Of French descent and Cree descent, the Bellerose family is one of the early and founding Metis families of the settlement of St. Albert (AB).

vast library of various registers expressed through a multitude of sound qualities. Some of the sense-based questions I probe my body with are asking, "is the sound far or near, indicative of a fast, boiling whirlpool-ish, or calm flow, is it slushy like newly frozen water melting in the bright noonday, or is it silent like ice? But also, a performative listening approach can tune-in to sounds that are inaudible. I can hear ice's water flow if I pay attention. This listening that is audible and also, inaudible, is of the register of experiencing a lived dimension of hearing water flow.

Performative listening is a technique of hearing life.

Performative listening evidence is anecdotal, but it is an evidence felt as a lived experience. Performative listening has me moving. I may hear a conversation taking place presently; I may hear a rock dreaming; I may hear stories telling of memories long ago. I hear my cues to move from the environmental conversation happening all around me. At times, I imagine traces of stories floating around like bubbles of thoughts. They may be traces of conversations from somas past. In this sense, performative listening is an approach to re-inhabiting imagined and felt real somas with the aim to allow shape-shifting creative insights into somadance eco-performance.

In an ecosomatic framework, and at the nexus of existential phenomenology and ecofeminism, I operate in a modality where everything *has* a soma / that somas are in everything, everywhere. The approach of performative listening taught me that everything has a story – everything dreams, everything imagines, as well as everything remembers. The wind, and the water, they have stories, carry stories, they dream, they imagine stories. Performative listening is a practice of existing together with and within a sentient and living ordinary and enchanted world.

Path of Least Resistance, and Being Called to a Place

I move on the path,
 and move on into the distance
 dancing my way along the path.
 In this encounter,
 I and the path are transformed.
 We transform.
 Meanwhile, one of many stories forms.

 Scouting emplacement.
 Even before the moment I lay eyes on the path;
 I choose to dance it.

Dancing the path of least resistance is intimately linked to a sense of being called to a place. The path of least resistance is where much of the flow flows. It is not the easiest path, the easy path, direct or shorter, nor a path walked with ease. It is not an exercise in drifting aimlessly through existing paths, nor is it an exercise of the affective urban strolling *à la derive* French philosopher Guy Debord describes.⁴⁰ The path of least resistance is a technique that graphs onto the method-technique of performative listening, accessed by moving consciously and the protocol of guesthood, actualized through presencing presence.

40 Drifting *à la derive* is a term coined by French philosopher Guy Debord, in an article published in *Les lèvres nues* (1956). His group rejects wandering at random in favor of a philosophical concept of drifting. *La théorie de la derive* is a methodological, experiential approach, "a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances" (62).

The path of least resistance already exists as a path. It is the path carved by trace-flow of already and always existing stories – perhaps celestial traces, ancestral somas, dreams, or any and all sorts of thought bubbles. By being imprinted, it already is mapped. But the path of least resistance is not a chasm. The path of least resistance lives on the frequency of listening to its already existing avenue. I can decide to follow the path. I can decide against following it. And of course, *hearing* its call can be beyond my ability at this very moment when I try to tune-in to my own within the sentient world. In the Eastwest Shin Somatics method, a tactile-proprioceptive-kinesthetic sense of touch (with or without actually touching) is practiced through a developmental, therapeutic technique which involves what Fraleigh terms *matching*:

One partner in the role of the teacher finds and guides the lines of least resistance in the other partners movement, matching emergent movement patterns with slow, gentle, somatically attuned touch. (Fraleigh *Moving Consciously* 3)

In the Eastwest Shin Somatics method, matching is quite alike my somatic and sensuous experience of living through the path of least resistance leading me to a place of calling. Its nature is that of a tactile-proprioceptive-kinesthetic sense of touch. It is an empathic journey, walked through an approach of sense awareness and attunement. It is an approach to choosing in symbiosis with the world that I walk with – the land I walk on, and the wind and the water I walk through – where I will somadance and eco-perform. However called to, I do not have a sense that this is an approach that has me give up what is so foundational to a modern mind – the concept of free will. But I do have a sense that it is an approach that re-centers the individual within the commons – a community of peoples past-present-future and the land. In this view, sensing one's existence along the path of least resistance leading me to a place of calling informs a sense of somatic wholeness. In this dissertation, I continue the process of theorizing such experiences.

Stretching my Skin

The technique of stretching skin can be associated with the technique of manifesting contour (see: chapter six). In this approach to stretching my skin, I employ Tourangeau's performance art action technique of manifesting amplitude and density to make visible my contour. This gives me *visible* shape, activating the physicality of presencing presence. In this way, I stretch my skin through manifesting felt volume mutation, through amplitude and density.

Stretching my skin is more than a performative presencing technique. It is a metaphorical sense commonly experienced by those who practice methods and techniques of moving consciously through performance art action approach so as to place oneself in a situation of encountering the self in the world. I use the imagery of the metaphor of stretching my skin because it involves a sense of touch. Stretching skin is a tactile felt real and imagined sense. Each mover has their own experience of metaphorically existing as bigger than their own *skin*.

In an existential rapport to this technique, I like to frame the stretching skin metaphor through Eddy's definition of the proprioceptive and the kinesthetic senses. The technique of 'stretching my skin' has to do with "the perception of one's own body known as proprioception," how I feel my body's boundary (skin) and altering spatial dimensions through mindful awareness and, or a performance kinesthetic presencing *act*, such that it shifts "the perception of one's own movement" (kinesthesia) (*Mindful Movement* 6).

I practice stretching skin as a technique to augment manifesting presencing presence. Presence lives on the skin. I project my presence outwards in a manner of perceiving my own body boundary much farther than simply shaping my *life-size* human skeleton. In this way, I project my skin (a sense of volume) which allows me to inhabit the outer space, inside of me. This proprioceptive experience of stretching the skin makes me feel like a giant, like my body

(skin) embraces a vast area – such as a lake (see: chapter five). This augmented proprioceptive sense gives me access to sensing the *far away* as if close enough to touch.

Stretching my skin is a technique with which to experience the phenomenological dimension of the lifeworld. This imagined felt real touch is highly informative of the conditions in which the lifeworld *too far away to touch* exists. In this eco-phenomenological approach to stretching skin, my inner-place is touched by the outer-place. This is because the outer-place is placed inside of me, contained in my stretched skin. I am phenomenologically touched by land that is beyond my *life-sized* reach. The world then, exists within me, felt real and imagined. Unlike a worldview where I would claim that *I am one*, this worldview honors the differences between myself and the lifeworld inhabiting land. And yet, inside of me, I can hold the lifeworld inhabiting land. By the land inhabiting me, I learn from a different perspective what / who the outer-place is. The transformative potential of this technique means that I can connect with places that are unknown or lost – such as ancestral land.⁴¹

Stretching of the skin is a metaphor but also a somatically felt real and imagined lived experience. In, "On the Lived, Imagined Body: A Phenomenological Praxis of a Somatic Architecture," I wrote about the felt real and imagined experience of sprouting wings from my back. These wings cannot be seen; they are invisible. But those wings move me differently into space. It is in this sense as well, that I describe stretching skin. It is a drive to move that is not dependant on how my body looks to the human eye, but how my body's presence is lived, received, and presenced. Stretching skin acts on the delivery of my performance of presencing.

41 When Auntie Pua says, "from my mountain to yours," it is clear that her mountain is Mauna Kea on Big Island Hawai'i. In response to her greeting, I am at a loss. "What is my mountain," I kept asking myself during the writing residency in Ka'a'awa Hawai'i (2019). I came to sense that my mountain touches me even as I do not know if she exists, or where she is if she does exist. I came to understand that I do not need to touch my mountain physically, to be touched by her. Through the technique of stretching my skin, and the trust in the felt real and imagined, I can embrace land in such a vast embrace that I re-inhabit the land where my mountain exists.

Stretching skin is also an existential embrace, in the sense of how Fraleigh frames it "[d]ance, after all, is not simply self-expression; rather, it urges one past the limits of the self" (Fraleigh 2015 xx). To stretch my skin so as to meet my horizon, I must first drop into my body. This means that I find my center, find my ground.

While I return to my body's edges post-performance, I take with me the sense of having connected to land skin-to-skin, even though this skin was an imagined skin. At the nexus of Somatics and the phenomenological concept of interconnectedness, the skin is my skin. It also is not a skin. *Skin* is a metaphor to help me make sense of the sense that I embrace at a touch more than via my biological edges. In containing more space, I sense a different way to relate to the land.

We 'map' place through our embodiment, engaging through our own skins and through the reach of our personal kinespheres, as well as engaging with the immediate environment [that] provides life-enhancing information, critical to survival (Barbour "Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness" 54)

Stretching skin, I reach out through connections both to my soma and towards the somas populating the outside of me. As the stretched-out skin resorbs, I import felt lived somatic connections into my body. With my imagined skin having encountered the land otherwise, I nevertheless experience an encounter.

The methodological concept of performance milieu sustains methods of: moving consciously, presencing presence, defining somatic drives – a sense of existing, sensory awareness and attunement, and a sense of the existence of the other, i.e.: empathy, and the method of writing with mountain depend on the techniques of: performative listening, stretching skin, engaging on the path of least resistance, and leading to the place of calling. These living, growing, and adaptable methods and techniques are the base of accessing moving-thinking and grounding in movement | rooting and moving, and as well as trusting notions of the felt real and

imagined somatic senses that will lead to depatterning somatic amnesia and repatterning ecosomatic senses, repatterning enchanted kinship, repatterning a fundamental relationship to the land, and adopting patterns of ecosomatic mutual wellness. The following three chapters are evocative phenomenological descriptions of my somadance eco-performance fieldwork, accessing senses, nonsense, and spellbound somatic dimensions. This is a journey of unwinding an aesthetic research by way of affirming my sense existing in an eternal dance already existing, of co-dancing with wind and water adopting sensory awareness and attunement, and with empathy to my sense of sensing even the nonsenses, depatterning somatic blockages felt real and imagined in the process of doing somadance and eco-performance, and repatterning fluidity expressed through site dance fluidity.

CHAPTER FOUR: ECOSOMATIC SENSES, SENSITIVITIES, AND SITUATIONS

In this chapter, I write of multiple ecosomatic senses, sensitivities, and situations experienced while in the performance research milieu, and via somadance eco-performances with the wind and the water. The narratives of this chapter are a collection of descriptions from four eco-performances, performed between 2013 and 2019 taking place in Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (2013), Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (2019), Tenàgàdino Zìbì | Gatineau (river) area (February 2019), in Lake Seneca, Geneva NY (May 2018). The multiple ecosomatic senses, sensitivities, and situations experienced include: arriving (at a place) and waiting, introducing myself to the land and being welcomed and then sent off with an exchange – a little bit of me with the land for a little bit of the land with me, walking / swimming in rounds, finding my center inside and outside of me, and orientating differently. The experiential textual translation of the senses, sensitivities, and situations experienced first transits through the body, and then through existing theories and language. This form of body-to-theory translation requires I stand witness to felt phenomena. In this listening presence practice, I begin the somadance eco-performance research.

If you are responsive by being present to the speaker, her story can morph toward the answers. Can you practice being present as a witness for the story of another, listening until the end, however long it takes?" (Fraleigh "Ways we Communicate" 15)

The presence to witness happens in increments. First, there is the increment of attending to the immediate eco-performance. Then, there are the many re-inhabiting sessions, re-living somatic dimensions experienced while writing, and polishing the writing of the story post-performance.

Furthermore, ecosomatic sensing is a concept that englobes a multitude of sense perspective standpoints. Some of these ecosomatic sensing concepts include seasonal cycles and are place-based, such as the winter cold and snow season. Some of these ecosomatic sensing are familiar concepts informed by my readings of approaches to land-based meaning-making,⁴² site dance,⁴³ and of Indigenous decolonial and settler decolonial studies.⁴⁴ Some of these concepts are informed by my attending to my own EcoSomatics / performance art praxis with my teachers – Fraleigh and Tourangeau. Some of those familiar concepts manifest by simply walking in a forested path in the winter giving me a sense of being in relation with other sentient beings, how Abram writes "of existing in a world made up of multiple intelligences" (9). Certain concepts experienced and narrated in this chapter are less familiar. These include senses of differently mapping direction as well as orientation and dis-orientation in thoughts, habitual patterns, connecting bodies, and so on. In the following case studies, I narrate morphing into a dance by listening to the many dimensions of familiar and less familiar phenomenon felt real and imagined. In turn, this awakens my tuning-in to somatic and ecosomatic senses so as to repattern my sensuous relationship with the living land.

The narratives of this chapter are a collection of descriptions from four eco-performances, performed between 2013 and 2019. I express these fieldwork experiences in a storytelling form. Accordingly, I opt to narrate the lived experience as a live-in-the-moment tale.

42 Particularly informed by the works of: Archibald's *Storyworks*; Blackie's *If Women Rose Rooted, The Enchanted Life*; Borrows' *Drawing Out Law, Law's Indigenous Ethics, Recovering Canada*; Kanahele's *Ka Honua Ola*; Kermaol and Altamirano-Jiménez's *Living on the Land*; Meyer's *Ho'oulu*; Simpson's *As We Have Always Done, "Being with the Land," Dancing on Our Turtle's Backs*, "Land as Pedagogy;" and Styres' "Land as First Teacher," *Pathways for Remembering*.

43 Particularly informed by the works of: Barbour's "Activism, Land Contestation and Place Responsiveness," *Dancing Across the Page*; and Barbour, Hunter, and Kloetzel's *(Re)Positioning Site Dance*.

44 Particularly informed by the works of: Mackey's *Unsettled Expectations*; Manuel's *The Reconciliation Manifesto, Unsettling Canada*; Meyerhoff's *Beyond Education*; Rifkin's *Beyond Settler Time*, and Trouillot's *Silencing the Past*.

In this way, I hope to convey the direct senses felt real and imagined at the time of the dance on site, albeit post-performance. The first of these is my very first eco-performance with the snow, in Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (2013), intended to connect with the land for the purpose of collecting new, fresh movement-dance gestures. In the post-performance description, I focus on the storytelling of somatic senses of settling into the place (of performance) as well as settling into the performance milieu. I also focus on a somatic sense of arriving (settling into) and of waiting.

The second eco-performance is one of my more recent performances in winter, snow, and cold. It is also performed in Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (2019). In this post-eco-performance, I tell the story of introducing myself to the tree that saw me born, as well as experiencing fusing with the tree. Partly due to hypothermic shock (self-diagnosis), and partly sensing through tuning-in to a lived elemental conversation between human and tree, I experienced sharing my spine with the tree and vice versa – an exoskeletal felt situation and an endoskeleton felt situation.

I then move on to Tenàgàdino Zibì | Gatineau (river) area (2019). I continue exploring eco-performance in the winter cold snow. This time around, I decide to try dancing with snowshoes on. This eco-performance is an exploration of actions setting a new challenge to settling into a performance milieu. I shift method of entering into a performance groove by tasking myself to walk in circles and spirals until an urge to move otherwise rises in me. I also task myself with speaking outloud the names of various elements: snow, cold, wet, and cardinal directions, in English, French, and Anishinaabemowin. In this eco-performance, I come to the awareness that at times, the dance is not my movement, but the imprints I make in the wider fabric of the environment where I dance.

The last eco-performance of this chapter is a continuation of experiencing cold. This time it is early spring in Lake Seneca, Geneva NY, May 2018. There is no snow, but the lake water is too cold to swim in longer than eight minutes at a time. In this eco-performance, I stretch my limits in more than one way. Floating on the water and walking by the lake, I experience shifting my ground and center, a sense of (dis)orientation, as well as shifting spatial measurements.

Between the Impossible and Possible Journey (Tiohtià:ke | Montréal QC, November 2013)

On this very first eco-performance with the snow and cold, I have decided to wear some pieces of the costume I regularly use for performing the *Dalidada* series of performance art solo concerts indoors. Each piece of the many costumes I wear is white because that suits the Kinect's light projection technology that augments my dance-theatre performances (collaborative works from 2011 to 2013). For the outdoor performance at hand, I pick the white leggings and my long white fringe top cut from thick jersey. I also bring with me my *Parasolo* – a wide umbrella prop that I strung with 82 white fringes measuring about 12 ft long each. The prop is heavy. The fringes are white and are cut from polyester gauze. I take a small pot of white clown paste with me. I figure I might want to paint my eyes white, on site. I do wear a white paste as a base for my stage makeup. The white past is gooey and messy, but it does pick up light very well. Today, I also bring my video camera that I will set on a tripod because this very first eco-performance is intended as fieldwork research to collect a different kind of dance gestures that being in studio I might not *think* of dancing. My intent is to capture these elemental, environmental movement sequences, patterns, and shapes and to put them together as one choreography, polish it, and present it for my next indoor movement art solo piece. Little do I know that this day will be a turning point for my artistic direction. Little do I know that I will get hooked on wind and snow (water). From that day on, my dance will shape in co-creation

with the elements on land. As well, from that day on, I will wear the same costume, paste my eyes white, and bring my umbrella and video camera along.⁴⁵ This eco-performance is therefore, the very first one I have performed in focusing deeply on my relationship to the land. This experience is also the start of my relationship with snow and cold. In this exploration with the land, I encounter two concepts that will become foundational to how I practice eco-performance. The first one is the concept of 'arriving' at the place of performance, thereby, settling into myself and the ground underneath my feet. The second one is a concept that I sense somatically as, 'waiting.'

Arriving: Somatics and movement performance arts practitioners say this, *settling into*, of our relationship to the arrival point. This arrival is physical – the place – and also, performative. Arriving / settling into furthermore, means the performer settles into a process of mindful connection between body and arrival. In performance art action, I spend a great deal of time just waiting. It took me five years to get accustomed to waiting. Waiting is a most confusing series of learning moments. The wait, the stillness. . . . Even as I will grow at ease into a performance of waiting, the wait is why I turn away people who ask to watch me eco-perform. I worry that if the whole performance is waiting, I may bore people. I worried then as I do now. But one development from the 2013 eco-performance is that I no longer confuse *action in stillness* with doing nothing. I still get a sort of stage fright however, as waiting still is perplexing – am I doing enough? Is there a connection? There are times when waiting never seems like it will resolve into action. But I now trust the somatic experience as a performance action of simply waiting. Waiting can be in itself the entire performance. It can also lead to a wealth of unexpected yet grounding experiences.

⁴⁵ Bringing my video camera along and recording my eco-performances is the reason why I was able to accumulate a rich documentation of my many eco-performances improvisation from the start of this research journey.

Tiohtià:ke | Montréal, November 2013. I know I have decided to head out of the studio; I do not know where I am going to perform. I head north west to what's called Mount Royal. I am practicing walking until I know this is the place to perform.⁴⁶ I walk until I arrive at the place where I will settle into. This is the place where I am called to perform.

Arriving and settling into: I have found the place of the performance. I still have some tuning-in to locate the specific spot. I take a moment to observe how I feel. I note: I vibrate; I am dizzy. In a meditative approach, I follow my breath until I arrive in the moment. I follow my breath until my whole body breathes.

I set the camera on its tripod. I point the lens toward the gazebo set on the highest point of the hill adjacent to the busy Parc avenue and next to the Montreal Fire Prevention Department. That spot seems the likeliest place for me to enter in my performance action. My body is kept warm under a very heavy long winter jacket. Underneath, I am wearing my Dalidada costume. I brought with me my Parasolo prop. I am here. I wait. My hope is that something will reveal itself which will make me dance. I am not familiar with performing snow. I am new at site-specific dance. I figure I will keep my heavy coat on until I feel an urge to move. Meanwhile, I gaze at the horizon. Everything is white and grey, the hallmark of a winter city park surrounded by an inner-city highway. The sky above is bright blue.

I have an urge to move toward the place I am called to perform. Like a dowsing rod, I am pulled to a specific spot. In a few years, I will have become familiarized with a sense of this spot as a portal. Right now, I move intrigued, swiftly, before the urge dims. I swish open my umbrella – I must untangle its long fringes. Shortly after, I press record on the camera. I pack my heavy coat pockets with scarf, mitts, hat. I empty my lungs – because I've been holding my breath for some time now.

Let the heavy coat slide to my feet.

Walk into the camera's frame.

Walk into the cold.

Cold air.

⁴⁶ "Walking until I know this is the place to perform" is a learning I have assimilated into my current journey from the teachings of my performance art coach, Tourangeau.

Walk. . . .

. . . .

. . . I have arrived.

I arrive at a spot. It seems like this is the spot. I settle into myself. I find my ground. I look at my surroundings. I look inside of me. I wiggle a bit to stir my ground awake while sinking in the snow a little deeper. I settle, and I wait.

Nervous.

What's the action, I ask myself? Perhaps, an insight will come to me now that I have arrived in this place. Can I hold listening presence body-and-mind together in a wait? Is arriving here enough for my performance action to be complete? How long can I hold a performance alive in one and a same place? Waiting is so excruciatingly challenging, difficult to hold. Physically, it requires strength. Waiting weighs; holding a prop is heavy. Psychosomatically, waiting is leaving a door open for my inner monologue to trail off unrestrained. I am trying to avoid the pitfall of thinking a performance urge might drop out from the sky, as if the act of waiting means I am owed a creative insight.

But. . . .

I do have a sense that if I wait long enough, something will manifest.

I decide to try my hand at presencing the wait. Instantly, I experience delight. Presencing, waiting in stillness, is challenging but the presencing activates joy. Presently, I grow to enjoy this challenge. In the near future, I will become familiar with its many sensory somatic layers presencing incurs.

At present: I set my task on witnessing myself from the outside in.

Witnessing the world from the inside out.

Nothing moves – or so it seems.

I settle deeper into presencing. I hang there between this moment and the moment where I make myself believe that I ought to perform movement in space. Hanging in there feels like forever. Plus, I am near naked. Cold is not a friend to the urban modern human. But as always, in a performative zone, discomfort is dim. I take note of how my naked skin has acclimatized to the cold wind. Even as I do not feel the cold, I expect it. I do know that my body temperature and the environmental temperature are clashing. I will not last long in this cold. For the forever to last forever I would need eternal fire to keep me warm, bird's wings to drift on a warm wind corridor. I would need to be other than human. I would need no intake of air into my lungs nor an exhale – this way I wouldn't choke, I wouldn't cough. The cold air shocks me, nevertheless. I cough. My body is moving through breathing and choking on cold air. I take note of my bodily response: the cough sets a somatic subtle wave throughout and a not so subtle chain of twitching movements. This is moving while waiting. I witness all of it that I can at this time, probing for an indication of something of an obvious urge to move large and big gestures, more deliberately artistic perhaps. Silence. Or I should say, near silence and a symphony of subtle movements.

Be still.

I wait for something to move me in the space where I am grounded. Besides spasms and hearing my own breath, I don't sense much of any other movements happening. Nevertheless, by presencing the wait, I grow to understand that I am mindfully presencing action in stillness. I breathe. I wait, I breathe. Here I am, aiming to dance cold and snow. The surrounding elements are vastly engaged in a dance that I am only beginning to glimpse. I learn already, from the elements.

There is a ton of snow this year, even if it is only November. Sometimes the wind blows a wisp of a breath. The umbrella is heavy. I choose to hold it with the one arm. Same arm. My arm must be tired, but I do not feel it is. The fringes of my umbrella shiver. It must be my arm's muscles spasming, or is it? There is so little wind flow. Even city sounds stand still.

I perform presencing for the outside of me, what I now call stretching skin, and manifesting amplitude and density. It is like one of my legs has grown in girth. It's as if

I've become part tree trunk. On this stretched out foot-trunk base slowly evolves a pivot. I continue to hold the umbrella up in one hand. At some point in the long moment, I hover under the umbrella, cocooned by the round of its fringes. At present, I am inside a cocoon. From the inside of the cocoon, this waiting evolves into a sense of holding space. Holding space in this place is a new somatic sense. Holding space in site specific place is holding a lot of space. I wait nearly still, twirling my umbrella so that the fringes slowly veer to the right then to the left, in circular rounds at the edge of where I stand. Something is happening that is so much bigger than me. I feel at peace. I feel wide, tall. Ok. This seems like a comfortable position I can settle into. And so, I wait, knowing that I have arrived at peace.

As I wrote earlier – I get hooked right away on dancing outdoors. My dance is wildly minimal. I am moving with and against the elements, interrupted by my surroundings, as well as interrupting the environment I set foot into. My dance improvisation is a series of interruptions and adapting to the wind, the snow, the cold, and a few curious passersby. During this winter, I will go out four more times on Mount-Royal mountain at the center of the city of Montréal, once nearby on the sidewalk on rue Des Pins facing oncoming traffic and sheltered by the north wind by the high grey rock wall enclosing the convent of les Soeurs Grises de Montréal (Grey Nuns). On another outing, I will come out nearly as an invisible performative intervention at peak-hour clubbing hours amidst a crowd of clubbers transiting from one to another dance establishments on the busy boulevard St-Laurent. I will also bring the performance to an outdoor heated pool (Club La Cité), waddling in hot water while my head hits -15C above water. One of the performances I had set myself to go into featured a rainbow in a snowstorm (rare) as a backdrop for my dance. But because of the bitter cold killing my video camera's battery, I had to cancel it. The performance was less a call to place and more of an awe-ness at the beauty of nature interrupting an otherwise cityscape. I did take this performance indoors, propped on my raised

bed platform in the loft, cramped between walls, and window, and ceiling, and giant umbrella. It turned out to be a productive exploration of confined space. And finally, I will take this eco-performance exploration to the West End of Tkaranto | Toronto, in a back alleyway. More eco-performances came out of exploring the cold and the snow. The series of "A Study: Between the Impossible and Possible Journey" (2013-2014) is a pivotal one in my movement performance art journey.

Rue Henri-Julien: Introducing Myself and my Art to the Tree that Saw Me Born (Tiohtià:ke | Montréal QC, February 2019)

In this following narrative, the stage is set on rue Henri-Julien, at the corner of boulevard Crémazie in Tiohtià:ke | Montréal, in February 2019. I choose this location because this is the place where my parents lived when I was conceived and also, born. I lived the first six months of my life, here. My primary intent is to experience the water I first drank as a newborn. The way things turn out in this performance is the surprising story I am about to tell.

In this eco-performance, I will introduce myself to a tree. The land welcomes me and as a token of it, sends me off with an exchange – a little bit of me with the land for a little bit of the land with me. I also continue my inquiry with dancing the snow and cold. I encounter somatic senses and situations that are some of those encountered time and time again, in my various somadance eco-performance: a sense of being pulled to water as if by a sort of 'gut-radar.' This felt sense is visceral as well as lived somatically in relation with the inner and the outer *somas*. I feel the connection as it manifests through tingles – a sort of wet-imagery throughout my body combined with a sort of mental imagery of being flooded. The novel somatic experience felt here in this eco-performance is the sense of inhabiting a common body, a collectivity of bodies. Later in the performance, I will experience a sense of my spine existing outside of me. I will

also feel a sense that someone's spine fuses with mine. Upon recognizing the area as a familiar ground, I will get a sense of remembering and rekindling with the area (with the tree, more specifically). In addition, I note that I experience time-traveling. The reddish-brown bricks of the nearby Montréal's apartment triplex bring me across time to my maternal grandmother's home, and to the trees that lined the streets of this part of Montréal. On rue St-Dominique, the three-storey apartments are tightly fit shoulder-to-shoulder. By sensing being at home on rue Henri-Julien, I travelled to a time when my maternal grandmother was still alive. I also get caught between seasons, at a time when leaves are green, and also, about to turn gold. By February 2019, I have been performing somadance eco-performance for six years, co-creating with water and wind. At this point in my journey of ecosomatic experiencing, I am growing familiar with a sense of grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory.

For my eco-performance on rue Henri-Julien, in front of what had been, by my guess, my parents' house at the time of my birth, I had omitted in my pre-performance planning to consider the role of the trees. For the performance at hand, I had planned to walk toward the house that had seen me born, not to the tree. I had expected, following my gut feeling, to identify the house by the water flowing through pipes, through taps, in the house, not the water flowing through the trees. What surprised me in this eco-performance is that I performed with a tree. Trees have only recently been a part of my conscious eco-performance milieu. Trees carry water within them. It does make sense that I had been drawn to the water element I dance, albeit in a different container (during the winter life of a tree: bark, roots, and trunk). Water the roots of the trees drink and the water I drink in Montréal is the same water – taken from lac Saint-Louis, lac des Deux-Montagnes, Rivière des Prairies and le fleuve St-Laurent.

Tiohtià:ke | Montréal, February 2019. I drive to the corner of rue Henri-Julien and boulevard Crémazie est, and find parking one street over. I walk to Henri-Julien between

Crémazie and rue du Liège est. My goal is to locate the house where I was born. I am specifically focused on the space where my mother and father lived when she was pregnant with me. I have this idea in my head that I want to reactivate and remember the water they drank while I was conceived and the first water I tasted in my human mouth.

Today is bitterly cold, -15C, feeling like oh my god! As per usual on bitterly cold winter days in Montréal, the sky is heavenly bright. It's as if heaven's clouds have been swept under the rug except for a few long white wisps punctuating an otherwise perfectly calm baby blue sky. Were I seated at a cafe table by the window, I would bask in these rays, comfortable in a toasty, lavish mid-afternoon experience. As it is, if I take off my gloves, my fingers will fall off. Even through a double layer of mitts-and-gloves, I can barely feel my fingers alive, they are so cold. Today of all days, I have decided to eco-perform on Henri-Julien at the corner of Crémazie. Today is the day, because I no longer live in Montréal, and I only have a few hours to cram this eco-performance in before I must head back to Gatineau. It is cold, very cold. Have I said it enough already!

Underneath my ski pants, I have a layer of white leggings. My feet are cozy in my merino wool socks and winter boots. Underneath my winter jacket and heavy wool sweater and wide scarf, I have tied to my neck the white long fringes. Underneath, because I seldom perform bare breasts anymore, I wear a thin layer. My arms will be bare. My feet will be bare. In my winter jacket, I have a frozen pack of white paste that I will melt warm and smear over my eyes when I am ready to walk into my performance.

A few days earlier I had asked my father to describe the place where he and my mother lived when I was born. He described a typical Montréal triplex attached to a row of triplexes. My parents lived in the third-floor apartment. At present, I am looking for a ground floor front balcony framed with columns which marks it as looking different from the other ground floor facades on the street – as my father had described to me. I am looking for one particular triplex that has access to a side alleyway because my father said our apartment had a side window overlooking rue Crémazie. All the triplexes are brick built, usually reddish-brown bricks, with the odd beige triplex standing out. 1920's is a marker for the rise of this neighborhood. I locate a large and deep front balcony, and a spiral front staircase leading to the second floor, where the third floor can be accessed through the door via an indoor staircase. I have very few details to work with in order to

locate the house, to say the least. No pictures. No address. Finding it is an exercise in piloting a gut-radar sense.

My maternal grandmother / godmother Yvette also lived in such a reddish-brown brick triplex. Also on the third floor. But in Little Italy. She lived on rue St-Dominique near rue Beaubien est – ok, a near miss from Little Italy. This is where my mother was born and raised. My parents met at my paternal grandfather's grocery store on rue Beaubien at the corner of avenue Casgrain. It isn't very far from where my mother lived when she was pregnant with me.

