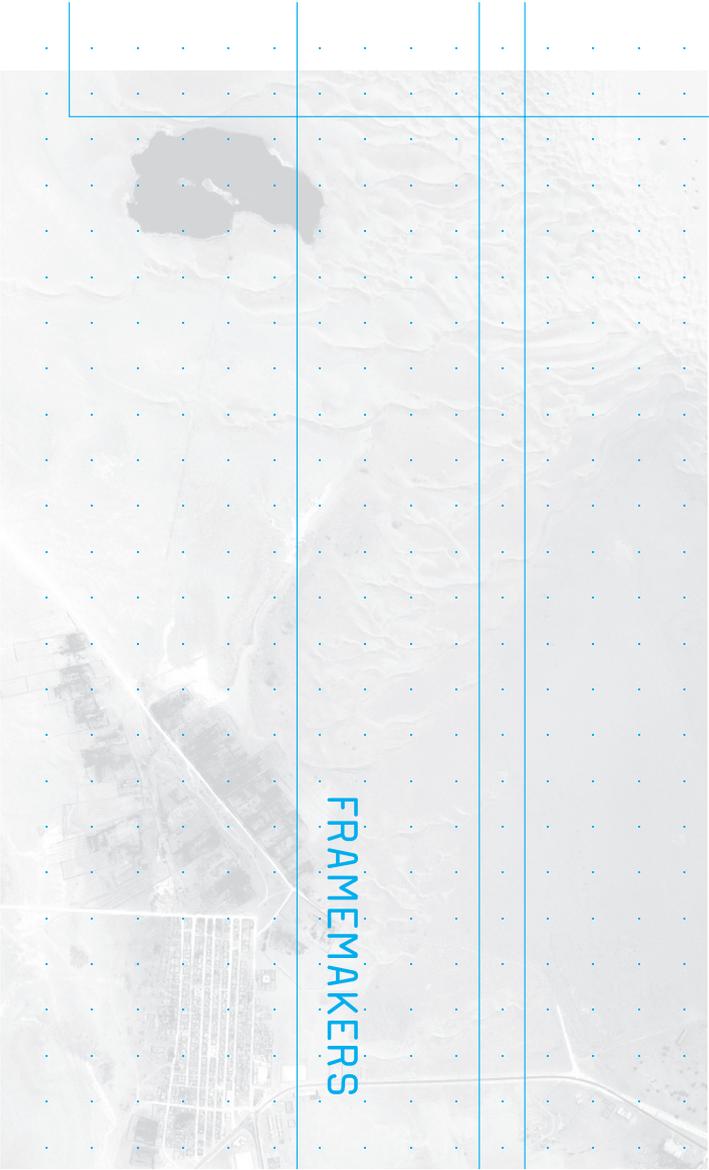


CHOREOGRAPHY AS AN AESTHETICS OF CHANGE/
A SYMPOSIUM THAT EXPLORES A WORLD UNDERSTOOD IN TERMS
OF RELATIONS, ORDER AND ECOLOGIES/

PUBLIC THINK TANK/ 13 MAY-12 JUNE 2005/
DAGHDHA DANCE COMPANY, CHURCH OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS/
JOHN'S SQUARE, LIMERICK, IRELAND/

... IT'S TIME TO START PLAYING FOR REAL/



FRAMEMAKERS

choreograph (v.): bodies in time and space

choreograph (v.): act of arranging relations between bodies in time and space

choreography (v.): act of framing relations between bodies ... 'a way of seeing the world'

choreography (n.): result of any of these actions

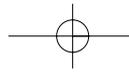
choreography (n.): a dynamic constellation of any kind, consciously created or not, self-organising or super-imposed

choreography (n.): order observed ... exchange of forces ... a process that has an observable or observed embodied order

choreograph (v.): act of witnessing such an order

choreography (v.): act of interfering with or negotiating such an order

Text by Jeffrey Gormly and Michael Klien

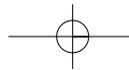


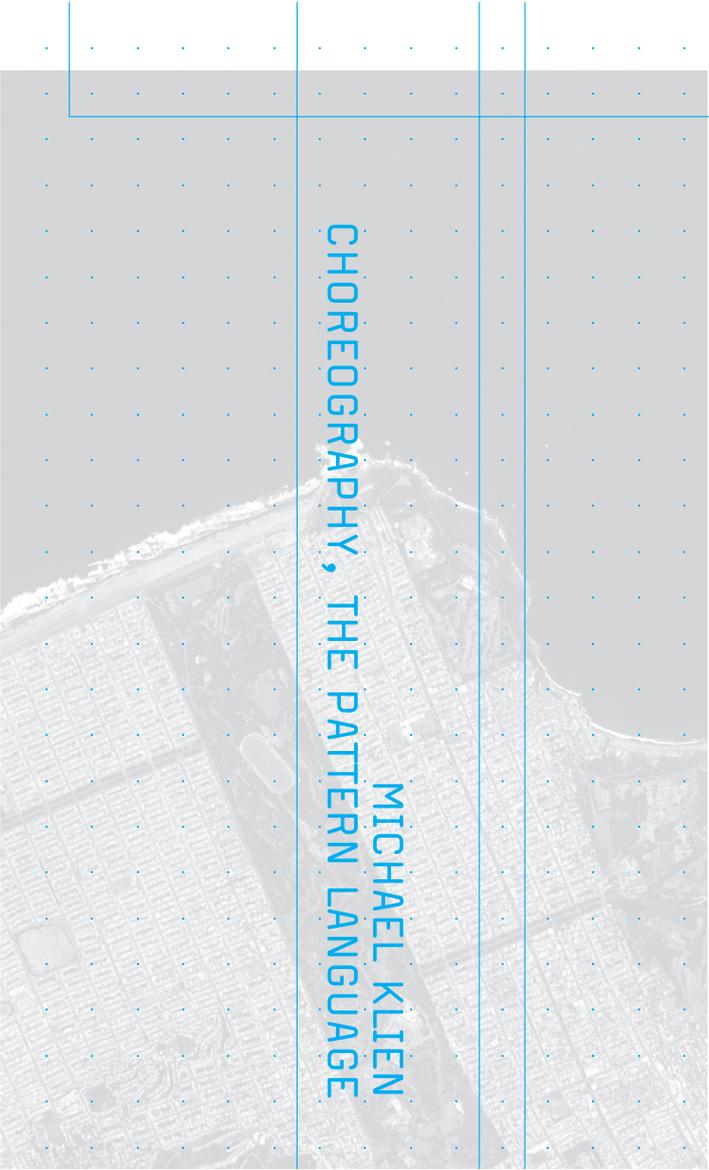
Framemakers is an ongoing inquiry into a world understood in terms of relations, order and ecologies.

