



*actual versus eventual  
nocturnal versus international  
healthy as opposed to mindless  
deliberate as opposed to glamorous  
'marcellous compromises'  
can forget the contempo nature  
of feeling, framing, a dry limit  
mackerel of doom, soaring into space.*

**volta : camenzind**

**elia bosshard  
louisa lau  
eleni schumacher  
brigitte wirfler**

**ivan cheng**

**the long room  
redfern oval  
1700 - 2100  
6 july 2013**

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The following is a foreword, relayed by Ivan Cheng to a group of observers on July 6, 2013. The audience (that is to say, the performers) had been isolated from Cheng in the half hour preceding the foreword, and, not knowing each other, were able to be in the space together. The space was dressed with the audience seated on folding chairs in an arc, looking out onto the oval through the large glass walls. House lights (LED downlights and wall-accent lights) remained on, with floodlights hidden behind rows of plastic water bottles, with a rectangular sheet of thick, clear perspex on top. A vacuum cleaner, steam mop and exercise bike had been wrapped and draped with linen and mustard coloured academic hoods. Cheng had been downstairs welcoming observers into the space. At his reception desk were programs: manila folders cut in half, with a loose sheet of blank paper for note taking. Apart from the personnel involved, the only program note read:

*“memory is the virtuosity I am least interested in”*

The performance began with a synchronisation of tracks with Elia Bosshard, Ivan Cheng, Louisa Lau and Eleni Schumacher. Brigitte Wirfler was scheduled to arrive at the venue 2.5 hours later. EB, LL and ES were not expecting the foreword, and heard nothing, though they knew its general content. Their in-ear tracks played two songs to warm up to, chosen deliberately with the intent of personal enjoyment rather than meaning. IC's track relayed the following, with unusual pauses, varied inflection, as well as some gestural cues.

Thank you for your time and support, thank you for coming to the world premiere of *camenzind*. My name is Ivan Cheng, and I am the composer and director of this work.

This is the first time that a work of mine has been performed under a composed new music context and as you will see, I am very interested in the idea of form and structure, especially in relation to time.

Despite this, the ways I'll play with these elements are very straightforward; I draw lines between the material that I work from, and through the work you'll notice a lot of 'lines' which somehow join or relate, which is the tyranny of time and space.

The performers with me are Elia Bosshard, Louisa Lau, Eleni Schumacher, and Brigitte Wirfler, new to each other and the space, but not new to me. This work is very much about types of newness, and approaching resistances.

This project is presented by *volta collective*, a group of young men with different tastes who will hopefully have something to contribute to Australia's arts industry. New music is new language, and new language is important. Just think about how important language is... and then pose the question of why it might be good to innovate... and then the reasons and methods of notating it. Of course, in preparing this audio cue track in advance, I write and record from an earnest viewpoint, from which I can see no alternative, that is, no alternative to this form of notation, of making work.

I don't feel as though I'm giving too explanatory a lecture, only a starting position, but you can take an apology if you feel it's necessary; your expectations are your own, but I feel that this, a foreword, is necessary. It is also very much in line with the format of the rest of this score that you have come to see.

As I have clumsily said to a few people already, I am interested in youth.

*Peter Camenzind* is the first novel by Hermann Hesse, a pretty classic example of a bildungsroman, which demarcates a novel whose subject develops himself psychologically, intellectually, and spiritually. So it's a wise kind of real deep youth that reflexes on itself; is it identification as youth which allows us to be entirely vulnerable and say 'let's learn' and to thus develop into maturation? And then taking the phrase of 'forever young', negating our physical age by stretching a younger mental skin on ourselves, are we permitting ourselves to brazenly display ourselves as open to judgement and selfishly inclined.

