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Creativity as care during COVID19: The domestic pedagogies of learning from home

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Abstract

This article reflects upon relationships between pedagogy and domesticity in relation to a creative teaching philosophy of 'critical care'. Two contexts frame this discussion. The first: the socio-economic levers that, prior to the pandemic, were working hard to reposition creativity as a 21st century skill demanded by employers and commodified in languages of entrepreneurial innovation by Higher Educational institutions. The second: the home-schooling conditions of Sydney's twin pandemic waves, which for many, merged the homespace and workplace in ways not yet fully understood. In using pedagogy to bridge the logics of homespace and workplace during lockdown, I invoke a series of frameworks invested in expanded notions of creativity. These are performed as 'intermezzo': offering intercutting, non-finished evocations of the disrupted and scattered self. The haiku poetry of a group collaboration timestamps modes of paying attention as one pathway that counterpoints the neoliberalisation of creativity with small acts of everyday world-building.

Keywords: **c**are, COVID19, creativity, pedagogy, performance, youth,

Home-work, life-work, work-work

In this article I reflect upon the role the COVID19 pandemic has played in reshaping not only future conceptions of learning, but learning's conceptions of *the* future. By this I mean to focus on – through care theory intersecting with theories of creativity pedagogies – how the learning moment can be activated in such a way that it embodies a sensing of its own aftermath.

There are two enfolded contexts that frame this discussion. The first: the socio-economic levers that, prior to the pandemic, were already working hard to reposition creativity as a 21st century skill demanded by employers and commodified, largely in neoliberal languages of entrepreneurial innovation, by Higher Educational settings promising employable graduates (Mould, 2018). Ranked as the number one soft skill by Linkedin's 'Workplace Learning Report' (2019), this form of instrumentalised creativity stems from drivers in the creative industries that prioritise problem-solving over 'messy minds' (Kaufman & Gregoire, 2015: xvii), 'uncertainty' and 'beautiful risks' (Beghetto, 2019: 1). The kinds of creative languages, acts and underpinnings

upheld in my field of performance, however, challenge the instrumentalisation of creativity as a language of productivity and profit (Mould 2018). In theatre and performance, whether in the face-to-face or Zoom studio, we work with the elastic temporality of the live performing body. We focus less on problem-solving and more on the radical kinds of world-building that happen when we allow ourselves to generate the future into which we act. Phenomenologically as well as philosophically – as novelist Charlotte Wood notes – we rehearse our discovering of the 'problem' as well as its outcome as we go (Wood, 2015).

The second discourse I draw upon operates in counterpoint to the first. I am a performance studies teacher and researcher, but also, a mother of two young school-aged children (aged six and ten). The lockdown conditions of Sydney's first and second COVID19 waves generated not so much a competition, as a conversation, between the interfolding worlds of life-work and work-work, situating both as a kind of 'home-work'. In the pandemic context, for those parents able to work from home (a privilege in itself), media commentary ran thick and fast on the rebranding of home-space *as* workplace, and home-space *as* school. Less, however, has been made of the third relation in this triad: the home-space operating as the place where lockdown learning came to meet, entangle with, and in my experience, inform workplace expertise.

As COVID19 unfolded, the social isolation experienced by university students was coupled with their heightened envelopment in the language of crisis delivered hourly by governments, health experts and statisticians. Vital forms of responsivity were visualised in the media as modes of taking action: graphs, charts and stats were published daily if not hourly, vaccinations were tested, apps developed and rules and measures for managing a populace in lockdown rapidly rolled out. In Australia, a heated national conversation was simultaneously underway surrounding the vocational value of creative arts and humanities degrees. #Myartsdegree hit the Twitter spotlight as COVID19 numbers surged and universities sector-wide hit their panic buttons to slash courses, degrees, and staff (Kelly, 2022).

COVID19 instrumentalised the pedagogical application of my disciplinary as well as domestic knowledges in a way that I had not expected. Domestic pedagogies – my daily struggles with, and survival through, the labour of being at home – became central to the principles that supported my rapid pivot to online teaching during crisis. These were principles that used creative frameworks to enact forms of 'critical care' – where critical underscores the 'urgency' of refining our 'analytical attention' as well as our capacities to act. Contexts of home-work, life-work, and work-work forced me to consider my expertise not in terms solely of *what* I was teaching, but *how* I was teaching – and what I was teaching for. Five key principles emerged to underpin what follows from this point:

1. How to be purposeful with what is available (resourcefulness)
2. How to use imagination to transform given situations (mental agility)
3. How to act in the moment without knowing the outcome (risk and experimentation)
4. How to listen in to all that surrounds you (collaboration)
5. How to say yes to the "you" who is doing (confidence in communication)

On the surface, these are philosophies about *what happens* in the classroom. For me they became philosophies about making a *classroom happen*, or making *'happening' happen* – whether you are in the classroom or at home. They facilitate learning by building capacities for resilience. They do this this through how they structure togetherness, support diversity of voice and necessitate listening to the room as it is forming.