Daghda Dance Company hosts a new kind of social space, a think tank that invites the public to enquire into the deeper structures and dynamics that bind this world, in which we have our being, together. Framemakers poses the question of how we can move things in an ever-changing and deeply interconnected world, how we can imaginatively order and re-order aspects of our personal, social, cultural and political lives. Framemakers aims to embody and foster a new understanding of choreography, choreography as the creative act of setting humans, actions, ideas and thoughts in relation to one another, to create order, channel energies, explore dynamics and create the conditions for something to happen.

Following the Framemakers symposium in Limerick (May/June 2005) a second leg of Framemakers, the Theatre-Congress, will be presented at the Project Theatre, Dublin as part of the Dublin Fringe Festival on 12–17 September 2005.

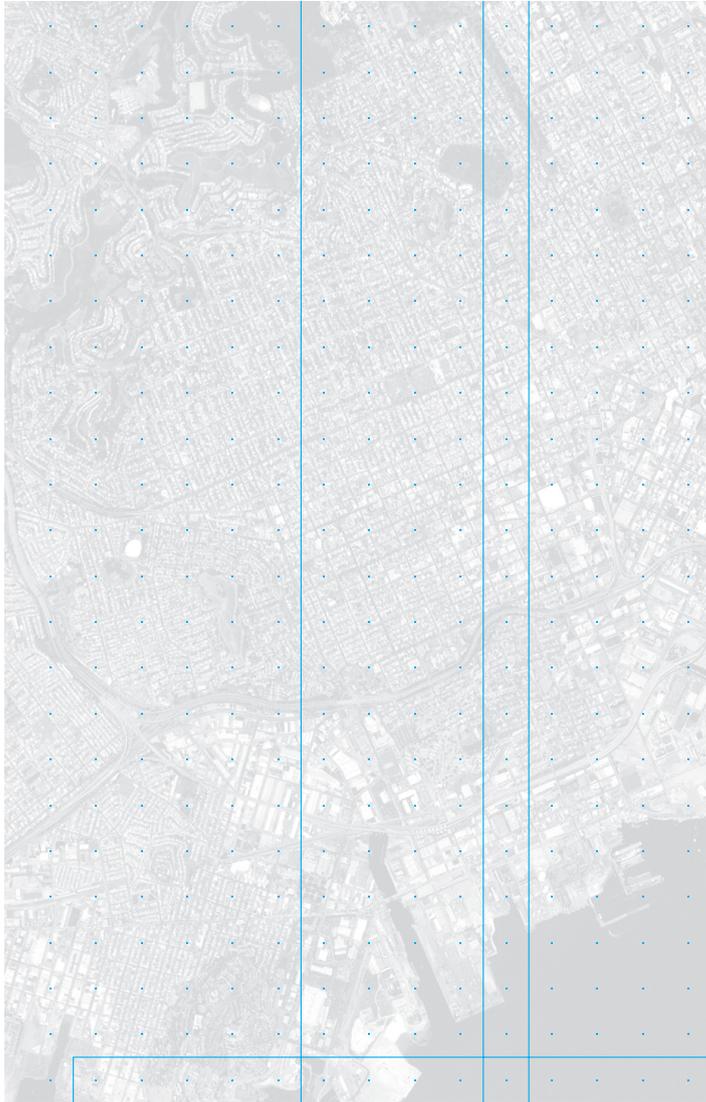
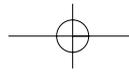
... it's time to start playing for real.





MICHAEL KLIEN
CHOREOGRAPHY, THE PATTERN LANGUAGE

Patterns are everywhere. Patterns are in between, ephemeral but real. They are only visible to us under certain conditions, in certain wavelengths for us to grasp. The fact is that those patterns govern our lives. Routines, solar systems, life and conversations – all governed by subtle frames of patterns of some sort ... the patterns we live by. This is the search for patterns, patterns as Gregory Bateson reminds us ... 'that connect the crab to the lobster and the orchid to the primrose, and all of them to me and me to you', aiming to imagine and formulate a vividly presented awareness of some profound and ambiguous structures and dynamics working in man and nature. Patterns are not rigid, they are fluid constellations, appearing and disappearing, crystallizing and dissolving, being born and dying: an ongoing dance of creation and de-creation in the world in which we have our being – a subtle frame of flight. Amongst and in between this dance lies a world full of interaction, relationships, constellations, dependencies, arrangements and ecologies.

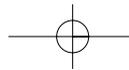


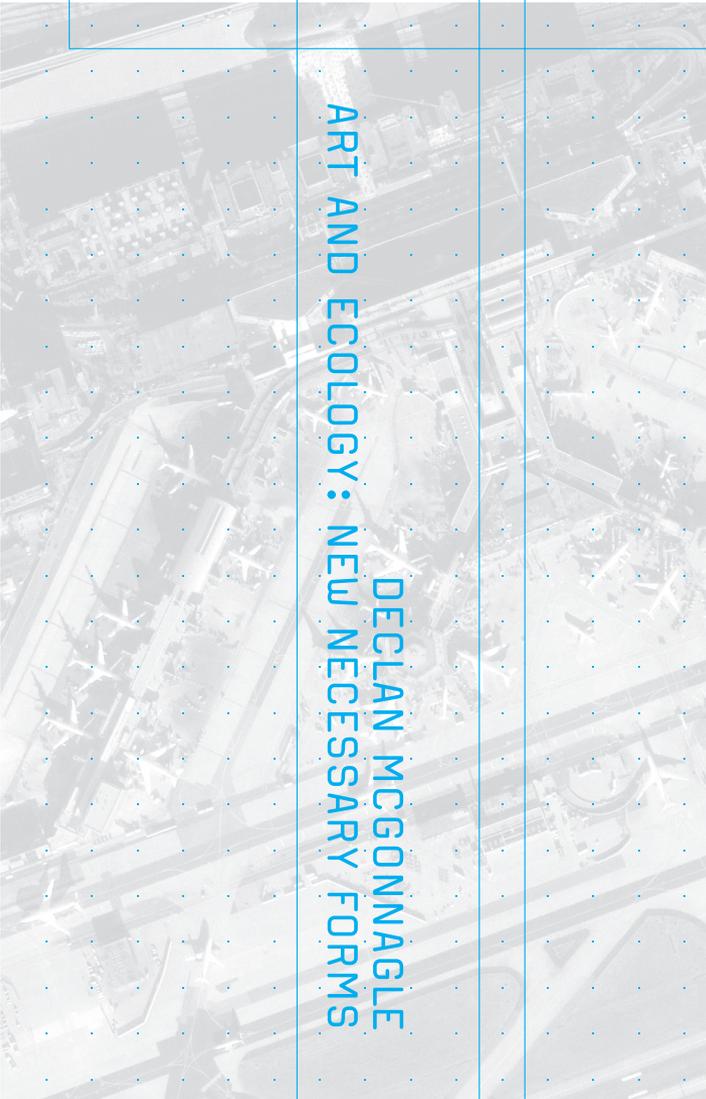
To enquire into the world of changing patterns and the forces at play, is to enquire into the choreography of life, examining what makes us dance and why. Patterns can grow, live, learn and propagate – we might call those patterns an idea, a mug or Wilson. However those terms are only distinctions and Wilson, the mug and the idea form parts of other patterns, patterns of patterns. We, ourselves, are part of those larger choreographies and our acts are acts upon them. This requires responsibility and creative action. It requires a thorough exploration into the wider grammar of patterns, their proportionality and their paradoxes to discover the frames that bind us together and makes us see the dances we dance.

