

KHiO

Oslo National Academy of the Arts

Master's Project

**Dancing in tune with
oneself & others**

Lieu Thi Le

Master in Design: Clothing and Costume

May, 2024

Supervisor:

Christina Lindgren

Abstract

Nothing is absolute; everything is in progress,
transitioning and transforming into the dance of becoming.

My master's project, titled '*Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others*', investigate how seeing the totality of own artist practise and creative process can cultivate mindfulness, fostering an awareness of the symbiotic relationship between oneself and others, encompassing both human and nonhuman.

Tutorials:

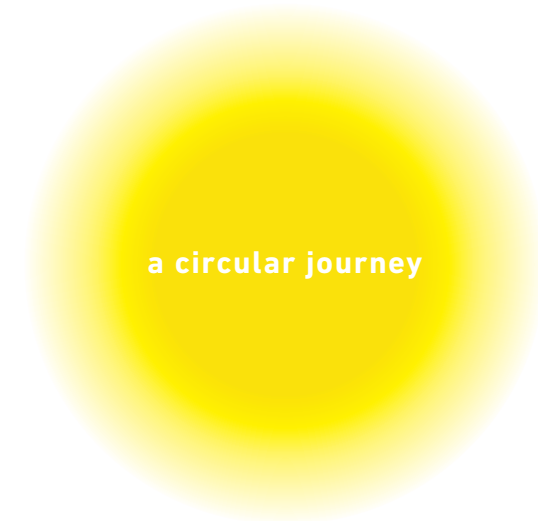
Christina Lindgren

Kirsti Bræin

Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others

What is the interconnection between myself as an artist and the human and non-human that exist around me during the creative process?

By shifting the focus from singularity to totality, Le started to notice what has been left unnoticed in her daily environment, leading to herself finding appreciations towards the everyday overlooked mundane. Through a mindful process of observing, discovering, and gathering unused or unconsumed materials from the near-by surroundings. Le started to integrate the findings in her artist practise, while questioning the value of these seemingly worthless leftovers and their potential for transitioning and transformation. Since autumn, Le has been weaving with leftover yarns, collected from factories in Norway and dyeing them with plants harvested from nearby nature or given by the local community.



Le sees her artist practise as a circular journey, involving various mindfulness stages of time-consuming handcrafts such as natural-dyeing, hand-weaving, hand-knitting, wet felting and hand-sewing. The aim is to create a foundation for her artistic practice, both being immersed in it and observing from outside. This involves both personal involvement and collaboration with others¹.

¹ "others" refers to all human and non-human that exist around oneself.

Preface

My artist practise

I am an interdisciplinary artist based in Oslo. My work explores my own Vietnamese heritage and is strongly influenced by both Nordic and Asian cultures, with nature as a central source of inspiration. The sensuality of textiles in relation to the body and movement is particularly evident, with one of the goals being to explore how material can be healing for the mind and body while also radiating a sense of calm for those who experience my work. The colour yellow is often prominent in my work and is an essential element of my artistic expression. I narrates my personal journey of identity, belonging, and spirituality by inviting the audience into my world through performances.



Photographer:
Einar Fuglem

Preface

My background

As a teenager I started my journey into the world of movement with urban dance choreography, where I attended classes at dance studios. It was a structured form of expression where a dance instructor taught choreography performed in sync with chosen music. The focus was on memorising and matching movement to the the music. Dancing that started as a hobby, suddenly became serious, the pressure of competing or mastering a new choreography within a one-hour class, felt unfulfilling. Despite a decade of active participation and the joy of connection with others through dance, I lost sight of the essence.

The transition from dance led me into the embrace of fashion, a realm pulsating with creativity yet filled with its own challenges. After graduating from my bachelor degree at London College of Fashion, I gained industry experience as a fashion designer for various brands in the UK and Scandinavia. In a glimpse, another decade spent and it reached a point where it felt like an ill-fitted garment. Stress, overwork, anger, and eventual burnout, became apparent. The excitement of its fast pace and newness that initially drew me to dance and fashion, became the force that pulled me away.

The turning point came following an infection of COVID-19, leading to a long period of chronic fatigue. Through the healing of chronic fatigue, I immersed myself into mindfulness practises such as meditation and yoga. As the saying goes; from negative outcomes arise positive transformations. It was a profound moment of self-awareness, realisation of the mind-body connection. Reflecting on my past experience in movement and fashion, dancing to someone else's tune; meeting external expectations rather my internal. I came to mind with comfort and authenticity, not just following someone else's lead, a recognition of the importance of dancing in tune with myself, in order to be in harmony with others.

Performance is associated with ritual, with technology, it is associated with being as much as with doing, with the process more than the finished product. (AA Bronson & Peggy Gale, 1979, p 10-11).