This type of brick triplex brings memories of a tree. It is customary in this part of Montréal, to have in front of each triplex, one tree. The story I remember is that of a marvellously big tree rising high, with foliage bringing deliciously cool shade to my grandmother's front porch balcony. My grandmother used to tell simple stories of passing the time sitting on the porch, rocking herself in a chair, quietly reading, or day dreaming. She spoke about the leaves and the branches of the tree, from when buds unfurled in the mild spring to their shimmering greenness, and lasting until the colorful September summer. One year, the city cut down the old tree to make way for a newer tree. I think my grandmother was already 60 years old at the time. I believe the old city tree might have been as old as 50, judging by its girth, and from as far back as the stories that surrounded it populated our memories. A bit of my grandmother died that day with the cutting down of her old tree friend. The scrawny newer tree did not survive the winter. It was never replaced by another tree. I remember the unspoken memories shared between our family members as we huddled near my grandmother to console her. Seriously, it felt like everyone was grieving with my grandmother, for the tree. Their faces said, "50 years," "long-time friend," "how is this possible!" Even as a pre-teen, I note how impressed with the tree I myself already was at the time. We offered condolences to a truncated, long relationship between my grandmother's life and the tree. I interpreted the grief of my relatives, witnessing their eyes staring at empty tree foliage, to replaying their own memories silently, of the many years of communal living with our family and the tree. That tree might have seen my mother born!

Back in where I am presently, I felt pretty confident I had identified the right house. At least, the little description I had to go on fit the triplex. A resounding sense of

somatic tuning-in to the place kicked in – existing here, awareness, attuning, and empathy. The triplex stood across the street from where I stood with all my gear – me, outfitted in my winter garb, camera and tripod and umbrella tucked under my arms. I stood a bit down south from the apartment, so that I could set up my tripod to get a good camera angle at the triplex and a bit of rue Henri-Julien at the cross section of the busy boulevard Métropolitain overpassing rue Crémazie.

For this performance to begin, I had to wait for space to clear out – the postal truck to drive out of the parking spot in front of the triplex; a neighbor to have his car battery boosted, and then drive both of his cars out of the alleyway that was just next to the triplex where I was aiming to perform. In this wait, I had time to choreograph part of my dance. I was to walk to the house, intently tuning in to my somatic drives, and trusting that by the time I was near enough to the house, some sort of insight would kick in. At any rate, I was hoping to remain as spontaneous as possible, trusting in the intuitive process in the moment, to move me to dance. I was not planning more than walking to and walking back. The only busy triplex, with ins and outs of occupants, was the one I believed to be my birth home. I waited nearly an hour.

Back in the moment. Every time I take my gloves off to check the time on my phone, cold bites my fingers numb. It is that cold. I bravely visualize my naked feet to bear the cold of the asphalt throughout the performance. Nonetheless, I am not looking forward to freezing my kidneys. I know that is not a pleasant post-performance residual experience, at least, from previous bad experiences I have had in dancing in the cold way too long. The first time I eco-performed in the Virgin River (Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT 2014), I could not bend at the hips for the next eighteen months. In this cold, too, my camera might shut off. I realize that on top of all that, I have only a half hour left before my car gets towed away. And I have to add the time it will take to walk the distance back to where it is parked one street over. Meanwhile, the mechanic guy is fiddling with his car engine, still in the way of my called-in place. Still. There are parameters to honor. There are no good reasons to walk up to a guy who is fixing his car in the bitter cold, and act like I am dancing on clouds right next to his worries. Compassionate as the wait might be, the window for exploring my relationship to this land is getting shorter. I am aware of a person watching me from the second floor of the triplex across the street. The person is

hidden behind white drapes but the drapes swish as if someone has peeked through. I do not want her to call the police to come check on my performance, and worst of all, stop my performance before I have time to do it. Perhaps, the person behind the drape will enjoy watching my dance after all. I will never know. Anxiety is trying to get the better of me. I know that I am attuning to fear. So I let myself drift into the laughing warrior.⁴⁷

I stand witness to the human activity on the street centering on the place where I intend to perform. I wait for an opportunity to jump in. The mechanic guy in the alleyway has pulled both of his cars out of there, and driven off in one of them. There is still human activity on the street but as far as my performance lieu is concerned, the coast is clear. A somatic urge has kicked in so hard I almost start walking before I can take note of it. An old man passing by behind me on the sidewalk frowns when I take my jacket off and pile it with my hat and mitts and scarf on the asphalt. I press play on the camera's digital menu. I smear the thick gooey white paste on my eyes. I do not hold eye contact with the old man behind me. He has walked away anyways. I feel him gone and shove his disapproving frown out of my invisibly growing presencing presence cocoon. I focus on taking my boots and socks off. My bare feet are now in direct contact with the ice-cold asphalt. I do not lose a second longer and walk myself into the frame of the camera, carrying my giant umbrella, diving into the performance and research milieu.

As soon as I cross the street, a car drives by. No wait, it stops right next to me! I have not done much else than walk to the tree, holding my umbrella with its many fringes, and all of that while bare foot. The car stopping next to me is a natural (urban) interruption, nothing more. I take the time to acknowledge the disrupt. The man sitting at the steering wheel of the black car is enjoying the performance enough to roll down his window. As a manner of greeting, he begins his interruption with a large, assumed, empathic smile. He puts his head out through the rolled down window and initiates small talk. I stay in my performance research milieu, performing an extra layer of quotidian performance. While he is wearing winter everything, somehow, the contrast of my bare

⁴⁷ The laughing warrior is an experiential tool I give myself to counter fear. In this dissertation, I will not introduce the concept. I have created a yoga flow in the Land to Water Yoga style, to be practiced in the water (Hawai'i 2019). The flow includes various kinds of warrior postures.

feet on icy asphalt, my bare shoulders, and his winter garb keeping him warm even as he sits in a heated car, escapes him. "What are you doing?" he asks.

Well, this is where my parents lived when I was born, and also, I am a movement performance artist. So I have decided to come here to introduce my art to the tree that saw me born.

He says something like, "ah!" and then, "art" and "history," and waves goodbye still smiling. Oh well, that was wild! Did I just say that? Fortunately, the three other cars all jammed behind this one go on without stopping. I let go of the quotidian performance. All I have to hold space for at this time, is to be with the performance research milieu. The driver's intervention interfered with my walk up to the house. By replying to his question, I myself shifted the journey of my eco-performance. My call is no longer to the house but to the tree. I have shifted my aim, and now focus on introducing my art to the tree that saw me born.

Strong somatic stirrings further animate me. I am rekindling with an old friend! Catching up with a tree! I glee and glow. Heat runs through my veins. Sweat steams out of my pores. That is not a good thing, though. Bare skin in subzero, I might catch one hell of a cold. I wonder if I can resorb sweat. I try toning down presencing.

With hindsight, I understand that my somatic attuning to water has drawn me to a tree. The tree remembers me; I remember the tree. This interruption has put my dance on a different path. I walk to under the tree's extended winter bare branches. It is a tall tree with branches shooting nearly across the street. In the summer, it must make lovely shade, what with its green leaves rustling, sounding. Never mind the noise coming from the busy boulevard Métropolitain, I feel totally alone and intimate with the tree.

I want to introduce myself. I find myself projected into a story where I am a bean and sprouting from my feet up to my raised arm holding the umbrella. I receive loud and clear a sense of being alive, a sense of existing. From this somatic urge, a gesture emerges. I curtsy three times, one knee pressed against the hard grimy ground, and yet gracefully, I welcome the wind playing with the fringes of the umbrella. I balance my weight accordingly. I experience a heaviness on my left side because I must compensate

for the weight of the umbrella I am holding with my right arm. I balance grounding and settling. After the curtsies, I decide to twirl. And then, I repeat the curtsy, so as to take note of the somatic sensations of bending, of my core sensing dissociation from upper body to lower body, inhabiting weight shifts for a later post-performance embodied remembering writing session.

There. I have introduced who I am to the tree. When the performance of presenting my dance to the tree comes to an end – because it feels it has come to an end – I decide to push myself a little more. And against this cold situation, I chance another somatic drive coming through me.

I am pulled to walking three times around the tree, but when I get to half the circumference of its trunk, I decide that it is enough. It is too cold. I check in with myself. The soles of my feet feel warm. So I push on, and decide to step bare feet in the snow mound accumulated against the tree trunk. It is a crisp kind of snow. In the city, snow does not stay wool-y for long. It shrivels and dries with pollution's heavier dust. White is covered in soot. It's an ugly snow. I try not to jump out of the performance milieu. I try not to jump ahead of my thoughts, but I cannot resist fantasizing a long lyrical gesture rising from having both feet buried in this snow. But, I do come out of myself, projecting myself ahead of the dance. I am in an epic mood. I step in the snow crisp and soot with both feet. Wow! I am brought back to a radically painful in-the-moment situation. I flinch. I lose ground. And oh wow, do I ever feel a surge of pain shooting up my leg at this sidestep stumble! I know right away I have exceeded my human capacity to bear cold. I have gone too far. I have let my whims to predict my dance carry me away from tuning-in to ecosomatic perception. I call it quits, but just a moment too late. And begin my walk towards the camera, i.e.: towards my warm clothes. Loyal to my initial desire to capture my performance in frontal view, I remain in the performance milieu. My feet are frozen anyways so I can't even spring back to my socks, my boots. I might as well move at a crawl and call it eco-performance. I think I am going to fall off my feet, it feels like I am walking on stumps. My urge at this very moment is to get down on my knees and slither back to my clothes. Partly out of a survival – the street is grossly dirty – and partly out of artistic ego, I stay upright on my two legs moving slowly, calmly, consciously.

At this time, I experience a split from my body. As I move away from the tree, it feels as if my spine is still out there, by the tree. It feels as if my spine has left me. I am a walking skin sack. My skeleton is missing a spine. It feels as if I am a walking rib cage to which are attached arms and legs, and frozen stomps. My spine has stayed behind. My boneless neck and my skull still attached, come with the rest of me. I may be experiencing a sense of delusion due to symptoms of hypothermia playing with me in weird somatic fantasies. At this time, I cannot resist, and I dive intently deeper into somatic witnessing mode.

I note activity taking place in my spine, as I continue to walk away from it, away from the tree, and across the street. I feel the length of my now exo spine elongate to as tall as the top of the tree. In somatic movement classes, we remind students to drop their tailbone to the floor. This is exactly what is happening. My tailbone rams into the ground. It occurs to me that my tailbone marks the site of my birth. This may be an ecosomatic situation of rooting myself to the place that saw me born. I may be experiencing grounding while moving. As a result of my tailbone being thus planted in the earth, I am pinned in place; nevertheless, my real body continues its wobbly shards-shooting-in-the-frozen-feet walk. This extra length allowing me to move away while also being grounded may be an experience of rooting in movement. I have become two bodies. Rather, I have become a spineless body and a spine-as-body. I manage to walk as far as about two metres' distance separating my spine from the rest of my body. As I walk, I have a sense of being a barrel rather than being a vertical biped. What keeps me together feels cylindrical and radiates horizontally. I roll standing up towards my boots.

I experience living without a spine, yet, my spine dictates my path from its outer venue. I now have an exoskeletal spine initiating my movements. Said spine rests against the tree trunk. I know this because the surface touching my spinal cord is vertical, and feels like a tree bark surface, specifically. Since my spine is leading my somadance, I am led from a vertical plane, which is not a minor twist to what walking stepping on a horizontal plane feels like. I am led no longer by my feet stepping into space but by my spine pushing against the tree trunk, propelling me onward. It's like floating on water but I am standing up.

Then, something else happens. A spine leans against my back from the outside of my body. It isn't my own spine. Nevertheless, I feel it pushing against me gently. It is a warm push. It is a wood-based spine, warm like a tree-sap warmth. I recognize the tree of my birth place. Oh my god the tree is hugging me!! The tree has moved inside my skin sac. The tree has imprinted in my ribcage. It inhabits me, extends twirling vines to my rib bones, knows not to choke my organs. I now have an endoskeletal tree spine and an exoskeletal spine backed against a tree. As a part of me has stayed behind, I nevertheless feel complete. I am somatically complete. Me and my two spines walk back to the camera.

Everything goes really fast from then on. I am nowhere close to moving consciously. Things make no sense. Whenever I emerge into moving consciously, I pick up glimpses of what my human body is moving through. I witness that I am in a sitting position to lace my boots back on. But I also do not notice what I am sitting on. Surfaces, touch, what is me, hard objects, imagined chair on which I sit, all support me and are mixed in a dream. I am off the camera's frame. The "performance" is over as far as digital documentation is concerned. I allow myself an overflow of senses felt real and imagined. As I ease myself gently out of the performance milieu, I skip beats. Part of me has come back to the quotidian milieu. Part of me sinks to a place that is no longer moving consciously. I know that I am coming back to because periods of non-consciousness come in at a much smaller interval. I witness myself first through strobe-light-like images, and then to a human-pace flow. Coming out of performance milieu is always a bumpy ride.

Amidst thawing bits and flow of conscious time / time consciousness, I float into the memory of place. I cannot see the visuals but feel somatically the moment of existing from birth, from having been inside of my mother's body to having been a toddler in this place in the world, and of looking at the tree from my home's front facade's window. I am more complete at this moment than when I came here a moment ago.

The full recognition of how much the tree was engaging in my performance comes fully to me as I write these words, post-performance. On the video document, it looks like the tree is extending over the street, and its branches are holding the threads of me like a puppet. It looks like the tree knows I am introducing myself to it, and that I am dancing for it.

In the exploration of rue Henri-Julien, I rekindled with my tree of birth. The tree is a witness of me, to whom I now introduced myself as a movement performance artist through my performance art. The dolorous walk back to my boots, with a sense of being complete with a missing familiar spine and a newly foreign integrated spine brings a metaphor of being born out of my mother's body, and of striving to learn how to walk like a biped. I wonder if it is the tree who called me after I told the man in the black car what I came here to do? Perhaps the tree put these thoughts into me? Perhaps, the disruption allowed me to let go of focusing too much on the performance and the connection to the house, so as to allow rekindling with somatic and ecosomatic senses of existing? I have experienced remembering a foundational connection to the past and to who I am today, including the tree in who I am – I left a backbone back there. Quite somatically, the tree included itself into me! As a way of performing to the tree that saw me born, I come to an understanding that I am a movement performance artist living life through the somatic lens of performance art. The sense of existing who I am and the sense of being aligned to my roots, meet. Performance art is very much my *Lebenswelt* (Fr.: *le monde vécue* / Eng.: lifeworld).

Walking in Circles in a Little Forest (Tenàgàdino Zibì | Gatineau (river) area QC, January 2019)

In the following two case studies, "walking in circles in a little forest" (Tenàgàdino Zibì | Gatineau (river) area QC, January 2019), and "dancing lake" (Lake Seneca, Geneva NY, May 2018), I reflect on ecosomatic situations of walking / swimming in rounds, finding my center inside and outside of me, and orientating differently. Federici, in *Re-Enchanting the World*, reminds us that people and societies are profoundly shaped at all levels by a daily interaction with nature. In urban contemporary times, nature is the city skylit sky, a weed peeking through a crack in the sidewalk.

Four thousand years ago Babylonians and Maya sky watchers discovered and mapped the main constellations and the cyclical motions of heavenly bodies . . . Polynesian sailors could navigate the high seas on the darkest nights, finding their way to the shore by reading the ocean swells – so attuned were their bodies to changes in the undulations and surges of the waves . . . Preconquest Native American populations produced the crops that now feed the world, with a mastery unsurpassed by any agricultural innovations introduced over the last five hundred years, generating an abundance and diversity that no agricultural revolution has matched. (191)

Nature is always there. Gravity pins us to the land. In my eco-performance, I re-inhabit orienting phenomena: the circle, spiral, celestial sphere, magnetic north, cardinal points. I am reminded that by trusting tuning-in to the sentient world, I am rehabilitating my sentient potential to connect to my environment. I am reminded that my sentient body is my primal tool for *navigating* and *cultivating* my environment. With each newly activated ecosomatic sensitivity to existing phenomena, I explore further my fundamental and foundational relationship to the land and how it shapes my movements through dance. With each newly activated ecosomatic sensitivity to existing phenomena, I imagine how, such as Federici demonstrates in the quote from *Re-Enchanting the World* (191), it might have shaped a culture.

Post-performance reflection, I have identified experiencing a sense of aligning with the magnetic north, the cardinal points, and with the celestial sphere. During the performance, I had observed feeling like the needle pointing north while the forest is the "walker," leaving tracks in the snow as if using my body to do so. I also had observed walking in circles as a felt experience of remembering through my body, what may possibly be embodied echoes of ancestral Irish walking the rounds inhabiting my action drives.

In my own life, I am somewhat directionally challenged. I will turn left thinking I am turning right. I might get lost going somewhere familiar. I know how to use tools to orient myself. However, many a time, my gut feeling orients me otherwise. For years, I have explained

this sensation I have of being directionally alternative, by describing how I visualize my inner compass as a small grey ball floating in the center of my cranial cavity, bobbing up and down in a viscous liquid, rotating counter-clockwise from how I turn and orient my body. When I turn right, the little ball bobs up and down, and floats against the spiraling flow. This means that I am always lost, in a sense, and also always aligned with something. My guess is that inwardly, I align with a spiraling sphere rather than a static quadrant. This ecosomatic situation in part motivates immersing myself in an inquiry of ecosomatic situations of turning in circles, centering differently, and unsettling the quadrant compass.

A compass is a tool to navigate. Its magnetic needle points to the magnetic north. A compass is also a tool to draw circles and arcs, as well as measuring distance on a map. Earth's magnetic field and magnetic alignment are pulls and sensitivities that I move through without much awareness until these eco-performances. I have read that "Dogs are sensitive to small variations of the Earth's magnetic field" (Hart, V., Nováková, P., Malkemper, E.P. et al. 1). And furthermore, "[S]everal mammalian species spontaneously align their body axis with respect to the Earth's magnetic field (MF) lines in diverse behavioral contexts" (1). Can I dance the magnetic field lines, I wonder? How about the sky and the celestial sphere?

Tenàgàdino Zibi | Gatineau (river) area, January 2019. Winter settled in. In Gatineau where I live this means a deep blanket of snow. Ah, winter, my favorite season to engage with nature through eco-performance! I don my Dalidada costume, smear white paste on my eyelids, throw a winter coat on and boots, walk outside with my video camera on a tripod tucked under one arm, strap snowshoes to my boots and head out to a little patch of forest behind the house. Once in the place where I am called to perform, I usually wait. In this way, I make my presence known to the environment and the sentient beings populating the environment. I also wait for an invitation to join in the already existing dance. I wonder what would happen if instead of waiting still, I would be waiting while turning in circles? Today, I task myself to go explore spirals: whirlpools, wind swirls, dust devils,

birds circling above, rolling waves, drops causing concentric circles in the water, water puddles, etc. I am pulled to dance these shapes and these images.

I set the tripod in a clearing, not far from the house. I then slide my winter coat off, and begin right away walking in circles and in spirals. By now, I have familiarized myself with dancing the wind, and dancing water. I know these co-created dances by the familiar umbilical pull I experience when engaging in co-creation somadance. Even as I have begun circling before sensing an urge to dance, I feel the pull. But it's pulling from somewhere else in my body. I feel like my shoulders are initiating the forward movement in space. My legs are unusually heavy, and my feet are barely sensing anything at all, strapped in boots and onto snowshoes. Every step I take, I feel a tug from my hip down to where one of my snowshoes is momentarily stuck in snow. The tug propels my head forward on an otherwise relaxed neck. The outlook is that of a pigeon walk – my head bobbing, and my hips slowly floating forward to realign my pelvic bone with my shoulder girdle. In this bizarre bird-like walk, I feel pulled-and-pushed. There is more volume to my following the call to the place of the dance.

I allow myself to be called to circle around this tree and that tree, and spiral among this bunch of bushes and that fallen tree. I walk between trees and over dead branches poking out of snow piles. I then begin walking around a familiar cedar tree, first one-way over and over again, and then switching it the other way around, for a few rounds more. I make myself walk in circles. Nothing much else than settling into the snowshoe walk comes through as far as dance moves go.

I shift my attention to the wind. I witness my breath. In this humid cold, exhales come out in visible puffs. Hearing my breath gives me the idea to sound words. I play with sounding out loud the name of things around me: trees, stream, snow, cold, and the cardinal points. I try to speak in French (mother tongue), English (scholarly writing tongue), and Anishinaabemowin / Ojibwe (language of one of the First Nations on whose ancestral land the eco-performance takes place).

Français	English	Anishinaabemowin / Ojibwe
arbre	tree	mitíg(oog)
ruisseau	stream	jiwan (it flows)
neige	snow	goon
froid	cold	dakamanji'o (s/he is chilled, feels cold)
eau froide / eau glacée	cold water / ice-cold water	dakib
nord	north	giiwedín (north; the north wind)
est	east	waabanong (in the east; to the east)
sud	south	zhaawanong (in, to, from the south)
ouest	west	ningaabii'an

I interrupt my walk to crouch next to the tiny stream and speak those words out loud. Nothing seems to come out from the magic of spelling words out loud. So I decide to stand back up. It's obviously not what the snowy edge of the stream wants. She draws me in closer to the stream. As I try to push myself up on one hand, the snowbank swallows my arm right up to the armpit. I press on but only manage to tumble face first in the snow. With my head and an arm buried in the snow, I try to kick myself up giving what I hope is a pendulum swing strong enough to flip me back up. But I only manage to cave myself in deeper, with knees buried and my legs all tangled in the snowshoe straps. With snowshoes, there is no easy way back to standing! I try to prop myself up using my left arm but only poke through the snowbank without touching the ground. Now I'm mostly snowed-in and feeling like I'm inching into a snow-slide, into the partially iced-over stream. My skin stings from the contact with the cold snow. A bit of my warmth melts the snow and the feeling of wet cold takes me right out of the cool and collected performance zone. Against my better judgement, I roll on my back. That was a silly move. I brace myself to slide into the stream. She isn't very deep at all. I will get wet-er, is the worst that can happen. But hey! Survival instinct is a strong drive! My abdominal muscles kick in. And in an instant, I am propelled to a sitting position – back against the stream. I wiggle a bit to keep the tension of the spring-like dynamic going, until I find momentum to swing my snowshoes under me. Then with a spring, I shoot myself up on one knee. I manage to get myself

halfway to standing when the cedar tree next to me drops a mound of snow on my head. I swear I can hear the forest and the little stream laughing outloud!

My face is red, my hands are red.

My face is wet.

My hands are wet.

I don't know where to tuck my fingers to get them warm.

I am freezing.

I let the sting of the cold wash over me.

The snow melts on my bare skin.

I feel every second of it.

I should be uncomfortable.

But I am too jolly to notice anymore!

I too laugh outloud with the forest and the little stream.

Once fully up, I decide to walk in tight circles, stopping to recite words. Another mound of snow drops from the cedar tree, this time, as I am facing south. I try to laugh with the forest a little. It's not that I am less amused at the forest and the stream. But I am beginning to feel like this eco-performance is going nowhere. Later, I will note that the video documentation of this eco-performance shows a pitiful somadance, indeed.

I push on walking in circles. I turn my full attention to witnessing somatic drives. Nothing much manifests inside of me other than me feeling really pretty cold. Eventually I come out of the forest into a clearing. There, I walk in spirals. When I reach a center, I pivot, and walk back on my tracks to the outer edge of the spiral. I pivot when I reach the tail end and walk back to the center. I do this a few times, probing my body for somatic cues of any drives surfacing. Honestly, I feel sick to my stomach. Turning in circles, and perhaps slowly going into hypothermia is making me nauseous. I gather my focus for a final exploration.

This time, I place myself in the center of the spiral shape I just traced now in the snow. From here, feet together, I begin twisting my upper body left, then right. I allow my arms to swing out freely. I do this motion as if I am skiing down an easy peasy snow hill

and swinging my arms without poking the ski poles in the snow. Eventually, my long loose hair, and the neck fringes I wear fly out parallel to my trunk. Hair, and fringes paint horizontal lines in space. Then at the counter twist, hair, and fringes fold and pop back out horizontally to the opposite direction. Meanwhile, my arms are swinging around my waist and with a loud smack, gather inertia to swing out 'round the other way and then smack my waist again. I allow the swinging impulse to sink in my lower body, twisting my legs all the way down to my ankles. My ankles and knees roll out of axis with each new rotation. With my feet immobilized in the sunken snowshoes, I take note of the strain this free flowing dissociation puts on my knees. Ah! There is the main reason why I stopped downhill skiing, poor knees, the twist and strain just hurts too much. I better bend my knees and sort of bob up and down. Simply, I adjust my body by locking my lower half and driving the dissociation from the waist up. My rib cage and shoulder girdle are active in this motion dynamic. My shoulder rotators even lift off a bit while my neck buries into my torso. I do this twisting dance for some time. I let myself be taken by the momentum of the pendulum movement, but there isn't any manifest sign of somatic drives rising up from me. No personal somatic drives seem to brew an eco-co-created dance. No somadance feels like intervening through all of this twisting about. Eventually, I let the movement die off on its own.

I walk out of the spiral. I am terribly nauseated, so I don't take much care in collecting myself out of the performance zone. I simply step out of the area where I walked in circles and spirals.

One.

Two.

Three steps.

I am curious enough to contemplate the site of the non-dance and swivel around taking a good look at the place where I just performed. Of course, I am not there anymore so there is nothing to see but the path I traced in the snow. "Oh well. . . . some you lose," I tell myself. I reach out for my tripod and camera and pick up my winter clothes. I don't bother with putting my winter coat on, I'm nearly home.

One.

Two.

Three steps.

I wonder if the sound of snowshoes walking on mushy snow has a name in English. Swoosh, is it? I swoosh myself to the front porch. I'm wet and cold – nothing less than a steaming hot shower will do to bring me back in my every-day body.

As I come in, my dog greets me with love, then barks a bit, letting me know she's not happy with me for not having taken her along in the little forest. I place my gear on the floor. The light coming in from the glass panel in the front door is a pretty color. I take a few photos of my open umbrella on the floor of the entrance lobby, to record its wetness and tangled fringes. These images will turn out as beautifully lit by a glorious winter sun ray. I have no idea what the rest of this site-specific study might have reaped in the form of artistic production, let alone research contribution. I will have to review the video to watch for clues.

My mother greets me, showing me her iPad with which she recorded my performance from her bedroom window. She was not able to pick out my dance when I was deep in the forest by the stream, but she does have footage of me spiraling in the clearing. It is by viewing her footage that I realize that the dance was not in me, but me in the forest. I was simply one of the dancers in the forest dance. Tree trunks, pine needles and winter tree leaves, deer poop, snow of course, a dancing blue sky interrupted by the little forest's mostly bare branches canopy, etc. The video footage shows a surprising painting. Imprints on the surface of the snow blanket make a curious design. It is simple yet clearly defined. It looks like the trees bordering the clearing where I danced were breathing hard enough to leave breath marks – their visible puffs – on snow. It's as if some of these foot marks (snowshoes) have been orchestrated by the forest itself. It looks like the patterns on the snow are somatic drives from the forest itself. Bare trees, bushy coniferous, snow tracks and spirals, and me swishing, is the choreography of a much bigger somatic dance than that of a single human dancer.

An ecosomatic approach to movement art is an approach to a practice of knowing how to move and trusting / sensing the unknown. In a circular and spiral approach to learning (Archibald; Shin Somatics Method), I learn a little bit more with each revolution. In the "little forest" dance, I remember the Commons, a form of collective body. I remember and experience the human body, the ancestral body, and an environmental body. Of course, I do not become snow, and snow does not turn into a human being. I believe it is important to honor differences because it is difference which allows for the intricacies of a *bigger picture*, the expression of an eco-performance somadance. As so often happens during these site-specific somadances, the movements I dance are moments that are also present in the bigger picture – my arms shaping a circle as I dance not knowing giant vultures circle above (at the foot of Angels Landing in Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT 2019); my raised arm dropping in the moment of a slow dance just as an icicle breaks off the lip of a grotto behind me (Weeping Cave, Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT 2016); my body shaping in odd angular and *clownesque* dance mimicking a twisted tree behind my back (Pine Valley Peak UT 2019); rising the ocean tides, lit in a ray of sun framing a tableau of me rising the tides and manifesting (Ka‘ena Point HI 2019). I am a witness to a synchronic bigger picture dance even as dancers are uniquely different. Training in ecosomatic attuning develops the ability to tuning-in to the bigger picture.

In this "little forest" eco-performance, I did not experience the ecosomatic orientation as I had intended. I did not tap into a sure navigation. Circles and spirals are unsettling, and yet, they are motions that bring-in togetherness. When I walk in circles on the deep snow, I reveal myself as a mover to the world. In a sense, I introduce myself as unsettled and willing to partake through my art to this winter little forest's common dance. I connect with the snow in ways that create resistance in my walk, forcing me to settle and land; in ways that my steps leave traces. I

connect with the sky which is blue, but not always in view because it is hidden by the little forest where I perform. I connect with the water element, pulled to trees, and to the tiny little stream nearly iced over. The sound of my voice speaking tongues calls in textures, the quality of the snow in all its crunchy and swoosh-y sounds. I connect with the wind which finds me whenever I come out from where I am shielded within the little forest. I connect to my breath which comes out in clouds. Immersed in somadance eco-performance, I am never alone.

Together, the snow and I are shaped by our encounter. The path of least resistance to the circular and spiral paths is ancestral. It is at its foundation, a path painted by encounters. It is the story of wind and water currents, of animal and human migration, of navigating the rolling waves, of travels on land but also through cycles of time. In the midst of this story, tracks in the snow remind me that I am a human.

Lake Series (Seneca Ganyodae | Lake Seneca in Geneva NY, May 2018)

The following case study is performed in water. By exploring settling into, grounding, and rooting in water I inquire how orientating in water impacts differently the tuning-in ecosomatic process. Is grounding always a sky-earth alignment? Is the ground always felt beneath? Is beneath necessarily at a vertical axis to my standing up body? What if I lay horizontally, do I still ground through my feet? These are some questions that have emerged post-performance. In this eco-performance in Lake Seneca, I will experience a somatic sense of horizontal and vertical alignment, centering, de-centering, re-centering, and osmosis centering (sharing center with the lake) an ecosomatic situation I name *the great circle* because it is a lived experiencing of a sense of being part of a collective body, and the experience of stretching my skin to the edge of the lakeshore.

At Seneca Ganyodae | Lake Seneca in Geneva NY, May 2018, I begin dancing my Lake series. This is my first venture in deeper than ankle-deep water. The dance is so totally different than dancing rivers. The water does not flow in fast current. And when I float, I float in place. It is a wide enough and busy enough lake that waves may come in from wind blowing across its long surface, or from boats or jet skis whizzing by. But today, there is no wind, and no engines. I will have no direct contact with the ground (lake bed). It follows that the sense of losing foot alters my tuning-in to an inner-compass. Seneca Lake where I eco-perform is really deep water. The lake is 188 meters at its deepest. The lake bed is well below sea level. Seneca Lake is part of an area of eleven lakes named (in English), the Finger Lakes. Seneca Lake is also home to Donongaess, the mythical sea serpent creature. Urban gossips talk about the lakes connecting, and of Donongaess swimming from one to another of the Finger Lakes through the deep tunnels.