In this piece of writing, the domestic pedagogies of critical care are performed as 'intermezzo': self-reflexive, autobiographical entries that criss-cross the blurred horizons of home-work, life-work, and work-work. Haiku poetry disrupts and also supports this discussion, performing a collaborative method of timestamped attention to self and a community of intergenerational care in its co-emergence. In doing so the entries below record the acute temporal dissonance caused by the manifold nature of working in lockdown conditions. In some senses they document the incompletion of thought – the distracted mind – as it became tethered and stretched across both camps. Importantly, they shift hierarchies of knowledge, inviting me to ask with my students and my children: what – and how – did I learn from home?

False positives

It is late and despite the winter dark outside, the older child cannot sleep. We hear the foot plods down the stairs. Then we see the panicked eyes. She's panicked because she cannot sleep. She's panicked because not-sleeping is a new thing for her. And she knows that this newness grows itself: not-sleeping breeds more not-sleeping. During lockdown #1 (April 2020), this child was a walking zombie, and by the time Halloween came around and lockdown had eased, her pale face and wild eyes ensured she looked like the ghost she'd been planning to dress up as for so long.

It is now one year later and months into Lockdown #2 (June 2021).

Any sense of novelty has worn off.

Here we are in duration itself.

I don't want to focus on the positives, she declares, burrowing into the couch*. School keeps on telling us to focus on the positives. Like wearing pyjamas and being at home.*

(This is true – her school delivers these messages weekly to their Google Classroom accounts as if they are beacons or missives of hope being pelted out across the school yard from a tinny loudspeaker. Her teacher enjoys being able to 'make tea whenever she wants'. One boy sees benefits in being able to 'play with his dog all the time'.)

This child is not convinced. She tells me that the positives are not really positives. Like the false positives on a COVID19 test, they feel like a lie, or a trick that silly adults make up to stop kids like her describing what they might really be feeling.

Like panic. Like the world has stopped. Like the bottom has fallen through. Like time has melted. She writes in haiku:

A fragile petal
Falls to the base of the vase
The flower is dying
[B. L. Trezise 3/8/21, 5:27:17 pm]

I worry into the night. A group of young anthropology students writing collectively from a UK higher education institution describe their COVID19 experience with an acute sense of its temporal impact – its forcing of their adjustment to new modalities of self within time. 'Young people's actions are like timepieces', they write, 'they act as measures for the emergence of new worlds' (Jones McVey, et al., 2020: 289).

Their self-awareness is impressive. Their voices sharp and moving. They seem to see both the irony and the fact of their mission ahead. 'We are in a new sort of accelerated standstill,' they write. 'We must hurry up and do nothing' (Ibid, 289).

Later, I write in haiku as if to sweep my response to the problem of false positives into some condensed form of storage:

Time has softened strange
It holds us without shape and
Tempts with possibles
[Mummy 13/8/21, 9:20:06 pm]

Creative care

In her foundational work on creative aging, artist and scholar Anne Basting describes the 'vibrat[ional]' possibilities that take place when the terms 'creativity' and 'care' are placed side by side: 'The tension between [them] calls attention to the generative nature of one and the depleting qualities of the other' (2020: 55), Basting explains. This is in part because the terms have thick, politicised, and policed lineages, as well as contexts of application:

> By its very definition, creativity is new and valued. Care seems the opposite, defined by loss, devalued at every turn, pulling down economic productivity and inhibiting generativity. Creativity is the place we want to be. Care is the place we're forced to go. (Basting, 2020: 55).

Basting's work as a practitioner of creative methodologies of care-giving within aging communities has been recognised not only for how it reshapes care practices and policies, but for how it reshapes the condition and sensibility of what it means to experience aging – particularly in the context of dementia and Alzheimer's sufferers and their families. My interest in her proposition for expanding the repertoire and language of care by placing it adjacent to creativity, however, spins on the opposing axis. This is because equally important questions – *vibrations* – are forced when a lexicon of care is added to questions of pedagogy, and particularly

the use of creativity pedagogies operating within Higher Education settings. The language of care invites reconsiderations of what the teaching of creativity 'does' and how and why creativity literacies might be 'taught' or 'learnt'. A secondary question to the question of how we can care more creatively hence asks: *what about* creativity might be understood *as care*? And when creativity is opened out as a form of care, what might we understand about the purpose and value of both?