Prologue

Materiality

Every day, we as human beings, enveloped in a world of sensory materiality – the material sensibility that emerges the moment we wake up. From the cloth we use to dry our body after a hot shower, to the clothing that touches our bare skin, the texture of our bedding, to the chair cradling us and so on.

Take, for instance, the ritual of calming own body and nervous system before sinking into bed for a comfortable night's sleep. It involves awakening the senses and choosing sensory elements that brings the body into a state of relaxation. Whether it's a preference a snug or airy duvet, a firm or plush pillow, or a vast or snug bed, or the temperature of the cold being cold or warm, these choices all tie back to own sensory inclinations. That can perhaps be heighten by bringing awareness to the overlooked nuances of impermanence in our daily lives.

Somatics taps into the mind-body connection, encouraging a “felt sense” observation and active listening to internal signals that your body communicates about your current experiences. (What Is Eco-Somatics?, 2023).

While somatic practices have become increasingly popular in the Western world over the last 50 years, many of them draw from ancient Eastern philosophy and healing practices, including tai chi and qi gong. (Somatics: Definition, Exercises, Evidence, and More, 2020).

Eco-somatics, rooted in the belief that our actions on Earth reflect on ourselves, recognizes the inseparable connection between our well-being and the well-being of the planet (What Is Eco-Somatics?, 2023).

Prologue

Body and Movement

As humans, movement defines our very existence: the rhythmic beat of our hearts, the flow of blood through our veins, the fluidity of water, and the circulation of air. In the realm of artistic practice, myself, as creator, take on the persona of everyday performers. Whether as a clothing designer, painter, or performance artist, the essence of cultivating a body of work lies in the presence of a body in movement. The entire body participates in a dance, sometimes following a circular rhythm as a ritual, occasionally choreographed, but mostly in improvisation. The repeated movement of the hands when drawing, the graceful gestures while draping textiles on a mannequin, the rhythmic motions of the arms passing the yarn shuttle through the weaving loom, each gesture in the creative process transforms into a performance art in itself.

If I can turn the repeated ritual of creation into a mindfulness practice, can I maintain a sense of calm through the transitions from the beginning to the in-between and to the end stages?

Performance is associated with ritual, with technology, it is associated with being as much as with doing, with the process more than the finished product. (AA Bronson & Peggy Gale, 1979, p 10-11).

Just the way performance evolve and metamorphose in time and space, likewise does the body of work. Time-consuming traditional handcrafts such as natural dyeing and weaving demand the engagement of the entire body in movement at each phase to progress to the next. The completion of each stage, therefore, brings me a profound sense of satisfaction. Hence why I find an attraction and peace in time-consuming traditional handcrafts, the possibility to witness the transitioning of spirit and matter through time.

Prologue

Can the repeated ritual of weaving become a choreographed dance, evidencing the timeline of the creative process?

In the art of weaving, the body follows a choreography that involves spinning, stretching, tying, and dividing. The rhythmic sounds produced by these movements express the dance of weaving. Comparing weaving to dance, the process unfolds as a choreographed sequence with elements like repetition, series, form, tension, and speed. The hands move left to right, right to left, and the feet move up and down, creating a choreography dependent on the weave pattern and type of loom. This rhythmic dance defines the weaving process, where each motion contributes to crafting a beautiful woven piece. Just like a dance performance, the weaver's smooth movements and the rhythmic sounds of the loom and tools come together to form a visually and audibly pleasing composition.

By being the performer in own artistic work, how has that been a tool to investigate the relation between clothing, body and movement?

I was introduced to the term 'somatic costumes' through participating the project, 'The Somatic Costume Dressing Room' by PhD candidate Sally E. Dean. Building on my background as a dancer, Sally E. Dean encouraged to integrate my movement experience into own artist practice. Transitioning from being an observer of a wearer's body in movement to being the wearer with own body in movement.

Somatic costumes are embedded with multi-sensorial experiences. They are designed specifically to bring awareness to different areas of and qualities in the body, as well as to support the understanding of certain movement principles in relationship to self, others and the environment. (Dean, n.d.)

This exploration prompted an investigation into the potential to design a costume that could encourage, enhance and elongate movement in performance, as well somehow becoming an extension of body. By using textile and dye deriving from nature, I aspired to create a costume that could bring nature close to the body and bringing awareness to the point where body and textile meet.

Prologue

Transitioning and transforming

The smooth transition from one season to another unfolds gradually, in tune with the passage of time. Nature follows its own rhythm, seamlessly shifting from spring to summer, then fall, and finally winter. I've observed a similar gradual transition while working with materials sourced from nature. Thus, I'm drawn to natural dyeing, a practice I perceive as a slow, evolving journey of transformation. In this realm, every element partakes in a subtle dance, collectively influencing the hue of the resulting colour. In the simmering pot of water and natural dyeing material, pigments release from the materials, some intertwining with textile fibres while others linger in the water.