I am a good swimmer, and a skilled floater. In the water, I usually enroll the water's density to perform what I am doing more efficiently, with more ease. I totally adore the freedom of gliding through space the way swimming allows. I love the feeling of immersing and emerging. In general, I love swimming fast. In comparison, on land, I am a poor runner. In water, when doing the front crawl, I quite enjoy the feeling of water slicing my face. When floating, I love that a viscous liquid quality espouses my body. Water is a surprising material. Swimming, I can slice through it. Floating, water supports me. But landing fast (as when I lose balance while water skiing) or landing hard (from diving from a high diving board as when I miscalculate my jump and hit the water poorly) will be a disagreeable experience. Extreme surfers know landing a wave poorly can crack their bones. Water in its liquid form can feel like an incredibly hard body. In deep water, I usually "do" something. I mean, I keep myself busy because god knows what's beneath me! On land, I can look over my shoulder. In this deep water, there is no seeing through. Unless I am equipped with an oxygen tank, I barely relax in the deep water. Every time I enter water, I fight this sense of the real and the imagined fear. Even as I adore being in water, I am ever so keenly aware that I am in unfamiliar ground. I understand the real threat of drowning. And I am embarrassed to say, I always have a sense that something is out there to eat me alive. Scuba diving is a different feeling. But otherwise, being in water, however much I love it, is a battle dance.

Even as a place calls me in to perform, there are times when I must decline the invitation – as in lunging myself off a bridge to perform in midair! But today, I have accepted the lake's invitation to dance, even as the water is way too cold for an ordinary swim. Today, I am accompanied by a few somatic practitioners who came to see me perform a dance in water. I will be dancing no farther than a metre from the dock I jump from. This is so I can get scooped up from the water in the case where I would be so shocked by the water's coldness as to need assistance in getting out of there. The water in mid-May in Geneva Lake is frigid cold. The Finger Lakes do not freeze because they are so deep. This early in the year, the water is way too cold for a leisurely swim. My being in its water at this time is a very special invitation from the water. Luckily for me at this time of the year, water weeds have not yet bloomed. The place where I dive to dance in the deeper water is free of the common native water Elodea weed. Later in the season, this part of Lake Seneca will have been invaded by the long Hydrilla weed. Toxic blue-green algae will appear much later, in mid-September. Over my years of swimming in the Gatineau area's many lakes, I have acquired a frank aversion to lake weed kissing my skin. I hate how lake weed wraps around my ankles too. So in this sense, this early swim is a great timing. May's cold water brings its own share of challenges, but a lake free of kissing gooey tendrils and cyanotoxins is a blessing.

Today, friends accompanying me in this dance hold space for the dance even as they witness it from the lakeshore. I was supposed to enter the lake only the following day as part of a conference lecture-presentation, "Dancing Land to Water Body Eco-Poetics."⁴⁸ But today is a sunny day. And as tomorrow will be rainy, I chose to move the eco-performance one day earlier. We drive from the studio where the Eastwest Shin Somatics workshop is taking place to the nearby home of Michelle Ilk. This is where I will jump in! The lake at the edge of the dock is only about five metres deep. Still, I will be in enough depth to experience losing my footing. Ah! It is a beautifully crisp and sunny day. There's a delicate wind just cold enough to keep us all perky!

I go in the house to make a change of clothes. Then I walk to the edge of the lake. I wait for an invitation to go in. My bare feet sink into the lakeshore pebbled sort of beach.

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As I am slightly distracted by having company, I reach for a more tactile prompt. I crouch and stick my hands in the pebbled lakeshore. I pick up two, one in each hand, stand back up, and begin speaking to these pebbles I hold in the palm of my hands. I fold my fingers in a fist, enclosing the pebbles thus. Softly, I bring my fists close to my mouth. I have an urge to share some words with them. I say nothing specific. I just simply say my name, and that I am about to jump in the lake to dance its water. Then and there, a sort of peace engulfs me. At this time, I know I have stepped onto the other side of the liminal threshold between the pedestrian milieu and the performance research milieu.

Today I am wearing a white knee length skirt and a white tank-top bra. I also have my long fringed necklace loosely hanging over my shoulder. I back away from the shore and let the pebbles roll off my fists. I then dip fingers into my white paste container, and smear unceremoniously, white paste on my eyes, one eye and one hand at a time. I am ready; I have arrived. Having introduced myself to the lake in this way, I walk onto the dock where I set my laptop to video record my flight into the lake. Thereafter, the camera ought to pick me out, waddling in the water.⁴⁹

I am keenly aware that a cold shock may paralyze my muscles, leaving me breathless. I am also keenly aware that five friends are there with me in part because they have asked to witness my performance in water, in part because they have volunteered to pull me out of the lake should I go under. After I survive cold shock, the next crisis to attend to is hypothermia. Between bypassing my nervous system in a frenzy, breathing evenly, purposely, and slowly, I will have to will my body to pump more heat than usual through my veins. To aid, I will begin by moving in the water. This will generate the energy I need to warm up my blood. To be clear, in this eco-performance, I am not measuring my body's organic response through scientific instruments. I am using imagination. I will somatically monitor my body's response to this watery environment. I have promised Michelle I will remain immersed in the water no longer than eight minutes – as this is the length of time I can remain safely in this cold water. She has discussed this timing with her husband – and he should know as he is a life-long sailor, and the coach of

⁴⁹ Unfortunately, a hardware glitch shuts down my computer. The only footage that is saved is the segment where I jump in the water. It is a nice segment, showing my fringes flying as I ride the wind into the lake. I also have many documents from photos the performance attendants shared with me.

the local university's sailing boat race team. No longer than eight minutes then, that I will time by the feel of it. I imagine being in the water already. And then my thoughts trail off.

Well, well, well. Are you home, Donongaess? I wouldn't want to give you a scare. Will you please let me in the water! I let the frenzy of the monster-fear bubble through me and up, like little beads of oxygen surfacing through my flesh and my guts and leaving through the pores of my cheeks. Fear evaporates into the sky. I believe my audience has now congregated nearer to the dock, though I have given no signal. It is time.

I place myself at the very edge of the dock, slightly bend my knees, lift both arms at a T, and jump in making a stop dive to keep me from hitting the lake bottom hard. In colloquial diving language, this is called a bomb. I laugh internally as I forgot to warn the friends. My diving in may have splashed them with cold water, oops! Once the armpits are wet, then I can acclimatize. It's cold, but refreshing. Plus, I am on an adrenaline rush. There's nothing quite enlivening as a crisp cold swim! I resist the urge to take off. I do not swim out. The urge to just go for it is incredibly enticing but I respect the one metre near the end of the dock call. My mind is full of mental verbiage. I will myself into a near stillness so as to tune-in to somatic drives manifesting. I am a natural floater. I have powerful legs. Either floating or kicking, it is easy to keep my upper body out of the frigid water. I breathe in and hold the breath while I fold my legs under me (like a floating buddha). My lungs so full, I bob afloat long enough to quiet my mind. I let my crossed legs slumped to the bottom and initiate a lazy kick. The upper part of my body out of the cold water evens out my inner body temperature even as the movements of my legs waste precious body heat. I begin moving in space.

I swim while looking inside of me. As I swim, kicking water in alternate rotation of my legs, I experience an upper & lower body division, buoyancy, breathing easily, and a loss of my kinetic center energy. Indeed, I find it hard to attune to my center, floating in this lake and without touching land under my foot. Perhaps this is why I feel numb to my somatic drives. I cannot find my center at the center of my body. This is rather unsettling. I decide to probe myself somatically for an alternate internal compass. Somatically, I am able to negotiate this new centerless reality. Trusting in the water supporting me, and me floating well, I allow being disoriented. One thing that is quite fun is that in water, I can readily shift from vertical to horizontal planes. My body travels between planes, like a

seesaw. Once on my back, I let the back of my head sink deeper so that my ears become submerged. Sounds which traveled in the wind now travel in the water. I experience volume differently. My sense of gravity is altered. I am bouncy. I experience the sound of liquid space. These sounds are fuller. I receive these sounds as differently textured spatial volume. I hear a rumble so low, so rhythmical, I catch myself almost wanting to get out of the water to dance to this deep techno bass on dry land. The pulse may be blood pumping through my veins. It may be my cerebrospinal fluid dancing the length of my spinal cord. It may be that I attune to the lake's craniosacral flow.

Buoyancy.

In the water, I experience how massively bigger the lake is, than I am. My whole body awakens to directional tasks, as I try to locate my centre in relationship to the lake's center. My center migrates to our center. As I connect my center to its center, I experience a previously unknown somatic sense. My internal compass moves from disoriented to orienting "together." Osmosis orientation. The exercise of dancing with a lake this deep makes sensing my kinesthetic body an altered experience. I experience a sense of dissolving my own body boundary. It feels like I am being stretched so that my hands each grab the edge of the lakeshore, and my toes touch its opposite shore. It is like a magnet which pulls me, stretches my skin onto an elongated, unnaturally far-reaching horizontal plane. Even though I am physically no longer than my real body, I have a sense as if sitting in a bathtub barely big enough for me. With my body thus elongated, my center stretches the length of the lake. As somatic urges to move are kinesthetically dependent on where I place my centre, if I move my arm up, will my fingers touch the sky? The shape a body morphs into is dependent on the relationship between the space which it moves into, the space it moves, and the effort its body moves through. My kinesphere is where my body creates movement in space. What is a watery kinesphere? The air is replaced by liquid flow. Its dynamic movements affect my shaping differently. I give my body time to flow with it. I find that if I flow (physically and metaphorically) slower, I shape otherwise. Against a buoyant gravity, my body is much lighter than it is on land. I let my ankles sink. Knees bent and flapping my legs to stay afloat, it feels as if I have underwater wings.

Now I try swishing artistically in the water this way and that way, all-the-while oriented to my horizontal plane; I cannot mimic in deep water what I would do on land. My high energy flip-flopping takes me nowhere. In the lake's water, the gestures that makes the most sense are those that keep me afloat or ready to re-emerge for air. I try grand sinuous arm gestures such as those aquatic legendary dancer Esther Williams would dance. Rounding my arms one at a time in front of me, I return to listening for somatic drives to kick me in the next action. The lake's center pulls me in. This odd pull to a center that I cannot place has me bob (up and down) and roll (in and back out). I can't stand up by pushing into my feet because I do not touch the lake bed. But I can float like a stick. I try exhaling deeply and sink. The downward gravity pulls me into the deep. I let myself float softly back up to the surface. I breathe copiously and holding my breath, I am immediately pulled upward. This is such a fun feeling, bobbing up like this! Then another urge engulfs me. I return to treading water, head in stationary position, witnessing buoyancy, my arms floating. I choose to stay in place. I dance two different treading kicks: a modified breaststroke kick, and the egg beater kick which I prefer. The egg beater kick alternates with the power phase and the recovery phase, so my thighs alternate between exerting energy and resting state. Arms using a sculling motion, moving inwards towards the center of my body, then outwards, away from the center of my body. My arms are traveling. Foot flexing and pointing, ankle rotation, palms facing inward and outward, wrists rotating. I concern myself with negating gravity's downward push, alternating between long arm strides, smooth treading, and jerky movements and angles. These are a vocabulary I had to learn in order to write about the experience. I learned to swim in French, and experientially, through figuring out how not to drown! The water participates in my dance. I can sense that. A collective body dancing. I think, is it possible this lake water does not know how vulnerable I am in her cold-cold embrace? It takes mindful engagement to stay alive in water. The water does not support me even as I float, just because. Water challenges me. Even floating is an exercise in balancing my weight. I dance it with my fat, my muscles, my fluids, the air intakes and exhales. Dancing in water and no feet touching is an obvious negotiation between space and body.

I return to simply lying on my back. The less I move, the more I preserve my body heat. But the less I move, the more my body's temperature acclimatizes to the cold water.

Being submerged as I am, the less I move, the more I freeze! It is the excitement of tuning-in to further somatic drives which keeps me alert. I have tapped much less into the cardinal points, as when I am on land, my body with extending arms on either side, as a four cardinal point direction. I have tapped in spherical lines, arcs, much alike those of the celestial sphere. Come to think of it, I have come to shape water shapes. I imagine how different I would be if I looked at the sky day-long and night-long. As it is, walking on land and looking straight ahead of me forces sight into literally, tunnel vision. If I could walk and look up, I would see stars, see clouds, see sky. I do, whenever I have enough of an open space before me to see 'as far as the eye can see.' Fraleigh guides her students practicing Land to Water yoga to find their horizon. I am amazed each and every time I practice' finding my horizon' at how I experience vertigo. Finding the horizon pulls me to a sense of grounding differently. In water, floating on my back, the horizon becomes a play of the imagination, as my sight is aligned with the celestial sphere! My horizon is upwards. My ground is no longer Earth (what I see in my horizon) but Sun (what I see in my horizon). I root with the stars. This great circle reminds me of our role as humans to care for all life. While I bob at the center of the great circle where I root with the stars and settle into a vast liquid place, I move to the rhythm of a quiet and very deep lake. A great circle moves with me, rooting through my own floating in near stillness movement. The celestial sphere is a somatic place where I move consciously through spatial presencing, I connect my movements with those of a vastness unimaginable. I indulge in simply sensing this incredible situation. I experience lifeworld from a watery moving perspective.

I have an urge for one last dance – I am aware time is running out. I roll over and float face down, drawing my limbs into me as in a fetal position. Later in Hawai'i on the ocean shore of Waikiki, I will introduce a variation of this position as "the drowned / fallen warrior" to Eastwest Shin Somatic's workshop participants (2019). At present I am briefly acquainting with imagining living a drowned state. Bobbing face first in the water, I have a clearer sense of embodied connection to the motion of universe. Maybe it is because I have stopped fighting for air. In water, I cannot breathe. So if I stop breathing, I sort of become one with the space. Being in lake water, I connect differently to Earth.

Well, time is up! I have begun feeling so warm that I have an urge to swim the length of the lake, of which its end is nowhere in sight. This is a telltale sign that I am no

longer in my sane body-mind space. I am afraid I have reached the state of delusion. As I know I am not immune to hypothermia, I take this cue as a signal to swim back to the dock, while I still have movements in my arms and legs. I break the water spell, and swim merrily back to the dock's ladder, back to dry land. Once I make it up to the dock, I have no sense of balance. I find it pleasant. My eyes tell me the dock's flooring is even, and I know both of my legs have nearly the same length. But my first few steps are as if I am walking in a funny house with a wobbly uneven floor. Swaying. Everything is amusing. I am in a state of bubbly euphoria. Michelle is behind me at the edge of the dock, still glancing at the lake. Is she talking to the water? Maybe. I forgot to ask her, post-performance. I try walking a bit. Walking too, is funny, as if one foot cannot find the ground and the other one does. Someone must have handed me a towel. I look at people. It feels weird to have to support my neck into placing my skull where my eyes can meet my friends' eyes. Gravity on land is an altogether different experience. I see my friends looking back at me. I see their face but cannot make sense of their facial expression. I must be still in slightly cold shock. I stagger along the dock all the way to the grassy land. I head inside, and into a steaming hot shower. When I come out of the house, Michelle hands me two pebbles. These are them, which I had held in my fists. What a beautiful coming full circle of this somadance eco-performance! I eventually regain balance but not my center. It is not until the following day, with hands-on bodywork / table work manipulations that I am able to re-center myself.⁵⁰

I have a long way to go still, to understand the phenomenological implications of somadancing while rooting differently. I wanted to include these somatic and ecosomatic situations and senses in the dissertation because unusual orientation planes and unfamiliar grounds, for example, turn my self-reflection on its head. This unsettling approach to otherwise usual phenomena – the horizon, my center, gravity – challenges relational patterns in a way that has me reflecting on

⁵⁰ This happens in a post-performance remembering session, thanks to the hands-on body work with Eastwest Shin Somatics practitioner Michelle Ilk.

another layer of normal habitual patterning of my existence. However unsettling, at the close of these somadance eco-performances, I have felt complete.

These ecosomatic narratives arc back to enlarging moving-thinking through an ecosomatic praxis, an emerging theory of moving-thinking. By way of teasing apart the somatic and sensuous operative processes of connecting ecosomatic communication channels, and installing trust between intellectually minded thoughts and bodily felt real and imagined lived experiences, I have identified moving-thinking's theoretical cadre through multiple ecosomatic senses, sensitivities, and situations experienced while in the performance milieu, including: arriving and waiting, introducing myself to the land and being welcomed, and feeling somatically complete even as a little bit of me stayed with the land as a little bit of the land imprinted me, somatic dimensions of orienting, walking / swimming in rounds, finding my center inside and outside of me, and orientating differently.

Through experiencing first-hand, the healing of the disrupt between mind, body, spirit, and heart, I access ecosomatic sensing, a concept that englobes a multitude of sense perspective standpoints. Some of these ecosomatic sensing concepts include seasonal cycles and are place-based, such as the winter cold and snow season. Some of these are familiar ecosomatic concepts and some of these concepts are informed by my attending to my own somatics / performance art praxis. Tuning-in to wind and water in relationship with my body and land gives me a sense of being in relation with other sentient beings. In the following chapter, I demonstrate that a fundamental relationship to the land can be achieved by trusting the nonsenses, and the extraordinary.

CHAPTER FIVE: ECOSOMATIC NONSENSE, SENSITIVITIES, AND SITUATIONS

The chapter is a description of the experience of senses in nonsense, unusual and extraordinary means, and encounters, during somadance eco-performances. These include: not-cold cold and finding a portal. I tell of encounters of place, time, and action that are not supposed to make sense in the modern way of life. I challenge myself to sense the world outside of my habitual sense-perspectives. This inquiry is driven by seeking to reveal what it is that I might be missing by remaining within my habitual patterns of perceiving the world. The following case studies reveal experiences of sensing cold as texture, remembering thoughts post-performance by listening to memories stored in my body, experiencing geological and elemental time, experiencing not being cold when I ought to be, dancing at the speed of ice, having a sense of being transported through time, stepping into a time portal, and becoming a time portal. These experiences live at the threshold between the real and the imagined. In the midst of what I can describe as altered perception, I make visible sentient lifeworld somas hidden from plain view.

The experience of interconnection with multiple vital forces is an experience shared across land-based practices, ecofeminism, phenomenology, especially lived through a practice of a Husserlian *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) paradigm and Somatics and EcoSomatics. The experience of connecting to one's own lived body and to the lifeworld is accessible through a practice of somadance and eco-performance. Furthermore, to access and connect deeply into a real and imagined sentience, I practice the suspension of judgment (Husserlian epoqué) allowing for extraordinary perspectives of time and space to emerge.

I use the word nonsense. In a felt real and imagined sense, I am remembering mythical sensitivities, how Blackie names the experience of *the mythic imagination*. Techno-science scholar and performer Jackie Orr writes in "View of Enchanting Catastrophe" (2017): "Sorceries and superstitions are dangers that we believe we have destroyed whereas above all we have lost the appropriate means of responding to [them]" (6). In connecting to land through an ecosomatic nonsense perceptual approach, I am re-learning to engage with the lifeworld and beyond. As an artist-researcher, I make use of these lived experiences to: 1) dance my dance; 2) reconnect to a fundamental relationship with the land. The following somadance eco-performances take place in Seneca Ganyodae | Lake Seneca in Geneva NY (May 2018), Weeping Cave (Southern Utah, December 2016), Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park (December 2014), Virgin River at the Court of The Three Patriarchs in Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT (December 2015), and Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River TX (July 2017).

Cold

In these following case studies, I continue with experiencing cold. In this chapter, cold takes on a dimension of textural perspective. Following the Lake Seneca somadance eco-performance (see: chapter four), I practice remembering / re-inhabiting cold post-performance by way of assisted Shin Somatics hands-on work applied to me by Michelle Ilk. In the second eco-performance narration, I describe an experience of moving at the speed of ice cold water in a Weeping Cave in Utah. Negotiating the cold experience for the purpose of somadancing in cold places will lead to experiencing portals – a place in space and time before cold existed.

Cold is an ecosomatic situation inhabited and expressed in more than one way. Many of my somadances in eco-performance research are set at a time of harsh cold (winter, snow, ice, cold lake water). Cold is where / when I first performed an eco-performance. Cold has become

familiar but not any less hazardous. The preparation to enter extreme cold, for example, is a process that includes a series of somatic body-events. To access cold and beyond cold in eco-performance, I make use of various performance techniques: meditative state, controlled breathing, looking at my horizon, imagining tapping into my nervous system and switching off the sympathetic flight or fight response but leaving a mental note pinned to my parasympathetic control panel to kick in the vital signs siren in case I get lost in performance! In some cases, I dance under the watchful eyes of those who are tasked to pull me into safety.

In warm weather, of course, I am safer. But I feel sluggish. Because of this experienced sluggishness, I find it challenging to connect with warm wind, warm water. Without a battle to connect with the cold, I find it extra hard to connect to the land. Having to wait for the ice to invite my naked feet so as the sting of the cold no longer bites makes the connection more engaged. It has been suggested that what motivates my eco-performance in cold is surviving death. At any rate, the liminal tension that accompanies the acting out of a survival instinct reveals much somatic information. In cold, I absorb and synthesize what is experienced, rapidly. Sensations are felt bigger. A cold sting is a powerful surge. Cold is not subtle. In somadance, cold is a proposition. The many qualities of cold wind, the cold of the snow on my skin, are the stories I dance.

Likely because of how loud I experience cold to be, I have eased into sensing cold as a texture. I want to experience cold, but I do not want to feel cold, or freezing. So, I shift how I sense cold from the discomfort of it, to its textural qualities. By shifting how I receive cold, I am able to pause in a situation which allows very little time for a pause before pausing turns into hypothermia. The cold water is just another texture among the many textures. The temperature-texture of a place of performance stands out as a strong determinant of the personality of a land,

a place, as well. Each cold has its own texture, just as each snow, water, and ice has its own personality. I feel the cold, not in its biting sub-zero temperature sense, but rather, as a sharpness, grittiness, viscosity, velour and silk-like sense. Inside the dance there is a tapestry of various touch qualities. Images of me eco-performing in the cold do not show me freezing because I choose to travel the impulse of shivering as other than shivering. The quality of the performance transcends shivering. This phenomenon of feeling temperature as texture is somewhat of a synesthetic entanglement of the senses. *When I visit the inside of me is when I stop being cold.* This is a thought that came to me during a hands-on bodywork session with Michelle Ilk during a performance-lecture I gave at the Eastwest Shin Somatics workshop in Geneva NY (2018).

Drop Inside

Somatic bodywork and somatic yoga practices allow a practitioner to 'drop inside' of the body for an experiential, somatic check-in. Such somatic practices, solo or assisted, and through hands-on bodywork, bring tension relief and healing. In Shin Somatics bodywork method, the somatic bodyworker assists the client's body to unwind somatic blockages, depattern and repattern skeletal alignment (bones and joints) into healthier functional / experiential habits. I use functional alignment as somatic technique in order to meet my ground / center, in performance as research. The body manipulated in yogic, intuitive improvised dancing, and by way of bodywork, releases inhabited / embodied / enfolded memories. Some of these somatic memories translate easily to verbal language even as they may come as out of the ordinary images, i.e.: "I remember sensing lake water pressing on my skin." Other somatic memories live barely long enough into consciousness for verbal language to come out before the thoughts leave consciousness. My working assumption is that those somatic memories are buried again in the

body. The thoughts may also fly away, released into the world as their own thought bubble unit. Bearing in mind that my expertise lays in Somatics praxis and EcoSomatics praxis, and not within psychosomatic or eco-psychology, I allow myself imagining so as to use the images manifested to dance me. On the premise that some of the thoughts will bubble into consciousness barely long enough for me to actualize them verbally, I ask someone to take notes during the bodywork, or, I use a recording device to document the thoughts.

'Dropping inside' is how somatic teachers instruct workshop participants to visit their inside world. As a somatic practice, dropping inside helps to locate somatic drives – a sense of existing, awareness, attunement, and empathy – and informs the follow-up somatic instructions on how or what or where or when to move.

Lake Series: Post-Performance (Seneca Ganyodae | Lake Seneca in Geneva NY, May 2018)

Geneva NY, May 19, 2018. "When I visit the inside of me is when I stop being cold." The observation sounds like a bit of a theory. But truly, these are words which I vocalize pre-(self-reflective) theory, and post-performance via Shin Somatics bodywork. These words come out of my mouth a day after I danced in very-very cold water in Lake Seneca. The touch and body manipulation Michelle Ilk does on me the following day, releases a thought that I had locked in my body. The body manipulation releases many thoughts.⁵¹ In a somatic sense, I am experiencing (re)surfacing thoughts. Whether "when I visit the inside of me is when I stop being cold," is simply a reference to "dropping inside of me," or whether somatically visiting embodied memory of having felt cold triggered this thought into words, I cannot say. Likely, it is a bit of both. But the story it manifests is that cold is re-membered without my body dropping into a freezing, shivering state. So, this points to an ecosomatic relationship with cold that is otherwise expressed than freezing and shivering.

51 Many of the thoughts released through an exercise of post-performance Shin Somatics manipulation are written down, woven through text, in this dissertation. The tablework was part of a lecture-performance I gave during the "Dancing Land to Water Body Eco-Poetics," *Dancing Your Path: An Eastwest Shin Somatics Conference*, May 19, 2018. Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva NY, USA.

In the quest for unsettling my de-sensitized sensorium, I also strive to unsettle my response to sensing. What are other ways to express cold artistically moving with, and in-and-out of it? In this approach to movement, the dance does not stay locked as a reactive dance. It is not that I block my first impulse. I do want to shelter myself from frost bite. But it is that I do not think of my first impulse in terms of first-and-foremost. It is not that I have banned shivering, for example. I transcend discomfort in order to explore other ways to express the discomfort. The discomfort becomes a phenomenon that I can choose to engage with or not. Shivering becomes one possibility among many. In doing so, I study myself in a reformulated relationship with cold. I ease into witnessing, and proceed through methods and techniques of somadance eco-performance.

Bodywork is an interesting way to bring to the surface, research that remains in my body. I have a sense that, especially while immersed in adverse conditions such as cold elements, when my survival impulse is to bundle up and huddle myself, post-performance somatic practices such as Land to Water yoga or assisted Shin Somatics bodywork, will aid in collecting theoretical thoughts re-emerging post-performance of the in-the-moment bodily practice inquiry.

Weeping Cave (Southern Utah, December 2016)

In another eco-performance with cold, I tap into other time where time is slower than my human clock time. Therefore, *place* is spaced at a different pace. In the following case study, I describe my relationship to altering place through accessing slow time, and ancient time – geological time and water element time. I write of using mental imagery such that we practice in Eastwest Shin Somatics method, to acclimatize to cold. Moreover, I use principles of honoring differences, in moving slowly, dancing at the speed of ice.

Weeping Cave, Southern Utah, December 2016. As I attune to an iced-over cave rock floor, I attune to slow time. With awareness of my movement dance, I modify my own clock. I also attune to the cold, modifying my body's conversation with cold. A technique I

have been practicing when encountering cold is to imagine myself traveling to a time before cold water, cold wind, existed in this place where I presently dance. By way of activating this technique, I arrive at the place of performance via an altered reality. I access this journey through performative listening of the cold, and moving consciously through the shock, by peeling off layers of history through past time until I reach this land where warm time exists.

The park sign reads, "The rock that weeps." What makes Weeping Rock weep, I wonder? Weeping Cave's geological journey through time is a story of mud deposited in lowland streams 1200 years ago, covered with wind-blown sand. Over time, mud turns into thin Kayenta Shale layers as the sand turns into thick Navajo Sandstone layers. Water passes easily through sandstone but not through shale. Water that squeezes out of the thousand-year-old rock double-layer cake, is water that has soaked through thousand-year-old sand cake, rain and snow water, and at the touch of ancient water-memory, makes its way out, ex-pulsed, snaking along vertical flat surfaces, wetting the floor, while yesterday's water dripping off from the overhanging cliff hits the surface of my body. I crawl on the wet floor of the cave. Wet like polytime wetness⁵².

In periods of subzero weather, the rock squeezes out water that freezes in glittering icicles. That is a rare sight to be seen – perhaps a window of a few hours in any given year. The icicles dangle from the upper lip of the grotto, like hundreds of light-reflective water crystal daggers. As the sun warms their bodies, water dribbles below, making a slow motion rain curtain-scape. Eventually, the icicle will break off, but having lost nothing of its sharpness as it free falls, it pokes the ground it meets before shattering in disorganized fashion. If it is hot outside, the shards will quickly melt off. If it is freezing, the wet bits will latch on to already iced over water, dis-shaping and reshaping the once smooth-polished, now iced-over and uneven surface of the cave's floor.

Moving through, moving consciously, I activate movement within. I connect with outer somas which have been a long time dancing already. When I move consciously along this watery landscape, I attune to, and move through multiple phenomena. These include the phenomenon of water in its place journey, moving from the top of the

52 Polytime = temporal multiplicity (Rifkin 19) = plural time = past, present, and future collapsed. Read more on polytime somatic situation in "Spellbound," in chapter six.

mountain, through the mountain, out of the mountain, and onto the surface where I encounter its slippery wetness. This includes the phenomenon of time, of water freshly deposited as snow not too long ago, melting through the rock, and of water existing as thousands of years of mud memory locked in rock, encountering each other inside of a rock formation. This includes the phenomenon of incompatible bodies meeting, affecting each one's journey. This includes the phenomenon of my warm body melting ice, my body pressing against it, as it wets my skin, as it cools my body, making me move even slower, at the speed ice water flows. Ice formed out of thousands of years of water memory meeting new memory, awakens my body to cross-temporality.

As I am aware of how slow I am moving through what I can barely call a dance, I experience frustration with what I imagine to be a lack of creative power. In self-judgement of my dance on the ice, I first think that I dance too slowly. I barely dance but I still move. In hindsight, I remember hearing a sort of a melody and tapping into its flow. But presently, I feel such weak drives to move other than the electric discharge of burning pain from the biting cold. I do not have a sense that I am waiting for something to happen. There is no build up. There is only ever slowing down. In retrospect, I will comprehend that ice is slow water. Had I sped up my time, I would have escaped the story. As it were, I had danced at the speed of ice. Slowly, very slowly, I made the ice melt. The ice made my body cold. A series of transformations occurred. I adjusted to slow and cold. The story of me and the ice dancing is a very, very slow dance.

Decisions transform expression, of course. I can decide to do nothing, to resist a somatic urge, to react to cold and escape it, or, travel a somatic urge along my body, allowing the urge to express out of my body through my fingertips, for example. It is a pleasurable exercise. Traveling somatic paths during an eco-performance exploration is extremely pleasurable. There are paths that are within me, those that are in my heart, in my spirit, and in my surroundings. I travel inside of me, through me, and through space. A manifestation of this pleasure is that time stops, at least slows down enough that I can insert myself fully in and between each second of a minute. So much so that I have time to experience a tingling sensation in, and outside of me. It is as if collective bodies come together to echo my inner tingling. Maybe these unseen but felt presence particles offer to shelter me from cold, hugging me without overbearing weight. Or maybe there are

speckles of matter catching the sun light. This cosmic long second carves pathways to time that I seldom take time for in the real world. No matter the cold or not, slow time is where I go in order to body-paint a sensuous expression of the environment. Slow time is especially precious when every second counts to co-create dance.