Care theorist María Puig de la Bellacasa positions care as a speculative methodology that can help our 'thinking and living in more than human worlds' (2017: 1). Care here is at once a burden, a joy, a moral obligation, an affection and also a form of labour. Puig de la Bellacasa's exploration, however, is not utopian, concerned as it is with highlighting how the moral ambiguity of care must account for its paternalistic, even colonial, imputations:

> the 'ethics' in an ethics of care … [is] about thick, impure, involvement in a world where the question of how to care needs to be posed. That is, it makes of ethics a hands-on, ongoing process of re-creation of 'as well as possible' relations and therefore one that requires a speculative opening about what a possible involves. (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017: 6)

The resonance between Basting's and Puig de la Bellacasa's models is instructive. Where Basting's model finds in creativity the potential for reciprocity that seems so fundamental to animating the most fulfilling forms of care, Puig de la Bellacasa's model finds in care the creativity that is fundamental to allowing care-full reciprocity to take place. That is, for Puig de la Bellacasa, the 'how' of 'to care' implies committing a fundamental attention to the matter of relating – perhaps implying a tautology in that 'to care' about care is really 'to care' about how we do the relating. To repeat Puig de la Bellacasa: it is within the ethics of care that the 're-creation of "as well as possible" relations' (2017: 6) must evolve. It is from this basis that we are then invited to consider, in relation to understanding care *as relation*, 'what a possible involves'.

In terms of pedagogies of both critical care and creativity, attending to *a* possible, 'the possibles' or even what *feels* possible – in any given moment – means finding ways to model paying attention to the lived apparatus – the temporal unfolding – in which oneself is co-emergent. During COVID19, seeing and sensing the possibilities for action and enaction felt greatly diminished as lockdown shuttered the busy-ness of our working lives. And yet the work of attending to 'what a possible involves' necessitates precisely the labour of finding, sensing, allowing to emerge – as a critical care praxis – potentials of relation within given constraints. In theatre discourse, particularly in traditions of improvisation and drama games, which Basting also discusses, the training is quite simple but emphatic: saying 'yes' to the offer being made, finding ways to move, generate, build and participate within the given set of unfolding and transforming parameters.

Being in uncertain times

In class a student sits, watching the clock (Figure 1). But this is no ordinary display of being in disinterested, distracted time. She is seated on a stool, facing us, a pocket watch on a chain suspended in front of her face.

Figure 1: Quianer Chen, 'Time', 2021

The watch swings.

Her eyes follow it.

The watch swings.

Her eyes still follow it.

We watch her eyes following the watch. While she might be in some form of self-hypnotic ritual, we are on the edge of our seats. Our time feels sharpened, intensified. Her unblinking eyes begin to glass over with commitment to their task. We wince as the job of being *in* time, being *with* time, *producing* as well as *moving* through time, *burns*.

Tears roll down her cheeks – at once mourning as well as marking their role in being witness to time's passing.

Time hurts.

Or is it the self that hurts as it watches itself move away from itself, *in* time?

Ed Scheer explains that in performance, time can be structured to manipulate how an audience experiences a work: 'Duration … implies a specific construction of time, a deliberate shaping of it to effect a particular experience for the viewer' (Scheer, 2010: 8). The clever young people whose words I cited above seem to already understand their role as curators, or composers, *of* our time(s). Scheer is writing about the lifework of Australian performance artist Mike Parr – but in the case of these young people the implied viewer, the one in the midst of this

'accelerated standstill' must be the self (Jones McVey, et al., 2020: 289). We find a way to self-see through how we hold time steady, through our roles in co-building the time signature(s) of the moment. Contrarily, we find a way to see and be in time by steadying self within it.

But time's flow is not steady, it is manifold, as the One Year Performance of Taiwanese artist Tehching Hsieh makes breathtakingly clear in our class discussion. Adrian Heathfield describes Hsieh's hourly ritual of photographing himself during the period 1980-1981 as involving us, the viewers of some 40 years' delay, in 'thick braids of paradoxical times' in which distinctions between past, present and future come undone (2009: 22). As Hsieh's actions force our own 'thick braids' to come into view, this sense that we experience the time of our own making as being built across and through 'inter-subjective and inter-relational exchange' becomes key to understanding the *work* of our work in the specific time-space of COVID19 time. Whence, as Healthfield explains, 'time is in part a product of structures of thought … our perceptions and understandings of time are a cultural construct, and as such, open to revision' (2009: 22).