Such sensitive knowledge sheds light on the impossibility of static frames and infuses doubt into existing structures in regards to a 'wider knowing'. A new clarity of interdependence asks for the rebuilding and re-framing of self and the way we conduct our life, interact, love, consume and apply ourselves to the social- and eco-sphere.

We have the superpowers to bring about change; to create conducive conditions for things to happen, for patterning and re-patterning within the continuum of life. Doing so is the act of the choreographer in each of us – the negotiator, the navigator and architect of a fluid ecology we are all part of.

** Gregory Bateson – Mind and Nature*





ART AND ECOLOGY: NEW NECESSARY FORMS
DECLAN MCGONNAGLE

The word 'ecology' immediately summons up the idea of negotiable relations, the idea of rights, responsibilities and participation and ultimately the idea of citizenship – local and global.

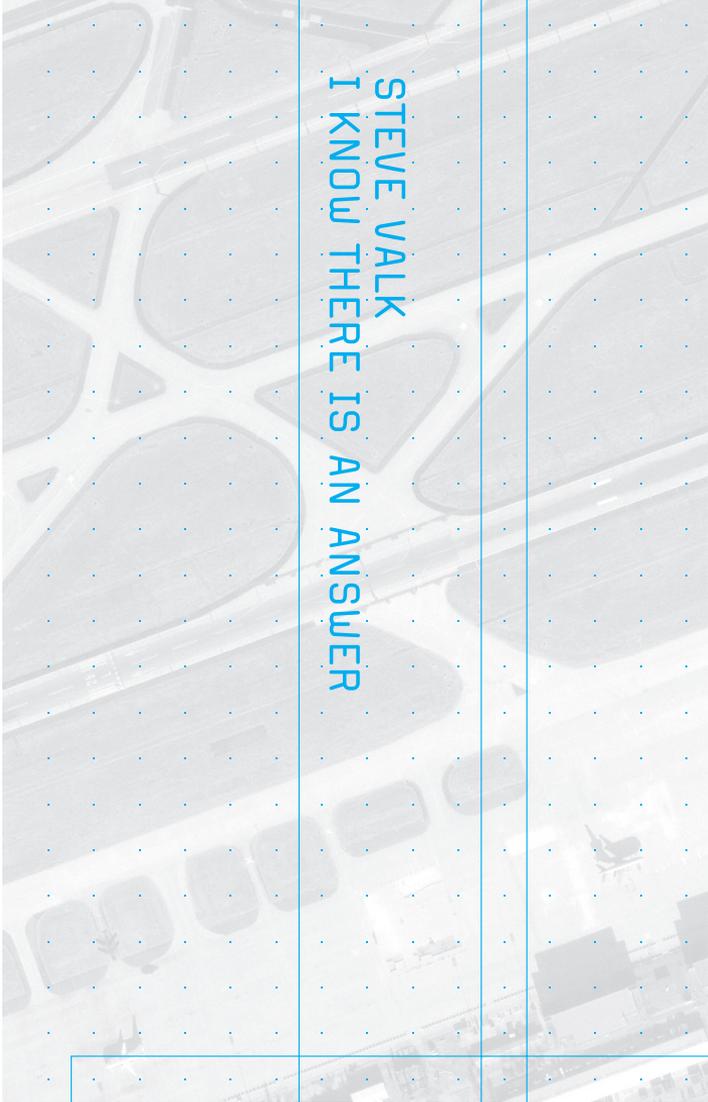
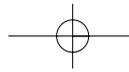
It is very interesting how, in the recent past, there have been incremental challenges to the existential model of the artist, as somehow the model to be aspired to but which projects separateness and disconnectedness.

Whereas ecology as an idea presumes thinking differently, presumes another model – a model of connectedness – and this, I would argue, is not only possible but necessary as we face into huge problems for the human project on this planet.

What is emerging and has to be supported is the model of the artist as negotiator, one who, by implication, with others, participates in negotiation in social space, the outcomes of which are not predetermined.

It is only out of this shift to a process of negotiation, rather than the inherited model of producer and consumer, that the new forms we need in this period, will be generated and validated.

New forms, not only of production but also of post-production for it is, arguably, in post-production, in the distribution space where the value of art is negotiated and created – where public value lies.



STEVE WALK
I KNOW THERE IS AN ANSWER

Gregory: Consciousness and aesthetics are the great untouched questions.

Mary-Catherine: But whole rooms and libraries are full of those ‘untouched’ questions.

Gregory: No, no. What is untouched is the question: Onto what sort of surface shall ‘aesthetics’ and ‘consciousness’ be mapped?

Brian: I know so many people who think they can do it alone. They isolate their heads and stay in their safety zones.

Steve: I am drinking tea ... and waiting.

Brian: Now what can you tell them? And what can you say that won’t make them defensive?

Mary-Catherine: They come on like they are peaceful but inside they are so uptight. They drip through the day and waste all their thoughts at night.

Brian: Now how can I come on and tell them the way that they live could be better?

Gregory: I know there is an answer. I know now, but I had to find it by myself.