Oh, and how fortunate I was to make those seconds count at Weeping Cave! I have decided to include the following post-performance post-reflective information, within the chapter. I keep putting it in and out of the endnote section, but I feel that exposing this bit of news makes a lot of sense in the context of working with land, stories, and time:

Weeping Rock, Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park (UT), August 24, 2019 at 5:50 p.m. A substantial piece of rock had broken off Cable Mountain, approximately 3,000 feet above Weeping Rock. The rockfall hit the closed East Rim Trail, knocking down trees and showering visitors at Weeping Rock with smaller rocks, branches, and a plume of dust and sand. Shuttles were stopped for approximately 90 minutes as the dust settled. ("Substantial Rockfall near Weeping Rock Shuttle Stop" NPS.gov)

I have seen with my own eyes, the *closed* cave, in December 2019. Weeping Cave has not been reopened to tourism. It appears that there are no plans to do so, either. It sounds to me like Earth sent a somatic / lifeworld message to us humans, by shutting us out this way. "I want to be left alone and have a rest," is what the cave may be saying in rockfall language. Without doubt, there is a lack of appreciation and care from humans visiting the area. The massive tourist influx in Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park is a plague and a burden for the land. It is time for the cave's mouth to close, and that piece of land at least, to rest. I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to dance there, two years in a row. I feel so blessed to have been there on the day in December 2015, when there was a rare weeping ice phenomenon. The ice-over ledge, the icicles dangling from the lip of the cliffs, and from the ceiling of the cave . . . these natural phenomena

are precious glimpse of natural stories. Simple, cold, dangerously slippery, the cave let me in and safely back. Merçi.

The Box (Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park, in December 2014)

Witnessing land with a geological and elemental time lens does connect to a wider spectrum of place in time and space. Place, in such an approach, is experienced as an enlarged spectrum of temporalities and spatiality. Cold teaches me that it is possible to temporarily cheat my senses so as to access nonsense, such as stepping into a place where cold does not take place. Temporal multiplicity: how I live the experience of time out of time, of place out of place, in my eco-performance is the premise through which to inquire how to step into a portal. I describe "the box" in what I sense to be a sense of time before time. Evidently, I remain in the present time. This means that by somatically trusting the felt real and imagined, I straddle across multiple times. Somatically, I walk into polytime lifeworld, what I experience to be the physicality of multiple stories each grounded in their own time all talking together at once during a storytelling session. Is temporal multiplicity so extraordinary? Mark Rifkin asks this question, "What possibilities are there for temporal multiplicity under the conditions of settler dominance?" (16). On the ordinary and the extraordinary experience of temporal multiplicity, Rifkin further inquires:

Does the supposed physical self-evidence of *now* offer ways of encompassing the multiplicity in lived temporalities? Or does the ostensibly inevitable sharedness of 'real' time function as an orienting background that normalizes particular spatiotemporal formations (such as the settler state), foreclosing or silencing countervailing stories and sensations? (19, parenthesis in text).

The sensations I experience at the encounter of "a box" portal give sense to my somadance. The first time I stepped into a box, it felt like a chance finding. The first time, it was dancing with the wind and the water at Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park, in December 2014. It took me months

to frame the storytelling of this place-based temporal experience. One day, as I tried explaining this out-of-cold experience, I very simply said, "it's like stepping into a box."⁵³

'The box' is a felt real and imagined sweet spot where time and space shift. I can step into the box and be sheltered from cold because, in the box, time is a time before cold. I experience the box as a space out of time. An open box hosting my foot is an enchanted space where time expression gets suspended. This suspension feels like cold transformed into void, and the void feels like a texture. Whereas I feel all cold as texture in the performance milieu, the box itself is a delimited area of micro-climate of sorts. During this first experience with the box, I had not entirely remained in it. I did freeze my kidneys pretty badly during that one hour in the cold Virgin River. To see the box, I need to decide to see the box. Similarly, I need to decide to see a tree rather than a forest to see *a* tree. To see *a* box, I need to attune to myself and to the element which envelops my dance, attune to water. I think in terms of dance partners, partnering with water. The story plot of the performance is a story of encountering body-me and body-water; my soma and water-soma.

The box requires an act from me. It is not coming to the box that gives me access to the phenomenon of time and space warp. The box remains to be activated. Fraleigh exposes space and time as neutral "until we move [them]" (*Dance and the Lived Body* 185). To activate the box, I tune-in to the four somatic drives – a sense of existing; awareness; attunement; empathy. Performing shifts with time is further connected to my performance art action practice informed

53 The term I use, 'the box,' is but a momentary expression. At the time, it did feel like 'a box,' invisible yet kinesthetically felt real and imagined, having a rectangular body, and a lid which opened, allowing my feet in. In later somadance eco-performances in extreme weather and cold, I looked for 'the box.' A place of cold-before-cold / a place of no-cold did invite and host my feet. However, I never found 'a box.' The kinesthetic shape had melted away into an invisible place felt real and imagined. This explains my choice of writing of a 'portal' somatic dimension, in the coming descriptions of such experience.

by Tourangeau's.⁵⁴ In the box, I exist in place of paradox; I am aware that I feel no cold; aware that the water is cold. I attune to the phenomenon by trusting my senses – this way, I stay 'with' the senses however real or imagined they may be; I empathize with the magic of the encounter in a way that I hold space for the box to manifest, and for the senses to lead me in a conversation with the surrounding elements as I shape the conversation as somadance.

The box manifests in the place I am called to. It is a calling. The box is located where it wants to be. I find it or not. The box can easily be bypassed. I do not know what happens to the box if I do not find it, or if life other than me can also step into the box. To manifest the box, I also must make my presence known to the lieu of my performance. I do introduce myself to the lieu. It is as simple as setting an intention – holding time for the ecology of this environment, where I settle in, to acclimatize to me. The setting up of the intention could manifest itself through an elaborated ritual. My method of setting intention is usually anti-theatrical, not very ritual-like. Often, I talk outloud to the sentient beings present. I say my name. I breathe in and out for some time before I set the video camera tripod. When that is done, I then wait for an invitation from the land before I step into the spot where I dance.

This is a concept of ecosomatic guesthood. It is possible that the land invites me to access timeless stories. In this sense, the portal that I experienced as a box is an ecosomatic situation that makes me practice guesthood. It invites me in and will host me with amiability for the time of my stay. Note that, I cannot overstay my welcome. There is a time when I have to leave, graciously. The box allows me to dance inside it, despite the near-impossible situation the place of calling seems for a human to withstand such extreme conditions.

⁵⁴ Tourangeau's performance action's method: intention, amplitude, motivation, channeling, action, entre-action and performative acts of creating density and contour, see "Spellbound," in chapter six.

There are gaps in the water.

There are doors to more depths.

There are gaps in the water where there is no water, like doors to more depths.

Doors lead to an invitation to learning.

(Vocalized post-performance via Shin Somatics bodywork by Ilk, Geneva NY, 2018).

Virgin River at the Court of The Three Patriarchs (Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT, December 2015)

This particular case study took place in Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT, at the foot of the Virgin River, in 2015. In this eco-performance, I will describe a sense of stepping into water gaps within river water. These gaps, that I speak of during my post-performance re-membering session in Geneva (NY), are other ways through which to imagine the then sensed ecosomatic situation I describe as 'the box.'

Virgin River at the Court of The Three Patriarchs, December 2015. The Southern Paiute call this place Mukuntuweap, meaning straight canyon. A bird's eye view shows a large and very long dip, bordered by high and sharp edges. The red and gold peaks are punctuated by holes, some of them housing the imposing Californian Condor. I have danced with these birds. They have circled above me. They are simply majestic – 10-foot wing span, and the ability to fly 50 miles an hour, at a hundred miles a day. All creatures I have danced with in Mukuntuweap transport me to a heightened sensuous realm: the Bighorn Sheep, the Mule Deer, the Wild Turkeys, but most of all, the Condor.⁵⁵

This part of the canyon where I stand presently, cradles a river that at times is like the mirror of the sky, other times like silk, and at yet other times, reflects the sun and the shadows in a manner that paints the water shimmering copper hues. The native inhabitants, descendants of the ancient Pueblo Peoples, carry a reverence for Earth and Mother Nature. This reverence is a belief and a practice carried through generations. I

⁵⁵ In December of 2019, I had the chance to dance with Californian Condors circling directly above my head. Shadow dancer and photographer Sarah Jeffreys snapped amazingly evocative images of these impromptu dances.

heard the name Pa'rus, meaning bubbling water, to refer to parts of the water pathway. I have not found native names for this body of water, but of course there has to be, for such an epic waterway. What is now called the Virgin River owes its name to Spanish Missionaries passing by in the late 1800s naming the river after the Virgin Mary. Where I dance – the Court of the Three Patriarchs – is named after the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints' three famed figures of the Mormon Church's pantheon. The Mormon pioneers settled in the area around the mid-1800s. The very spot where I dance is bordered by massive rocks, their tip the outline of the three figures. The mountain water is clear and on most days, reflects the purest blue of the bluest sky. In the least, this is quite a special nook, well deserving of its sacred affiliation.

In mid-December, Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park is quite cold, with extreme highs of 21.5C, extreme lows of -14.5C, and the water itself at extreme highs of 7.5C, and extreme lows of just above freezing, 2C. I have come to seek the box of no-cold place; the before-time-of-cold box. I return twice to the water over a two-day period. On the second day, as I wait for an invitation from the water, I have to try again and again, dipping my foot in crisp cold snow-melt water. Each time, my foot cramps by just hovering the sole of it over the water. I futz around. My heart races because I really am excited to go right in the middle of this narrow water patch, but I must wait. The river is bordered by a sand bank. The sand is like powder. It too, am very-very cold. Well, I wait, and I breathe in and out, witnessing the river flow.

This is the same water I danced the year before, at this exact same time of the year. But that water, well, I accessed it a ways back up, in front of the Zion Lodge, and next to a tiny pretty bridge crossing the water. There, the bed of the river is made of medium-sized river pebbles and huge boulders. Here, the water flows clear over sandstone grinds – from smaller blocks to fine sand. The sand collects at the bottom of the river in a shallow dip. The water collects for a swirl, and then runs its course. The current is deceptively strong for such a peaceful looking patch of running water. The sand banks are ill defined. The path of the river snakes. There is visible evidence that the river gets out of the bed and flows a bit that side, and then this side. The sand dunes are lacerated by this river dance. Beyond, the river-path is bordered by trees, then bordered by very, very tall

cliffs. Where I stand is a bit like a beach, a sand encroachment. I face the very, very tall cliffs.

Two people have joined me. The three of us are on our lunch break from the yearly Shin Somatics gathering conference and week-long workshop. One dancer, Robert Bingham, leaps beautifully on the sand beach, executing balletic gestures, lifting his long limbs as if the wind dances him upwards. Another participant, a brilliant photographer, joins us to simply witness. She tells us stories of drowned tourists her Ranger husband has to pull out of the water every year.

I struggle with time. Part of my struggle is to find a place-in-time in that river-path when-and-where my body acclimatizes to the cold water. I know this river has boxes, for having experienced it last year. It is a matter of stepping into the box. But, the box does not seem to be on the edge. I am in a time crunch. Lunch is only an hour long, and we left the cabin at least thirty minutes ago. I am also under pressure (of my own) to dance gracefully. No matter how much I tell myself I trust in the somatic drive action process, I do wish I could just improvise virtuosity. I can. But at present I have committed however, to listen to the river, and to find, if possible, that box! I hope to receive an invitation from the water itself to get in the water, thank you, before my frosted partners call me back to the car; back to the heat; back to the indoor studio where our movement workshop is about to resume. Nevertheless, I take my time. It will take the time it takes. I will return, if I must. I dance around, move around, look at my horizon, and follow my line of sight. It becomes clear that the box is in the middle of the river's bed-width, as I have been falling into seeing the same point again and again, right over there. This means stepping quickly in the frigid water and into the box before I fall off my frozen ankles. Did I mention this river is quite shallow? Most of my body will remain above water.

On the third try of the second day, I step into the box. I enter the water with an intent of calmness, walking the shallow river, feeling its soft gritty sand-bed, the sting of cold like tiny mouths nibbling on my ankle flesh, making it through and deep into my bones, irritating my nerve endings. I squeal with pain. Hot floods flow through my veins making me sleepy, and paradoxically, even more clear(ed)-headed.

And then I find the box.

Take a deep breath.

Exhale.

Walk in.

Both feet are planted in the bed of a river, inside an invisible box. The sandy bottom hosts the weight of my body. With a door opening for me to step into, it feels like the lid of a box pops open. A phenomenon that arises external to my control, the box itself is a milieu that belongs to its own. Inside that box is a place of warmth, or rather, a place of no-cold. It feels as if I am in a place of timelessness, in a time before there was cold. Something is suspended. This something includes the temperature of the water. I dance the cold as a time-space void, that is to say, I am fairly still. But I feel so agitated. The void dances wild patterns inside of me. I also have observed that the time allowed in the box seems eternal. Movements become less about being cold, and more of a conversational aesthetic. I have a loose sense of time, of the now. I know the feeling of today, in me, on my skin, in the sky. The clouds move. They were different yesterday. A moment earlier. Tomorrow. I adapt to the feeling of a place before cold time. My dancing body dips in eternal movement.

I have brought a glass container with me. I am drawn to collecting rushing water. When we return to the lodge, I will present a paper. I prepare to carry with me, a memento of this water I dance, so as to dip my fingers in later on, practicing remembering my connection to the Virgin River.

The landscape is mesmerizing. Brightly sunlit sandstone cliffs overlook the spread of water below. As I am not really in a life threatening situation, I ease into the pain of the cold. My whole body attuned to the dry land and mildly cold air does not trust my foot-to-ankle ease immersed as they are in frigid flowing water. As a result, I stiffen into a homolateral stance. I feel like I have no volume and only frontal-back surfaces. From afar, I must look like a thin cookie-man stuck in the middle of the river. Perhaps the shape takes root in the fact that I am holding onto the glass bowl with two hands. Perhaps the task of holding the bowl drives my dance. Perhaps it is because there is no spiralling impulse from attuning to a river that is rushing in a straight, linear directional path from the front of me to back of me. Perhaps my feet are already unborn, hosted in place before I

was even made. I remind myself that in the box I trust, and begin feeling stable. I stand my ground until the rest of me makes a move.

*The sound of my heart beating and the sound of the water flowing and the sound of the light breeze and the sound of my breath merge, in one musical score together. Every moment has a sound. The sound of space, the sound of time. Space-time is filled with this complex orchestration of land alive and human alive together through sound. The musical score of me-and-the-river is hypnotic. It draws me in. I let it penetrate me and exit me, like I am a song-lung. Eco-music comes back and leaves me. I breathe it back inside of me. "Is it any wonder we call the first phase of a breath an 'inspiration'?" Sondra Fraleigh writes in *Moving Consciously* (10). In this dance, the first impulse is to bend down, crouch in chair position, and receive the flow of water on my chest. After a few deep breathings, I stoop over. I present my bowl to the down-rushing current. I shift from intently looking at a full body of river water to intently reaching for the water, glass bowl in hand without letting go of my gaze over the horizon. I scoop water from the river into my bowl. Never leaving the water river out of my sight, my arms slightly bent at the elbows, I look intently. My gaze travels from a full body of river water to the water I have scooped up in the glass bowl. Eventually, I allow myself to become wholly absorbed by the water in the bowl, while my feet burrow deeper into the fine grit of the river bed.*

I fall inside of me, hands and feet connected to the water, bowl in hand. I roll my eyeballs first inside, then seeing outside. From looking inside of me to seeing my horizon, I register how light shifts. The outside world is brighter than the inside of my skull. The shift has me connecting to a deep breath intake. Fully amplified, fully fulfilled, I prepare for the coming gesture. It develops from the seed of an impulse of bending down to fill the bowl with water, to raising both arms parallel above my head almost, unfurling the spine and gazing at my horizon. One hand lets go of the bowl. The other bends at the elbow. The water bowl gets closer to my heart. My heartbeats arc to the heart of the water in the glass bowl. I count the ring ripples in the glass bowl. From where I dance the land, I smell the mineral quality of the water, I feel the sharp edge of passing moisture across my face, and see through the soles of my feet, the color of the sand where the Virgin River meets the impossibly faraway Lake Mead. The heightened sensitivity prefaces somatic drives kicking in. I know an action is coming. I feel a somatic impulse to throw water at my face. I brace

to receive it. All the while, I probe space in my body where the action could travel otherwise. I feel the bottom of my feet tingling. It seems the box has released my feet. I get ready to fly to my warm clothes on the beach as soon as I get a cold shower in the face!

Swiftly, but nevertheless moving consciously, I raise both arms above my head, my wrists fold and rotate, and the water from the bowl spills not on my head but back into the river. Yes, the urge to move has travelled differently in me from what I had expected. I register where on my body, my skin remains dry. It is an interesting observation. I take note of my surprise. I follow through the movement, since I feel I have not completed its journey. Indeed, going to the edge of my impulse comes in an accelerated motion such that exists in a Japanese theatre dramatic arc climax. I stretch one of my arms out to the river. I scoop more water into the bowl. I splash my neck and left shoulder.

And just like that, my left shoulder walks me out of the spot, parading to the world, her cold patch. My body's movements back to the beach are all initiated from this shoulder, as if she holds herself high and proud, waving a trophy for all to see. I got wet and still am standing! Ah, the folly of post-performance decompression. I no longer am in the performance milieu. I am just a human walking half naked, from an ice-cold river back to my cold clothes piled on the cold sand. My photographer friend manages to gather her gaping jaw into forming words, something about getting dressed quickly or else catching a cold. I say, "I don't get cold when I . . ." I have no more juice to explain how I am not cold, in a performance milieu, in a box. I have just enough energy left in me to bend down, grab my clothes, put them on, bend down again, grab the bowl and fill it with Virgin River's water, put a lid on it, and walk myself to the car. I have written already that coming out of a performance milieu is a chaotic ride.

Back at the lodge, it is my turn to present my paper. I pass the bowl around and ask attendees to dip their fingers in so as to get an ecosomatic connection to the water, as I read my paper, "Embodied Textual Translation: Oh! How the Inner Waves are Raging."⁵⁶

56 "Embodied Textual Translation: Oh! How the Inner Waves are Raging." Paper lecture. An Eastwest Shin Somatics Conference, Dec 11-15, 2015. Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park Lodge UT, USA

The black box I describe in the eco-performances above is a manifestation of differently lived time and space. In a few of my eco-performances I have experienced time and space behaving differently than what I am used to from time and space in quotidian context. I have come to describe this differently lived time and space as experiencing an ecosomatic situation of stepping into a portal. These portal experiences are placed-based, and / or, time-based. The place can be land-based, as the eco-performances described above have been. The place can also be (my) body-based, as the coming eco-performance shows. Portals are felt as real but demand a fair amount of trusting the imagination in order to manifest long enough to dance with them. Performing presencing time and space is an acquired performance art action skill set. Tourangeau has guided much of my honing of shifting time and space skills, as has the skill set has matured with years of my own practice.

Transport (Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River TX, July 2017)

In this last case study, I describe experiences of entering a portal leading to an encounter with an added layer of time-space complexity. What makes entering a portal something of an ecosomatic possibility is its somatic process: I arrive; I settle in; I hold space and time. During this part of the process, I will form an intent, move consciously, and listen. I will also introduce myself to the land, prior to, and during the performance. As I enter the performance milieu, I step in the specific place of calling, I wait. This wait could be movement in stillness or walking the rounds. This part of the process is also felt as arriving, settling in. Tuning-in to somatic drives, *somadance eco-performance* happens. *Co-dance* happens. I will not over-extend my welcome.

The spatiotemporal portals exist in a dimension of lived experience. A portal is a place where elements of time and space act without expected norms. Another way I can describe a portal is a place where time and space muddle expected rules of time and space, furthermore,

experienced as other-than quotidian, regular, familiar, and / or human time. These portals may be an inner experience, or an outer experience. While I usually experience time to be a felt inner experience, I experience place to be a felt place on land. Inversely, it is fair to say that land reflects on my own inner experience, and that it might be possible to feel the outer inhabit me within. If that is a possibility, then, there is also a possibility for the place outside of me existing in its own time, to inhabit me in its own time, entwining my own body clock time with a surreal, or, unfamiliar place-time. These are deliciously poetic propositions. In the following eco-performance, I describe such surreal multiple-times inhabiting my human body.

One more thing before I step into the eco-performance narrative. The act of experiencing a portal is already a dance in itself. Traveling through time, and / or between places is akin to a somatic sensation of transport. *Je me sens transportée, exaltée, émue. Transporté* (French vocabulary) is a sense of being utterly and deeply moved. The word describes moving between and from one to another port. Port is a place of arrival and departure. The ecosomatic sense of stepping into a portal is a sense of transport. Water is a moving port, and so is wind. By moving between moving ports, I stumble into movements existing already within what I imagine to be the celestial sphere, a sort of cosmic eternal dance. Evidently, this sort of transport is unsettling. Orr, in "Enchanting Catastrophe," writes this of alternate perceivable modes of time:

Once upon a time the magic circle – predecessor to the magic site, and evidenced for centuries in European pagan and theatrical practices – offered ritualized protections from the supernatural in the bounded spacetime of its conjuring. Today, the human world stumbles without ritual safety through realms simultaneously empirical and occulted, through modes of time both perceivable and preternaturally unreal. (4)

In the performance milieu, my human lifeworld encounters realms simultaneously empirical and occulted. By way of trusting the extraordinary, by way of allowing myself to be spellbound into

an enchanted kinship, I access both the perceivable and the preternaturally unreal. In chapter six, I demonstrate ecosomatic dimensions of spellbound and enchanted kinship.

In the following case study, "the box" portal turns out to be my body. More specifically, the portal is my mouth. Not only did I access a place in the river where I located the call to perform, but I also activated the box, this time slipping my whole body inside the box. In retrospect, it felt a little like sliding inside of my very own coffin since I accessed a time when the "I" in the box was / is dead. Well, my physical body slipped between layers of water within water, in the gaps, through doors and into a place where time existed after life.

In July 2017, I drive down to San Marcos (TX) from Gaspé (QC), alone with my dog. It's a little over 4000km. In terms of nationhood, this drive takes me from the north of Québec to the south of the US. My aim is to get filled with the waterways' presence, even as I drive by the many water sources. By the time I park my car in San Marcos, I am pretty excited to actually swim in the water! At a constant 22.8C, San Marcos river is one of the warmer waters I have ever danced.

I am in San Marcos for a Body-Mind Centering conference, The Fluid Body: A Somatic Journey, from July 25 to July 30. The Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River runs through the Texas State University campus where I will be staying for the duration of the workshops and conference. My own workshop will guide participants through "a theory of folklore: a performative inquiry along river archiving human knowledge." I learn on site of a few folk stories that will serve as a guide for somatic in-studio exploration. But better yet, each one of us participants will have had the experience of being in the Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River at the time of my workshop, and will be able to draw from their own experiential knowledge to move their dances once back indoors in my workshop.

This area of the US is scorching hot at this time of the year. The humidity is so potent that those of us, like me, who are not familiar with this climate, puff up like bloated puffer fish. The river is thus a blessing. Very early on every morning, I go down there to float and experiment with somatic drives and somadance. Soon the day begins; we all

head to the conference sites. Some of us walk across the little bridge. But most of us walk right through the river, holding yoga mat, tablet and note pad above our head as we titter across. By the time I reach the venue, my clothes are dry, and I re-begin to bloat. At lunch time, I rent a tube and float the length of the river. There is a bus that drives us back up the river. I return to the conference venue. And in the early evening, I lounge in and out of the water.

I visit the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment (formerly Aquarina Springs) in Spring Lake on the very last day. There I took a glass-bottom boat tour where I was introduced to varieties of fish, turtles, and birds. I learned of the popular 1950s mermaid show, Ralph the swimming pig, and Tarzan's epic dive to the underwater geysers. The Aquarina Springs tourist attraction folded not that long ago (1994). The fascination for mermaids remains, in spirit at least, as well as through colorful performances during the annual Mermaid SPLASH festival held by the Mermaid Society of Texas.

On being healed and healing: Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River is a rare and extremely delicate eco-system. River bank restoration projects are found in delimited areas. It is said that the river has not only healing properties, but that its magic is connected to the underworld. The creation stories of pre-contact people, the hunter gatherer Coahuiltecan Peoples, tell of the Canocanayesatetlo (warm water) | San Marcos Springs to be a portal to another world. The (so-called) White Shaman cave ancient painting in southwest Texas maps the journey to the springs, for those who attended their yearly pilgrimage. During the boat tour, I was told a creation story: After following a deer through the underworld, Coahuiltecan Peoples took on their human form when they emerged as people from the fountain springs of San Marcos. The Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River is an enchanting place. The river is fed by 200 springs from the Edward Aquifer. The area is a very old and ancient continuously inhabited territory dating back more than 12,000 years. Since 1995, San Marcos holds The Sacred Spring Powwow. While visiting during the Body-Mind Centering conference, I heard rumors of a story from ancestral times, which a phone call to the Indigenous Cultures Institute confirmed as fib. Nevertheless, a land populated this long ago has many stories that are fabricated to some, and felt to others.

The information learned from the pamphlets, and from what the boat tour guide said, serve as post-river performance knowledge. All the same, as I reflect on my immersed eco-performance in the water of Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos river, I retain an ecosomatic encounter with its history.

Two and a half years pass before I return to the Meadows Center, this time via their website. I read that the Texas blind salamander is a predator that hunts by sensing water pressure wave shifts. Now that I know this, I wonder if I ever attune to water pressure while in the water. I do have the experience of sensing differently, in the water. Certainly, touch through water feels different. I also am deprived of the sense of feeling something coming towards me. On dry land, I pick up on spatial density shift – a sense of proprioception that allows me to dance together in a group without bumping into anyone. In the water, I am constantly taken by surprise by encounters. Perhaps I can train myself to tune in to this type of somatic sensitivity under water. Perhaps, it has to do with grounding myself. In the previous chapter, I speak of centering my center with the center of the lake. Maybe this is how blind salamanders get a sense of water pressure wave shifts.

I float on the Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River in Texas. The river is home to several harmless critters, and other less harmless but intent on minding their own business. But alas, the fear of the imagined and made-up water monsters accompanies me to every single body of water I dip in. I float avoiding wild rice patches, leaving that space for spawning, tiny shrimps, and possibly water snakes.

Who are the monsters of this river? Sure, Copperheads, Cottonmouths, and Rattlesnakes are endemic to these parts. Cottonmouths, also going by the name of Water Moccasins, enjoy swimming. Water Moccasins have been spotted water-slithering in these parts. Broad-banded water snakes may swim past me as well, or more likely, chilling out unperturbed on an overhanging branch, as I float past. They will be aware of my presence while I might not be of theirs. Broad-band snakes are non-venomous, but will bite to protect themselves, of course. My job is to leave them with a safe space to retreat to, meaning, not be in their way when and where they wish to retreat, should they find my presence threatening.

There are no monsters in this river.

Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River gets to be a highly populated water, especially in the scorching hot summer days. Entire families lounge on its shore, picnicking, and seeing their children drift safely from one end to the other of the designated tubing stretch. Today's dances, along with the simple act of gathering families near the water sharing food and laughs, animate the somas of the land. This early in the day, however, I am alone in the water. In the part where I float, there is very little action this early in the morning. This stretch of the river is bordered by University Drive and opposite Sewell Park and the San Marcos Lions Club Tube Rental. I access the river from the west side, a short walk from the summer housing where I stay. The access to this part is over-curated, with pavement, cement, and a series of steps walking me right into its bed. The river is shallow. If I stand up, I touch its bottom, and my shoulders are out of the water. I see nothing, not even a fish. Maybe river water life hangs out at another part of the river. Maybe in the lower basin. But here, it is fairly quiet. Marine critters like their peace of mind just as much as I do, I have to remind myself. I peer through the clear water. It is early in the morning and the sun isn't shining high. But the sky is already lit, enough that I can see through the surface and into the shallow depth. I see river pebbles and other bigger rocks. In this part of the river, the water is nearly transparent but for the steady current that blurs its water somewhat. The steady current, I imagine, also washes this part of the river from its human filth.

Over the days of immersing myself in the water, I gradually give in to the pleasurable simplicity of floating. This morning, the first day of the BMC workshop, I get up before the sunrise to float. I set my laptop on the edge of the water to video-document my dance. There is always light before the actual ball of fire rises in the sky. I am facing east. I press record on the camera, and let myself in the water. My body is warm. My skin registers cooler. I resist letting go of my warmth. Eventually, I ease into trading a bit of my warmth for a bit of the cool. In San Marcos River, the water is at an even 22.8C. My body temperature is at 37C. I have experienced wider gaps. At first, agitated and fearing the monsters, I try a dance of artistically thrashing in the water. Perhaps unconsciously, I am combining my idea of an exquisite dance with warding away all shapes and sizes of critters. Having alerted all life of my presence, I try another fear-triggered impulse: the

bomb-dive. It makes splashing noises. Perhaps the water rising in peaks and droplets spraying will look good on camera, what with the background of the rising sun. Eventually I find the courage to ease into my irrational panic, and try to float in stillness. In this silence, I immediately feel connected to Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos's story.

The bottom is near me. I let an arm sink and immediately come in contact with a hard surface. Ah! I must be hovering over one of the great big rock slabs. I prop myself with a one-arm hand stand, then fall on my side, lying on the surface of the slab. All of my body awakens with a yearning to stretch. I stick my legs out of the water and move in a scissor motion – back and forth, then back and forth some more. Balanced on my hip against the river rock slab, I bring both arms above my head. I even elongate my neck at an angle, in a gesture that makes me feel like I am mimicking a turtle's head stretching its neck sideways out of its carapace, hoping to snack on a stem of wild rice, but too lazy to just rearrange her whole body to better dig in the snack. Later, viewing the video, I see that I look like a two-ended Y shape, like a tree branch floating away. The sky is grey. It is partially reflected in the even darker grey water. The bordering trees, pre-dawn, take on a darker shade of green. The Y stretch does not feel like the right movement to dance the water. I resume floating still, some ways away from the rock so I get a bit more depth under me. I float on my back.

In stillness, something in me might move differently. I observe what is going on inside of me. I am in water, and keenly feel my body. My first familiar element is my own body. Through thinking with breath, I grow at ease with being in a less familiar body element (water). I am air, I am lungs. Where is my breath traveling? From laying on my back, I steer my body like a slow spinning wheel so as to have the fullest peripheral view possible. I am not ready to close my eyes. For now, I prefer keeping an eye on my surroundings. I see almost everything except what is under me. It is hard to let go of knowing what is in here (water). It is hard to float trusting the unknown. Plus, I drift away quite a lot. Every one minute or so, I swim back up the river to where my video camera can pick up my image in its visor. I return to floating on my back. I float and feel sluggish as I do in warmer water. The one connection I feel fully is to allow myself to drift on the current's flow. I can't wait for something to happen, however! I wonder if easing into comfort is enough to be called a dance. I am grateful to be alone in this water with the sun

taking its sweet time to rise. I am struggling to love the river, however. I have this sense that something wants to snatch my body and drag me to the underworld. Meanwhile, nothing spectacular happens. I float like what must look like a corpse peacefully flowing away onto the next world.