Take, for instance, the process of working with onion skins, which typically yields a sunny yellow. Yet, the nuances of this yellow remain an enchanting mystery. The vibrancy of yellow varies, influenced by the onion skins' condition, whether freshly harvested or dried, the temperature, the time during boiling, and the preparation of the textile. Indeed, factors such as scouring and mordanting further contribute to the intricate tapestry of the final outcome.

Similar to the natural dyeing process, I experience a deep connection between wool fibres and water temperature when wet felting. This connection is further enhanced by the friction created by my hands. As I work, I can sense the materials' rhythm as they transition between formlessness, the in-between stage, and a distinct form.

Prologue

Temporality, Time and Space

Textile dyeing with natural dyes is deeply intertwined with the present moment, existing within a specific space and time.

Following a journey into nature for harvesting, I'm filled with gratitude towards the plants generously sharing their colours and the landscape welcoming me.

There's a mindful essence woven into each step of the process: searching, harvesting, cleaning, washing, boiling, draining, dyeing, and drying. Each movement varies, influenced by the unique interplay of space and time. The resulting colour evolves based on the connection between material essence and matter, creating an ongoing improvised artwork.

The colours achieved are fleeting, serving as a poignant metaphor for the passage of time. Learning to embrace and cherish the current hue, knowing its temporary nature, allows for an appreciation of its evolving nuances before eventually fading away.

Wabi-sabi is the view or thought of finding beauty in every aspect of imperfection in nature. It is about the aesthetic of things in existence, that are “imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete”. (‘Why Is It Difficult to Understand What Wabi-Sabi Means?’, 2019)

Prologue

Perspective

How can one's understanding of the interconnection between spirit and matter be influenced by their individual view and interpretation of the world around them? It involves observing oneself, acknowledging the presence of others, and allowing others to exist in one's presence. It's about perceiving the everyday movements and the interaction between humans and non-humans.

Consider, for instance, a simple yoga pose. Initially, it might appear to be merely a physical activity, with the body supported by the floor's force, Earth's gravity. However, upon delving deeper and altering one's perspective, subtler aspects come into focus. Perhaps one becomes aware of the space between the body and the floor, or the subtle shifts in gravity. This shift encourages contemplation of the role of unseen forces, such as the spirit of "air" that supports the body in certain poses, adding complexity to the interaction between the physical and metaphysical realms. It's intriguing how the shift of perspective, can shape individual's perception and interpretation, bringing attention to subtle nuances that may initially go unnoticed and overlooked.

The conventional approach to performance production often sees costumes as emerging from the play's storyline or choreographed dance. But what if we shifted the perspective to focus on the clothing itself? What if costume design were given equal importance alongside other elements? This change in viewpoint allows for a dynamic interplay among all elements, each one empowering and enhancing the others. Instead of prioritizing one element over the others, let them coexist and find balance, where every aspect matters equally in the same time and space. In my own costume performances, I strive to experiment with this shift of perspective.

Prologue

Appreciation, Acceptance and Adaption

A tailored wool jacket goes through various stages, from fibres spun into yarn to woven textile, cut shape, and sewn into its 'final' form. Yet, this 'final' form isn't really final; it changes over time, influenced by its surroundings and the body wearing it, showing visible signs of wear and tear. Let's say, the woolen textile gets damaged by moths, instead of discarding or donating it away, accepting these changes can inspire ways to maintain and adapt. Repairing a hole with carded wool can transform the jacket into a new design showcases this acceptance and adaptation. It involves recognizing the beauty and equal importance of each stage, steering away from obsessive focus on outcomes or rigid ideals of perfection. Can this acceptance and appreciation for evolving form extend to all material matters, the human and non-human, such as our aging bodies and surroundings?

Totality

In essence, my artistic journey from dance to clothing design has been transformative, intertwining threads of movement, mindfulness, and materiality. Reflecting on past experiences shaping my current practice, I explore the interconnectedness of mind-body awareness through somatic expression. Merging clothing design with performance art, I serve as a performer in my own and others' work, investigating the intricate relationship between clothing, body, and action. Embracing the totality of the creative process, I appreciate the beauty of dynamic changes over time. This journey, marked by transitions and transformations, emphasizes that creation lies not only in the final form but also in the dance of becoming.

Introduction

My master's project integrates elements from my past works, serving as its foundation. It weaves together a comprehensive synopsis of previous research and investigations. The artistic research from my master's thesis, titled 'Dancing in Tune with Myself: From One or the Other to the Perspective of a Clothing Designer in Movement,' will serve as a mindfulness tool for me throughout the development and creative process. However, it will evolve further to be an investigation of the interconnection between myself and others during the creative process.