I am interested in how we position ourselves as trying to learn, to acquire knowledge via inquiry. But I am confused about what avenues we can proceed down to do so. In one of the first second hand purchases I ever made, I bought a first edition of Hermann Hesse's *Poems*, translated and edited by James Wright. My entrée into how to understand Hesse thus came from Wright, who spoke of Hesse avoiding greatness by being eternally childlike. So I already have a position on anything I read by him, and, as a young person, I barely know what maturation is; the spiritual enlightenment that the characters fall into, the relentlessly poetic language which is highly measured.

In a cold, subletted room last weekend, I spoke with a friend who talked about how legible artworks can be, perhaps too legible. I agreed. The room belonged to artists who had decorated it with quite a lot of rabbits. Oh! That makes them legible in a way. But that's okay.

So here is a work that I'm making too legible – the system of structuring and content is explicitly from watershed works from the careers of Hesse : *Siddhartha* (1922), in eleven chapters and two parts, and Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*, the 1957 electronic music work which set text from the Bible's book of Daniel, of the youths in the furnace, interested in expressing seven layers of comprehensibility in aural space, fusing electronically generated sounds with that of a young boy, set in a studio and asked to imitate programmed sine tones that Stockhausen had calculated. Stockhausen was interested in the idea that any sound, mapped as a sound-wave, could then be divided into further sine tones which are superimposed into one instant of sound. This is nice, because it is objective – the sound is all of these lines read as an instant. The way he shaped the fragmented information into an aesthetic which has left an impression on the form, and my continual admiration of his process is then key to my belonging in audience. So this work is constructed for the comfort of my bourgeois youth rather than this audience, and should be read as such. These performers read my notated lines just as I read others.

These are the keys to the bathroom if you should need to use it. use the black one; head back down the stairs, and entry can be gained with the little remote control please don't eat, but feel free to drink the water provided. At one point we'll lightly insist on it. If you choose to eat later tonight, it might be more of a pleasure. I hope this feels like reading a book; you have different tastes, sometimes you'll forget what's happening, we'll reread passages, and then you can form an impression based on certain moments of text or image.

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louisa undresses the exercise bike and relays  
an academic text by nicholas ridout  
about Societas Raffaello Sanzio

Halfway through the eleven-show sequence of *Tragedia Endogonidia*, the company seems to have developed a more than passing interest in charismatic leaders. The hero, as dramatic figure, has been conspicuously absent from the sequence until this point—his place in the dramaturgy seemingly taken by anonymous figures, often mothers—but suddenly, in the Paris episode, he makes an odd new kind of appearance, rather peripherally and tentatively, in the shape of Charles de Gaulle, who comes onstage alone near the end of the show, looks in apparent confusion at the audience, seems to test the walls of the room to see if they are real, glances at his watch, and leaves.

In the subsequent episode, created in Rome, the charismatic leader is of course Benito Mussolini. He occupies a fairly central position in the piece, seemingly reenacting the signing of the Lateran Treaty with a group of basketball-playing priests. (The Lateran Treaty was the deal he struck with the papacy to help secure his regime.) But Mussolini finds himself under constant harassment from a punitive, machine-gunbrandishing Harlequin, who seems to have descended from a painting on the domed ceiling of the auditorium at the Teatro Valle. As with de Gaulle in the Paris episode, the actor wears an incredibly accurate and specially molded latex mask. He is a self evidently better-than-strictly-necessary representation, in which the effect of the uncanny is not just that of similarity (to other representations, of course) achieved because the latex work is so good, so faithful, but also because the mimetic means are so strangely exorbitant.

It is as though in this theatre—or perhaps in any theatre—the better your representation looks, the more it looks like a representation. Truthfulness and truth come apart at the moment of their most assertive proximity.