I write Heathfield's words on the whiteboard as Sydney's 2021 COVID19 case numbers explode around us. As if the words themselves will sustain us. We are still here but suddenly our 'hereness' is different – masked, socially distanced, tentative.

Untrusting.

The news of the last 48 hours (130 COVID cases and rising) has made us cautious – of movement, of breath, of cross-contamination. The thick braids shadow the room and in the following days we are plunged into Lockdown #2.

In some senses we have been sent back into being with where we were before.

Glide along the ice
Opening a wooden box
Create what you can
[B. L. Trezise 4/8/21, 6:06:49 pm]

How to find a possible

In Basting's model of care, creativity is valued for its role in imagining and re-casting relations. Relations here apply not just to people, but to the 'worlding' of environments in which self might become reframed, to/for/by itself. Basting explains:

> Creative care is an agreement between people to imagine themselves, each other, and their worlds a little differently. It is an invitation to shape the world together. For people denied the tools for world-shaping, this invitation can be a profound and life-changing act of healing. (2020: 57)

The students are now working online. My kids are now working downstairs. Both worlds are spinning off-axis.

In the compressed time-space of the digital as it meets the lived edges of my homeworkspace, sweat appears. It is not just on my skin. It has been smudged on the innards of this house, this white concrete sponge soaking up our collective unease.

The walls are creeping.

In the mornings, I try to make a maths lesson out of cutting up and planting potatoes. The cutting and the digging hold us steady for half an hour. Little fingers in busy earth, little noses in fresh air. The predictive multiplication – how many potatoes will we have? – perhaps a novel realisation.

But expectation falters: the potatoes fail in their task. They take *too long* to grow. The sourdough starter froths gleefully in the corner – it seemed to know this would happen.

I develop an obsession with seeds. I start saving these time capsules – capsicum, avocado, lemon - as if the apocalypse is upon us and they will be needed for future harvests. One lettuce – six weeks from seed to table – demolished in two days.

We feel once more just how hard it is to wait with time.

Online, students are working hard to recalibrate, but their efforts remain static. They are in shock. They communicate this through physical stillness. Our screens hold us frozen in place. It seems we have forgotten how to move.

We play *What's the Time Mister Wolf?* in our bedrooms/broom cupboards/kitchens. The students freeze and move, freeze, and move. I catch them out. And repeat. We conduct a slow-motion running race to *Chariots of Fire*. Just how slow can we go? Just how tensile can each movement be? We translate what would have been an exercise of physical touch into spoken instructions and become puppets to each other's voiced choreographics. In this digitally distanced exercise, spoken words 'impress' a body into unfamiliar movement positions in place of physical proxemics.

A student showcases his work.

His eyes are shut.

He traces his face with his hands while drawing his portrait on his bedroom wall. The action is careful, internal. Self-intimate (Figure 2). The student then opens his eyes, sees himself and dances the inscription. His dance embodies the sketch which in turn embodies the internal mind's eye. Which part(s) of the self-seeing-self have we been invited to see? Which parts of the self are seeing itself in process, in motion?

The word understates the beauty of his offering, but we come to call his instant choreographics a 'whoosh'. It is an act, literally, of self-composition.

In the 1990s media theorist Andrew Murphie (1997) coined the phrase 'soft body' to delineate the ways in which performance art can use the material body in order to surpass the power encoded in representation. Working with Lacanian psychanalytic frameworks, and towards Deleuze and Guattarian frameworks of machinic desire, Murphie explains that a soft body is one that works at arriving at a beyond of signification. A soft body is 'just' a body or a 'nobody', even. He explains:

> Performance softens the body, and makes culture aware of the softness of the body. It attacks a consistent morphology of the body by proposing alternatives. It points to, and more than this, energises, the flows of the body in breath, organs and blood. It shows the body moving, and doesn't just present it as a rigid taxonomic representation of frozen muscles, subjected to a cultural meaning. (1997: 65)