I invite you into my creative process through this written diary documenting my exploration and experiments.

Diary

March - August 2023

I've long been fascinated by Asian traditional craft and culture. During my master's program, I spent a semester at Tama Art University's textile department under Dai Fujiwara, former creative director of Issey Miyake, whose work I admire. He suggested I visit textile studios in Kyoto and Arimatsu to deepen my understanding of Japanese shibori dye techniques and natural indigo dye. As I witnessed artisans bringing beautiful textiles to life, I felt a profound appreciation for their dedication to their craft. However, conversations with artisans also evoked a sense of sadness as I learned that many of these intricate techniques are at risk of disappearing. The complexity and time required to master these crafts, coupled with the challenge of sustaining a stable income, lead some artisans to fear that our generation may be the last to uphold these cherished traditions.

Though aware of the impossibility of mastering techniques within a short timeframe, I remained eager to learn. Thus, during my time in Japan, I devoted myself to studying traditional Japanese textile dye techniques such as aizome, katazome, and shibori. Tama Art University located in the outskirts of Tokyo were surrounded by nature. This environment gave me a sense of calm, and connecting deeper

to nature by being able to harvest materials in the nearby surroundings for natural dyeing. It was this time that I developed the project 'Luck exists in the leftovers of others'. The project focuses on the mindful process of observing, discovering, and gathering these overlooked, unused or unconsumed materials from the surrounding environment. It aims to question the value of these seemingly worthless leftovers and their potential for repurposing.

Hanami, the tradition of flower viewing, unfolds in Japan each spring. Many people gather to behold the beauty of cherry blossoms in full bloom. However, once the flowers fade and only bare branches remain, they no longer receive the same level of appreciation. Contemplating this, I pondered the notion of embracing beauty in all its stages, not just at its peak. I began collecting cherry tree branches fallen during heavy typhoons to use in my natural dyeing experiments. Despite suggestions that dyeing with cherry trees to obtain a pink colour should occur before or during blooming when the pigment is strongest, I was intrigued by the potential of the branches' "leftover" colours. I wanted to appreciate the hues I was given in this very time and space, regardless of their temporary or permanent colour fastness.

RESEARCH

リサーチ

JAPANESE TRADITIONAL TEXTILE - INDIGO DYE - HACHIOJI

日本の伝統的なテキスタイル - 藍染め





Diary

September 2023

Both Japan and Norway share a profound connection to nature and tradition. Despite growing up in Norway, and being Norwegian by nationality, I couldn't help but reflect on how little I knew about the history of Norwegian traditional crafts. Upon returning back to KHiO, together with fellow classmates, we visited local wool factories in Norway to learn more about their long standing history. Factories we visited were Rauma Garn, Krivi Vev, Møre Bånd og Vev and Tingvoll Ull. I collected "leftover" materials from their bins, filling up bags with yarn scraps, production offcuts, and small knitted pieces.

October 2023

I devoted my time to figuring out how to make use of these leftovers. I delved into a period of slowness, a period of pure connection, myself and the materials. Through a time-consuming yet calming process, I carefully untangled the yarn offcuts thread by thread, re-knotting and re-spinning them for hand weaving. Can something considered "worthless" gain value through transformation from one form to another?

Weaving with the carefully reconnected yarns felt deeply rewarding, transporting me to a space beyond the constraints of time and place, a pure meditative state flooded with dopamine. It was a process I could have stayed in indefinitely.



Yarn waste
off-cuts



re-knotted yarn
spin into comb



used as warp yarn



knit waste from
garment knit machine

used as weft yarn



form

"the in between"

no form



unravelled knit piece

once filled with knit
now an empty space



"the in between" filled
with traces of
leftover wool fibre

Diary

November 2023

I reluctantly pulled myself away from my meditative state of weaving, to focus on writing. Yet, I often found myself being back in the weaving room, alternating between states of allowing myself to be in it and letting go. An autumn month of repetitive rhythm settled into a cycle between weaving, researching, reading, and writing.

As I delved into researching and reading, I found that the textual content about weaving failed to captivate me. While weaving itself draws me in because of its tangible nature, allowing me to feel the materials and witness the pattern grow as I weave, reading about it didn't hold my interest. In contrast, books on body, dance, and movement drew me into a world of exploration and learning. Each page turned felt like a seamless transition into a new realm of movement practices, captivating me for hours on end.

My connection with weaving lies in the tangible experience of touching the materials and tools, immersing myself fully in the process. It requires me to transition from my desk to the loom and be fully present. Movement on the other hand, happens constantly, whether it's a blink of the eyes, an internal body shift, or a little dance while moving from one space to another. It only requires my own body, which is always with me.