The video footage shows an uneventful performance, indeed. One image that catches my eye is that of me floating, with only my flexed foot, outline of my face (nose, and part of my forehead, and cheeks), and my hands reaching out of the water like lobster claws. I think that anyone seeing me float at this time would see the image of a small dove floating alone on the water, either the tip of a big river stone sticking out of the water or a thick branch, and two fish jumping out of the water in perfect synchronized motion. There are really only five little and pointy shapes popping out of the water. My body has disappeared. Here is one anecdote that is worth mentioning to illustrate how dull the whole performance manages to look. I had originally submitted images from the Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos week-long water eco-performance to a scholarly journal's call for submissions. The written article retained the editors' attention, but I was suggested to replace the images with more entertaining ones (my paraphrasing of their statement.) I did provide images with a lot more pizzazz, and eventually the article shifted in content too. Both pizzazz images and article went on to be published. The images of my disappeared body in a pre-sunrise river are still unpublished! What I take from this story is that narrating a dull dance is as hard as dancing dully.

Flowing calmly, drifting away, is a lesson of 'less is more.' As I reflect on the learning of the softer performances, those somadances that barely moved me, or made no-sense, or looked like / felt like a suspended spectacle, I reflect on the teachings of having enough, and the abundance that is burrowed in this simple truth.

I settle in this somatic situation – abundance. The sun is just about to rise, shooting the bordering tree trunks' shadows on the surface of the water. Their reflection

makes evenly spaced lines across the river. It looks like the water is behind bars, and my floating body too. I float in and through the shadowy gate. The gate is porous but also well defined. I stare at the sky. Although at first, all of me is overwhelmingly busy with sensing my own body for somatic drives to action, eventually, I grow responsive to the feeling of the water supporting my weight. As I give in to the support, a somatic wave of activated drives pours over me. I sense a presence, and I make my presence available. At times, elemental stories manifest through textures, at other times through visions. An image comes through the sensation of being covered in a heavy, woven, wet, and fragrant fabric. I can smell the scent of its wild plant fibers. The woven material smells like it is cooling down in the fresh water, but it had previously been sun-scorched when it became wet. What it is, is that I am wearing a dress. It is a simple cut, long at the arms and the hem, and opened in a loose circle at the neck. The fabric is colorless, a bit like a dull white, close to dull wheat-yellow. The threads feel like they are made from a locally sourced plant. Wild linen. I can feel its pulse. Later, I search the web for this plant. I find that Wild Blue Flax is a medicinal, edible plant, also used in spinning linen thread, and it grows in Texas. I remember the feel of the water-vision dress and recognize the rough touch of linen on my skin.

The vision becomes ever so clear. I am / was dead. I am / was another woman, with long black and grey hair spilling in the water like a fanning spread. I am / was in a state of lifeless peace. From an unimaginable depth, I / she sinks in reverse – from bottom to top – and settling in me / herself. I become her, but 'her' is very much who she is as me. We float, our dark, long hair floating counter current. The view from above – from where I see with my eyes – shows a pattern of shooting tendrils stretching up to the source where the water emerges from under the earth and into the river. I am transported to a place where I float but at the very bottom of the lake. I need no air. I rest, on a bed of sand, with water encasing me. I float, but at the bottom. Since there is no need to breathe, my lungs are empty. And I sink. But the feeling is of floating, not sinking.

For a long time, the woman floats together with me. Of course, everything happens in a flash because I float nowhere down the current. I know this because I have caught the moment on video. This moment is where the conjuror, the prestidigitator and illusionist manifest their tricks of slowing time down to infinity.

Meanwhile, my mouth is the portal of me. The portal of my mouth is the first portal into me, the primordial fissure seeing the other world from my inner world. The space between my lips, the aperture of my mouth acts as the umbilical cord between breathing and drowning. For the time being, my mouth is the set for my performance research milieu. As much as I need to surface for air, all parts of my body may remain submerged. Only my lips framing the portal of my mouth touch the surface water. I mouth the sun which is about to rise.

If you think that the truth can be known from words, if you think that the sun and the ocean can pass through that tiny opening called the mouth, someone should start laughing! Someone should start wildly laughing now! (Hāfez 1315-1390)

There is no laughter in my mouth. And yet, I am as pleased as if I was smiling ear-to-ear! My smile turns to an O shape. Spacing inhales and exhales, I grow into existing stories. Breathing mindfully, I grow with existing, attuning, awareness, and empathy to the surreal surrounding. In the world where time has slowed down to allow my vision to endure, air continues to flow in me. And finally, it comes! The laugh. I laugh, no longer fearing river monsters! Vision and air both feed me. The human world keeps me alive, entering my body through my mouth. The dead lives inside of me. I exist underneath, buried in a watery grave, but for the portal of me. My body and the world act together as place-holder for time. I feel all: sharing, differences, weaving commons, knowing pleasure, holding breath, laughing warrior, releasing, sun and shadow, and joy. A thought bubbles to the surface, 'this is an eternal dance.'

The sun finally hits the surface of the water in full. Fiery yellows and hues extending to red, blasts the surface of the water. I stand. My body re-emerges from the rib cage up. My navel is below the liminal watery line, still in contact with the underworld. Our body heat is almost at the same temperature. The morning air a perfect bridge between my body heat and the environmental heat, in this early day. My body scintillates like a ball of fire. The sun rises over land. My long hair is pulled back from my face, full of water, very heavy, and down to the middle of my back. I look south where the flow flows.

These ecosomatic narratives arc back to freeing the soma-body from somatic blockages, through ecosomatic praxis. From this unwinding of poor ecosomatic habits, emerges a theory of moving-thinking, and the start of a theoretical articulation of grounding in movement | rooting and moving. By way of moving along nonsense and extraordinary ecosomatic situations, I connect to land through an ecosomatic nonsense perceptual approach. I unsettle somatic amnesia and re-learn to engage with the lifeworld and beyond. As an artist-researcher, I make use of these lived experiences to: 1) dance my dance; 2) reconnect to a fundamental relationship with the land.

The chapter is a description of the experience of senses in nonsense, unusual and extraordinary mean, and encounters, during somadance eco-performances. These include: experiencing cold as texture, and entering a place-time before cold existed, what I can describe as entering a portal of place-time. I tell of encounters of place, time, and action that are not supposed to make sense in the modern way of life. I challenge myself to sense the world outside of my habitual sense-perspectives. This inquiry is driven by seeking to reveal what it is that I might be missing by remaining within my habitual patterns of perceiving the world. The experience of connecting to my lived body and to the lifeworld is accessible through moving consciously in my practice of somadance and eco-performance.

In the following chapter, I broaden the scope of what sense and non-sense means as somatic drives and ecosomatic experiences. I explore ecosomatic dimensions I write as spellboundness. I allow myself to learn from failed somadance eco-performances. And I conclude by making sense of an enchanted kinship as it grants me access to my fundamental relationship to the land.

CHAPTER SIX: SPELLBOUND

This chapter engages with the dancer-land relationship through sensuous mutuality, with performance art action methods and techniques which allow access to living through these somatic realms. The writing of this chapter is made possible by way of the *writing with mountain* methodology which allows for a deep and unabashed remembering of somadance eco-performance experiences in the intent to be translated to text. The case studies took place between 2014 and 2018 in The Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (QC) in December 2014, le parc des chutes de Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC) in July 2014, and during an eight-day journey leading to a workshop at La maison aux volets jaunes in Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC) in July 2018 and back to Tiohtià:ke | Montréal, my home. The sense of spellboundness includes living through listening to the land, dancing *with* the land inside-out, and outside-in, an intimate lived experience of intimacy with the land, leading to a sense of lineage. Performance art action methods and techniques include: affirmation, contour, tension, ease in tension; a story of seeking balance, building trust between the land and I, presencing choices, and keening. This last journey concludes with the grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory emerging from this doctoral research.

Spellbound is a layered title. In this chapter, I write of a sense of spellboundness as living through an experience of being spellbound. By its poetic and lived experiential processes, a spellbound approach to living / remembering a somadance eco-performance makes easier the task of translating somadance eco-performance to a functional mode of thinking from land to

page. Writing this chapter also stands as a landslide series of learning episodes informing the creative potentials of performance art action techniques showing in performance itself, and also, spilling into impacting perspectives on life itself. The first two case studies are narrations of failed somadances. I take from these, lessons in listening to the land, and dancing with the land inside-out, and outside-in. This intimate lived concept is manifest in a sense of kinship. I will come to understand through self-reflection post-performance that land is a place out there and within me. "From my mountain to yours," Aunty Pua Case, Indigenous organizer and activist defending Hawai'i's Mauna Kea, would say.⁵⁷ This final case study of this chapter takes place on a historically significant land for what the land means to my family. The ensuing somatic sense revealed is a sense of lineage.

In this chapter, I come to reflect on sensing stories on land – some of which are my own heritage stories. I name this chapter in a poetic manner, "Spellbound." In addition, and upon polishing again and again this last written account documenting my somadance eco-performances, I come to understand the healing / 'unwinding and re-patterning' potential of spellboundness. The co-dance is not what I expect. It is a dance of approaching constraints not as delimitations but as invitations to adapt, morph, transform. The outcome takes on a generative form of adaptive creative output. Furthermore, spellboundness confirms my somadance begins well before I enter the performance milieu – a sort of green room on land where pre- and co-performance come together. I have long understood that my dancing inquiry to rooting in place comes from the trauma I experience of existing as an embodiment of colonial settler occupation on Native stolen land. Spellboundness meets head-on the myth of eternal rootlessness.

In spellbound, 'spell' is a double entendre on the spelling of my many lived movement

57 See: Appendix A: Holding Aloha Space for the Land and the People of Hawai'i

stories infolded into one bound dissertation. Spellbound also acts on-site as magic imagery actualizing ties to the land, inserting my own dance as one of the many threads knitted in the fabric of life. 'Bound' speaks of the ties between me as the artist and the human, and the land when / where I dance. 'Bound' speaks of encountering my European ancestors' stories on Turtle Island land. Spellbound weaves together the discreet Efforts of Laban's chart – bound with free flow, direct space with sustained time, light and strong weight together – as some of the many paradoxical layers existing together in a complex eco-conversation. Later in the chapter, I describe the performance approach of finding ease in tension. The somatic experience or spellboundness completes my journey of the solo body dancing in the environment, arriving at my place in the collective body dancing the already in motion, always eternal, and never alone dance. Dancing land is a family story. (See: the continuation of this chapter into a more intimate lineage with my human lineage, in Appendix B).

Renascence (1917)

...

The sky was not so very tall.
 The sky, I said, must somewhere stop,
 And—sure enough!—I see the top!
 The sky, I thought, is not so grand;
 I 'most could touch it with my hand!
 And reaching up my hand to try,
 I screamed to feel it touch the sky.
 I screamed, and – lo! – Infinity
 Came down and settled over me;

Forced back my scream into my chest,
 Bent back my arm upon my breast,
 And, pressing of the Undefined
 The definition on my mind,
 Held up before my eyes a glass
 Through which my shrinking sight did pass
 Until it seemed I must behold
 Immensity made manifold;
 Whispered to me a word whose sound
 Deafened the air for worlds around,
 And brought unmuffled to my ears
 The gossiping of friendly spheres,
 The creaking of the tented sky,
 The ticking of Eternity.

...

(St. Vincent Millay *Renascence, and Other Poems* 1-8)

Dancing and Being Danced: A Call and Response Approach

One hundred years separates my dance from the lyrical poetry of feminist playwright Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950). The vibrant images she paints resonate with me. The sky has been a long time dancing! Was there ever a time when I danced unmoved by it? Well, there was a time when I built *single-handedly* a performance to put out into the world. Dancing a somatic practice of eco-performance has reset how I move through the process of creating dance, from insights, sensing movements, processing the dance, and performing together with the world. Being danced by the land is not a way to say that I give up on initiating movements. Moreover, *dancing* as an active proposition is not a way to takeover the whole dance. Being danced by the land is an

approach combining wonderment with call and response. When I accept my role as an active dancer, I open up to the possibility of being danced. These two parts of a whole proposition – call and response, dancing and being danced – result in easing into an ecofeminist continuity standpoint. Being danced by the land involves tuning in to the subtleties of my somatic drives manifesting through impulses to move, together with listening (performative listening), having the imagination to feel the stretching of my skin embracing multiple manifestations of the lived.

The First Failed Dance

The following is a narration of a failed eco-performance dance. Failing, in this story, is an expression of not being attuned with the dance already existing in place.

Tiohtià:ke | Montréal, December 2014. On day 9 of my series, "Between Impossible and Possible Journey," I decide to climb Mont-Royal in a blizzard. Since I left my winter boots in Gatineau on my last visit there, I tell myself the white wellies will have to do. These plastic boots are not made for climbing steep snowy cliffs, as I am about to experience. As per usual, I pack my camera and tripod. I wear my long fringes and white leggings under my long winter coat. I put on a hat, mitts, a scarf, and merino wool socks. I wear my warmest winter coat. This time around, I walk up and past the gazebo, and towards the winged angel statue (le monument George-Etienne Cartier). I trek past the fenced-in Montréal's Prevention Fire Department. There are a few trails which connect to the larger Olmsted road winding up to the Chalet and the Belvédère Camillien-Houde. I walk up one of the trails that has been laid with steps. The plastic wellies I am wearing are so stiff in the cold, I am surprised they do not break in half. Of course there is not a (human) soul in sight. Even on the sunniest of days, during the deep of winter, Mont-Royal is surprisingly unpopulated. I am alone. In a snow blizzard.

I set my eyes on a spot next to a signpost which indicates distances from here to the Chalet and other landmarks. I decide here, this is the cliff I will majestically climb! The cliff is steep, and snow packed. I imagine I can claw up it in a stylized dance. This is my ninth eco-performance, which makes this, still, a new adventure. By now, however, I

have gotten the sense that my surroundings, the land and the snow, and the sound of winter, dance me as I dance them. Had I performed listening, I would have perceived that this dance was not going to happen.

I plunge into the performance milieu. I drop my mitts, pop the umbrella prop open and step on a few of its fringes making sure it won't fly away in this storm. I reach for my left pocket and take out the small container of white paste. I open it, scoop a gob of goop and warm it between fingers and thumb. When the paste is soft enough, I smear some on my eyelids. The ritual of entering the zone of performance is done. I let my coat slip off of me, un-twirl my scarf, push my hat off my head, and press record on the camera. I grab my umbrella and walk myself in the cadre of the camera's lens.

As I try to climb up the cliff, I fall and slide, and I fall and slide, and I fall and slide. I try to hang on to trees but my free hand (left hand) only fumbles through snow, eventually latching on to twigs. Meanwhile, my right hand grips at the umbrella like it is a climbing ice claw. My plastic boots have the worst grip ever. It is as if I am climbing an oil patch, uphill. But I will not take my boots off. Oh no! I am already really very frosty-cold. The wind has knocked most senses out of me. Snow flurries hit me like so many shards. I can barely open my eyes for it stings to just look at the wind. This kind of wind rattling the forest would make a hissing sound but for the snow-covered landscape absorbing the sounds. My drama happens in the silence of a white winter. After a few more failed climbs, I shift my focus. I let myself slide onto steady ground. I shelter somewhat from the elements by getting inside the cocoon offered by the umbrella's fringed dome. From there, I pick up my wits and think. Should I push on or should I give up?

There is still a desire to explore movements pulsing within me. In an ultimate attempt at dancing the land, I shake off the cold and embrace the wind. I walk myself out of the umbrella's cocoon, and smile at the camera. Cold and windy. Tears streak across my face, sideways. Oh! The dance is ever so brief! I retreat under the umbrella's fringed-shield. I make myself as small as possible so as to shorten the length of the body surface the frigid air can lash at. Finally, the land today does not want to be climbed with wellie boots! If ever there was a dance in this, today, it was a dance of sliding and giving up.

There are many lessons learned in working against the grain. Some of these lessons will take years to manifest. Some of these lessons have grown out of this eco-performance's particular fail, and yet others will emerge from future eco-performance research inquiries. Fraleigh wrote, "We played [as infants] with falling down and getting back up, sometimes in little jigs that were our first upright dances," (*Land to Water Yoga* xvii). Falling down and getting back up leads to resilience. Different dance propositions emerge from adjusting my ground. When viewing my video footage afterwards, I note powerful, aesthetically pleasing images. The resilience, stubbornness, and defeat presence well. Working uphill is hard, there is no going around it. If I learned one thing from this eco-performance, it is that failure gives me a sense of an honest response from myself, to myself, and from the land.

Space Gathering Festival (le parc des chutes de Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière QC, July 2014)

In the following case study, I take my alter ego *Dalidada* and animated umbrella prop *Parasolo*, roving around for the time of the festival.⁵⁸ I imagine that coming across a carnivalesque character will entertain the gatherers at the Space Gathering electronic music and transformative festival. I had met the founder and organizer while we both did volunteer work at a Vipassana meditation centre near Montebello. I traded a free entrance to the festival in exchange for my performing at his festival. The agreement was for a one-time performance. I already put myself in the mode for roaming for two-and-a-half days speaking to no one really, but staying in character. I enjoy roaming as a clown. I also enjoy the extraordinariness of electronic music and transformative festivals, its people, the performance acts, the carnivalesque vibe, the round! the clock music, and the sound of release. Ah, happiness! But I am a little bit feral. All the better if I do not have to interact with humans in my quotidian human persona!

58 Roving is a term used for when a clown goes *in socius*, keeping in-character in everyday, ordinary life.

Space Gathering Festival, le parc des chutes de Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC), July 2014. I arrive at the place in a rideshare. We park the car in the parking lot. I grab my tent and set to find a spot in the forest where to pitch it. Soon, the festival's organizer comes to greet me. I am shown where on site, I am booked to perform. It is an indoor dance venue, covered by a domed structure. I think, "the width of my umbrella prop alone will take up one fifth of the room!" That is not possible. I say, "This will not work." I explain why I cannot fit in this small space with my huge prop, and in exchange of freeing myself from our trade, I offer to roam around. So it is that not long after I arrived at the festival place, I slip into my Dalidada costume and character.

I spend the first day in-character, sunbathing by the waterfall and in its natural pools. Festival goers don't seem to mind my in-character presence. They have their own adventure kicking in – rekindling with the regular festival goers, relaxing, taking in the sun, easing into the day and soaking the good vibes in preparation for a long night of dancing of their own. It is a glorious day. Everyone is high on sunshine and waterfall. People already have gathered in pods, chit chatting, some standing in water waist deep, others floating away on the river's currents before wading back ashore to dry their body on the sun baked river boulders, re-joining friends. I keep to my bubble. On that first day, I try various things. I explore the edges of what works and what will not work in performance with the water. I stay far enough from people that I do not cramp them with my antics! But I do stay close enough to immerse myself in the crowd. I step onto a boulder in the water. In this way, I am in the water area, but not wet yet.

Ahead of the entertainment gig, I had taken a few mental notes to prepare for this day-time roaming. One of the notes said that I should walk waist deep in one of the waterfall's pools, at the site where the river makes an elbow just before flowing hard towards another waterfall. The note said that my fringes might float, and if so, that they would trail beautifully in the whirl-pooling water. In a rare eco-performance where water and wind were not terribly frigid-cold, I had imagined looking like a Victorian depiction of a lily pad fairy might on a hot summer day. I had imagined lounging in the flowing water, gazing up at the majestic waterfall, the fringes from my umbrella and those hanging around my neck, sprawling like the river's venous system. I also imagined

coming out of the water like the lily pad fairy I saw in my mind's eye. Standing tall, proud, confident, and at ease all at once, I would be holding up the umbrella prop while its fringes in gauze material shone pearly hues against the open blue sky, the green of the forest, and the emerald green of the water beautifully framing Dalidada. What beautiful postcards these images would make. Such beautifully serene scenery!

Well, reality check. My fringes do not float. Neither the ones on my umbrella, nor the ones I wear around my neck. And the more wet they become, the heavier they are to bear. And the heavier they pull on me, the more I am pulled to the bottom of the river. I had not planned on being whisked away by the powerful string of waterfall's current, nor on drowning. The umbrella's fringes, cut from second-hand transparent nylon curtains, and the neck fringes, made from spongy polyester jersey, are light enough to catch the wind, but not light enough to float. They are tangible enough to be tossed around in the water, however. Under the surface of the water, the fringes dance as if in a washing machine. And I am tossed left and right, left and right, left and right. Their long length eventually gets sucked in the many whirlpools forming at the crux of the waterfall and the many boulders punctuating its deep water. There is another set of waterfalls over by the bend. The water between the two waterfalls looks calm from an outside view. But up close and caught in the current, I experience the power of water. The whirlpool effect is stronger than I had anticipated. Some of the fringes catch in branches and other snaggy bits stuck in cracks between the immersed giant river boulders. Some of the fringes twirl and tangle around my own body, knotting my legs together and hampering my eggbeater kicks. As I am surely getting pulled away from the shore, deeper into the deep, I no longer have footing on the big bolder. The edge of the river looks too far already for me to just flop myself onto its shore. Instead of a lily-pad fairy image, wrapped up as I am in my knotted fringes, I take the shape of a giant spider's snack. Or. A body bag! I am getting pulled harder into the fast water current. I swim with my free arm, holding on to Parasolo with the other. I won't let go of the prop. It is tied to me. I think, maybe if I dance under water, I can untie myself. I try to dance with the knots but only get dangerously more entangled. I surface to take some air and dip back under to work the knots out, only to find it harder to surface for air. The fringes are too short now to keep the big dome of the umbrella away from me. I end up hovering under its dome. At each dip, with the fringes

shortened thus by the knots, the distance between the dome of the umbrella and my head shortens. This is turning into a battle for survival. Either I step out of the water, or I face letting myself be spit out, mangled at best, past the next set of waterfalls. This is a failed show. Firstly, I nearly drown, but then, I do not gracefully sink either. There is a special kind of warmth that surges through when failing in front of so many people. I might not have let it shown that I was struggling against drowning because no one comes to my rescue. I imagine that on this first day, festival goers have not experienced the power of the water turbine flow yet. From an outside view, the water looks deceptively, blissfully calm.

Being graceful, the dancer has learned how to bring the right amount of effort to performance (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 110).

No one knows of my struggles. All the better. I simply give in to the water current, just long enough for the knots to be washed away. I am dragged a way out but then, swirled back closer to a heap of river boulders. THANK YOU. I swim myself unceremoniously out of this bind. On shore, I close my umbrella so it will not blow away. I arrange its white fringes neatly over the boulders. While I let my umbrella prop dry in the wind, I stand tall (and embarrassed), swaying my hips in the sun to shake the nervous shakes out. Swaying is a way to relax my super tensed body. I keep my fingers busy playing with my still-knotted neck fringes. Soon, Parasolo (my umbrella) is all dried and ready to dance. I pick it up, intent on making its fringes swirl in the wind. Once again, nothing happens like I saw in my mind's eye. The air is still, except for the times when I give a push outwards to my umbrella in an effort to agitate its fringes. Only then, the wind picks up in a disorganized whisk, swelling its sail (dome), making manoeuvring the heavy prop cumbersome at best. Then before I have time to engage in a dance with the wind, it dies out. It is as if the wind wants me to move elsewhere.

...

Well!

...

I listen to the wind. After all, the fringes look very good when they dangle straight down (in the absence of wind). I listen and walk just a short little way out into the river. I stop and stand on one of the free half-submerged boulders, like so many other festival goers are doing already. We stay there. I busy myself with my own experience. Even I as am propped up on the boulder, the fringes of my umbrella are long enough to soak their tips in the water. Wet like this, their weight makes it impossible to twirl around. Here goes. Another missed tableau! And if I did twirl the fringes – because using might would necessarily make moving a wet, heavy umbrella possible – I would spray the gatherers with droplets of water. So, I stay here, faking content. A now familiar monologue runs through my body: shut up, listen, and hold space. The land is dancing already. Let the dance dance me. Join, because of and as a pledge to care, love, nurture, and protect the land. Join. Dance the expression of inner tension and exterior tension, sharing 'ma condition humaine' with others, our communal 'expériences vécues', lived experiences, and with the Lebenswelt (lifeworld), and beyond. I stand here for a very, very long time. Breathing comes in and out easily. I am at peace.

The following day, it rains non-stop. I had left my umbrella outside of my tiny tent overnight because even folded it takes up so much room. In a rain like today's, my gear will never dry. Still, I have an urge to dance. It is not so cold, but not too hot outside. The pouring rain is the heavy type that falls in thin ropes and straight down. So it is that on the morning after nearly drowning, I walk back down to the river. I hold myself proudly tall, holding up my heavier-than usual umbrella with its 82, 12 foot long soaked fringes trailing in the mud. Parading thus, from the campground area to the edge of the river, my fringes trailing pick up pine needles and sand grit mixed together. The white of the fringes turns to a dirty brown. By the time I arrive at the river, I look like a lost pup in a thunderstorm holding on to strings to which are attached mud cakes. Gone is the fairy queen mother postcard! Never mind, however. Magic is in the wet air, I can feel it. This time around, I settle on a very large boulder the size of small hump-backed whale. I face the high waterfall and the overhanging suspension bridge. Compared to yesterday where every surface glowed gold and emerald, today the landscape is deep dark-green.

I pick up the umbrella for a try at my first swing by holding firmly the stick of the

beast, and grabbing with my other hand a handful of its wet and muddy strands. I begin spinning around my body axis. Everything feels so much heavier. But with great might, I manage to swish the free fringes and they fly free in the rain. The ordeal of moving the dead weight in the dead wind and a pouring sky has me recall the strength required to stay afloat in my prior bottom-driven dance. Except this time around, I am on 'dry' land. The dead weight also grounds me in contrast to the way flow-y fringes tend to lift me off the land. I decide to walk through a choreography I had prepared for an in-studio cabaret piece made in 2013 for a one-person tango performance I titled "Parasolo Tango." I warm-up for the dance by flicking the umbrella's dome open and closed. I walk us pair through a sort of organized tango pattern. The open dome looks like a medusa. The closed dome looks like a calamari what with the trailing fringes looking like tentacles. I walk through each gesture and sequence, playing longer with those that make sense in such context. Big, powerful gestures make sense. Large gestures make sense. Slowly dragging the wet fringes on the ground makes sense. Interrupted flow does not work. The fringes simply stop mid-air and fall down in an unceremonious tangle – 'flop'. I have to give time for the fringes to complete a full swish and collect themselves before I swish them into another direction. I close the dome and hold the umbrella by its tip. I give my body's weight as a counter-weight to the heavy umbrella prop. Holding the tip of the stem with two hands now, and spinning on myself making dizzying circles, I lean back even further from my vertical axis. The fringes make a 'vroom' sound that even the heavy rain does not silence. I alternated between open and closed umbrella dome, and holding the beast from one or the other end of the stick. I pivot this and that way in the pouring rain, drawing arcs, and circles. The fringes fold when they drop to the ground. It takes a strong tug to animate them back alive. I alternate between swishes and vrooms. In the rain, with big gestures, balancing counter-weight, and having the patience to let a motion complete its path before initiating the next move, the dance takes shape. By now, the dance feels like an oil drill hammer coming down with great might, regularly pumping the ground. Boom, boom, boom, boom. The fringes are so wet they no longer make a hissing sound, nor a swishing sound when they collect. It's just, boom/flop, boom/flop, boom/flop, boom/flop. The soles of my naked feet are lined with grit. I use my toes like frogs do when gripping on slimy surface. The sound my feet make when shifting place in dance is like a

kissing suction cup's 'smack'. When I grab the umbrella by its handle stick and point the tip to the ground, the umbrella hits with a 'tic' before the 'flop'-ing fringes collect in a wet mass on the rock's wet surface. Raindrops and fringe-drops collide in concert –'tic', 'smack-smack', 'swish', 'boom-flop', 'smack-smack', and 'vroom'. It is all very noisy in a kind of rain-drowned percussive melody. I feel silly, unceremonious, and truly filled with joy!

Fortunately for my documentation mission, a festival photographer stumbles upon us, me and my wet eco-dance. Obviously, I did not set my video camera up in this weather, and the beautiful images she will snap of 'our' dance will make more than up for it. The photographer and I do not exchange words as I remain in the moment of the dance with the mild wind and the heavy downpour. The images the photographer snapped capture a wholesome entanglement: me and my prop, the very-very wet rain, and the storm-painted lush North Woods in mid-summer. I am not surprised that the re-enacted choreography needs to transform in order to adapt to this new environment. But I would not have imagined that exerting this much effort could show on film as a graceful tableau vivant (living picture). Perhaps the gracefulness of somadance eco-performance can be expressed as differences pooling together in one big picture – a graceful communion of sort. In any case, to animate the fringes, I have to bring the right amount of effort. The magic of the world enters me through a sort of clearing of expectations. By meeting the water (rain) halfway, we managed to shape a dance. I 'found' movements that are usually not those needed under climate-controlled conditions. The more I empathize with the rainy circumstance, the more I grow familiar with the rain. In this developing intimacy, I enter a somatic milieu of spellboundness.

We think of ourselves as 'in' landscape, but sometimes we forget that landscape is also in us. We are formed by the ground we walk on: that which lies beneath our feet. . . . The need to make sense of, and find meaning in, our relationship to the places we inhabit is a fundamental and universal part of the human journey in this world. To put it quite simply, we cannot be human without the land. Our humanity cannot exist in isolation: it requires a context, and its context is this wide earth which supports us, and the non-human others who share it with us. (Blackie *Voices of the Wells* 1-2)

From allowing the land to inhabit me, emerges a sense of my own roots. I dance in place such

that land has a place in me. A spellbound approach to somadance eco-performance acts as an antidote to forgotten sentient connection to the land. By way of dancing land, I (re)trace my humanity.

Dance as something humans do is not abstract in application; assimilating perception and imagination in action, dance produces embodied ways of knowing – or embodied epistemologies – subject to interpretation. (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 28)

Dance is something we *do*. My experiences are subject to interpretations – they rise in the form of theoretical articulation, methods, and techniques born of the felt real and imagined that make my somadance eco-performance better. My interpretation moves in gestures as they move in thoughts. These moving-thinking lived experiences make me want to *do* dance, *do* better relationship between human and land, *do* depatterning work (advocacy, pedagogy, applied deeds), and *do* repatterning work attending to the sense-based, land-based somatic epistemologies. As Tuck and Wang wrote in their landmark article of 2012, *Decolonisation is not a Metaphor*.⁵⁹

Workshop at *La maison aux volets jaunes* (Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière QC, July 2018)

In the following case study, I interpret spellboundness through various movement performance art action techniques I developed from training with Tourangeau: affirmation, contour, hosting tension, balancing ease in tension, developing trust between the land and I, presencing choices, and keening. In the prior narrated fieldwork episodes, I have described my experiences of dancing with wind and water and of allowing wind and water to dance me. This double articulation reveals a sense of continuity, mutuality, of my guesthood and responsibility to the land, and also of a sense of story sharing with wind and water, moving together with the dance of

⁵⁹ To reiterate what I wrote in the literature review, chapter 3, "Decolonization is not a Metaphor" pertains to the ideology (abstract in application) of the move to innocence (Tuck and Wang). Metaphors have their own power – spellbinding is one of them and it has allowed me as a somatic dimension, to rekindle with an enchanted kinship. Thinking decolonization is not enough. Depatterning cultural and historical legacies embedded within somatically amnesic colonial structures requires doing. Hence, I use the term 'moving-thinking', to emphasize the doing of "embodied ways of knowing" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 28).

life. Dancing and being danced is one of the ways with which to access a sense of spellboundness. I have experienced living through an ecosomatic dimension of spellboundness by way of coming to an enchanted kinship. This spellbinding dimension builds on 'dancing and being danced'; it is lived through manifesting place, time, and space (inner and outer), and as a result, an enchanted kinship reveals itself. Presently, this exercise will be done via embodying ways of seeing and ways of being seen.⁶⁰ The outcome of the following fieldwork narration is an exercise in, "assimilating perception and imagination in action, [where / when] dance produces embodied ways of knowing" (Fraleigh *Back to the Dance Itself* 28). The total experience – through somadance and eco-performance, trials and errors, coaching notes, training deeply in various performance art action techniques – reveals a sense of affirming myself within the dance of life. In terms of land-based epistemology, I come to sense my grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory by dancing as part of an enchanted lineage.