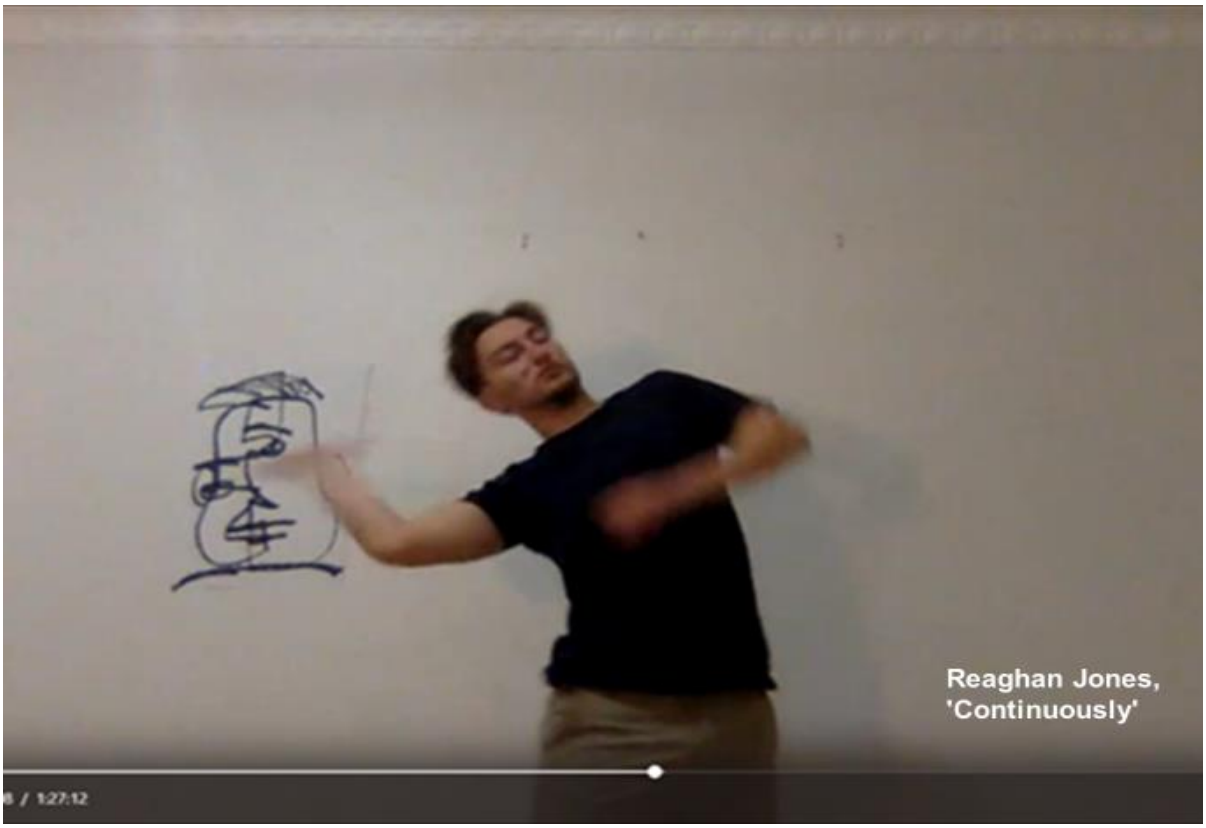

Figure 2: Reaghan Jones, 'Continuously' 2020

This premise has driven our explorations in this class for years: how to activate that field of 'beyond' by working with the material of the body, in all its *significance*? Working online makes this question even more complex. A soft body can possibly never be achieved but can it be visualised / enacted in/as a process of attempt? As Murphie suggests, '[It] is a micro-economic thing. It happens in the moments of performance. For a moment, performer, audience, or both, experience something different, something which cannot be easily assimilated into identity and taxonomy' (1997: 65). It is a paradox in that setting itself in motion is both the body-self's means of departure and arrival.

With the whoosh, self de- and re-materialises with/through us in time.

He, as we, have been *moved*.

Into the (next) moment.

Take a step forward
Whirl into infinity
Pull back its covers
[B. L. Trezise 5/8/21, 8:12:46 pm]

Wednesdays

On Wednesdays, my children wake thick with anxiety. There is no Zoom lesson today, no promise of even digital connect to pull them forwards.

The day already feels infinite.

I'm just tired, the older one says, her eyelids lingering downcast. But this lethargy, we know, is existential.

There is panic, too, about the school work: maths sums, spelling lists, comprehensions weigh as if pressing into her spine, reshaping her with determined incompletion.

The other (younger) is busy in the corner, a bowerbird making worlds of piles and piles of worlds with collections gathered daily.

What feels possible?

The smallest thing.

One step. One breath.

A pile.

This is where we must begin.

This is our home-work.

This is the score, I say, jaw tightening as I push my morning's work to the side: make a whoosh with your whole body. *Whoosh*. Dance it, let's go!

My legs hurt, she says, reluctant to move.