Viewed through the dual lenses of a clothing designer and a movement practitioner, I contemplate the interconnection between artistic practices that rely heavily on individual body and those that involve collaboration with others. In other words, oneself or oneself and others.

Diary

December 2023

I began broadening my perspective of 'others' to encompass not just other human beings or bodies, but also all human and non-human entities external to my own body. 'Others' could be the tools, environment, and materials that interact with me during my creative process. They could also be the space, floor, ceiling or object that interact with my body during a solo performance, or the bodies moving alongside mine in a group performance.

I wanted to investigate the possible interdependence between materiality, clothing, body, and movement through clothing-in-movement workshop sessions with dancers. The workshop will be a collaborative session, where participant can experience an intimate meeting of own body and clothing. The intention is to raise awareness and deepen understanding of how clothing can influence body movement and choreography, and vice versa.

I began this exploration with a single dancer in a room, armed only with my clothing, a camera, and my own presence, aiming to minimize external distractions. The dancer engaged with the clothing hanging on the rail, responding to my improvised instructions. I repeated the experiment with another dancer. The workshop wasn't directed towards a particular result; instead, it served as a platform for experimentation and personal insight, revealing how individuals respond uniquely to simple instructions.



Diary

January 2024

Commencing the second semester, a lineup of exhibitions and performances awaited. This presented an opportunity to invite the public into my work, observing their reactions and listening to their feedback, critique, and responses. Using performances with dancers as a medium, I sought to communicate my research through storytelling within a defined time and space. Coming up was a solo exhibition with performance in the reception gallery end of the month, my plan was to showcase the work-in-progress of my master's project, textile developments and explorations in movement.

I began to see my creative process as a circular journey, involving both individual and collaborative stages. The individual phases primarily consist of time-consuming tasks that foster mindfulness, such as preparation, harvesting, dyeing, weaving, knitting, felting, sewing, and crafting, encompassing both myself and non-human. Alongside these solitary endeavors, there are collaborative stages involving interaction with human bodies. These may include experiments with fellow creators or the presentation of work to the public through workshops, exhibitions, and performances, with each stage guided by specific research questions.

I conducted more clothing-in-movement workshops, however this time in groups of dancers. With more participants, the atmosphere became busier, and it was a challenge to follow both my instructions while remaining attuned to each other. An observation seeing each dancer moved to their own rhythm, unaware of the music guiding others. Yet, occasionally, they collectively created the illusion of dancing to the same tune, seeking their individual connections to the materials, textile objects, and bodies in the room.

Alongside with clothing-in-movement workshop, I worked on material experiments. I started to work on natural dyeing and collaborating with the local community to gather dye ingredients. Among these were dry tansy harvested last summer, ground coffee bean waste from fellow classmates, avocado seeds from my uncle's sushi take-away, flowers from a nearby local shop, onion skins from a nearby local bakery, and leftover dye bath of acorn from a fellow textile student.



Participants:
Inga Sóley Kjartansdóttir
Mirika Ishida
Julie Louise Berg Bjelke
Ida Simone Weidemann

SLOW PRACTISES



Diary

February 2024

After spending several months weaving with wool leftovers, I completed four textile pieces suitable for natural dyeing. Eager to experiment further with various hues on silk and wool, along with shibori and botanical dye techniques, I realized I needed more wool materials. This led to a trip visiting Gudbrandsdalens Uldvarefabrik in Lillehammer, where the factory owner, Frode Svarstad, graciously provided me with insights into their rich wool history. I received several meters of faulty production textile, which I could utilize for natural dyeing. Additionally, Rauma Garn and Krivi Vev each sent me a box full of leftover yarn cones, ideal for both weaving and knitting. Grateful for the support from local factories in Norway, I felt a deep sense of inclusion and connection through the wool.

Silk materials was something I already sourced during my time in Japan. At flea markets, I often came across old non-bleached silk fabric rolls made for kimono making. Each silk roll measured 13 meters in length and 40cm in width. Most of these silk rolls had traces of mold or moth damage, therefore could no longer be sold in the kimono shop. I found the imperfections uniquely beautiful and well-suited for my master's project.

I spent one week preparing the textiles for natural dyeing, a labor-intensive process involving hours of washing, scouring, mordanting, and drying. Although demanding, it was a necessary and important step. The following week, I focused on dyeing 20cm wide swatches of all the textiles I had mordanted in various dye baths. The result was an earthy color palette with various shades of yellow, beige, brown, and pink.