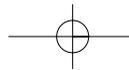
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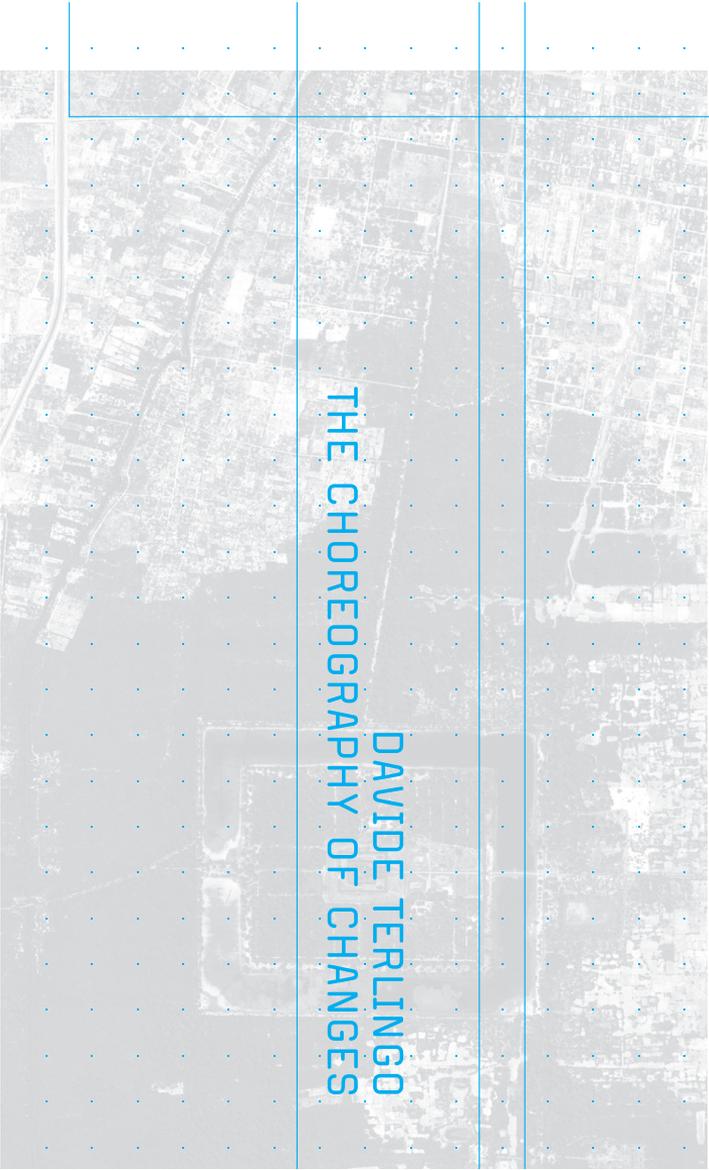
Gregory Bateson – Mind and Nature

Mary-Catherine Bateson – Mind and Nature

Brian Wilson – Pet Sounds

Steve Valk – himself



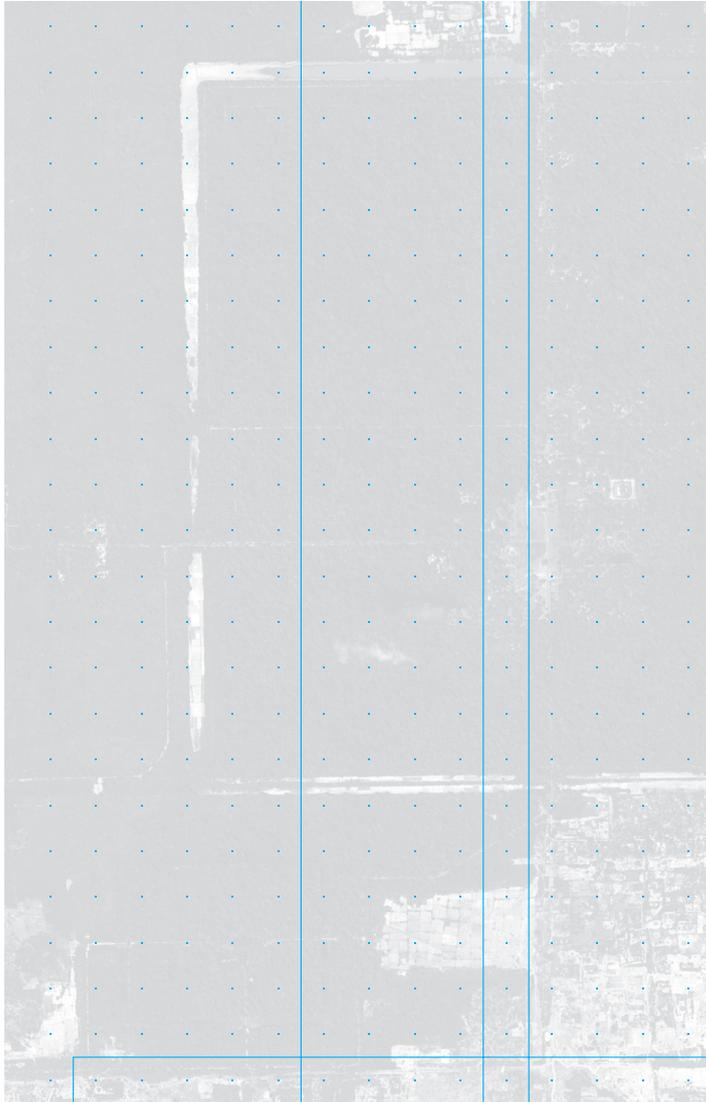
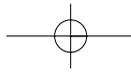


DAVIDE TERLINGO
THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF CHANGES

Where are our boundaries, how far can we change the world around us and how easily can we change ourselves? How deeply can we comprehend the dynamic processes of change and what tools can we develop to expand our actions and knowledge? Being human is inevitably connected with natural forms of limitations, natural because embedded in nature – a nature that is all, and, when detached from anthropocentric views, manifesting a consistency transcending any simplification of human reasoning. However such consistency is to be found within the human limits too, a type of consistency that reflects the workings of nature making them closer to our understanding and experience.

Some of these limitations are dictated by the laws of physics and, consequently, by the physio/biology defining our physical essence. Through them our bodies become clearly recognisable entities and acquire a unique physiognomy filling a (de)limited space whose visible boundaries coincide with a layer of skin. Here is where our physical bodies end, where the 'I' becomes the 'else' and where the internal becomes external. Therefore the boundary is a limitation but, at the same time, it is an essential trait of our being, it defines who we are.