We put music on and the three of us find a way into moving towards movement. For a moment I am an actor playing the role of a famous mother, Anna Halprin, who danced with her children daily in a pedagogical philosophy of movement as breath, self, wellness (Gerber, 2009). I laugh at how clumsily I *move* into this role.

Later, we go to the park. Cockatoos screech above us, desecrating palm trees, before swooping down to dig at the grass. The younger child grabs my phone to record them, their beaks tearing through bark.

Bowerbird meets cockatoo and all seems equal.

In the background I see the other (older) dance ten different whooshes, each located, each sculpturally emplaced in a feature of playground architecture. One unfurls in slow motion on the solo merry-go-round; one is elevated, expansive, delivered to the sky; one is *all about the hair*. One whoosh takes place amidst bubbles that pop and zing around her.
(The bubbles are imaginary, but I see them all the same).

What does a whoosh *set in* motion? In what ways might it animate through creativity the 'towards' of a methodology of critical care?

Where a false positive might instrumentalise a series of false or pretended relations by animating a series of feelings that are not really there, a possible reorientates us to/as the present moment and provides us with scaffolding to understand modes of being-in-relation as modes of acting, enacting and hence, activating.

Perhaps Puig de la Bellacasa would agree that a possible is what allows for a positive to appear.

The smallest thing.

One step. One breath.

Perhaps I am suggesting that it is somewhere between attending to what feels possible and discovering the positives that critical care appears.

It appears *to do its work*.

The nature of this kind of work might be expressed thus: when I am thinking *through* and *with* creativity, my whole self or bodymind is engaged in an act of imaginative grasping. When I am thinking *through* and *with* creativity I am trying to move myself through the 'given circumstances' (here and now) and into a beyond that I'm yet to – but am in the process of – feeling. And I use the verb grasping because creativity is sensory, tactile, embodied and affective. A 'whoosh' both expresses and animates a body-sensed analytics of affectivity. 'Sense' – in the fullness of its doubled meanings – appears to, and through, the self.

We trudge home, damp from gentle rain. The kids build a fortress colonising my work desk, spending hours online with their cousins in secret bowerbird business.

This majestic space
Opens out its soft wisdom
Patiently alive
[Mummy 5/9/21, 6:04:09 pm]

Rapid spatial reframing act

The next week in class the students work on a new task. We call this a ten-minute rapid spatial reframing act. With cameras off they become bowerbirds: mining their households for ways to reorientate the viewer. They are invited to attend to – or defamiliarise – the 'understood' dimensions of the domestic settings that they have been working within. They are encouraged to consider how space might become less of a film or theatre set and more of a material apparatus. Their task is to arrest our perspectives, to take us into new worlds by reshaping theirs.

In the transfer from live studio to Zoom studio, most of our attempts at discovering what live performance can potentially become online have so far tended towards replication. By this I mean that the experiments have tended to feel more like the Zoom camera is watching theatre unfold at a distance, as if we are watching a BBC recording of theatre enacted live, on a set elsewhere.

We are working now to try to 'remediate' what we understand about performance in digital conditions. We are trying to learn how to put the digital mechanism to work on its own terms.

We set each rapid spatial reframing act to a spontaneous sound piece selected by the production designer. A collision emerges here, between choice and chance, between unexpected optics and the ways in which sound signals the chronotope of another world.

Surprise is in the air.

One student works with a large sheet of silhouetted crepe paper. The camera flashes on but we are in darkness despite a small hole, which has been cut to reveal a set of eyes. And the eyes are fixed on us (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Isabelle Clements 'clickingclickingclicking' 2020

From their strange world the eyes follow us. The eyes take their time. The eyes take up time. The eyes swallow time, hang in time's suspension. We are in an 'accelerated standstill'. We must all 'hurry up and do nothing' (Jones McVey, et al., 2020: 289).

A voice behind the eyes speaks: "Fear. Old images. Hoarding. A labyrinth. Clicking buttons. Forever shopping. Clicking buttons. Forever shopping."

This work invites us to see and re-feel how we are being. In uncertain times.

Nowhere, no thing she
Hovers in between moments
Calling herself home
[Mummy 31/8/21, 5:05:15 pm]

Nervous systems

At night, when my children are in bed, I set myself the task of creative exploration. This is a writing experiment. A letterbox leaflet promising the services of psychic assistance has arrived like a humorous, even dangerous, beacon. Its voice is arresting, its certainty of place in a world in crisis, compelling. In post-it notes I pin on the wall the following phrases:

Showspace histories
Paranormal genius
Hoaxery

My chance encounter with the leaflet becomes the impulse to explore thematics, by doing them as method. In my writing experiment the leaflet provides a refrain that seems to be hanging around the person who seems to have the voice of a main character. *I can break the most strongest of spells.* This character has just been told by a fake magician that she is in grave danger.