In the past, I was overly particular about using a specific shade of yellow, finding other tones disruptive and even mentally stressful. I sought to embrace the acceptance and appreciation of all shades of yellow, letting go of the need for perfection. My colour selection reflects a departure from rigidity and the idealisation of a perfect hue. Instead, it's about embracing the nuances of life and the colours nature gives. Which is an evident part of natural dyeing, where each hue is unique and unpredictable, highlighting the interconnectedness of all elements. While yellow remains the dominant colour in my work, I aimed to explore a range of yellow hues, blending them with subtle elements of beige, brown, and pink.



washing



scouring
mordanting



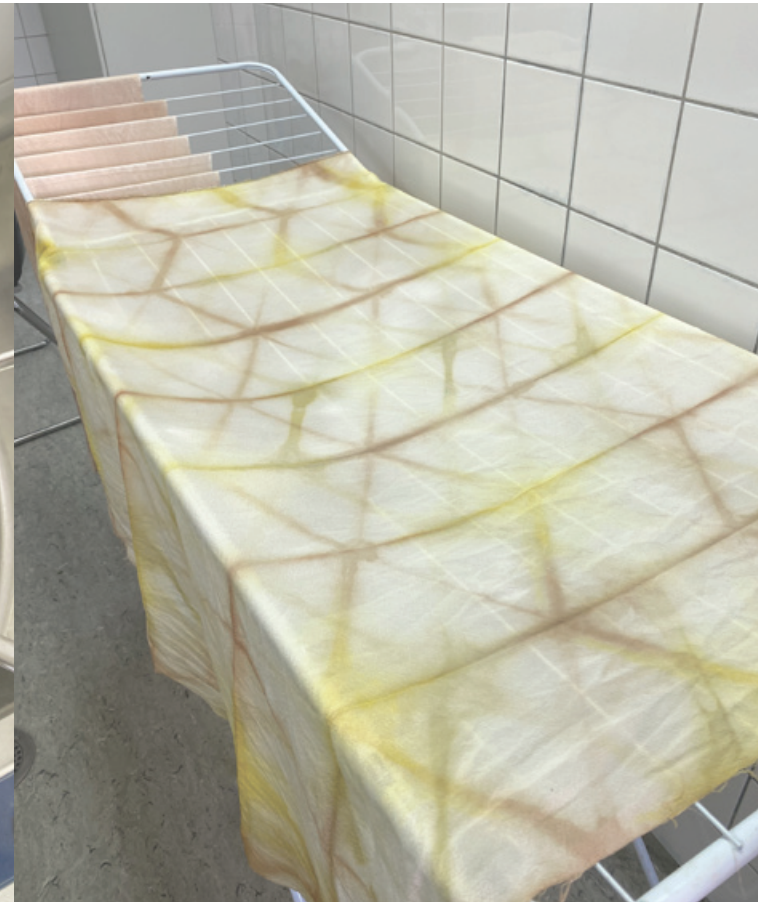
drying

SLOW PRACTISES



LIEU LE

Master's Project



[VIDEO LINK](#)



Diary

As I pondered my upcoming solo exhibition performance, I contemplated the experiments I wanted to undertake and the research questions I was eager to explore. Reflecting on a clothing-in-movement workshop session, where my instructions were largely improvised, I recalled a moment when I began to incorporate the sounds produced by clothing and body movements. In that instance, one dancer emerged as both the instrument and the music, guiding the others' movements. Intrigued by this dynamic, I sought to delve deeper into how clothing could shape the narrative and choreography of a performance.

Having previously explored shibori techniques with stones during my time in Japan, I contemplated the transformation of something nonhuman into a living element through the touch of a human body. Stones thus emerged as the natural element I wished to utilize as potential instruments for my performance. As I meticulously tied each stone to pre-mordanted textiles, I envisioned them as perfect tools for creating sound.



[VIDEO LINK](#)

Inspired by the ever-changing nature of existence, Le's textile sculptures undergo a transformative journey. Time-consuming, yet meditative, each piece has taken hours to sculpt. Utilizing the ancient Japanese shibori technique, she intricately ties hundreds of stones found in her daily nearby surroundings, infusing them with the element of earth. In the performance, these sculptures breathe, moved by human gentle touch. Each stitch and stone hums with life, inviting the audience to listen to the whispered echoes they release, harmonizing with the space.

Photographer:
Lieu Le

*Solo-exhibition at the reception gallery at KHiO
29th of February - 3rd of March, 2024*

Solo-exhibition at the reception gallery at KHiO

Documentation photo of the live-performance 29th of February, 2024

Performer:

Inga Sóley Kjartansdóttir

Mirika Ishida

Eline Chao Vaaje

Julie Louise Berg Bjelke

Ida Simone Weidemann

Anton Skaaning Thomsen



[VIDEO LINK](#)

Photographer:
Diska Livia

Diary

March 2024

The upcoming highlight was the graduation runway show, for which I planned to present 7 looks. However, my aim wasn't to prove my skills in clothing construction; rather, I intended to keep the collection conceptual and aligned with the theme of my master's project. With a body of textile works already created, I wished to transform these textiles into clothing on a moving body.