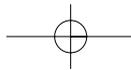
Other limitations seem to extend beyond material factuality – intended and perceived as a natural order pre-existing in the physical phenomenology. These appear as a different sort of limitations, closely linked with the nature of being human, the nature of the subject seen as a unique psychological and cultural identity: not what is touched but what is felt, not the perceived but the perception, not the form but the idea. Examples of this kind are any types of social, moral, religious or intellectual restrictions, beliefs and definitions – other essential aspects defining who we are.

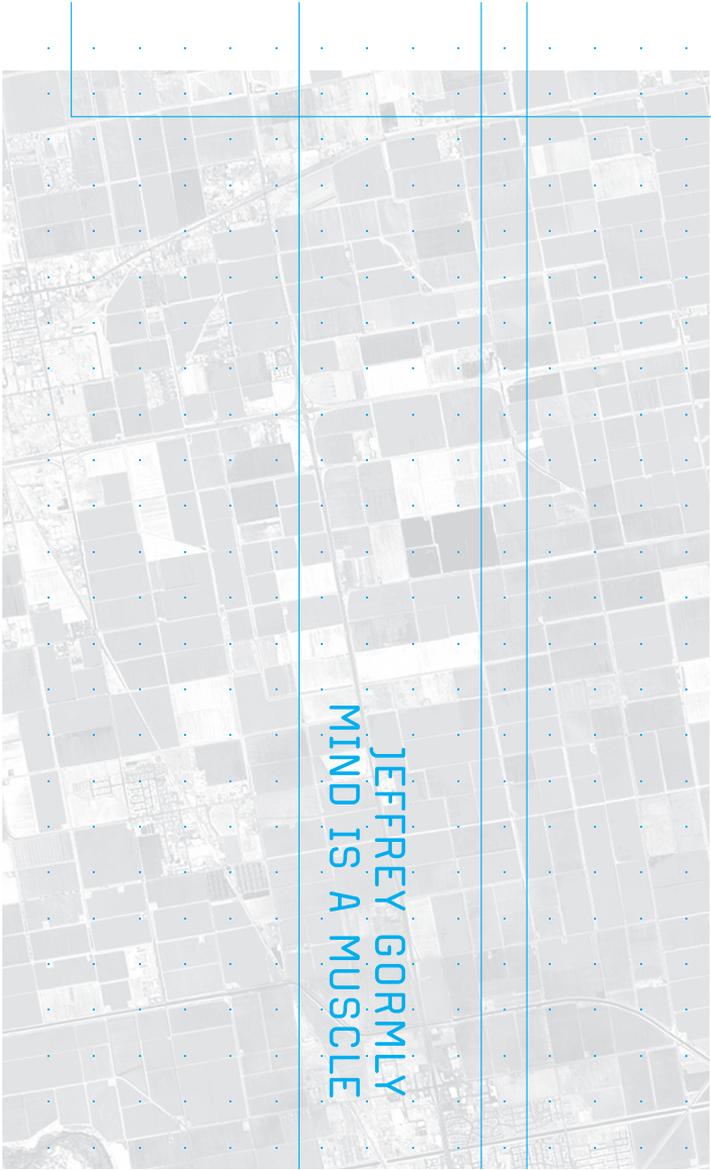


These mental limits of the subject (of the 'I') are important in defining the extended essence of an individual human being. Extended because it is seen as a complement to the original nucleus that defines us in our physical bodies. At the same time, the mental life is not simply overlaid onto the body; the two permeate each other in a fluid manner. Thought is not only conditioned by matter, it also reshapes the nature and relations of the objects with which it interacts. Every thought is a body: within these limits we find possibilities; they are the patterns that help us to find our place in the world and interact with it. This amazing ability is the expression of the human freedom to choose, which, along with the knowledge of its own consequences, determines the essence of human will.

However, as mentioned before, nature cannot be entirely revealed to us. In this dynamic exchange between mental and physical realities, at times we are brought to a deadlock, a closed circle of influences, a structural looping. Through our choices we gradually converge toward patterns from which it is then difficult to move. Observing history this seems to be a common re-occurrence, almost as if the object-subject ought to meet in pre-existing points of attraction, or as if their convergence created points of attraction in which the human patterns stabilise in a state of unresponsive stasis.

Here is where a view of choreography as proposed in Framemakers shows its utility: in becoming a tool of understanding and change, in reinventing relations to destabilise sedimentary stagnation. Those are the bases onto which we can create a new form of applied choreography, a choreography that reveals the continuity between our thoughts, our actions and the world around us: a choreography of changes.





JEFFREY GORMLY
MIND IS A MUSCLE

– May I advise you, sir, that you will do well to find another community which allows such latitude in behaviour and belief as this one. If your mind is pregnant with great schemes of thought, if you have a new science to research, a new religion or philosophy to bear into the world, here and now is the time and space for it. If you have none as yet, perhaps you will allow me to elaborate on our own science, which I have been practicing with some like minds in a small way here.

– I am always interested in the original thinking of any man.

– That does you credit, Mr. Collins, great credit indeed. Physically speaking, Mr. Collins, our body is the home of many organs: the heart is a muscular organ which pumps oxygenated blood around the body; the lungs are muscular organs which absorb into our body the aforementioned oxygen into the bloodstream. You will agree, at least, that these organs benefit not a little from vigorous and regular exercise: a brisk walk, a sharp game of tennis, a pleasant bathing excursion or a dance night. Similarly, our brain is a muscular organ, which through the medium of electrical activity controls the conscious and unconscious workings of the body, and supports the incomparable miracle that is the human mind. We believe that the brain, too, benefits by regular exercise: learning, some artistic pursuits-painting or the composition of poetry, musical appreciation, puzzles, problem solving. Can I take it we agree thus far?