Enacting theme as method brings about a testing of what Cuban-American dramatist Maria Irene Fornes has called in a documentary about her life's practice 'transport[ing] yourself to a world that at the same time you are creating it' (Memran, 2020). Fornes' language, a language of the pedagogies of creativity expressed and explored through dramatic form, echoes Puig de la Bellacasa's call for care to materialise through an 'ongoing process of re-creation of "as well as possible" relations.' Here I am struck by the tautology internal to these concepts: 'as well as possible relations' are perhaps those which enable relations of possibility to emerge.

For Fornes, '[l]earning how to become intimate with your own imagination is more important than accomplishing a piece,' reminding us of the distinction between 'earning a living' and 'earning a life' (Memran, 2020). Exploring creativity through writing offers one way into understanding what finding a possible might involve, given that my writing practice is modelled on the opposite of what good knowing is generally thought to be. My worlds are scored – literally – by chance, gut feelings, illogics, dream sensations, deviances, disruptions, intuitions. This is a scoring that is invested in paying attention to what is available as a form of understanding a possible relation – or, a relation of possibility. By focussing on what is available, I wrestle with discovering – word by word – what seems possible. 'See how simple it is,' Fornes comments. 'It's not even about making things, it's about being present' (Memran, 2020).

Intuiting has been described as a 'complex set of interrelated cognitive, affective and somatic processes in which there is no apparent intrusion of deliberate, rational thought' (Hodgkinson, et al., 2008: 1). Others describe intuition as the unconscious transmission of perception: 'a form of knowledge that expresses itself in thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations in connection with a deeper perception and understanding of sense-making (Mayer & Mayreeb, 2017: 475).

When intuition appears to me through/as writing, the social field of the world-in-making feels 'hot'. I write where the 'heat' feels like it sits. And I send my internal gaze to sit with it until it tells me enough to move on. Can knowing about heat in this way be a 'good' kind of knowing?

In her interviews with Australian writers, Charlotte Wood uses the term 'heat-seeking' to describe this key part of the creative process in which material is identified as feeling 'hot' or 'alive':

> [Heat-seeking] refers to the way in which all participants would separate promising from unpromising draft material, by detecting and following the 'power' or 'energy' felt to be in the area of attention. In much the same way as a heat-seeking missile detects the whereabouts of its target, the energy radiated for each writer, which could emanate from any part of their work. (2015: 40)

Psychologist in everyday creativity Ruth Richards (2018) draws on theories of Jungian "active imagination" to describe the bodyminded benefits of acknowledging the energetics attached to such internal image-sensations. Richards explains via Jung that it is a process which 'allows unconscious material to express itself, through emergence of forms, suspend[ing] "rational critical faculties" it can "bring things alive"' (2018: 36). Richards continues: 'We don't just see something "out there." Or "in here" either. The construction is complex and profound, drawing from an outer manifest reality and inner processes' (2018: 35).

In these accounts, creativity forces a body-brain to stretch and train through becoming different to its continuously relational self. Discovering the bio-physio-logical sensation of this becoming difference creates increased capacities for managing that space of 'not-knowing' again.

And again.

It trains the bodymind to experience this place as a place of pleasure and possibility, rather than fear. Richards explains that it also has measureable health benefits, such as increased T-cell counts and raised immunity (2018: 37).

When Sara Ahmed reminds us that 'self-care' is 'warfare', she builds on Audre Lorde's statements around the histories of oppression surrounding Black, queer and people of colour to exist in states beyond, or other than, survival. Ahmed makes the case that: '[t]o care for oneself: [is] how to live for, to be for, one's body when you are under attack' (2014). This sense of self-care, very different from neoliberalised languages of wellbeing, speaks to the ways in which paying deep attention to embodied states and the circumstances in which they are produced offers modes of action, and enaction, from within.

Is my accidentally intuitive writing practice a way for me to become better at being knowing-ful, which, I would make the case, is not the same as being knowledgeable? And if I am becoming knowing-ful, is there value in this non-empirical but decidedly self-centric methodology – in the political sense of what creative pedagogies of critical care might be and do?

Day, night all the same
So hard to keep track of time!
Everything just is
[B. L. Trezise 12/9/21, 7:52:55 pm]

QR haiku

I send out the instructions for our intergenerational 5 o'clock haiku group on a whim, early into lockdown #2. There are five of us females on board – between us we are friends, mentors, mothers, daughters, aunts and grandmothers aged between 6 and seventy-something.