Traditionally, garments are crafted through the process of sketching designs, followed by either pattern drafting or draping, cutting the fabric, and then sewing it together. I wanted to challenge this notion, by experimenting with various approach to clothing design.

Feeling a profound connection to the textiles I had dyed, viewing each piece as a textile art sculpture in its own right, I embarked on a challenge: creating garments without cutting into the fabric. Instead of draping on a static mannequin, I did a draping experiment on a living and moving body. I collaborated with fellow KHiO dance student, Julie Louise Berg Bjelke. Through draping on a moving body, designs that I otherwise wouldn't have envisioned emerged.



INDIVIDUAL STAGE



LIEU LE

DRAPING ON A STILL BODY



Master's Project

Diary

April 2024

Consequently, the clothing collection I created for the runway show comprised both conventional clothing designed through sketching and cutting the fabric, as well as pieces crafted while preserving the original shape of the fabric, without any cutting.



Performer/models:

Kristina Gjems
Mirika Ishida
Julie Louise Berg Bjelke
Eline Chao Vaaje
Inga Sóley Kjartansdóttir
Diska Livia
Nora Auberg
Kaori Solvang

Photographer:

Julie Hrnčířová / Studio Abrakadabra

The final month was dedicated to finalizing preparations for upcoming collaborative events, providing me with the opportunity to delve deeper into my research, particularly focusing on the significance of oneself and others within the creative process.

'Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others'

Documentation photo of KHiO Graduation Runway Show, 24th of April, 2024.



[VIDEO LINK](#)

Photographer:
Kristine Jakobsen

The observer: Oneself observing others

29th of February 2024

Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others

Exhibition, Performance & Short Film Screening at the Reception Gallery at KHiO

Immerse yourself into a textile landscape exploring the connection between materiality, body, and movement with interdisciplinary artist Lieu Thi Le. She will be showcasing her master's work-in-progress, alongside collaborative projects.

For this performance, my focus was primarily on observing. Investigating the interaction between a dancer and a single textile sculpture. As well observing how they eventually find connection with others; other bodies and textiles on other bodies.

It started with me reading a meditation for everyone present, encompassing the audience, performers, and even the objects. I deliberately positioned myself to the side, directing attention to the audience observing the dancers within the textile landscape, while the dancers, in turn, observed the audience and their inner worlds.

This performance delved into the concept of self-perception and observation of others. The dancers immersed into the textile installation as if it were an unknown realm, gradually noticing the textile sculptures, each other's bodies, and the audience. Their attention then shifted to one textile sculpture, initiating the emergence of the performance. Textile sculptures transformed into clothing on moving bodies, as well as each one's awareness of others grew within the space.

Seeing oneself, seeing the other, letting the other see you.

Meditation written by Lieu Le

Imagine a space where time does not matter.

In the moment.

Seeing oneself.

Arrive in your body, in the space and in the stillness.

Notice your breath. Notice how you are feeling.

Notice something you have not noticed before.

What reaction is this giving you?

Accept what occurs. Allow it to stay. Allow it to go.

Seeing the other.

Open your eyes. Notice your surroundings.

Notice your body in the space.

Notice something you have not noticed before.

Accept that it is there. You are seeing it. It is seeing you.

How would it be if what you are seeing is not there in this very moment?

How would you feel if the space became empty?

You are seeing the space, the space is seeing you.

Did you notice something you have not noticed before?

In the totality.

Solo-exhibition at the reception gallery at KHiO

Documentation photo of the live-performance 29th of February, 2024

Performer:

Inga Sóley Kjartansdóttir

Mirika Ishida

Eline Chao Vaaje

Julie Louise Berg Bjelke

Ida Simone Weidemann

Anton Skaaning Thomsen



Photographer:
Diska Livia



Photographer:
Diska Livia



Photographer:
Diska Livia

The observer: Oneself observing others

13th and 14th of April 2024

Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others

Performance as a part of the group exhibition, 'Sticks, Stones and Stitches', Akademirommet at Kunstnerens Hus

featuring the work of Lieu Le, Annikken Wilhelmsen, Kjetil Smedal and Lloyd Achim Winter.

For this exhibition, I had two textile sculptures hanging from the ceiling and one on the floor. I was curious to see how my work could harmonize with other artworks in a shared space. Each art piece was placed where we thought would be a suitable balance. However, I was curious if this harmony could be maintained when objects changed their position.