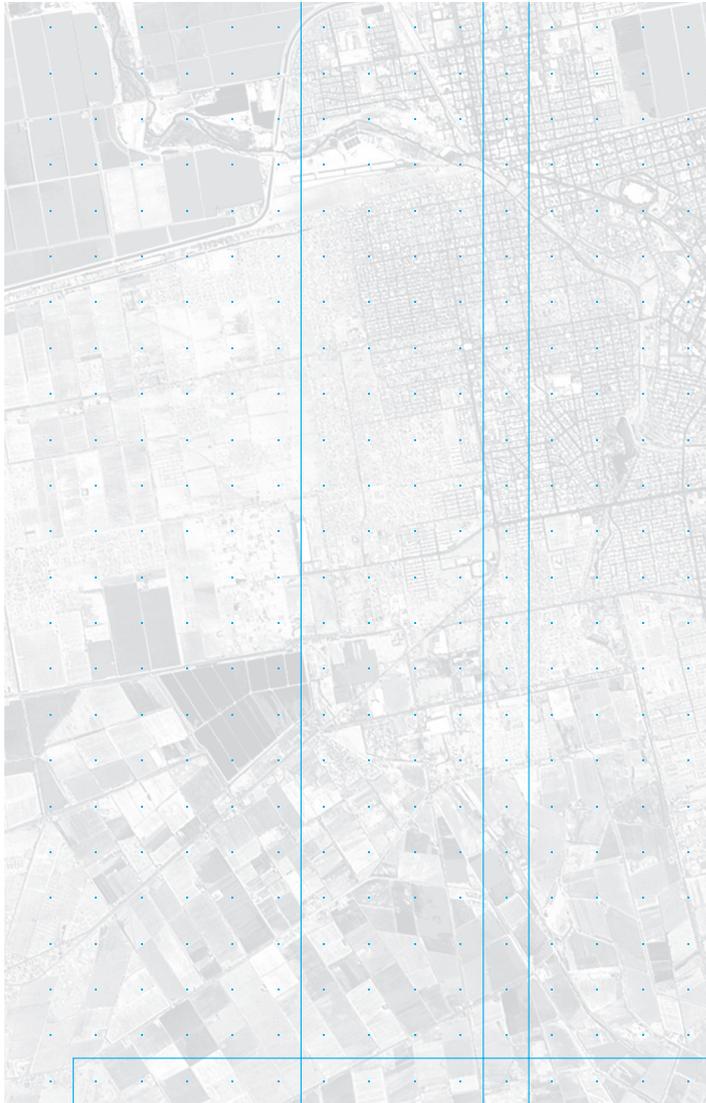
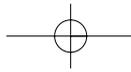
– You can.

– And I think we will agree on the next point also which has become one of the commonalities of modern discourse: that the average human being utilizes in their lifetime only some eight per cent of the potential of the brain given him or her. You concur?

– I have no blind faith in this truism, but I will not disagree that the human mind is the great undiscovered country, and that our mental abilities show the potential for extraordinary growth.

– Bravo sirrah! We are of a like disposition. It is this disposition towards the development of the mental potential of the human experience that has led me to the formulation and practice the science and philosophy of flexistentialism.

– Flex-istentialism, flexi-stentialism ... I like that.



– Flexistentialism. The ring of familiarity will, I hope, enable me to introduce the subject to every mind in the world eventually. Ours is a philosophy of possibility, sir, and our guiding principle is very simple: we believe that if one is to hold in the mind a collection of thoughts or ideas, fact, fiction or the bastard sons thereof, uploaded, so to speak, into the brain in such a manner as to potentiate the creation of connecting threads between these ideas, even though the brain strains under the weight of these improbable theses, even if credibility is stretched even to the very limit and beyond, even if the person fails to hold the extremities of all these ideas in their own mind at once, given time the mind will stretch, the mind will become flexible, and then regardless of the ultimate validity of the ideas that were the subject of the exercise, the mind will have increased its capacity to hold unrelated notions at once, and its ability to balance ideas in the brain and judge their relations. As I have said, it is not necessary that these ideas are scientific truths, but that they exist as possibilities. Through my own practice I have come to believe there is only fiction, and that it is all true. We must cut the association lines of word and image (that's uncle Bill William burroughs) to destabilise common sense and rescue meaning for our own actions, our own speeches, our own lives. We must create and project newly imagined realities onto the surface of our own experience, to dislodge the rigid structures of programmed thought. Remember, the mind is a muscle – flexercise it. It is only by expanding the realm of the possible that the actual will take shape.

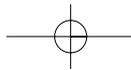
– It is in our imagination, then, that revolution will take place.

– Not revolution, mate. Evolution. You will join one of our meetings? We will make you very welcome. Do you like entertainments?

– Yes very much.

– We have entertainments at all our meetings ... stimulating, provocative. We are inspired by art to shift laterally in our mental cogitation. It adds another shift of gear ... I think a hundred times more clearly, frame of reference flexible, laterally connect ideas, I even internally ... I arrange them on a structure like to a topography space-time, fold the landscape at will, making creases to make ...