Like Tching Hseih's clockwork ritual, our underpinning philosophy aims to use haiku as method for punctuating time, for paying deep attention, and through this, for recording self-in-relation as a measure of our connection.

1. Write at 5pm or thereabouts
2. Post by that evening
3. Date and name your post
4. Repeat the next day, and the next
5. Invite a friend to join if you wish.

We become gently allied by the rhythms of our timestamped poetry. Our work becomes a kind of determined inversion of the incessant QR sign-ons we are being asked to perform wherever we go, as each poem seems to say: 'I/this *was* in an emergent and profound *here*'.

The renowned work of writing teacher Natalie Goldberg frames our process. Her study *Three Simple Lines* describes haiku as 'a refuge when the world seems chaotic, when you are lost, frightened, tangled and nothing is clear' (2021: 1). Drawing on the poet Allan Ginsberg, Goldberg notes that haiku's three lines produce a deceptive simplicity, which should aim to '"make the mind leap … upon hearing one your mind experiences a small sensation of space … which is nothing less than god"' (2021: 4).

Like Ginsberg's observation of the sensation of a mind being made to leap, creativity researcher Michelle Root-Bernstein evokes the capacity for haiku to distil self within a moment, while at the same time sublimating self in focus of paying attention. This is what Goldberg frames as the 'way' of haiku: 'bare attention, no distractions, pure awareness, noticing only what is in the moment' (Goldberg, 2021: 5). Root-Bernstein records her observations of working with haiku in a school-based setting:

> The haiku focused class attention on observing, or honing sense perception, and on visual imaging, both important tools for thinking. Can we learn not just to recognize, but to see a thing in the real world each time as if for the first time? Can we recall that thing seen with our mind's eye? (2001: 137)

In Root-Bernstein's study, dance was translated into haiku and vice-versa, allowing body and text to both rehearse and voice imaging techniques and practices:

> Martha Graham, like so many choreographers, composed dance on and with the body, though not without the input of tremendous visual imagination. Isabel Allende composes narrative in a captivating flow of words, but not without first feeling what she wants to say in the tension and disposition of the body. (2001: 135)

The foregrounding of a deep listening in to what is internally 'felt' as a valid momentum for knowing, and holding that knowledge as a form of creativity literacy repositions modalities of intuitive, bodyminded forms of knowledge within the broader educational canon and system. This 'tools-for-thinking' approach to creativity learning, in which transformation and translation of media into other media transcends disciplinary logics and instead highlights the role of core skills in paying attention, imaging, abstracting, bodythinking and patterning makes clear the role creativity plays in both attending to what feels possible and sourcing, from this, the positives.

What kind of education system would have the courage to imagine its future thus?

Child you can see
Interesting things in your mind
I love my mind
[C. L. Trezise 5/8/21, 8:11:04 pm]

Domestic pedagogies at work

Exploring how creativity works as care allowed me to demonstrate to students how pedagogies – knowledges – in the creative arts and humanities are 'critical' to crisis and hence to imagining new futures. Emerging at the intersection of care theory and creative practice, the domestic pedagogies discovered with my students and my children allowed us to foreground in open, non-deterministic, not-output-driven ways: i) bodyminded ways of sensing-knowing ii) relational responsivity as social responsibility, iii) emergence, uncertainty and playful risk, and iv) multi-species 'vocalities' of difference, minority and vulnerability. As a language of care these pedagogies revealed how the creative arts model critical care as a form of social, civic and political responsivity – where critical underscores the 'urgency' of refining our sensed 'analytical attentions' as well as our capacities to act.

When I asked in our final lesson what students were taking away from our large first year course, one student offered this response in chat: 'Self-awareness - you are participating in every event that you are within - and having accountability'. When students are able to both perceive and experience the production of the classroom in the moment in which it is taking place, they sense their own relational – positional – agency as thinkers, makers and creators. They engage in creative acts of critical care of the highest order and social value.

Four beady soft eyes
Watching, waiting, expectant
The weekend rolls by
[Mummy 26/9/21, 9:12:31 pm]

Author Biography

Bryoni Trezise is a senior lecturer at UNSW Sydney. She has published two books and prize-winning articles on performance aesthetics, pedagogies, and cultures. She was 2020 recipient of the UNSW Dean's Award for Teaching and was awarded the 2021 Children's Book Council NSW Charlotte Barton Waring Award to develop her first novel for children.

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