

SEDIMENTS OF AN ORDINARY MIND, 2014

In a deeply interconnect world, knowledge has to be first and foremost grounded in, and raised from within, embodied knowledge, the naïve realism of the senses: to integrate our most abstract concepts into our own physical existence and redefine collective assumptions by moving right through them; to disclose a sense of being to the world and simultaneously align ourselves with mental health. Dance and dancing becomes a singularity. It is a truly dedicated practice, the dancer holding the rare technology to eradicate the artificial ground of rational assumption and place the feet right upon her ancestors. To align the world anew. To give the world a new name.
TYRONE O'ROS

What happened: It was. People doing things, moving around, not able to find solace, moving. Neither in a particularly coherent manner, nor in an overly interesting manner, curiously unable to formulate...working out things without ever succeeding. Finding momentary peace in an embrace and on the ground, as fear and the quest for living takes her off the ground once over. A social mud ensues. Many people moving in myriad pathways, endless trails and traces entwining. Sediments are falling in the mind: hands held. The prophet entering Jerusalem. On her toes. Sleeping furiously. A total loss of coherence and into other worlds.

The prophet, the hands, the uttering, the ground, the rising conjure to mute the hovering mind. Sinking into being-with. Gravity, souls, earth, thirst, wonder. There is nothing else but us. How noble. What beautiful life. To nurture and commune. To huddle against the sleet and snow.

Dear Steve,

At airport with 8 hours delay. Yesterday was weird. I got rather low afterwards...It just wasn't 'masterly' as my own skewed expectations might have hoped for, still I was taken back by the emerging aesthetics of it all – limited by how humans seem pre-determined to move. Then I couldn't sleep all night and the darkest, most profound dreams crept in - strong stuff. The manner of structuring, how things unfold, 'does' something to one's perception and thought. There was a philosopher who said he couldn't stop working on his thesis whilst watching, and a biochemist who couldn't stop figuring things out that had nothing to do with what he was seeing. It was only the dance-programmers - the programmers of dance (as it was part of a festival there were quite a few of them), whose gaze brutalised the moment, and maybe it was that, which was unsettling: the work seemed incommensurable with their reality, probably trapped in amateurish, random, moving about...I felt devalued by their presence. There was good feedback and generally I note, that however great it is to work in small circles, for this work to truly radiate one has to put the nothing on the altar of everything - meticulously presented and protected...anyways, these are only the first thoughts.

There I sat, almost a month after working on Sediments of an Ordinary Mind, looking at a distinctively large Rubens painting in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. This work had little in common with Sediments. I neither reminded me of the process with Weld company nor of any resulting manifestations. Sediments, Stockholm, Weld didn't come to the fore whilst gazing at an enormous depiction of some holy miracle. What I was much rather examining that very moment was the potential of turning its massive wooden frame into a life-raft. Could it be done? Is enough wood available, how many people could it carry, how far, under what weather conditions? Despite my father-in-law having been a naval architect I know nothing about boats and equally little about woodwork. I know more about painting. Yet, could I remove this frame and build a raft? What would I do with the painting? Can it be stored, displayed without its frame? Would I still care? Do I even acknowledge the painting's value in my shipbuilding scheme or have we simply passed the point in which to afford the luxury of tradition in the face of brewing storms?

Back in Athens, reflecting upon Sediments as proclaimed by Weld Company, the raft of Medusa came to mind, the infamous story of ship-wrecked survivors, immortalized by the Romantic French painter Théodore Géricault. The Meduse struck rocks off the coast of Africa due to the captain's incompetence and of the 150 or so who set off on a makeshift raft only 15 survived under the most treacherous conditions. Sediments has always been a choreography in itself. It is what it is talking about, a work-in-movement destined to change, adapt, melt, solidify and dance over time. It's a choreographic structure that has learning processes embedded at its core. The choreographer no longer dictates, proposes or demonstrates movement to dancers who inhabit the work; all movement material, positions, transitions, timings as well as interpersonal relations are grown out of a permanent discourse of the dancer with herself, negotiated in exchange with others and their specific environ (i.e. audience). When, ten years after its premiere in Ireland (the work was originally choreographed for Daghda Dance Company in Limerick), Anna asked me to create a work for Weld, I wondered how Sediments would manifest nowadays, at Weld, with Weld, in Stockholm. Choreography, in this vein, has been utilised as a cradle of relations, a cluster of ideas that orders or supports the organization of human movement. Any work created in this particular paradigm will unfold differently with each performance as I, the dancers and the wider cultural, social and political context will have undeniably changed from one expression to the next. What will take hold this time? A work in dance like Sediments can't be constituted as 'a piece'.