From 'Quadrate' by Jeffrey Gormly

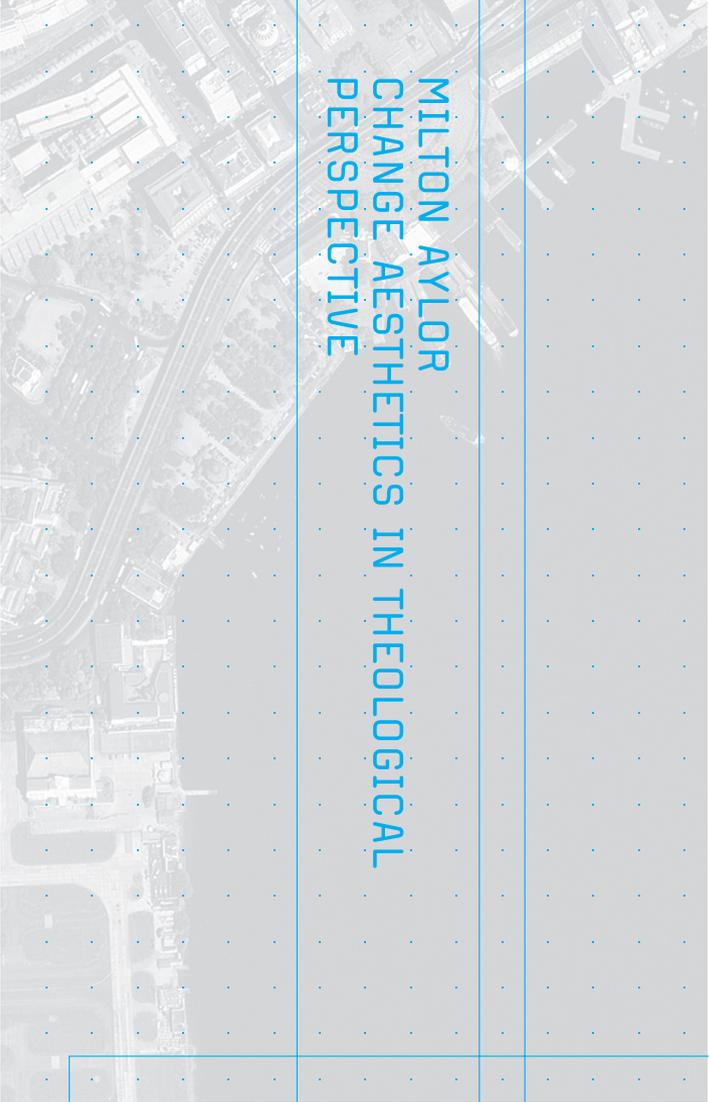


WILLIE WHITE

Choreography is metaphor much availed of at critical moments in Northern Ireland's long running peace process to describe the invisible management of unfolding events. It has an implication of care and nuance, that while the spectacle has meaning, this meaning will only be revealed when the action is complete. The appraisal of sometimes confusing or contradictory messages is deferred in the expectation of an ultimate revelation. When the time comes, however, the protagonists are sucked back into another sectarian cliff hanger out of which they must choreograph themselves once more. If this were Arabian Nights, the classic 'frame' tale, at least a positive outcome could be guaranteed after story number 1001.

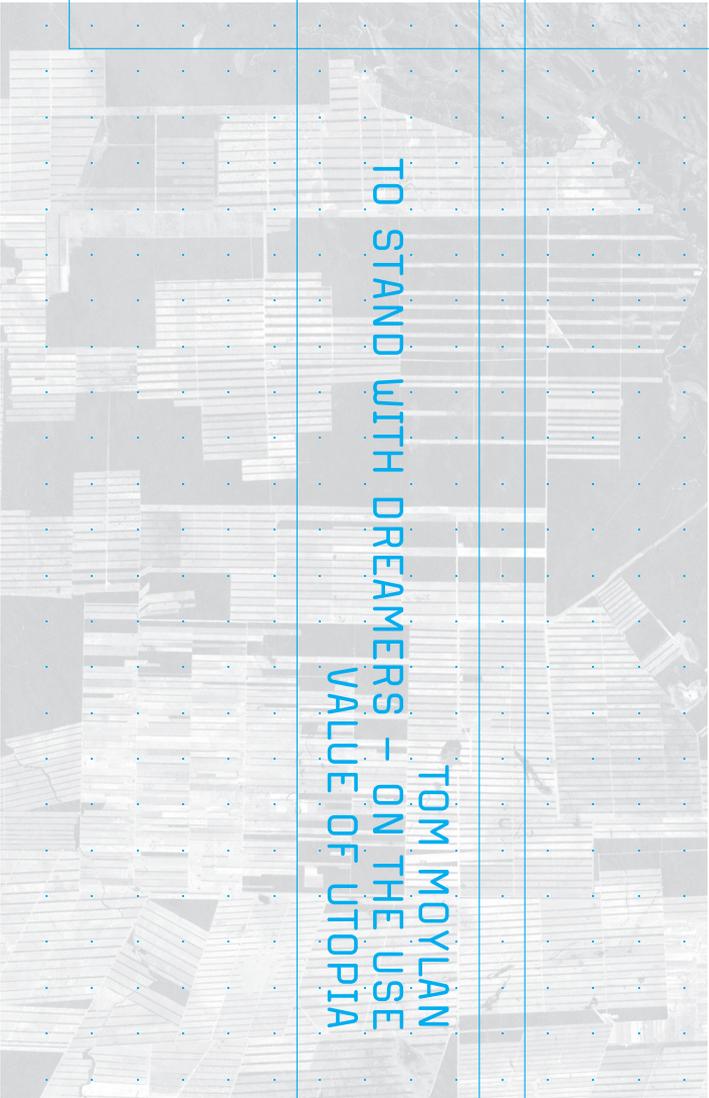
When political commentary has recourse to the arts, as it does above, it does so as an infrequent raid for metaphoric booty. A notable recent example of such spoils are Seamus Heaney's often cited couplets from the Cure at Troy 'once in a lifetime/the longed-for tidal wave/of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme'. In general, however, the attitude is one of indifference. Art is perceived to exist or to not exist otherwise in a sort of weightless state, a gravity free realm of aesthetic indulgence. The impact of events and interactions that actually do take place and have moment is dissipated because they do not have a foot in the real discourse of the world. Correspondingly it can be argued that artistic practice often happily forsakes such reality.

Framemakers proposes to think its way out of such frustrating binaries by getting around or beyond this limiting opposition of aesthetics and politics. As the rallying cry says 'It's time to start playing for real.' Society is not the exclusive property of conventional politics nor is art solely in the custody of practitioners. By declaring that social interactions can be given aesthetic shape, Framemakers creates multiple spaces for the intersection of these discourses. If one of the challenges in trying to critique systems of thought is the grip of their arguments, the way in which they seem only to produce more of the same type of thought, the symposium will hopefully counter with its own alternative choreographies, seeping outside the frame of performance, presentation or meeting.



MILTON AYLOR
CHANGE AESTHETICS IN THEOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE

The dynamic element in Christian belief used to be the result of what God does or did – this is no longer so, due to the demise of metaphysics; however, when we realize that metaphysics is composed of metaphors, then we can understand that belief has always been what it still is, a, if not the, creative act, the act of interpretation through which what is to be is introduced into what is because of what was. Traditional eschatology proceeds from the future into the present, but post-modern eschatology whirls around within the present to form moves which contour expectation as longing; the future is what we want to feel now and so we move to be moved – we dance. We shape space by moving through it until we become stillness and silence; knowing this, we return again and again to the circle and dance its line, its unending line. Fools go marching off; the wise dance, concentrating on the circle, where God is the center, around which/whom we move in praise, not progress. The center of now is the presence of spirit for those who will move to be. It is only Parmenides who knows how very right Heraclitus was. Let us imagine the warmth and will of the One before whom David danced. Could this One dance in our heads? Could this One circle around our secret self and enclose us in His/Her love? Perhaps, or even probably, it is more important to defrost than to deconstruct and so the moves and shapings of bodied life filling space and telling time are signals of spirit to the mind behind your name, so that it can jump and twirl and totter and swing and slide in dancing thoughts about doing differently what works all too well.