During a week-long workshop, I train in showing my presence / making my presence seen. This will be done through solo somadance eco-performance explorations with the wind. During this time, I come to somatic and expressive blockages that have me seek other ways to show what it is I am experiencing and striving to show (to presence). The journey is a revelation of a series of existential felt real and imagined concepts. By way of trial and errors, and by way of attending to the coaching notes Tourangeau provides, I work my way through layers of subtleties until I reveal my presence to the land (and to those participants attending the workshop). The more I am seen, the better I see. Throughout the workshop, I train in developing my sense perception through somatic observation and performance art action expression vis-à-vis attending to the multiple layers of life – past, present, and future – embedded in the land.

⁶⁰ Seeing here, is meant as an expression of the felt real and imagined, combining Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception and Somatic's perception through imagination.

Tourangeau is hosting the workshop which welcomes four participants including myself. I know one of them by name because of her affiliation with the National Choreographic Seminar.⁶¹ The other participants I will get to know through our time together here. We will be together for the week, sleeping next to each other and eating all of our meals together. Daytime instructions and explorations take place outdoors, in situ. Tourangeau facilitates structures, shares movement performance art action techniques she developed for her own practice and through years of coaching artists. Tourangeau will offer personalized coaching notes as well for every action we are tasked to perform (research). It is a workshop that will be as demanding for the participants as it will be for our coach. During the day, we each go on to our own solo performance exploration. Periodically, Tourangeau will call for us to regroup for a group coaching. Later, we will be alone again. And re-group again. Tourangeau addresses her notes to the performer, but it benefits everyone. Each of us also gets to present two minutes of our explorations which makes for about four performance explorations per day. I love these kinds of workshops because it allows each of us to take from it what resonates with us at that time. I describe below, some of these outstanding teachings of those many that transformed the way I approach my somadance eco-performance art since 2018: affirmation, contour, tension, ease in tension: a story of seeking balance, building trust between the land and I, presencing choices, and keening.

61 From 2015 to 2017, I contributed archival research to Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt and Carol Anderson's research project on the National Choreographic Seminars (1978-1996), titled: "Collective Historical Acts of Social Memory project (CHASM)." I recognize one of the *solidité / fluidité / solidarité's* workshop participant's name from a National Choreographic Seminar's participants sheet.

Affirmation

I describe the sense of affirmation as a sense of stepping into an active role in holding space and time with land in the eternal dance of life. I usually strive to minimize my presence to not disturb too much the dance of life already present. During the week, I will come to inhabit a sense of affirmation, how Fraleigh writes: "affirmation of bodily being is a potential value for both the dancer and the audience, because they share the dance – *as body*" (Fraleigh *Dance and the Lived Body* 55, italics in text). That is the core realization of this week's workshop, that by affirming my presence, I contribute to the dance of the land and benefit the dancers who then have a choice to engage or pass on the invitation of dancing together with me.

In somadance eco-performance, the contour of me is my skin, where my inner-place meets the outer-place. I have demonstrated throughout this research, the humbling physicality of acknowledging my differences and my boundaries when I dance in, say, a tumultuous ocean, or bare feet on snow (see: chapter two). At the start of the workshop, my interest is on shaping a somatic architecture upon which my own body is of little consequence. I tell Tourangeau that I no longer work with 'contours' in shaping my body into a dance. By way of engaging with various theories regarding the embodiment concept, I have incorporated an abstract sense of 'body' that is termed, the porous body, by way of studying Deleuze and Guatarri's article, "The Body without Organ" during my time with the Sense Lab at Concordia University, Montréal. The shape my body takes is the shape I sense the somatic environmental architecture to be. In other words, I fill the gaps in the outer space. I espouse the missing parts. Tourangeau listens to me and shows body language expressing surprise but she does not object to my story. Unbeknownst to me, this *volte face* week-long training will be the depatterning of my acquired disembodied philosophy. The quality of my presencing somatic attunement will change.

Contour

In this workshop, I will come to understand that presencing contour allows the other dancers to dance me as well. Otherwise, what I engage in is not a dynamic call and response, but an act of performing echoes. By letting go of the intention to presence my contour (my boundaries, my edges, my organs), I deny other dancers a guide to meeting these boundaries on their own terms. Defining my contour is a role I can actively take, one which allows other dancers the freedom to decline, or to join me in a dance.

How do I manifest contour in movement performance art action? In how I inhabit Tourangeau's technique, presencing contour is a way to say that my performance's intention comes out clear. It is a mix of inner and outer amplitude and density. It also is a Somatics praxis of breathing mindfully. Breathing of course, is the bridge between the outer and the inner, as well as between the nonsense (pre-verbal) and the sensuous consciousness. Defining my contour is a layered phenomenon. My interpretation, and experience of contouring my presence are such that I express (in-to-out) and allow to be inhabited (out-to-in) body-place. Both the inner body-place and the outer land-place are involved in shaping my (co)dance. With contour, I have a place to host the dance for those dancers joining in. Manifesting a performance contour is a declaration that the ballroom is open – *a dancer is in the house and all dancers are welcomed in!* Contouring creates a place that is my own; I come into my place. In a sense, contouring is not only seen by the other dancers, it also is a means to ground myself – *to come home*.

One of two things happens when I decide to forego contouring: 1) without presencing my contour, the dancers of the world have no idea I am present in their world; 2) the dancers may see that I do not contribute to the place to which they already contribute. Without contour, I am dead weight to the place. The eternal dance will not stop. But it will go on without me. And as I

did experience in the failed dances narrated above, every movement is this much harder to dance when I am alone. Words legendary tanguero, Pablo Veron, said to me years ago in Shanghai come to mind, "When I dance, I call the gods of winds to dance with me." As I demonstrate in the coming narrative, by way of contouring my space, I gain agility and speed in a way I imagine Veron does when dancing with the gods. My movements become supported when I share the space I dance. While I make my contour 'visible', I signal my presence in the world. I enter a place of reciprocity, of communication. I enter into spellboundness. With presencing contour, not only do I share place, but I share my inner place with the outer place. I transcend skin not by being porous but being present. The wind has a different contour than mine. In wind-dance, we do not fit together because of our resemblance. We fit together in a dance of our differences. Moreover, what emerges are distinctly unique partners in one co-activated dance.

For the first few explorations, Tourangeau will let me be. Soon enough, Tourangeau will task me to presence my contour. Tourangeau will then off-handily invite me to go ahead and dance with my many friends, "toi pis tes 12 amis!"⁶² Tourangeau *sees* the many dancers I dance with. But do they *see* me?! Tourangeau will invite me to presence my contour so that she can *see* me.

Tension

One of the many layers of presencing contour technique I have experienced, from training with Tourangeau's technique, is exploring intricacies of tension. Tension is necessary for movement to manifest. "Without tension, there is no change, no life, no experimentation, no communication, no dance" (Bartenieff 192). Juggling tension in performance is complex. Too much tension and

⁶² English translation: "You and your twelve friends!" Tourangeau is speaking of imaginary friends she has a sense seeing surrounding me when I perform.

my body will freeze or cramp; too little and my mind is going to go blank. Poorly managed tension makes a performance flat. To come out with a certain amount of charisma, I must find alignment in tension. But by tension, I do not mean a state of stress-induced tension leading to anxiety. I use my tension-as-motion to feed my following motion. Benoît Lachambre speaks of dissolving the tension so as to replace it with space (workshops 2015, 2016). His movement technique at that time very much focused on creating space. We spent 30 minutes every morning strolling in the studio and burping air out!

Tension therefore exists in space as movements building from their base the way harmonics build on a note – by riding the length of space to space and to space and so on. Movements of tension and harmonics are felt as a somatic vibratory sense, which is to say, a sounding-rhythmical sense – a kind of harmonic friction creating a melodic score. Moving is an act of space-time balance. This act is complex and layered. I have experienced this negotiation between tension and creating space as finding ease *in* space (note: not finding my way out of tension and into tensionless ease.) The following phenomenon emerged from this finding: rethink, path, balance, encounter, transformation, and reveal.

Ease in Tension: A Story of Seeking Balance

Moving through tension includes an act of balancing. This approach to shaping tension through layers of contours speaks of balancing acts in space-time. The point of balance of tension is the point at which the contour emerges. In this sense, contour is the ease emerging from balancing tension. Balancing ease and tension shapes contour. It is an ease that is not easy. In, *The Paper Canoe*, Barba who was one of Grotowski's earliest collaborators, considered a continuous search for balance, a deeply felt experience of life, and as *a precarious equilibrium* (33). Finding and balancing ease in tension is a deeply transformative technique. Barba describes as *thinking in*

motion, creative thoughts "which proceeds by leaps, by means of sudden disorientation which obliges it to reorganize itself in new ways" (88), thereby altering the performer's perception of the world. Magnat, also a student of Grotowski, writes in her latest book, *Vocality as Somatic Engagement*: "I suggest that such precarious equilibrium is a form of productive disorientation that reflects our on-going efforts to find balance in our lives" (40). Unsettling and unwinding, but also ripe with potentials for repatterning, the paradox of ease in tension has become a staple of my Somatics praxis, with wind and water, as with writing scholarly enchanted research to fit in a somatically amnesic academia. I resonate with Barba's view that performance art trainings are deeply transformative techniques, and with Magnat's view of taking this found balance into our lives. The somatic concept of balancing ease and tension experienced in somadance eco-performance is part of a mechanism of acting on rooting. Each time I ease into tension, I ease deeper somatically, sensing my own ground and rooting with other somatically enlivened dancers.

Building Trust between the Land and I

The praxis of spellboundness is functional, experiential, and one which fosters enchanted kinship. Imagine. I arrive at a place upon which I intend to dance / I am called to dance. My contribution to this place is but a layer of the many contributions that exist already in this space-time. Fostering an enchanted kinship means that I activate my space-time; I activate my bond to this space-time. When I experience multiple space-times at once, I can do so by accessing the liminal space-time between layers of space-time, as I did in the somadance eco-performances I have described in chapter four and chapter five. I can also access layers of space-time all at once, as I demonstrate in chapter five during the Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River somadance eco-performance. Presently, I experience accessing layers of space-time in place – this time, I

witness this layering with my eyes. The laying of space-time takes place outside of; it takes place for my performance art action coach and workshop participants to see because I presence what I see.

Presencing Choices

On the outside, I rarely move rapidly. I seldom engage in a succession of fast paces and directional shifts. On the inside however, movements go fast. Making choices and taking decisions keeps the aliveness of movement, even as I move in stillness. Tourangeau tells me, "tu prends des décisions sur le vif,"⁶³ and remarks that this enlivens my performance. By presencing the turmoil of acting on these decisions, at every moment, emerges a sense of aliveness. Even in stillness, I am animated. On day 5 of the eco-performance series during the workshop, I present back-to-back two performances of two minutes each. Right after, we all comment on them. I say that I felt much more penetrated, moved, in my first attempt. I say my second presentation was a miss-fire. It turns out that my second performance was much clearer to my audience. I expressed clearly, choices I made. Decisions were much more in place; choices stood out clearly. Making choices and taking decisions are part of the performative processes keeping a performance pulsing. I can presence the process leading to a somatic drive. I can presence the beats between making choices. There are times when I attune to a phenomenon just too big for me to manifest *it* through dance. And, there are times when I attune to a phenomenon just too big for me to justify on the spot, but a phenomenon to which nonetheless I attune to, and presence.

Keening

On day 3, one participant remarks that I have my mouth wide open quite frequently during my

⁶³ English translation: "Fast decision making." The French expression does not focus on the speed, but on taking the decision on the uptake of a somatic drive about to burst into action. 'Vif,' literally means 'alive.'

performances. She asks me if I have respiratory difficulties, and if my mouth opening is a way of coping with a better air intake and exhale. "Are you a mouth breather," she asks. Tourangeau also remarks on it. She tells me to just be aware of it, and not necessarily intent on shutting my open mouth. Immediately, my response is to say that I taste space better with my mouth wide open. There is that. But I sit with her comment for two years. From listening to Mary McLaughlin discussing lamentation practices (keening) on Blackie's *The Mythic Life Podcast*, I understand that I attune to the deep grief and sorrow of the land. At the time of the workshop, I ask Tourangeau why it is that I well up in tears at times – even to the extent of giving into heartfelt sobs. I imagine that I may be dehydrated and a bit exhausted from training outdoors, day-long, in this week-long once-per-year summer heatwave. But still! Tourangeau shares with me that it is likely that I am attuning to the land – past, present, and future. After all, this land is a scarred land. A place of hopes, of battles, of losing homes, of making homes, of losing mother tongues, and of erecting crosses in the memory of a sacrificial soma. It also is a land of seasonal changes, of animal husbandry, of rushing rivers connecting to the nearby sea, of tears, and sweat, and blood, and manure draining down its water. And each spring, it is a land that rises again.

Meanwhile, I grieve silently, even as my mouth is open in a gesture of wailing. Other times, the wail is so low in pitch and long in breath as to be nearly inhuman, as it happened during one of the *Healing my Mother* series eco-performances, at Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park (UT), in 2015. I follow its resonance traveling through me. I sense the vibration of the cry. It moves me. My mouth open – the mouth breather – I meet the wind breath first. I hold space for the wind to roll inside of my mouth; to visit the cave of my skull. The wind of a thousand breaths mixes with my lungs' outbreath. The wind and I take turn keening. Keening silently.

Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC), July 2018. I am in town for an eco-performance week, taking part in Sylvie Tourangeau's workshop dedicated to solidité / fluidité / solidarité (Eng: solidity / fluidity / solidarity). During the week, we will further develop performative methods of attitude, presence, and performative actions. From my first-eco-performance until today, I have always had at hand water in its various forms and shapes. This time around, I will be working solely with the wind because in the summer season, La maison aux volets jaunes sits in a dry hay field. The site of the workshop is nearly a quarter-of-an-hour drive to le parc des chutes de Ste-Agathe-De-Lotbinière where I performed in 2014, and even closer to the winding Palmer River. During our week at La maison aux volets jaunes, we will skip to the waterfall but not until the end of our working day. Our performance coaching will be taking place in a dry landscape, and no amount of stretching the eyes will give me a glimpse of a body of water. Put a hay field and July heatwave together as the site for a place-based practice, and you get everything that I have never performed with. Dehydration, extreme heat, dry land, prickly grass, all are quite unfamiliar performance sites to me. The cut hay will poke right through the skin of my naked feet. The scorching tunnel wind flow will imprint on me as my dance partner for the week.

I somadance eco-performance for five days straight, from morning to late afternoon, with a mid-day break in between. I keep in mind post-performance research and for this purpose, throughout the exploration, I video document my doing.

Day 1: The land is dry. It is summer. The sun is scorching hot. I regularly wet my clothes glued to my body's evaporated moisture. These intervals of playing with the water hose give me a much needed respite from the merciless heat. I feed my skin a modicum of moisture and head back quickly to my performance tasks. My wet clothes hang heavy on my body for just long enough to cool me down. My skin breathes. The wind dries my clothes in no time, however. And the wind, it flows uninterrupted from Neverland, to where I have staged my circle of place-performance. It is summer during a heatwave in Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière. The wind blows by gusts. When the wind dies down, I am not entirely alone. My coach, Tourangeau, sits in the field with other participants. She has seen that we are not alone. She tells me to play with the density of my amplitude, to manifest contour making visible my experience. I try it in my body and in moving through

space. Right away, manifesting contour adds to presencing. I smile. Is it joy I feel? Making "visible" my experience allows me to play with rhythmic modulation and speed shifts with more ease, more grace.

Day 2: I love experiential learning. I push myself to apply a lesson I have yet to learn fully. It is exhausting and also exhilarating. I know I'm in for a post-performance workshop crash. For now, I grab my bottle of water, take a sip, sit in the shade for a bit, scribble down notes, and move myself out of total comfort and into the fire. Even as I remember the workshop, I remember five performance artist participants on the field. But we are four. Including Tourangeau, we make a pod of five people out there in the hay field. Someone is unseen. I keep looking out for the fifth participant. This nagging sensation will not leave me. Not even years later as I type these words. I find a bird's nest that will become integral to staging my place of performance. It has fallen off a tree, likely during high winds. I scribble in my notebook, "Je ne suis plus seule. Je suis ensemble."⁶⁴ I leave the fallen bird's nest where I found it, under the generous branches of the fir tree. Eventually, I will incorporate it into my performance. Something strange is happening to my somatic machine. I have lost most of my markers in how my somatic drives get triggered. I usually work in near hypothermia and in water. I have never worked with a heatwave and in a place this dry. Well, I did dance in Utah's many deserts and I did not suffer from heat and dryness. But a summer heatwave in the province of Québec is a special kind of heat inferno. I scribble three words on a paper, "transformation," "torpeur," et "aisance."⁶⁵ I make the choice to let the heat pass me by. I will not attune to the heat; I will simply let it be. I keep my focus on the wind. Tourangeau says something about holding emptiness for the journey to take place. This piece of teaching will not make sense to me, not for a few years. As of today (date of this performance), I am familiar with "making space for," but not with "absence" as a positive contribution. Heat and dryness, matched only by me being already extenuated by putting so much effort in manifesting performance . . . I am as disoriented as I was on my first day on Mount Royal in 2013. There is a distance between me and my own somatic performance baggage, it seems. To take my mind off of expectations, I begin walking and

64 English translation: "I am no longer alone. I am together."

65 English translation: "transformation," "torpor," "ease."

touching. I walk myself into the barn. I touch my own skin and then the surface of things around me. I record in my note book the gentle feel of an old wooden table. I note an echo of this action of caressing the wood bouncing off from the surface of it. I scribble, "echoes of those of the past, and echoes of those from the future." They co-inhabit the place of my performance. Where I stand, there, someone stood, and someone will stand.

*Echo bouncing is a somatic situation I will explore throughout the workshop, albeit, without naming it right away. I walk back to the meadow. I lie on my belly. It is uncomfortable and scratchy. I reflect on narcissism, self-indulgence. I want to be seen by this vast immensity. I wish for this vastness to bring me into myself – earth, hay, wind, clouds, sky. I feel as tired as if I had worked a day in the field. I do not know name felt sense yet, but I experience bouncing in time. In a flash, I see my maternal great-grandparents working on their farm. I see them with my full body as if I had a thousand eyes poking through my skin. Their farm is not all that far away from here.⁶⁶ I count. I begin counting distances. First, at a human scale – one feet, two feet. I try at a rock's throw. I will have to drive there. The wind, meanwhile, is nearly at their door. I walk some more. In French, I play with words-thoughts like *déplacer* (Eng.: move; lit.: de-place) and *placer* (Engl.: to place). I purposely leave traces at each imagined place I visit. *Ça et là*, I offer a praise. I wrap it in a form of gestural offering, a prayer. Almost a year later, I will be called to introduce myself to a tree on rue Henri-Julien (2019) using gestures of offering. At present, I hear my inner voice telling me that this form of dance is the sweetest relationship I have to the land – "le sucre de mon existence,"⁶⁷ comes to mind.*

Tourangeau has worked with me a few times since 2012. She knows my performance art work. She is also quite witty at figuring me out. She tells me that I have the skill to bounce time around. She lets me know she knows I move through art performance amidst a spirited world. The following narrative is a self-reflective exercise done through re-viewing in 2019, four videos from the ones I recorded to document my eco-performance somadance at La maison aux volets jaunes (2018).

Day 3: I intend on searching for new movements and other points of entry into

66 The maternal farm is in Eastman, QC. Most of the land has been sold / expropriated to build l'autoroute 10, l'autoroute des Cantons-de-l'est.

67 English translation: "the sweetness / the sweetening of my existence."

those same movements. With using an umbrella and holding it against the wind, and at times, in dead wind, movements tend to be more of the same. They are my go-to within the possibilities I face. I am tasking myself to depattern these go-to movements. What are other movements I can express; what other possibilities exist that I have yet to explore? With the wind and my theatrical attire and prop, with the many fringes dangling from my neck and from the dome of my umbrella, I explore the many variations to my movements that result from being in connection with myself and the land and animated with the wind. I cocoon. I do love being inside this gigantic fabric-fall. From here, I strategize on entering unseen, unknown points of entry. Of course, these entrees lead to other sets of the unknown. One door may lead me to work with time, then through speed-shifts, or shape-shifts, traveling in space, contorting my body differently, and so on. I pause. Through moving spontaneously and traveling in my inner space, I travel my intriguingness. I task myself sensing the moment when and where I find a balanced point between my centre of gravity and the wind's center of gravity. I decide to probe time and space for these movements, and to presence it. Through this entry point, in that moment and at that place, I enter fully the performance milieu together with wind. In this mixed milieu, I probe the inside of me. In my notes, I scribble: a dark space, an absence of sound and an absence of light. In post-performance reflection on this, I observe that what I have not seen is likely the invisible colour of ease. I presence this ease. It is already some time into the exploration, and I clearly am at loss for a dance. I get agitated trying to have order in the fringes of the umbrella. I grip at loose fringes over the dome of the umbrella. I lose patience. I am learning that I have to make allowances for the tension to evacuate. And I have to make way for the fringes to pass me, when there is a change of wind direction. Or else I will get tangled in them. It is a corrida of sorts. It sure is a dance of battles. I change strategy and begin to walk in one direction in a firm stumping walk. Then I speed up the pace, lightening up my walk, and begin trotting in the opposite direction and coming to a circle. My walk is decisive, but I have a spring in my knees – no more stumping. I switch direction in space, tracing an 's', and circle outside of the space I have just animated. In this walk, I find two more instances of tension and ease. The video shows me to be against the wind. I grab hold of one fringe to help me maneuver the prop full sail into the wind. I switch and try to keep the dome of the

umbrella facing the oncoming wind. I walk back to the designated centre of my performance space. I collect myself. The wind picks up. The video footage I review shows lighter green lines depicting wave after wave traveling through the darker shades of the meadow's grassland. The cut grass below my feet does not move much as it is too short, but the long grass behind me wiggles like thousands of inflated clowns taken hostage by air columns. My fringes flare up in a tangled mess. I allow the flow of the wind to guide my arm, moving the umbrella in space. And the dome turns so as to face the wind that has shifted in opposite direction from a heartbeat ago. I meet the change by offering just enough resistance in a display of accepting the wind's invitation for a duel. The wind changes tactic. Until the very tail end of this exploration, it isn't decided on which way to blow and also mellows down somewhat. I make an inventory of somatic lessons learned. In this dance, I have stood my ground. The video shows no other action on my part. At a little over eight minutes, I walk out of the makeshift staged circle. My action seems complete.

On the following exploration, I say to Tourangeau: "Je travaille sur l'amplitude et la respiration" (Eng.: I am working on amplitude and my breath). This time, the wind is coming from my right side. The video shows me packing density to further presence amplitude. This process can be seen because my shape is very well defined. I cannot say I glow. But seeing myself on camera, it is as if there is an especially crisp filter set on me. There are definitely points where amplitude comes through successfully in various levels of density. Two things happen that are worth noting: 1) the wind is surprised by my dance; 2) I presence my fringes as if they were my own body, c'est-à-dire, I presence the stretched-out skin part of my stretching skin technique. In regard to seeing on the video documentation that the wind is confused, well, it seems so because the green grass turns uniformly green. This shows there is not a wisp of air disturbing one blade even. My hair is caught in wind. What is there to make up about the wind but that it is confused! After 2 minutes, I ease the tension my arm upholds by grabbing a fistful of fringes and swinging the umbrella dome full frontal. I operate the umbrella with fringes and stick, articulating the prop as a kite handler does. I travel the prop in between wind slices, or so it feels like. I find the slivers of windless-ness and dance in them – just as I had with finding place in the water where there is no water (Geneva NY 2018). It seems as if the wind is surprised

by this strategy, and immediately, calms down. The fringes fall down ever so slowly as if they are much lighter than they indeed are. Having been stretched up to their fullest, they now hang down vertically. I can feel my fringes resting by the change of weight of the umbrella. I make a move to fully shine (presence) this moment. It seems as if the wind picked up on this shining presence intention. Having seen me with an eye for my newly defined contour, the wind can now manifest a call and response movement phrase. Before the fringes touch their wide edge flat on the ground, the wind picks them up again and sends them flying (Fr.: virevolter) up to the sky. The fringes wiggle into a tumble of disarticulated mess. While keeping my eyes on the wind, my body facing into the wind, I take a step sideways. I walk a ways, dancing and holding tension until I find once again the spot of windless-ness and return to the choreography of slicing between slivers of wind gusts. In this call and response dance, I have animated my umbrella through the wind's dominant "musical" movement phrases,⁶⁸ twice. It's this kind of melody.

On my third exploration, I work on balance and union and living the experience of presencing contour. In this exploration, Sylvie suggests I try longer exhales. On the spot, I focus on her tip in regard to how it affects density: inhale-motivation and exhale-amplitude. In hindsight, I see how Tourangeau picked up on my gesture of breathing out as one more movement I had to follow through with until completion. A lament travels the maze of my somatic drives. After I voice this task out loud (inhale-motivation and exhale-amplitude), it looks like I conduct a somatic checkup, giving a tug to my senses of attuning, awareness, and empathy. I imagine that if I let enough of myself out of myself, then enough out will flow in. This should set me up for a sturdier balance.

On moving with ease while full of amplitude (density marker), and balancing, I tend to move in a homolateral pattern, moving leg and arm from the one side, at a time. This makes me look somewhat a bit like a cookie-man. In this pattern, I am squarely adjusting to shifting weight so as to be distributed equally on both legs. Ginger-bread cookie style, I reach balance in space. It is as if I risk not to perform contralateral patterns in case I fall off of my pelvic girdle by moving opposite arm and leg. But while I play with fully filling amplitude, and with breathing, I am able to twist my body with ease.

68 In musical theory, the dominant is the ground note upon which all harmonies are built, and the musical score returns to and (usually) ends with.

It is as if I have found a stash of sandbags (weight) and can now play with putting more sand (weight) in this part of my body while lightening another part of my body. With freedom to distribute my weight thus, I begin exploring move in torsion. Dissociating upper and lower body and crossing the legs over the median of my body axis requires more agility and strength because I have to balance my arrival point (landing) with staying there for a while. But also, the wind is inside of me. Or perhaps better illustrated as within me. One minute into balancing my ground while battling the wind, I find balanced. I find a moment, a point of ease in tension. To accomplish this balance, I aid myself by looking at my horizon. From inhaling, me-as-ground, I move to exhaling, me-into-the-ground. As I practice exhaling more, I lower my barriers to the outside world for it to come into me through my inhalation. Just like finding slivers of windless-ness, the dancing world finds breathlessness to move in. Making room inside of me for the dancing-world to inhabit me, I invite a regenerative flow of new lifeworld stories. The more of the outside that comes into me, the more I am being danced, the more I dance. The more I concentrate on exhaling more, the more world-and-me come out as a common grounding dance. In this way, I feel myself weighted down from the outside in. Bound this way, I move ever so slowly but without displaying sleepiness. I am enlivened at a different speed. Paradoxically in this union that I experience – as I inhale and exhale consciously – contour emerges and defines me. I am about to cross over to being enlightened in overlaid time.

A little over three minutes into the exploration, the umbrella prop and I are facing each other. The wind blows in its shell. It hides in this borrowed contour. It looks so much as if the umbrella is its own person standing in front of me. Of course, through physicality, the wind presences density; it holds the sail in flight. Psychosomatically, it can be said that the wind has stretched its skin to the umbrella prop. No longer an image of the earlier duel invitation, this is an invitation to give in to our mutual curiosity of knowing each other. The soma of the land dances in stillness through me / my soma, as I dance in stillness through it. We both presence a sense of calmness, of being collected in our own ground. We are two dancers facing each other, both animated in stillness. I take note that in eco-performance, I may create space for other-than-me to stand ground. The dance will have lasted five minutes. The wind removes itself from the 'illusion' of

'possessing' Parasolo. The prop returns to being just a prop. The spell of the wind dies down. There is me, and the wind, and a prop, in an ordinary land-based somadance eco-performance.

My sixth try is longer. Finally, at just over twelve minutes, something is about to happen. At a controlled and slow pace, I remove the fringe necklace by pulling it over my head, and fold it once over my right arm. I keep a soft gaze, neither looking at my neck fringes, nor looking at my horizon. But, the gaze is extended outside. It looks like I am trying to hold external space. As I complete the motion of folding my neck fringes, my left hand goes limp. At the same time, I have managed to build external density. Two of the participants have cocked their heads. By day three, we are warmed up to tuning into the presence, amplitude, and density of one another. They know something is happening. I release my left knee thereby forcing my axis fully onto my right foot. This motion initiates a ripple through my body and as a viewer, I expect seeing me sway. Instead, I recuperate my axis by grounding through my toes, keeping my body in the line it was. This means that a lot of energy is spent on supporting the weight of my body in this seemingly upright position, but only grounding through my right foot's toes. At once, I begin a pivot to my right side. The moment I pivot to face the sitting workshop participants is the moment I access another time dimension. It lasts all of five seconds. They are five very long seconds. Even on film, the potency of the space of a different time dimension is palpable. The wind plays with a few strands of my hair. I recuperate my weight by shifting my right foot away from my center towards the outer right side. While my body is alive but utterly still, my right foot makes a big show of stepping down firmly anchored. I then move my hips to locate them hovering over both of my legs, thereby distributing weight equally in this homolateral stance. This causes a rebound on my left foot until I sway back right and into my center. Two seconds have passed. I tune in to the clear present without the past and future collapsed. This is in real time. I am still in the performance milieu. I take a first step towards the sitting workshop participants. First foot right foot, then two, three more steps. By now, I have walked myself out of an entranced, or bewitched milieu into a pedestrian milieu. Though, I must say, no one on the street ever walks this calmly. I hover, my head seemingly stuck in a different dimension, but the rest of my body from shoulders to tip toes is in full mechanical motion. I have not taken notes of this particular two

seconds. But I know from experience that at that time, I am probably mentally revisiting what just happened. In this moment when I can hold presence and space, I walk myself into a normal walk, and think, something escapes me. This something is the echo of the performance. An echo of the magical moment of the overlay vibrates out of me, and takes hold of the space I just walked myself out of. This is the echo of performance. The echo of the performance moves out of me in the reverse path I walked, to populate the space where I exist by my absence. The video footage shows me standing up while looking over to one of the participants. It's the kind of look that reaches across time. In French we say, "outré tombe." In English, it translates to, "from the dead," but literally, from the outside of the tomb, ie: Otherworld. I see Tourangeau sitting with the other participants. They are with me, presently, except for Tourangeau who appears as if she is sitting in another time. In that other time, she is wearing a head scarf that flows in the past wind. The fabric is nearly transparent. The quality of the clothes Tourangeau is wearing and the quality of the head scarf are not the same. The head scarf has a ghostly definition. Tourangeau sits there in a time perhaps three to five generations past. I see that ghostly head scarf for quite some time. So much so that I have the leisure to count how many families might have lived and harvested this land, on this place, up to now. Eventually the vision goes away. The experience comes to an end. It has not been my most aesthetically articulated performance of the workshop, but I have seen time differently. Furthermore, I have entered a performance milieu that has at least three images: the personal, the collective, and the ancestral. Tourangeau confirms my vision, without me having told her. In her coaching notes, she tells me I have the skill to shape-shift time. On my last day, Tourangeau comments on what draws her to my movement performance, "C'est le voyage intérieur, c'est ta relation à ce voyage intérieur qui nous interpelle."⁶⁹

Day 4 and day 5: I continue to explore in my body and space, the techniques Tourangeau shared with us. I enjoy discussing our experiences with each other, and listening to the coaching she gives to each of us personally but in front of us all. In the evenings, we have down time at le parc des chutes de Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière. These are the same waters which invited me down under, just four years ago.