While the hanging sculptures occasionally swayed with gravity or a passing breeze, the floor piece remained still unless set in motion by human touch. Observing my sculptures alongside others', I wanted to see how the floor piece could adapt while moving gracefully with the space. Each performance showcased a single dancer: Ida Simone Weidemann on the first day and Anton Skaaning Thomsen on the second. This time, I aimed to witness the merging of a human body with the textile sculpture, embodying how nature changes due to human force.

'Sticks, Stones and Stitches'

Group-exhibition at Kunstnerens Hus, Akademirommet 12th of April - 14th of April, 2024.

Artists:

Lieu Le

Anniken Wilhelmsen

Kjetil Smedal

Lloyd Achim Winter



Photographer:
Lieu Le



[VIDEO LINK](#)

Performer:

Ida Simone Weidemann (13th of April, 2024)
Anton Skaaning Thomsen (14th of April, 2024)



[VIDEO LINK](#)

Anton Skaaning Thomsen transforming Lieu Le's
textile sculpture into a moving body, in a space
with other artists' works during a live-performance

Photographer:
Lieu Le

The performer: Oneself and Others

25th of April 2024

Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others

Solo-performance as a part of Avgang 2024, Akademirommet at Kunstnerens Hus

This solo performance marked my exploration of 'oneself', referring to myself and my body. In a shared space with 'others'; the textile sculptures and other human bodies, witnessing my movements and interaction with my own creation.

'Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others'

Solo-performance at Kunstnerens Hus, Akademirommet

Documentation photo of the live-performance 25th of April, 2024.



Performer:
Lieu Le



Photographer:
Einar Fuglem

The performer: Oneself and Others

25th of April 2024

Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others

Group-performance as a part of Avgang 2024, Akademirommet at Kunstnerens Hus

I joined my own creations and fellow dancers whom I had previously observed interacting with the textile sculptures. It was entirely improvised, with no rehearsals beforehand, only a brief instruction. I aimed for our movements and connections to emerge naturally, allowing our bodies and textiles to intertwine authentically.

- The audience will encircle us as we enter one by one, moving in a graceful dance-like motion clockwise.
- I will lead the procession, stepping into the center and remaining there.
- Each of you will follow, entering one by one.
- Once you complete one round, find your place and form a circle around me.
- Slowly, we will discover each other, observing one another, the audience, our clothing and the textiles in the space.
- As we move individually with deliberate slowness, I will approach each of you for interaction. When this occurs, I invite you to perform a solo improvisation, exploring the relationship between body and clothing with expansive movements. I will act as an observer.
- After each of you has completed your individual improvisation, we will come together to dance in harmony, engaging in contact improvisation with clothing and body. I may even exchange clothing between performers, assuming the role of the dresser.
- We will conclude the performance by merging into a unified entity, closing our eyes and entering a state of stillness.
- I will then "awaken" and step back, observing you all.

'Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others'

Group-performance at Kunstnerens Hus, Akademirommet

Documentation photo of the live-performance 28th of April, 2024.



Performer:

Lieu Le
Mirika Ishidaco.jp
Inga Sóley Kjartansdóttir
Julie Louise Berg Bjelke
Ida Simone Weidemann
Anton Skaaning Thomsen



Photographer:
Hieu Le



Photographer:
Hieu Le

Learning outcome

My master's project, "Dancing in Tune with Oneself and Others," has been instrumental in shaping my future artistic practice. Through analyzing my creative process and examining my relationship with various elements, I've gained a deeper appreciation for the collaborative nature of artistry and the significance of every component involved, whether it be the people I work with or the tools I use.

Utilizing the clothing-in-movement workshop as a tool, I delved into various aspects that could be further translated into a performance. Working with performance allowed me to explore my concept from different perspectives.

This journey has fostered a sense of gratitude towards previously overlooked aspects and reinforced the understanding that art is a continuous evolution, characterized by exploration and experimentation. Ultimately, this project has laid a solid foundation for my ongoing artistic pursuits.

Work in progress at Kunstnerens Hus, Akademirommet
Documentation photos, 26th of April, 2024.



Photographer:
Einar Fuglem

Special thanks to

Supervisor:

Christina Lindgren

Contributors textile:

Gudbrandsdalen Uldvarefabrik

Krivi Vev

Rauma Garn

Contributors natural dye materials:

Sankt Hanshaugen Blomster

Ille Brød

House of Sushi

Annikken Wilhelmsen

Tobias Bay Bang

Contributors photographer/videographer:

Diska Livia

Hieu Le

Yuzhuo Wang

Eyrún Mueller

Einar Fuglem

Performance collaborators:

Inga Sóley Kjartansdóttir

Mirika Ishida

Eline Chao Vaaje

Julie Louise Berg Bjelke

Ida Simone Weidemann

Anton Skaaning Thomsen

Kristina Gjems

Kaori Solvang

Nora Auberg

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