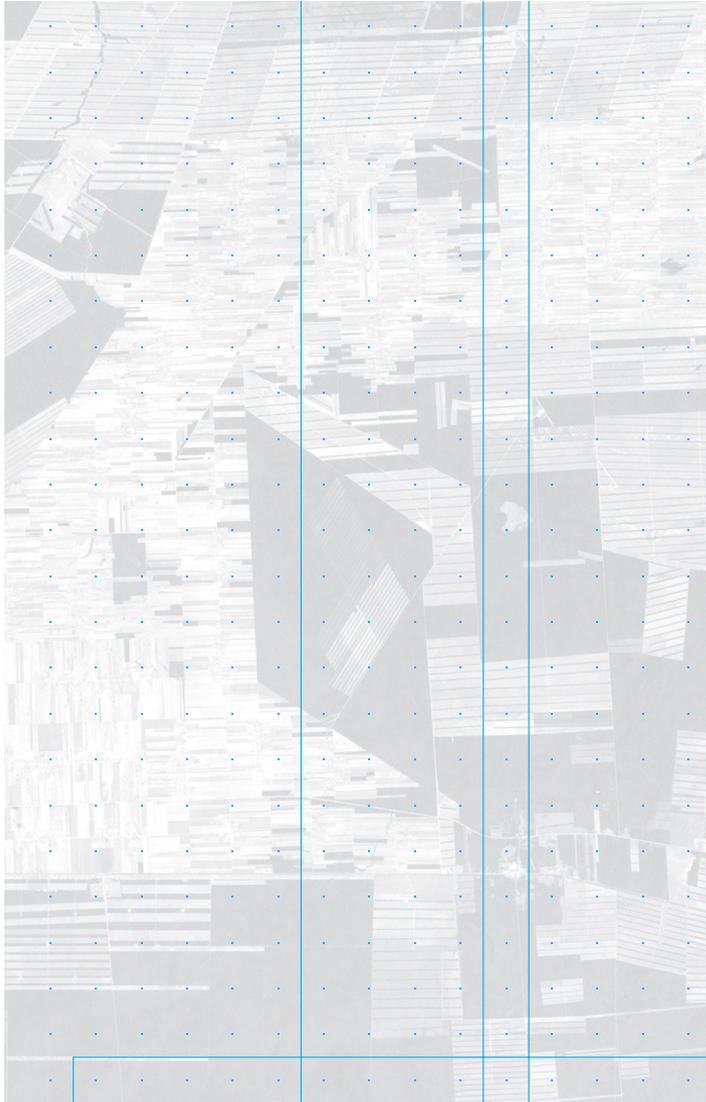
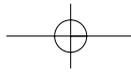


TOM MOYLAN
TO STAND WITH DREAMERS – ON THE USE
VALUE OF UTOPIA

Simply put, utopian anticipation can be understood as the production of hopeful visions of a better society that are articulated through texts and social practices. Deeply dissatisfied with the way things are, utopian thinkers and practitioners reach for a radically different way of organizing society and living out everyday life.

Such expressions can take many forms. Most famously, we see them in the literary tradition of the utopian novel or the sociological tradition of communal societies. Yet, while it is named as such in these traditions, the utopian impulse can, and has, been discovered and studied in a immense variety of forms and locales. Thus: songs, visual images, and architecture take their place in the utopian archive along with proclamations, speeches, and policies; and all these textual forms take their place alongside the many instances of lived utopianism – from religious and secular communities to political movements. Indeed, recent scholarship has also begun to look before and beyond the limits of the Western imaginary – as activists and scholars explore both indigenous and post-colonial forms of utopianism.

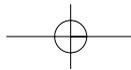
Across these many and differing manifestations, utopia's primary vocation is to tell us what is wrong with the world as it is; but it does so by evoking a totally transformed society, not by settling for piecemeal repair or reform. The utopian gaze, therefore, empties the present of its absolute authority – as it imagines how we might better live together – not in some escapist fantasy-land – but in a possible future reality. For, as Bloch put it, '(r)eality without real possibility is not complete, the world without future-laden properties does not deserve a glance' (Principle 223).



The utopian process, therefore, is always concerned with humanity's journey toward a horizon, rather than its arrival at a place determined by a utopian agenda. Indeed, as Fredric Jameson has argued, utopia's most fruitful yet troubling task is to declare its own impossibility to exist in the world as it is. With Ernst Bloch and others, he reminds us that utopian hope pulls us forward by challenging us with figures of new social possibilities: possibilities that, once approached, will themselves yield to more far-reaching visions at the moving horizon of our, necessarily collective, efforts to create a better society out of what is available. To refer to Martin Luther King who gave us a utopian vision in his 'I Have a Dream' speech, we see an example of utopia's horizon-effect in the development of his social dream as it grew, from the domestic call for equality and civil rights, to the international call for peace in Southeast Asia, and on to a systemic call, for socio-economic justice for all peoples and classes.

Thus, we see that utopia is best understood in terms of its twinned activities, of pedagogy and production – as it speaks in its future perfect tense to generate a critical comparison between what is and what could be. Like a sacramental signifier that means both itself and a transcendent reality, utopia offers its stated content (in its narratives and images, models and policies) not as an absolute, predictable, or enforced alternative, but rather as a simultaneously literal and figurative expression by which we can see more than what meets the eye: thus serving as a catalyst that inspires us to step beyond our provincial present.

Excepts (edited for this publication) on utopia and utopianism (from Tom Moylan's 'Inaugural Lecture', University of Limerick, November 2004)



From Friday, 13 May to Sunday, 12 June 2005 Framemakers provides a conducive, open environment for thinking, conversations, relaxing, tea, contributing, reading, listening, seeing and re-thinking. This new, inspiring cultural resource in Limerick's city centre offers discussions, performances, slideshows, a video-archive, an interview booth, residencies, lectures, commissions, research programmes, roundtables, dance, music, films, reading, social interventions and a café.

Interview booth – the interview booth screens a series of recorded interviews on the concepts of Framemakers with prominent thinkers, politicians, musicians and journalists of our time. Visitors to the interview booth are invited to record their own thoughts and impressions of Framemakers in a private custom-made interview room.

Audio/video booth – continuous looped screenings of dialogues, discussions and documentaries by figures who have inspired the creators of Framemakers, including the following titles:

Gregory Bateson

by Nora Bateson, courtesy Nora Bateson

Gregory Bateson: What is Epistemology

live-audio recording, Esalen, courtesy Big Sur Tapes

Stafford Beers

courtesy Liverpool John Moore University

Joseph Beuys: In Honour of Beuys

by Winfried Parkinson, courtesy Goethe Institute, Dublin

Joseph Beuys: Everyone is an Artist

by Werner Kruger, courtesy Goethe Institute, Dublin

Joseph Beuys: Public Dialogue

by Willoughby Sharp, courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York