69 "It is the inner journey; it is your relationship to this inner journey that takes us in."

In this chapter, I come to reflect on sensing multiple stories on land. From this last journey emerges the grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory, a dance that produces embodied ways of knowing from the inside-out, and outside-in – albeit, never as a fixed finality but always in a gesture of arriving for the first time, at each moment. It is with the land that I build trust, not with a choreographic expectation. Thus, an ecosomatic dimension of spellboundness nurtures unsettling expectations in a way that lifts the fabric of ordinary life, making visible an enchanted kinship.

This chapter engages with the dancer-land relationship through sensuous mutuality, with performance art action methods and techniques which allow access to living through these ecosomatic realms. The writing of this chapter is made possible by way of the *writing with mountain* methodology which allows for a deep and unabashed remembering of somadance eco-performance experiences. Dancing and being danced is one of the ways with which to access a sense of spellboundness. The sense of spellboundness includes living through listening to the land, dancing *with* the land inside-out, and outside-in, an intimate lived experience of intimacy with the land, leading to a sense of lineage, even as the water and the wind dances me around. Dancing and being danced is a call and response movement-based performance art approach which reveals hands-on, practical felt real and imagined stories that invite a sense of continuity and mutuality, as well as the notions of guesthood and responsibility to the land.

The first failed dance depicts the impossible journey of climbing a snow-capped mountain ledge in a snowstorm, with plastic boots. The following failed dance depicts nearly drowning in plain view of hundreds of music festival gatherers, not looking like drowning enough to be rescued, and not dancing gracefully enough to connect to an ecosomatic conversation with the water. Failures is a teacher of lessons as much as so-called successful

somadance eco-performances. My following somadance eco-performance has me dancing in pouring rain, maneuvering an extraordinary heavy-weight prop, shifting my weight, and sliding my feet on an extraordinary slippery boulder, and learning from wetness, dancing gestures that work and those that do not. In the week-long workshop at *La maison aux volets jaunes*, I flesh-out an ecosomatic theory of grounding in movement | rooting and moving by practicing performance art action methods and techniques, including: affirmation, contour, tension, ease in tension, building trust between the land and I, presencing choices, and keening. I describe my ecosomatic experiences of living through these methods and techniques, while I remain sensorially aware of the ecosomatic bonds pathing between the land and I. The land shows me through time. I imagine this is a testimonial of the land sharing its story with me.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

This doctoral research's contribution owes to my somatic and eco-performative processes, having depatterned my somatic amnesia and repatterned my ecosomatic relationship to the land. Its research outcome is the practical demonstration of functional and experiential theoretical articulations developed as moving-thinking, and grounding in movement | rooting and moving. "I Dance Land" documents my somadance eco-performances and draws from them a somatic, ecosomatic, and sense-based fund of lived experiences, methods, techniques, and a philosophy of depatterning somatic amnesia, and repatterning ecosomatic sense. The research allows access to my fundamental relationship to the land. My ecosomatic approach to autoethnographic inquiry reactivates a relationship between dancer and land, effectively repatterning a land-based meaning-making approach. This ecosomatic land-based methodology, and associated methods, techniques, and philosophy, emerges from my apprenticeship with wind and water. Moreover, this research outcome can be taught to dancers and non-dancers alike, for them to access their own sense of enchanted kinship, their own fundamental relationship to the land. By way of moving-thinking through a hybrid artistic, intuitive, and improvised site-dance, this research further bridges movement-based somatic art with movement-based performance art.

The methodological concept of performance milieu is sustained by methods of: moving consciously, presencing presence, defining somatic drives – a sense of existing, sensory awareness and attunement, and a sense of the existence of the other, i.e.: empathy, and the

method of writing with mountain depend on the techniques of: performative listening, stretching skin, engaging on the path of least resistance, and leading to the place of calling. These living, growing, and adaptable methods and techniques are the base of accessing moving-thinking and grounding in movement | rooting and moving, and as well as trusting notions of the felt real and imagined somatic senses that will lead to depatterning somatic amnesia and repatterning ecosomatic senses, repatterning enchanted kinship, repatterning a fundamental relationship to the land, and adopting patterns of ecosomatic mutual wellness. The driving somadance eco-performance art action methods and techniques collected over a five-year period during which I reflected post-performance on my performance as research doctoral fieldwork are comprised of the functional ecosomatic philosophy teased within the dissertation. As well, the methods and techniques are teachable, but they are also a living, growing tool-kit, adaptable to my human body in non-homogenous situations that make the bulk of my various eco-explorations: extreme weather, playful wind, pouring rain, and diverse cold and warm bodies of water. As such, they represent also the experiential ecosomatic philosophy emerging from my fieldwork.

My overarching aim is to better understand, and practice, how to somatically connect better to my fundamental relationship with land, as a movement performance artist-researcher, and as a human, in movement, on, and across land. The driving methodology for conducting this research is set in a methodology of my dancing body as a site of research, and by way of enlarging a theoretical framework of moving-thinking. Encounters with wind and water serve as the source for my somatic experiences lived through, and furthermore, generate a sense of trusting the enchanted encounters in their many felt real and imagined somatic dimensions. The ecosomatic encounters, moreover, served as an apprenticeship with the land – a land-based / sense-based epistemology. By way of living through ordinary and extraordinary wind and water

encounters, I was able to develop methods and techniques of tuning-in to my inner world, my outer world, my experience of co-existing worlds, as well as embodying theories impacting on my movement practice, thereby enriching my somatic abilities to tune-in to sensory awareness so as to better flow through movements nourishing my somadance eco-performance approach. This hands-on, circular and iterative approach to movement research as theory and as practice is my contribution to moving-thinking praxis – one which serves movement performance artists and its scholarship as well as serving practice-able know-how of Somatics as praxis to a phenomenology of the lived body, and as well, contributing to the eco-feminist discourse on continuity across differences. The practice of my EcoSomatics research further gave me an existential sense of grounding to place, a lived sense that extends roots between soma-land and my own somatic being as I move through somadance eco-performance with wind and water. The outcome of these felt real and imagined praxis gave me an ecosomatic sense of lineage. Accordingly, the emerging theories of "I Dance Land" are: moving-thinking, and grounding in movement | rooting and moving.

My overarching doctoral research question asks, "What somatic dimensions do I experience during somadance eco-performances with wind and water through an approach of sensing a fundamental relationship with the land?"; followed by two sub-questions: "What methods and techniques can I develop to sense my dancing through this sensuous fundamental relationship with land?" addressed in the Methods and Techniques' chapter (3); and: "What sensuous experiences are revealed in the action of somadancing eco-performance with the wind and water?" addressed in the fieldwork chapters four, five, and six. The research questions lead to a gap by my own assumption that it is feasible to sense my fundamental relationship to the land. I argue somatic amnesia blocks me from fully connecting to my own sensing abilities, and

thus, blocks me from fully living a fundamental relationship to the land. The series of twelve autoethnographic case studies performed during the winter season's cold and summer's heat in Canada, the continental United States and Hawai'i from 2013 to 2019 exploring encounters of wind and water through a somadance eco-performance modality had me unwind and depattern my somatic amnesia.

How has somatically sensing a connection to the land transformed me? My movement-based apprenticeship with the wind and the water aims at expanding this question not only as one that is at the core of my dance expression, but one that also is at the core of my existential relationship to the land. My working assumption is that Western culture suffers from somatic amnesia inherited from centuries of waging war on the relationship between body, senses, land, and knowledge. In turn, I have inhabited the somatic blockages preventing my connection to the ordinary and the extraordinary, distrusting my sense-perceptions in actualizing a relationship between my body, senses, land, and knowledge. By way of repatterning my somatic, sensory awareness, I gained a sense of reconnecting to sentient land. The research itself transformed me as a human, transformed my movement abilities into more fluid operative movements by being more fully somatically connected, as well as further developing a tuning-in to my own somatic potential and enriching the quality of my presencing somadance eco-performance's inner work to the outer gaze. In terms of contribution pertaining to the gap I have identified – somatic amnesia – "I Dance Land" contributes research to Somatics' area of studies, and to embodied research and arts-based research's methodologies, methods, and techniques, to think-move toward unsettling personal somatic amnesia. It is my belief that a post-doctoral research attending to unwinding artistic aesthetics expectations of performance as research, outcomes of ecosomatic gestures in the form of dance and in the form of thinking somatic translation, somatic activism, and somatic

social wellness may contribute to challenging 'somatic amnesic based' policies pertaining to the body(ies) by way of depatterning somatic amnesic patterns and habits, policies hold-on to, as their operative form. It is my belief that repatterning ecosomatic wellness as a base for a productive society requires deeper inquiry, new questions to produce new strategies of meeting present and future social and environmental crisis.

At the threshold between the real and the imagined, honoring differences, overlaps, and affinities at the meeting of uniquely sovereign somas, not all of the experiences make sense when viewed through contemporary biases and assumptions – the legacy of a modern and disenchanting worldview. The process of unwinding and repatterning my connection to my somatic body, to the land, to my senses and to trusting my sense-perception felt real and imagined is emergent praxis of relational eco-wellness. This Somatics research lays the groundwork for future projects involving somatic attentiveness.

Now that this dissertation is complete, I will take action to share its research processes by way of publishing excerpts in scholarly journals attending to Somatics, performance art, theatre, and dance training, Somatics education, ecofeminist journal or performance art journals' special issue on ecology, performance, and ecofeminism. I aim to continue to disseminate my experiences of somadance eco-performing with wind and water as well as my moving-thinking methodology by way of facilitating workshops to dancers / movers and non-dancers alike, designing a foundational, cross-departmental course on research methodology inclusive of somatic sense-based, land-based and embodied research modalities, and by way of producing

modules addressed to a popular audience via podcasts, to be hosted by the Somatic Engagement Working Group.⁷⁰

FIELDWORK FINDINGS

The First Fieldwork Chapter, Ecosomatic Senses, Sensitivities, and Situations (chapter four)

These performances as research took place between 2013 and 2019 in Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (2013), Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (2019), Tenàgàdino Zìbì | Gatineau (river) area (February 2019), in Lake Seneca, Geneva NY (May 2018). I collected somatic evidence as experiences of holding space which became the base for defining the theoretical concept of grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory. The complexity of a somatic practice of holding space is an essential ground supporting the theoretical concept of taking roots. The concept of guesthood emerges here in the experience of arriving (settling into) at the place of performance, thereby, settling into myself and settling into my / the ground hosting my body. The following concept is that of waiting. It took me some time to arrive at growing familiar with waiting; I no longer confuse action in stillness with waiting as if doing nothing. Waiting is part of the concept of guesthood, in how I wait for an invitation from the land.

The motivation for making this outdoor dance improvisation series is to find through environmental interruption, expecting that adapting to the wind, the snow, the cold will manifest as new dance vocabulary. From the first case study to the next one, I jump six years into the future. I do this to demonstrate the learning curve from experiencing the emergence of holding space for roots to ground, to meeting a tree that saw me born and afterward. The outcome is that

⁷⁰ The Somatic Engagement Working Group is an initiative dating from 2019-2020 in its seminar series, and presently as a working group (2021-2023). I am one of the co-creators and co-facilitators of this initiative, under the umbrella of the Canadian Association for theatre Research.

of a sense of sharing our common grounds through felt real and imagined roots (and spine). This case study demonstrates a sense of having been pulled to water as if by a sort of gut-radar – my soma water and the soma water of the tree called each other. The conversation between our bodies reached deep inside of me, literally – I gained the sense of inhabiting a common body, a collectivity of bodies, a common spine. This eco-performance took me through a felt real and imagined journey of a sense of remembering and rekindling with the area (with the tree, more specifically). I also experienced time-traveling by way of remembering my maternal grandmother's home and tree just a few blocks away from where I danced. Inevitably, these memories inhabited so viscerally in my body cultivated a sense of grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory. During this eco-performance, I literally felt my spine elongating until it rammed in the ground like a lightning rod. The sense of existing who I am and the sense of being aligned to my roots, met. While I left the place of performance, I sensed a part of me had stayed behind. I nevertheless felt complete.

The following two case studies in this chapter pertain to sensing ecosomatic sensitivities to direction and orientation. In a circular and spiral approach to learning, I learned a little bit more with each revolution. In the "little forest" dance, I remembered and experienced the human body, the ancestral body, and an environmental body. Of course, I did not become snow, and snow did not turn into a human being. I believe it is important to honor differences because it is differences which allows for the intricacies of a bigger picture, the expression of an eco-performance somadance. As so often happens during these site-specific somadances, the movements I danced are moments that are also present in the bigger picture. In the Lake Seneca series case study, I will experience a somatic sense of horizontal and vertical alignment, centering, de-centering, re-centering, and of osmosis centering (sharing center with the lake) a

somatic situation I name the great circle because it is a lived experiencing of a sense of being part of a collective body, and the experience of stretching my skin to the edge of the lakeshore. I performed presencing for the outside of me, what I now call stretching skin.

I have a long way to go still, from these case studies, to understand the phenomenological implications of somadancing while rooting differently. I wanted to include these somatic situations and senses in the dissertation because unusual orientation planes and unfamiliar grounds, for example, turn my self-reflection on its head. This unsettling approach to otherwise usual phenomena – the horizon, my center, gravity – challenges relational patterns in a way that has me reflecting on another layer of normal habitual patterning of my existence. However unsettling, at the close of these somadance eco-performances, I have felt complete.

The Next Fieldwork Chapter, Ecosomatic Nonsense, Sensitivities, and Situations (chapter five)

These performances as research took place between 2015 and 2018 in Seneca Ganyodae | Lake Seneca in Geneva NY (May 2018), Weeping Cave (Southern Utah, December 2016), Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park (December 2014), Virgin River at the Court of The Three Patriarchs in Mukuntuweap | Zion National Park UT (December 2015), and Canocanayesatetlo | San Marcos River TX (July 2017). I describe experiencing senses in nonsense, unusual and extraordinary means and encounters during somadance eco-performances. By nonsense, I mean: senses that make no sense in our current empirical-based culture, as well as a pre-verbal sense leading to conscious sense in how Merleau-Ponty sets the tone for the concept of nonsense in *Sense et Nonsense*, published in 1948 (*Sens and Nonsense*). Furthermore, I use the evocative 'nonsense' to bring attention to other ways *of seeing the world*, other ways to encounter these many sensuous connections. This allows me to move with a new dancing vocabulary. It also

allows me to dance with sensations and other somatic situations that would otherwise be unpleasant would if I remained attached to the sensible sense of being cold, for example. I dance long enough with these unusual encounters to unsettle my moving-thinking. In these somatic nonsense, sensitivities, and situations, I unwind habitual patterns (of disconnect) and repattern connections to the land. Ultimately, this creates space to live these encounters in a way that connecting together would be otherwise disconnected. Some of these somatic nonsenses lived through encounters include: cold as texture, dropping inside, temporal multiplicity, stepping into a box (portal), guesthood and not to overextend my stay, a somatic sensation of transport. At times, portal experiential stories manifest through textures, at other times, through visions.

The Last of the Fieldwork Chapters, Spellbound (chapter six)

I live through a sense of enchanted kinship by way of listening to the land, and dancing with the land inside-out, and outside-in. This is manifest through a writing method emerging during my four-month stay at Ka'a'awa, O'ahu (HI) in 2019: The writing of this chapter is made possible by way of the writing methodology of *writing with mountain*. The case studies took place between 2014 and 2018 in The Tiohtià:ke | Montréal (QC) in December 2014, le parc des chutes de Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC) in July 2014, and during an eight-day journey leading to a workshop at La maison aux volets jaunes in Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC) in July 2018 and back to Tiohtià:ke | Montréal, my home. This lived concept of spellboundness manifests through performative movement art action techniques of: affirmation, contour, tension, ease in tension: a story of seeking balance, building trust between the land and I, presencing choices, and keening. And furthermore, spellbound-ness is such that I go through experiencing healing by way of unwinding and re-patterning potentials of this very spellboundness.

In this fieldwork chapter, I spend time exploring failures – what did not work out as planned but ultimately were eco-performances ripe with teachings. Following, I spend a good portion of the chapter describing my travel to performance art coach Tourangeau's home, the week-long workshop, and conclude with the journey out of the place and back to my home, Montréal. I *naturally* come to grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory. By *naturally*, I mean, by way of land-based learning and training. I have long understood that my dancing inquiry to rooting in place comes from the trauma I experience of existing as an embodiment of colonial settler occupation on Native stolen land. Spellboundness meets head-on the myth of eternal rootlessness.

SOMATICS AND ECOSOMATICS

Somatics (theory) / somatic (adjective) and EcoSomatics (theory) / ecosomatic (adjective), I contend, are non-dualistic body-mind praxes, where movement and thinking enrich one another in a back-and-forth dynamic. For this reason, the study of Somatics may be a cross-appointed specialization bridging dance, performance studies, theatre, women and gender studies, environmental studies, communication and culture, political science, techno science studies, and of course anthropology, history, and archival studies and more. In academia, Somatics is very much aligned with practice-based research but it has 'hands-on' specificities that makes its intellectual research's breadth, unique. Somatics theory must include hands-on sensorial awareness – and if not by felt real, then by felt imagined encounter. The functional and experiential are part of Somatics' praxis, from the inner body's lived experience bringing intellectual meaning-making back in the body and aesthetics outcome to generate making-sense theories. Upon this mix – functional and experiential – rests one of the three principles of a

Somatics praxis: interconnection. The connections are made between the operative functional and experiential understanding and experiences, between the various body's systems, between the inner and the outer much informed by the connecting breath, between the felt real and the felt imagined, at the encounter between one's lifeworld and environmental lifeworlds, between time – past, present, and future –, and via a continuity between differences. Some of these differences may be between the human body and the land; between body-soma and land-soma. Another difference may be between time and space. This continuity may flow as a humble acknowledgement of boundaries. Another means for continuity is in overlay, for example, experiencing multiple times at once.

In this research, performance as research rests upon the premise that Somatics holds a framework conducive to research. Beyond Somatics operating as functional, experiential, and interconnected, Somatics also builds on the assumption that a somatic amnesia can be unwound, depatterned and repatterned. This means that Somatics' premise is built on a habitual structure which is constantly taunted to adapt, but that may not adapt because of its inability (blocking) to do so. Therefore, Somatics is a rehabilitation of adaptive pattern-making, and is a constant research into patterns that are operative, functional, experiential, and interconnected for an ease of procedural operation, which makes it a practice-able research methodology within performative arts research and beyond.

I have observed creative insights arising from adapting to inner and outer propositions, those propositions tackled through a Somatics approach. By way of inquiring tuning-in to senses and processing these senses toward dance as a means to communicate – call and response –, I have proposed a terminology, and created methods and techniques: performance milieu, moving consciously (enlarged), presencing presence, writing with mountain, establishing somatic drives

(a sense of existing, awareness, attuning, and empathy), performative listening, stretching skin, following a call to place by way of following the path of least resistance. Overall, through a somatic approach to phenomenological sense-perception found on a land-based research epistemological ecosomatic model, I was able to create methodologies of: 1) somadance eco-performance as movement art; 2) somadance eco-performance as research. And, "I dance Land" arrives at theories of moving-thinking, and grounding in movement | rooting and moving. These methodologies can be taught to other artist-researchers, artists, and researchers, as part of an arts-based movement workshop, as well as through embodied research modality.

FUNDAMENTAL AS SOMATIC DIMENSION

What is fundamental? In my Somatics praxis, fundamental is something I cannot exist without. I also learn from Wierzbicka, that my cultural fundamental is in part sense-making, and sensing experiences. I think in movement, and all things in balance, to attend to a fundamental relationship to anything outside, I need to have an authentic relationship with my experiences. Fundamental begins by being grounded. But what is grounded when I float on water, slide on ice, fight against the wind? When I began this research, I had a skewed expectation of finding fundamental. I have come to understand that I was expecting sort of an epiphany. As an internal sign, such as my body vibrating all over, like a dowser's rod. As an external sign, such as unlocking the English-speaking sound that the rustling leaves make. Living through somatic dimensions reactivated my potential for multiple perspectives. A fundamental relationship means a pact of commitment to grow on a structure that is itself nourished and nourishment to a relationship. A fundamental is the base, building the base, and sharing this base with other lifeworlds encountered who may have a fundamental base differently patterned than my own.

The initial motivation of my doctoral research question was to define what is fundamental in my relationship to land. To do this, I employed a somatic approach to moving and thinking on land – during the eco-performance, in the self-reflection post-performance, and on the re-writing of the dissertation through thinking with mountain. Moreover, the motivation for this research stems from understanding how I may practice this fundamental relationship to the land. One cannot simply *think* a relationship; one has to *practice* the relationship.

The practice of this Somatics approach resulted in a praxis of EcoSomatics based on sense-perception. The felt real and imagined emerges as the fundamental thinking through, living through, and practising with the land. Sensing the felt real and imagined is fundamental to channeling the purpose and the outcome of connecting to the land. The sensing the felt real and imagined paradigm is situated in the soma-body, the soma-land, and the relationship between these somas. Sensing the felt real and imagined is fundamentally positioning myself vis-a-vis myself, vis-à-vis my own culture, and vis-à-vis the land. The paradigm becomes a fundamental articulation to my movement techniques, to my research methodology, and to my activism. Sensing the felt real and imagined became the foundation of my dancing-researching methodology. From their foundation, the knowledge emerging is then theorized in scholarly writing.

A SOMATIC FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND THROUGH SITE DANCE

This layered approach has allowed my research a number of outcomes: 1) artistic creative insight, 2) unwinding and repatterning connection 3) sensing a fundamental relationship to the land, 4) thinking otherwise about land-based politics and policies, 5) future research questions on how grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory can be applied to: Peace and Justice

policies, and toward a methodology of embodied, somatic translation applicable to translating text. By way of unwinding and repatterning connection, I have come to a methodology, methods and techniques, and theories of making this connection to rooting and grounding fundamentally possible. I identified working somatic drives, dynamic fundamental thoughts in motion: a sense of existing, awareness, attunement, and empathy. As I moved with the wind and the water, I learned a novel way to see the outside, moving the inside in time with this new outside; and eventually, moving the outside inside so that I became a co-creation within, asking myself, what moves me; where in my body am I moved?

By striving to sense a fundamental relationship to the land, I have employed an ecosomatic modality which allows me to connect to differently intelligent life. An EcoSomatics praxis acknowledges the sensuous soma (soma-body). This thinking modality allowed me to move through the practice of moving-thinking and grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory. A sense-based fundamental connection held space for weaving connections between my emerging movement-art and post-performance self-reflection, and enlarged an already established site-based, Somatics scholarship. As an artist-researcher in an eco-performance setting, and as a solo movement-based performance artist either dancing in intuitive expression or creating movement scores for later more structured choreographies, I rely deeply on my senses. My movements are tuned to senses. Somatically, I pay attention to sense signals, and how senses inhibit, motivate, guide in space, and delimit my movement. By extension, tuning-in to senses through a somatic practice allows me to attain creative insights existing not only in the world of dreams but moving in my body, a dance already dancing. This process is dance. In its methodology, I deploy my body in shapes reaching full extension so as to meet the sensuousness a creative insight demands.

GROUNDING IN MOVEMENT | ROOTING AND MOVING THEORY

I have a long way to go still, to understand the phenomenological implications of somadancing while rooting differently. I wanted to include these somatic situations and senses in the dissertation because unusual orientation planes and unfamiliar grounds, for example, turn my self-reflection on its head. This unsettling approach to otherwise usual phenomena – the horizon, my center, gravity – challenges relational patterns in a way that has me reflecting on another layer of normal habitual patterning of my existence. However unsettling, at the close of these somadance eco-performances, I have felt complete. I recognize that a place is also land (including the ecology, societies, histories), and that my feet ground where they meet the floor (land). This floor is solid and may give a false sense of fixity. This leads me to inquire from a particular standpoint: how can I ground while moving? I reflect at experiencing multiple dimensions of the perpetual movement of water and wind, the anti-bodies, anti-borders elements. I think this is why I am drawn to water and air, because of their movement across land. This premise accompanies my existential settler sense attached to the place I was born and yet dislocated from the place where my culture was born. I am not wind. I am not water. I breathe. I am part water. While this dissertation focused on devising a methodology of ecosomatic sense-based thinking-in-movement, I do plan to continue my research probing inquiries of settlerhood, guesthood, problematizing movement on land alongside learning with the wind and the water.

MOVING-THINKING

In a path to connection, it is important, I think, that a theory of grounding in movement | rooting and moving be set on a model of co-creation, with at its foundation, values of reciprocity, values

of honoring differences, values of mutuality, values of continuity, values of adaptability, and values of flourishing, supporting a web of somas in a patterned culture of living dynamic lived body, lifeworld, and Otherworld entanglements – all phenomenal lived experiences I was able to inhabit during somadance eco-performances.

I think through moving artistically. My art practice has impressed on me an artistic approach to perceiving the world – wonderment at the beauty and grace, but also attention to details – the choreography of living movements in space and time. How I receive, question, and make sense of the world is informed by my artistic sensibilities. My eco-performance never ends, and neither does the learning from revisiting somadances with the wind and water. At each turn, I seek to learn from the marvellous. I ease into spellbound. Thus, I position myself both on my own, and also, together with. I dance land. And as the land takes me on an intimate, enchanted kinship journey, stories are made. These bonds between water-dancer and me, the wind-dancer and me, time and me, make stories that shape the creative insights which move me. Espousing the land moves me, and the stories have the potential to unite us. Reactivating these bonds re-affirms / memorizes my fundamental relationship to the land. My somadance eco-performance moves me through the stories that shape who I am today. Gaard writes:

As many feminist spirituality groups have discovered, most people can't jump backward in history, and attempts to re-enter and revive traditions can seem not only ill-fitting, but also fail to provide maps and solutions for contemporary ecosocial problems" (*Critical Ecofeminism* 165-166).

As an artist, I hold myself accountable to a responsibility of unsettling somatic amnesia separating me from my senses felt real and imagined. In the process, I allow myself sensing the magic that binds dancers across time. There is a level of trust and a level of befriending a sense of unsettlement that is involved in the unwinding which allows a repatterning *healing* process both on both the personal and the cultural planes. This research addresses the gap in embodied

research making sense of the world by way of acting with sensory attentiveness on the somatic amnesic body in its relationship to the land.

ECOSOMATIC LAND-BASED EPISTEMOLOGY

Land-based scholarship has motivated, guided, informed my own artistic-journey of coming to EcoSomatics. And even when my journey delved into my Euro-American cultural history and embodied somatic amnesia, there is evidence of a parallel foundational condition between EcoSomatics and Indigenous land-based scholarship toward immersing in ecosomatic land-based praxis. An EcoSomatics sense-based framework to understanding land-based framework and languages "articulate[s] in theory but also in practice" ("Land Back" 9), our understanding of the importance of our restorative, reciprocal relationships to the land. It also puts into perspective our legitimate relationship to land. My original venture into performative listening was intended to seek a reunion between myself, my European settler ancestors, and the Métis lineage of the Bellerose family. The project promised continuity in my already existing practice of EcoSomatics, well into its development as case studies fieldwork for my doctoral research. My encounter with Indigenous scholarship coincided with the start of my higher education studies. Even as I developed an eco-performance and later, somadance modality of connecting and engaging with the land, even as I trained with non-Indigenous teachers along performance studies and somatic-dance artistic foundation, I do owe pause in what it means as a settler colonial citizen in twenty-first century Canada. The messy and blurry divide between appropriation and appreciation, the protocols of recognizing first teachers and the legitimacy of dancing on historically scarred lands is embedded in my artistic-research process and outcome.

Given that I can shape my body otherwise when dancing in connection with the land than

when dancing in a controlled climate indoor studio, I have found through fieldwork and post-fieldwork critical self-reflection, that I can think otherwise when thinking with the land. If I find that my sense ability is shaped by my culture and the historical legacy marking my soma, then I do believe that my culture can shift to a sustainable relationship with the land and its inhabitants, and from there, redress and heal historical legacies for my people, to better communicate and live together with all people on land's (Earth / lifeworld) terms. Manuel calls for a fundamental relationship to the land with a view of economic, social and cultural sovereignty. I found that my fundamental relationship to the land is the ability to sense. My Anglo-English settler and colonial culture is shaped on sensing connections. The degree to which I can sense is fundamentally my sovereign power. By sensing myself through thinking in movement, I connect directly to myself and the world I am a part of. This fundamental sense-based connection plays a big role in how I can understand and put into action my role in the world, with the other, and with myself. I argue that by re-sensing direct connection to the land – and thus, to myself, and growing into connection to others which becomes a sense of community, reciprocity and responsibility – I am equipped to understand what it means when I hear, "One of the loudest and most frequent demands of Indigenous people in the relationship with settlers is for the return of the land." ("Land Back" 8). Of course, in a disembodied, somatically amnesic, and extractive framework, I will respond to the aforementioned statement, and I will feel threatened. However, when I shift my standpoint to a fundamental somatic, sentient relationship to the land by way of a direct reciprocity for the purpose of flourishing of both myself (and society) and the land, I posit my stance will shift from feeling threatened to feeling included in a discussion that demands I be one of the role takers.

By way of tuning-in to eco-insights, artists creators will experience augmenting the

creative potential by way of a collaborative structure as eco-partners, with land, wind and water, for example. The artistic practice of sensing my connection to the land which shapes my dance, shapes my thoughts (moving-thinking and grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory). I do not become First Nations of Canada – that is not the transformation that I seek. This present dissertation focuses on the settler colonial history cultivating somatic amnesia of the body, and of the body in its relationship to the land. But it is our responsibility to attune to the gaps, address these gaps, and find in our contemporary societies, ways to re-kin with land. While so many of us settlers in Canada are removed from ancestral land, the responsibility and joy we find in activating a mutual approach to Earth remains within our reach. An ecosomatic land-based and sensuous relationship to the land unsettles the "unsustainable, undemocratic, and fatal rush toward mass extinction through extraction, development, and capitalist imperatives" way of thinking ("Land Back" 8).

DISSEMINATING MY RESEARCH BY WAY OF CREATING AND FACILITATING ECOSOMATICS AND SOMADANCE ECO-PERFORMANCE RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

My contribution to Somatics is a functional and experiential, teachable approach of depatterning somatic blockages that restrict the full somatic potential of an intuitive and improvised dance. I contribute experiences, somatic and sense-based evidence, as well as a testimonial of lived ordinary sense and extraordinary nonsense as a portal to ecosomatic communication with the wind and water land-lifeworld, as demonstrated via a collection of somatic felt real and imagined evidence. In doing so, I contribute ecosomatic scholarship to Somatics, and a means to depattern somatic amnesia, repattern Ecosomatic senses, and finally,

rekindle an enchanted kinship fundamental to a somatic mutual wellness in our relationship to the land.