....no dance in pieces...

Who ever told us that dance comes in pieces? What happened along the way and when did we succumb? All broken now, starting at 8pm and specifically, and most perversely, not dancing as we have originally experienced it. Dance in Pieces is a packaged, stylized representation of what dance once felt like. Simulated spiritual disclosures, precisely measured pretend ecstasy. With philosopher Badiou in mind, I no longer want to think in pieces.
Proposition: The Unbroken Dance (From: Propositions: To Dance Differently)

Dance can be a showing of bodies in naked thought. And then there was my own father who extended himself in my mind. Where does he end? Where does he start? Whilst working on Sediments he entered the last stage of Parkinson's, me in Stockholm, he in Vienna, confused and silent. Such circumstance must resonate into my work. What artwork would not allow for life's fundamentals to take hold of the situation? It is meant to have a role in the process of living. In the opening days of rehearsals I would dance and revelations came flooding in. The interconnectedness of it all; deep waves of evolutionary thought we are bound into. Vast. Moving relentlessly: ancestry, paternity, love was closer to the surface. These waves kept crashing against the senses, they moved me. It made me dance differently, understand the work differently and resulted in an adapted choreographic structure with a new process entitled Jerusalem. In fact, my father, Medusa, the frame of Rubens are all held, sustained by Sediments, neither through me nor through the individual dancer, but by the shared dream we inhabit and which, close to its skin, we call reality. And then the six dancers built a raft to immerse themselves in the relentless void, the not knowing; one's physical situatedness as the navel of all dreams, being moved by everything but oneself, and relentlessly negotiating personal freedom, for whatever that might mean. The raft, the storm, the group and the interconnectedness of all humans. Sediments as a collective effort of digging into the fabric of life, to uncover, to understand, to adjust. Shall the performer fail to unfold these revelations, the entire audience somewhat fails, and in this manner this work binds everyone, the witnessing collective with the ones that dance.

In 2004 I distinctively remember Sediments to be 'a start'; an exhilarating expedition into the unknown, surpassing dance-technique to reach places where codes of interpersonal relations no longer work. A quest into how things are held together, what generates movement and change, how life and communication emerges in life's matrix, examining the governance of the movement-of-others and how this social mess might resolves into something? It was research with scientific inclination...to dissect, to test, to build. A journey that, beyond the performances that took place, has silently and invisibly persisted throughout the last decade - women and men looking into the storm, for self-preservation, survival, bare skin, nothingness, the void. Ten years later, Stockholm, and this expedition - now different men and women - has encountered the void: dance developed oddly unburdened by codes, structures and language, and now provided tentacles into other realities. This raw physical matrix, the place for not knowing, was at once unintelligible and engaging. What emerged did not correspond to what we previously knew, no sanity was found. It does make no sense. It does not give meaning: a thorough loss

of coherence and a crucial response to the contemporary practice of humanity: quietly crashing out of unsustainable visions of ourselves, into other worlds.

From a confident expedition that started in Limerick, Ireland to a dilapidated life raft lost at sea in Stockholm. Sediments took a journey in which something shipwrecked, something died, something survived. That's how this work moved between its own manifestations. Over years it progresses as a dream beneath the breath of consciousness. And by connecting to this dream, these clusters of concerns, the work continuously teaches me to think. It connects Rubens paintings, and if only their frames, to urgency, my father to myself and ancestry, and recursively to future governments and health. This might constitute a crucial function of choreographic work: to propose, experience, test and rehearse thinking that, in its manner of operation, is closer to the thought that thought oneself up.

do not have ideas

do not be creative

do not judge

do not resolve

become your own forgetting

radically un-ashamed and of unspoken confidence.

sediment

Jerusalem