I have created workshops attending to moving-thinking which I have facilitated at various conferences; I also have been invited to lead them as part of university courses. I plan to continue touring these workshops (see: post-doctoral projects, below). Typically, I begin a workshop by sharing my Somatics eco-performance praxis lineage – human teachers and non-human teachers as well. I then share my belief that a theory lives in a story. Storying leads to creating and sharing experiences; theories exist as a form of empowerment since each participant has access to their own generated stories. I also lead participants in observing that stories are already present in the place they move into. This awareness leads to experiencing co-storying. My intent is to facilitate an immersive and experiential experience of co-storying. The post-explorations sharing affirms this co-storying phenomenon from the point of view of participants' relating their experiences of place dance. The general framework builds on these five steps: warm-up (connecting by attuning to the inner and the outer, as well as attuning to one body and to one-body-as-part-of-a-bigger-body), instructions, observations (during the activity; to each one, their own experience), recording (habitually in the form of participants journaling their observation but also as further dancing, or laying down to inhabit the experience), and finally, story sharing among one another, including connections made throughout (with land / place). I end workshops asking participants to ponder in their own way as to in which life situations this exercise may be used, and how its outcome may be beneficial to various communities. In this pedagogical approach, I invite awareness to the immediate inner circle and to future dissemination, outer circle. These workshops are meant for participants having experience already with movement practice and improvisation. They are workshops that can be tailored to non-dancers as well. Even

as these workshops focus on eco-performance and ecosomatic philosophy, participants are not always led to go outside. That is, part of these place dance exercises depends on imagination, as well as drawing from memories of direct contact with the land – river, grass field, etc. – where the exercise takes place. The examples below took place in Bath (UK) (2017), San Marcos (US) (2017), and Montréal (QC) (2020). The most recent workshop I gave at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) (QC) (2020), was specifically designed as a performance as research exercise. In San Marcos, I led a workshop titled: "Theory of Folklore / Performative Inquiry along the Rivers Archiving Human Knowledge," with ten participants attending the Body-Mind Centering conference, *The Fluid Body: A Somatic Journey*. In Bath, I led a workshop titled: "Other Ways of Knowing: Stories and Movement" with six participants attending the *Bodily Undoing – Somatic Activism and Performance Cultures as Practices of Critique* conference. For our first exercise, I led them through the legend of Avon and her suitors, the giants Goram and Vincent, explaining the origin of the local geographical features of the Avon River and area. During the workshop, I witnessed participants narrate the story with their own body. As each one had chosen one body part / body system to lead the story, the dance studio became animated with grotesque figures resembling less their human participant's form and more like a mountain peak, or a bundle of moss, and so on. Participants took it on their own to shift, or not, between leading body parts / body system, and continued to move in tune with the narration of the legend, as well as mindfully so, with the topography of the place. For our second exercise, I led them through a passage from Jane Austen's last work, *Persuasion* (1817). The prompt to move through the story was not based on the title of the book (Austen had titled it, *The Elliots*), but rather in the fact that much of its story takes place in Bath (UK). This workshop took place just after the 10-day Jane Austen festival that sees Bath populated by people from all over the world enacting the fiction of

the "Austenian" world. As well, Austen herself lived in Bath for some time. I had expected the dance to be more difficult to connect to, since the words of the novel describe more of a pedestrian, human, regular and non-extraordinary event than the legend of the Avon River did. The participants moved in a way that gave priority of connection to one of the many layers of the play. They began to respond to another participant's dance. From a witness' point of view, the group dance looked much less like odd body parts moving, and much more like human characters moving in and out of one of the many complexities that make one individual character a complex construction of many systems – psycho-somatic attitudes, bodily shapes and postures, bodily tension, etc. The workshop I gave at UQAM was geared toward graduate students for them to draw on their own movement-based practices: theatre acting, theatre production, durational performance art, flamenco dance, burlesque theatre-dance, and lyrical opera. I had been invited to lecture and facilitate exercises attending to my area of movement performance art specialization, somadance eco-performance in extreme cold weather. The workshop took shape over a two-day period during the coldest week of that winter. First, we dove into one of my published articles, "Ancestral Bodies Dancing Snow" (2018). The focus on a relationship to place became the focus of an animated discussion – themes of unsettling artistic aesthetic expectations, settler and artists' responsibility, relationship with nonhuman, etc. My observation on "Dancing at the speed of ice" at Weeping Cave during a somadance eco-performance (2016) sparked the participants' imaginations, in how they would proceed into their own eco-performance in the extreme cold, tasked to tune in to the dance that already exists in place.

In conclusion, I have observed the potential this moving-thinking / stories-theories workshop reveals by way of unsettling habitual character-building construction (acting) and choreographic scoring (dance). Beyond performing arts' training, this sort of storying of place-

based narratives may be used for local residents and visitors alike so as to establish a felt real and imagined connection to their place of living.

POST-DOCTORAL PROJECTS

In conclusion, the praxis of Somatics as research transforms my dance, myself as an artist-researcher, and myself as a member of society. In the aim to foster a wellness culture, it is urgent to foster a culture of connecting ecosomatically to the self and the environment. I posit this will generate a culture oriented toward wellness, co-habitation (community), and co-creation (collaboration). We can reactivate our sensorial spectrum through somatic arts praxis.

Furthermore, I contend that without a culture rekindling with a fundamental relationship to the land, Canada cannot proceed towards a so-called Nation to Nation reconciliation project. The EcoSomatics workshop I have created could serve to unwind and repattern the personal informed by the cultural history, of individuals who identify as settlers on Turtle Island / Canada, toward a Nation to Nation mutuality project.

A somatic inquiry based on rekindling the multiple sensuous connections in a diversity of lifeworld / diversity of differently shaped bodies, must become part of the cultural mediation between the multiple individuals, communities, and living land. There is a vast potential of healing residing in Somatics tackling the amnesic soma body, as I have shown through somadance eco-performance with wind and water. There is a vast potential of healing the amnesic culture toward somatic wellness as well. The sensuous and the sentient must be part of restructuring social justice, must be part of policies addressing a better future, as well. At the time of concluding this chapter, I move forward with proposals to employ a somatic approach to repatterning the sensuous, tackling issues and polices regulating violence, violent behaviors, institutionalized violence. I believe it is urgent to engage actively as a society, to shift our culture

of enchanted kinship with the sentient land. How I could contribute to meeting this urgency is by way of facilitating EcoSomatics workshops, adapting the activities for various populations – those dancers and movers already tuned-in to their somatic body and environment, and to non-dancers. This Somatics research lays the groundwork for future projects involving somatic attentiveness.

I believe there is a need for further EcoSomatics praxis research to be done in exploring the personal somatic amnesia, as well as the cultural somatic amnesia. After such a long intellectual journey leading to this doctoral dissertation, I feel the need to dive deeply into embodied research by way of long-stay artist-researcher residencies and deep somadance eco-performance training. The task at hand is to secure funding – both at the university level and the council for the arts level. Knowing that this approach to moving-thinking reveals creative and intellectual insights, I hope to focus my EcoSomatics hands-on training toward the cultural felt real and imagined. I plan to take on three post-doctoral projects: creating a cross-departmental research methodology course including hands-on moving-thinking; resume an embodied translation project I had put on hold since 2015, *Dancing and the Lived Body* by Fraleigh;⁷¹ and following the completion of the translation, dive into an EcoSomatics as peace praxis, an initiative I plan to connect with three research pods: with my affiliated Somatic Engagement Working Group (CATR), by collaborating with Virginie Magnat at the Culture, Creativity, Health and Well-being international research cluster based (research.ok.ubc.ca),⁷² and by focusing on the double articulation of EcoSomatics and Peace and Justice studies, in

71 I will continue to explore modalities of EcoSomatics as translation by way of completing the French translation of Sondra Fraleigh's *Dance and the Lived Body: A Descriptive Aesthetics* (1987) I began in 2015 during my master's studies, and plan to spend seven months in Utah (where the author lives and was born) so as to live the lifeworld of the author's words.

72 Virginie Magnat has been a member of the Somatic Engagement Working Group since 2019 (then, a seminars series). Magnat and I have been discussing my involvement in the research cluster, since 2020.

collaboration with Martha Eddy.⁷³ My future research aim is to move forward with research in the praxis of EcoSomatics as an engine with which to make sense of a colonized imagination, and to move toward healing somatic amnesia, trusting unwinding and repatterning the enchanted kinship. The process of unwinding and repatterning my connection to my somatic body, to the land, to my senses and to trusting my sense-perception felt real and imagined is an emergent praxis of relational eco-wellness.

My contribution to academia is a demonstration that Somatics, and especially EcoSomatics inquiry of the sense-based, land-based pathos provides the discipline to become productive self-reflections through which I can practice depatterning my somatic amnesia and repatterning my ecosomatic senses. My contribution to research is multifold because my research is informed by multiple lived experiences, practical arts-based performance research, as well as multiple intellectual traditions. The praxis – methods, techniques, and a philosophy – of depatterning personal somatic amnesia and repatterning ecosomatic senses stand as the main contribution to research; my contribution to academia; my contribution to Somatics. I further bridge movement-based performance art with Somatics, creating a form of somadance that may be practiced as site specific eco-performance (as I do), and practised in studio (as I have thought in movement-based and storytelling workshops).

The outcome of a hybrid Somatics praxis with movement-based arts as research, contributes a new level of moving-thinking praxis, where movement is driven by what I have termed somatic drives (a sense of existing, awareness and attuning, and a sense of the other' existing / empathy), a mode of interrelation communication between myself and the land that is possible when somatic blockage – those blockages of distrusting the body, the senses, the land,

⁷³ Martha Eddy and I have been conversing since 2020, and holding off until after my doctoral defence to solidify post-doctoral plans.

and knowledge relationship – are depatterned. Overcoming these somatic blockages allow repatterning habits of trust in ecosomatic senses vis-à vis myself and vis-à vis my fundamental relationship to the land. By doing so, I posit accessing an enchanted kinship. This enchanted kinship, in turn, is my personal transformation as an artist-researcher that has allowed me to voice (move, think, and write) my somatic experiences. Ecosomatic enchanted kinship can be taught to dancers and non-dancers through methods, techniques, and a philosophy of movement performance art – an art form which I have enlarged and developed further by way of somatic and sensory awareness. The final contribution of my research to the academia is the sense of an enchanted kinship as a fundamental standpoint for depatterning somatic amnesia and repatterning Ecosomatic senses.

My contribution to Somatics specifically, is to having enlarged the praxis of sensory awareness by way of theoretical functional and experiential articulations derived from my practice of EcoSomatics. The EcoSomatics praxis – a branch of Somatics termed EcoSomatics – is further enriched by the interpretation of my lived existential experiences, and by making-sense of the experience of having inhabited multiple areas of overlapping scholarship: phenomenology, performance art, land-based epistemologies, and ecofeminism. I expand Somatics by matching values learned at the encounter of wind and water via somadance eco-performance. These ecosomatic philosophical values are a path to eco-wellness connection, and it is important, I think, that a theory of grounding in movement | rooting and moving be set on a model of co-creation, with at its foundation, values of reciprocity, values of honoring differences, values of mutuality, values of continuity, values of adaptability, and values of flourishing, supporting a web of somas in a patterned culture of living dynamic lived body, lifeworld, and Otherworld entanglements – all phenomenal lived experiences I was able to inhabit during somadance eco-

performances. Inhabiting and internalizing this eco-philosophy nourishes somatic engagements for ecosomatic mutual wellness. These values can be applied to Somatics as a practice of healing body, mind, heart, and spirit, and I posit, applied as a healing methodology to the personal informed by the cultural.

Moreover, I enlarge the theoretical articulation of sensory motor amnesia from a body-based and therapeutic enclave, to a driving motivation in movement performance art action (eco-performance) and site dance (somadance). In doing so, I bridge movement performance art – a field traditionally associated with Visual Arts (in Quebec) and Theatre (in Anglo-English Canada) – with somatic-based movement dance. I have developed living and growing methods and techniques in both site dance art forms: my somatic-based movement dance (somadance) and movement-based performance art action (eco-performance).

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APPENDIX A

HOLDING ALOHA SPACE FOR THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE OF HAWAI'I

Aloha! It is not within my jurisdiction to speak for the Hawaiian land and the People of Hawai'i. In this liminal place where I write the words of my experience on the Hawaiian land, I describe my sense of writing in Hawai'i, on the land, in a historical space and place, and especially at a time of powerful resurgence – Mauna Kea Protector camp summer 2019. Mahalo. *From my mountain to your mountain.*

I also include narratives of my somadance eco-performances there, in December 2018 to January 2019, and in June to October 2019. It is important that I include this appendix for two reasons: 1) in honoring my time there, by sharing my place-based story; 2) recognizing that landing on Hawai'i on my first trip, I was visited by a vision of the female warrior archetype. The vision came back in the form of an emerging aim during the last month of my writing residency, to inquire post-doctorate on a double articulation of Somatics praxis to Peace and Justice studies.

How am I here!

Well, the land called me back, assuredly.

One failed dance.

And another dance coming!

I am in Hawai‘i, learning myself from the inside, from the inside of volcanic land. O‘ahu is surrounded by an immensity of water. In July, the wind rocks my bedroom's window wall, uninterrupted. The wind on the wall is so loud and yet on the ocean, so quiet. The salty, *shshshshshshshshshsh* noisy too (!) ocean is full of monsters and beauty. I dream of coming making peace with the sea creatures, the sharks especially in their deep shark kitchen sea, and of learning how to bring a sailboat to the pier. For now, the clouds blow uninterrupted, blowing their trade winds from Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the Philippines to Ka‘a‘awa. The first solid they collide with is my bedroom wall. And in the day-time, I rock my chair, facing Ko‘olau mountain range. I am squeezed between deep ocean and tall mountains. Right. In. My. Backyard.

Starring at the mountain day after day after day . . . I find my mountain.

The archipelago has such diverse microcosms. The Hawaiian Islands have ten of the world's fourteen climate zones. On the Big Island, also named Hawai‘i, is where most of the climatic diversity can be experienced – from snow capped Mauna kea, to the snorkeling paradise on the West, and the dampness of the East. Pāhoā, in December 2018. I somadance eco-perform the Kalapana lava spill of 1990. Its lava had dried off. She is brittle. The land is a blanket of wrinkly, green glass speckles, and black forever crust. Itty bitty green ferns poke through pockets of soil carried by the wind and also, by the birds, pooping seeds. I was so angry a few minutes ago, but I was told to take off my shows and walk bare foot on the dried lava. That, the bare skin to bare skin contact would drain my anger down to a trickle.

Land.

I sit for a very long time.

My eyes are glued to the vastness ahead.

Black.

And,

Blue.

I see through my one white hair caught in the rocks.

This journey gave birth to "Pele's Hair."

On my very first morning on O‘ahu, I meet wild roosters, and then a small dog, and then a man, and then the grass, and the sandy beach, and the Bay of Kahana. We walk and talk. By the ocean water, of course. I tell him, I too, have a dog – *Lilas-blu*. The man invites me to meet his wife. Richard and Jeannine! On my very first day in Hawai‘i.

And just like, I was set to return!

In January 2019, I somadance along the east coast of O‘ahu. In the winter, it is the humpback whales' migration. Oh, from Alaska to Hawai‘i! During this particular movement exploration, I become spellbound. Animals around me, speak to my soma. My asanas move into shapes of an 'Iwa, a native white feathered great frigate bird, harbinger of storms, and a thief! I move into deep diving honu – the Hawaiian green sea turtle. I move in preparation for the Dancer's pose, moving from mountain and into Warrior III.

Upon returning to Hawai‘i in the summer of 2019, the northeastern trade winds make the eastern seacoast a quietest affair. It is a good time to snorkel. But I have to write a doctoral

paper! Every day, I write. I spend 65 mornings walking into the ocean at dawn, with my dogs. One is mine; and one is the little guy I pet sit. We watch the moon sitting above the sun, and the Ko‘olau mountain range. Up above, the Kauhiimakaokalani rock formation. Native Hawaiians believed it to be the head of a very large dog because, according to legend, Pele turned a demigod into stone, after he defied her. The English name is Crouching Lion, even though there was never any lions on the island. Kauhiimakaokalani is a dog, and it is there, at the foot of the dog mountain, that I walk my two dogs. Kahana bay is also the nursery water for Hammerhead sharks. We did not bother them; they did not bother us.

From where I sit on my balcony, I see Kanehoalani mountain – Kāne's heavenly companion. Kanehoalani is the tallest of the mountain range, standing at 610 metres. Kāne is the original ancestor, the highest of the four major gods of the Hawaiian deity pantheon. The creator and giver of life, Kāne, is associated with dawn, sun and sky. Everything is the most, and the biggest. The valley of Ka‘a‘awa where I live is full of stories. I experienced them. Some of these stories are of past epic battles, of spectres coming out at nighttime in the full moon, and also, after a brisk rainstorm, stories of the double rainbows splashing against the lush green of Ko‘olau mountain range. Oh, and the wild roosters . . . they do not have a bedtime. I call this place, amicably, the valley of the dead kings. It could also be called the valley of the falling / beloved warriors. Fallen and loved. Ka‘a‘awa is a place that is so powerfully alive that it is all but impossible not to feel a call and response, incessant, dynamic, constantly in movement. Creation is alive and evident everywhere – if not by sight (close the eyes), by way of somatically attuning to over-stimulated sense-perception. Every thought is echoed loudly back into my soma. A soma-mountain, a soma-land, a soma-wind, a soma-island. Ka‘a‘awa feels like it does not mind

my mistakes but will hold me dearly responsible for any I make. I have learned to be precise about making wishes, here. This place of portals is a dangerous place to fall off a dream.

Now, it is September.

The wind currents have shifted to the winter wind flow, from Alaska. The temperature is not that much colder, but the wind is noticeably cooler, and the waves are pregnant. Soon, in December, they'll get back up to 15.5 metres high. *Aloha*. It means, I breath you.

APPENDIX B

APPRENTICING WITH WIND AND WATER: FAMILY LINEAGE

This last journey follows the conclusion of my grounding in movement | rooting and moving theory emerging from this doctoral research. A sense of lineage arises – a lineage that I have not foreseen, one that brings me nearing to touching my family roots, lands, stories, ancestry having moved with wind and water from places to places. This *human ancestry lineage* is an inquiry that I will pursue in eco-somatic depth in a coming post-doctoral research journey.

The narration is contextualized within the pre-, and post- workshop at *La maison aux volets jaunes* with my performance art action coach, Tourangeau, during the *Solidité / Fluidité / Solidarité* workshop, in 2018. The combined (pre-, during, and post-) eight-day journey reflects the start and the end of this performance fieldwork. The journey begins in New York City (NY) from where I drive north to Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière (QC). It is a 1000km ride along water somas, by way of driving along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, rivers, and lakes. The road trip in leads me to the land that saw my maternal grandmother born. The road trip out and back to Montréal leads me back in and through my maternal human ancestry lineage.

The road trip in. I attend a friend's vocal performance in New York City (NY) just a few days prior to the workshop. I decide to drive the scenic route down and back up, taking this roadtrip opportunity for 'getting in the mood' with the elements. I chose to drive along roads as close as possible to the Atlantic Ocean and the many riverways heading back up to Canada. I do not entirely follow the path of least resistance since I have only two days in which to get to my destination. I will, however, deviate towards places I feel really, really pulled to – an ocean shore bird sanctuary, or a New England clam shack,

for example! I drive from Brooklyn (NY) to the Chaudière-Appalaches region (QC), with an aim to collect memories of sensing waterways, imprinting with a spectrum of water somas – ocean, rivers, lakes, ahead of the week in the dry meadow. The drive through Abenaki country is a little under 1000 km – that's a short drive compared to the 10 000 kilometres I drive yearly to the United States of Utah, Texas, or Nevada.

From New York State, I follow the Atlantic Ocean shoreline as much as possible. Come Narragansett (RI), I veer north, inland, to Providence (RI). I take the time to rest for a night in New England. There, I soak my body in the refreshingly cold New England Atlantic Ocean. For the duration of that stretch of the drive, I fantasize living on the east coast, so near the ocean. When I pick up driving again, I skirt around Boston and head straight for and through the White Mountain National Forest (NH). Driving through these lush high-altitude greens is such a charm. For the duration of that stretch of the drive, I dream of coming back here to camp, to paddle in the river, to breathe-in the glorious mountain air. I cross over to Vermont, following first the Connecticut River, then driving west toward the Brighton Municipal Forest, and then heading north, driving in the centre of two rivers' parallel pathways. Eventually, I reach Norton Pond where the Coaticook River takes its source. My aim, once I reach the Québec province's side, is to stop for a strawberry ice cream at la laiterie de Coaticook. Eating a strawberry ice cream from Coaticook is a yearly ritual I commit to, in commemoration of my brother's life (19 May 1972 - 28 March 1989). After twenty-nine years of practicing this annual ritual, I cannot not pay a tribute to the mothership of ice cream (Coaticook ice cream)! In Vermont, I follow the waterways up until I cross the border at Norton (USA) and Stanhope (Canada). I then follow up la rivière Coaticook until I get to the ice cream parlour. After a quick stop, I resume driving the last 200 km. In the interest of making good time, I take the ice cream 'to go'. This is a silly idea. Even with the windows rolled up and the A/C on, the blasting July sun heating through my windshield melts my ice cream faster than I can eat it. My left hand is wet and sticky, and so is the steering wheel. Ah well, lesson learned – I should always make time for a good time! I still have some ways to go on smaller roads. I do not stop to clean up the sticky mess.

When I get to Thetford Mines, I lose cell reception. My GPS is kaput and so is my sense of orientation. Honestly, this land gives me an evil feeling. I apologize to the people

living in the surrounding communities for writing this. My sense is not a reflection of the conviviality of the communities in the many small parishes in the area. I am describing my honest experience of connecting to the land as a first-time drive-by. Likely, I sense the hurt of the earth that has been plundered for its minerals – once collected, becoming a highly carcinogenic material – and its topsoil and grassland obliterated. Discovered in the 1850s, the Thetford asbestos mine, "Vimy Ridge mine," was once one of the most productive mining areas for asbestos in the world. Although Canada shut down all its asbestos mines in 2012, the Vimy Ridge mine has been closed even longer, since 1955. The feeling of Thetford Mines' chrysotile mineral open pit gets under my skin. I get lost for at least one hour, meandering and circling back to where I lost cell reception. Without the GPS to guide me, I rely on my alternative sense of orientation. I should have been driving north, zig-zaging on the quadrilateral rural ranks until I reach my destination. But as it turns out, I am following a pull to drive south – the exact opposite, and twice, in circles, at that. The 25km detour brings me back and forth between Black Lake and St-Joseph-de-Coleraine. On the third loop, I manage to spin myself out. A sense of relief but also a sense of funk loom just below the skin, steeping my flesh in bad juice. Years later, in order to write these words, I have to look at a map to locate where I had gotten lost. A roadmap shows lush land identified by its green colouring while the area where I had gotten lost is coloured grey. My heart sinks as I click on the interactive map to see a wider picture. All of the land bordering the great fleuve Saint-Laurent is coloured grey. The land that is part of what is called the province of Québec, from this perspective, looks like a mishandled wolf, its mouth dried, and lips cracked and parched.

On the very last leg of my journey, still without cell reception, I get lost – again – and drive through what looks like a heritage path featuring les croix de chemins. I am in awe of the many crosses I drive by. They are modest, made from simple boards hammered together and the wood is often painted white. Some of them are set in their centers with a bleeding red heart. Some of the crosses are arranged at their base with a Virgin Mary statue featuring the Virgin as if walking, in all of her radiance, out of the entrance of a grotto, and stepping onto a manicured flowered lawn. Oh my, some crosses are even set with rusted parts from machinery for working the land! I later learn that some of these crosses and calvaires (gazebo-like structures housing the Christ), date back from 1820.

Eventually, I drive by a Celtic cross. This one is carved from stone, inlaid with intricate designs of vines and triskeles. The Eastern Townships have deep Irish, Scottish, and Breton roots. This Celtic cross here, honours Irish early settlers. HOME.

Home away from home.

And lost,

Again.

Eventually, I pull over at a rural gas station and convenience store. I ask the cashier if she knows about a house with yellow shutters (la maison aux volets jaunes). One customer says yes, and gives me directions to the house. "C'est juste après la courbe, la deuxième maison à droite."⁷⁴ So lost and yet so close! I purchase something to thank them and resume the drive. I arrive before sundown. La maison au volets jaunes is on a very dry part of the land but my body is full of riverways and ocean breezes somas. I know a 10 minutes' drive will bring me back to water, to le parc des chutes de Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière, coincidentally, where I performed an epic failure, in 2014 during the Space Gathering festival. Everything looks so, so, so dry right now! Well, at least I know water is near in case I get stuck in a creative dry spell. As I pull in the driveway, I am immediately greeted with a welcome!

~

The road trip out. The journey home to Tiohtià:ke | Montréal. On my way home, per chance – or per what happens when I follow the path of least resistance? – I ride the root-lines of my ancestral tree. I opt driving back to Montréal by following waterways and small roads. Montréal is one island of the 234 islands called, the Frontenac Archipelago, populating le fleuve Saint-Laurent. Waterways in the area of Sainte-Agathe-de-Lotbinière drain in the wider Saint-Laurent river. I reason that all I have to do is to

74 The customer tells me that the house I am looking for is not far, right passed the curve and to the right. It is the second house to the right.

listen to its watery pull, and to make sure I orient 'downriver', to arrive in Montréal.

*An hour into the short road trip, I stop at a rack à patates (in colloquial Québécois language, or more properly termed pataterie; Eng.: roadside greasy spoon). I order the quintessential steam dog all' dressed with cabbage coleslaw, and un casseau of golden fat fries on which only adding vinegar and a bit of salt will do. Sarah Build, one of the workshop participants, is hitching a ride with me. She orders her lunch, and together, we walk across the street to an inner-city park by a waterway. There is a new-looking Celtic cross standing in the middle of the curated lawn. The monument stands on a cemented raised bed, and has various commemorative plaques decorating it. The whole structure is a neat monument carved from thick grey rock – a cross set on a nimbus (ring) and decorated with intricate and recognizable traditional Celtic knots. The tiny park overlooks la rivière Saint-François. By my guess, I must be near Saint-Cyrille-de-Wendover, across from Drummondville. Odanak Indian Reservation sits on its shore, in what was prior to European colonial invasion, part of a vast territory of the Abenaki People. La Rivière St-François is a significant historical watermark in my paternal Bellerose's lineage, and my maternal Irish-Scottish and French-Canadian heritage. But I did not always know of it. In 1986, Québécois journalist and author Louis Caron publishes the first of three historical fictions titled, *Le fils de la Liberté*. The first book of the series, *Le Canard de Bois*, is situated at the cusp of the *Révolte des Patriotes* (1837-1838). Hyacinthe Bellerose is its main protagonist, and the shore of la Rivière St-François is one of the places where the stories unfurl. The character is fictional, but the popular uprising against the British occupation did take place. I was not taught any of these historical events, at school. Neither was I was taught the history of the Irish exodus to Canada, nor of the colonial occupation of Ireland by the British Empire and the setting land rules and instigating strategic famines in much the way it happened in Canada. The Celtic monuments peppered near my maternal great-grandparents' farmland in the Eastern Townships come as a surprise. The somatic amnesia I suffer from, in my own body and in my relationship to the land, does not.*

I walk myself back to the car. I drive across la Rivière St-François. My family lineage – maternal and paternal strands – is tied to these lands. I drive on le chemin George Bonallie, because it feels right. I turn on chemins-des-diligences. There's an

upcoming nook in the road, by the water, so I park the car. Le chemin du Lac d'Argent and chemin du Théâtre are at a T, with le chemin du Lac d'Argent tracing the edge of the water, and le chemin du Théâtre bellowing down from a steep incline. I note a few things: 1) how can I resist walking myself into a lake that is at the bottom of Theatre road's hill? This place-name literally is calling my name! 2) I have a sense of recognition to this place. I have never seen it, but I did hear about it. I recall my maternal grandmother telling my mother and I about her elderly group's trips, visiting the area, and attending plays at the Théâtre de la Marjolaine. It is from her mouth that I heard the news of a catastrophe on this very specific spot. Forty years ago, it was. At this very crossroad where I stand at the edge of the lake, a bus full of passengers coming back from having seen a play at the Théâtre de la Marjolaine up that steep hill, drove down at full speed, right into the lake. Apparently, the bus's brake system had malfunctioned. On August 5, 1978, seven passengers made it out alive from the bus. The other forty passengers drowned. . . in Lac d'Argent! I am in Eastman!! This is not only a sacred place, a water burial, a nook in the road. This is the birthplace of my maternal grandmother. This is where my maternal great-grandparents lived. This is where my mother came to swim in the summer.

Images of black and white photographs placed carefully under cellophane paper in thick binders, come back flashing into my mind. Someone had taken a photo of my grandmother's children playing at the end of a dock overlooking the lake. By chance or by call. By the path of least resistance. By the wind coming from the Otherworld.

Today, the place feels peaceful. There is no one else here, no tourists, no swimmers, no ghosts. The edge of the lake is left wild except for a stretch where a tiny memorial park is meticulously tended. There is even a quaint gate surrounding it. I turn my attention to the lake and let myself into her crisp cool water. I float. It is so calm. So clean. So fresh. So no-lake weed! And so full of memories – my own, and not my own. I wonder what is silver (argent) about the lake? Likely, it is the clouds reflected on its perfectly calm surface.

...

Le Lac d'Argent in Eastman

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*Was my grandmother taking her children to the lake in the summer, simply for the sake of cooling off? Am I the first one in this family to crave a pilgrimage to my roots? My maternal grandmother, Yvette Bérichon Cloutier, lived in Montréal when she had her daughter, my mother. But Yvette had been born, and had lived in Eastman, as a child. She helped with farm chores, selling their produce to the outer (Montréal) city markets, and with raising her siblings. As a teenager, she had moved to the inner city Montréal, following in her own mother's steps, so as to find work to support the family farm. The years before WW2 had been difficult ones. There, she had married an Irish-Québécois. The visits back to Eastman took them several hours since my grandparents never owned a car. Yvette would take the train alone along with her three children and a provision of snacks. And sometimes, her husband, my grandfather, a World War II veteran, would come along. From Magog's train station, they would walk the 16km to Le Lac d'Argent, treading along the commercial train tracks. Along the way, they cooled off by jumping in surrounding ponds. "These are the stories of our own heritage, the stories of the real as well as the mythical women who went before us," Blackie writes (*If Women Rose Rooted* 14). My maternal grandmother and I had followed our call to the lake for our own reasons. Are they different reasons? If I could have a chat with my ancestors, I would ask them what they felt a fundamental relationship to the land meant to them – urban dwellers, factory workers, soldiers, small commerce owners, farmers, new immigrants, settlers.*

On my drive back to Montréal, I take the Highway 10 to drive by my maternal great-grandparents' farmland. At the speed of 120km, I see a row of pine trees blurring-one-into-each-other. In a space that is equidistant to the others but at a speed that is the speed of traveling backward into time, I see the family barn painted rust red. She stands, still.