In Strasbourg the stage is empty and dark. The back wall of the theatre—which is actually a former exhibition hall for trade shows—is made entirely of glass. We look out into the darkness of the city beyond and at the red rear lights of vehicles passing on the road out of town. A coach pulls up and about forty people get out, all wrapped up warm against the winter night. Gradually they are corralled into an audience, sitting with their backs to the glass wall (and to us) as Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* is shown, projected onto the wall of the adjacent building (an ice-skating rink). The film runs right up to the moment at which a fleeing Janet Leigh is woken from her sleep in the car by a highway patrolman wearing reflective sunglasses. The audience disperses and finally, after perhaps half an hour of the show, the light comes up on the stage inside, where for the next half hour or so a group of six or seven African women in combat fatigues perform delicate but somehow weary mundane tasks on a mound of rocky earth. They eat, clean guns, dig things up, and from time to time gaze out at us. Eventually, they too disperse and leave.

Outside in the dark, the front lights of a vehicle come on in the distance, and as they approach, a panel in the glass wall of the building slides up to permit the entry into the theatre of a tank. It rears up on the mound of earth and scans the auditorium with its cannon for a while before driving back into the night. The crucial and, for me, deeply unsettling effect of this coup de théâtre, this intrusion of a real tank into the fictive space of the theatre, was that in entering this space this real tank looked somehow but unmistakably fake, almost as though the company had assembled a fake tank, a theatrical tank, from the parts of a real one, rather than simply putting a real one on stage. In the theatre, I seem to be unable to tell the difference.

Back to the Rome episode a couple of months earlier: the opening scene, before the appearance of Mussolini, takes place within a uniformly white stage, viewed through a Perspex window that fills the aperture of the proscenium. The solitary figure on stage is a chimpanzee. It seems to be miked, and it has some fruit that it occasionally toys with. It moves around, does its thing, comes downstage and looks out at us, goes on doing its thing, for about ten minutes, perhaps. And there I am in the auditorium, wondering: is this a real chimpanzee or just someone in a really good chimpanzee suit?

In each of these instances the appearance of an individual body in the theatre deceives—or, rather, it alerts me to its presence as representation. Individualized in the uncertainty of my perception, I cast about me for some way to ground or verify what I am experiencing. Unable to credit the appearance of the heroic individual (or political villain), unable to distinguish between the machinery of war and the machinery of theatre, or between a human and an ape, I find myself in deep trouble. I look around me to see if there's anyone who might help. Could there be a chorus, perhaps, or a program note, or a well-informed citizen who might put me straight? Perhaps somewhere among that huddled collective gathered in front of the white glow of Hitchcock's film, there might be a consensus that would orient me in my struggle with representation.

Or maybe if the desultory inhabitants of the African revolutionary camp could raise a red flag with sufficient conviction, I could organize my understanding according to a political passion. But perhaps they, too, are already perplexed beyond belief.

If only I still believed in yetis.

+++

eleni is asked to stand still for an hour

elia walks in a glamorous manner  
and directed to execute difficult dance combinations,  
stripped of association

and then the trained movements  
hockey –

discus –  
javelin –  
hockey

if only to deal with the sporting connotations.  
elia also has to grapple

and deal with the piccolo eventually.  
with integrity or virtuosity

responsible for relaying stockhausen's *gesang der jünglinge*

there is a lot of time

louisa, who is ivan's mother, is given a snack break  
as requested. she takes it in the 'wing', eating a banana  
but visible to the audience through the reflection  
in the background,

there is a recording playing in the same area, of ivan reading  
a modified version of hesse's *siddartha*:

all cultural signifiers have been stripped.  
siddartha's name is now camenzind  
govinda's name is now hockey  
the word 'beef' replaces many  
sexuality is censored

somewhat peripatetic, the recorded block of text is processed  
in imitation of diagrams and sketches  
from stockhausen's gesang der jünglinge  
so it is barely audible

in opposition

eleni then is free, and has the responsibility of reading  
chris andrews' translation of cesar aira's *ghosts*  
chosen because of the authorial voice  
the innate difficulty in a trained actress reading a novel  
that she has not memorised  
the incomplete chunks and excerpts of the book, sections  
chosen (like all texts excerpted) for their radical significance  
in the structure and dimension of the piece, as well as for  
purely personal reasons; the knowledge that the text was  
of true significance to some of the observers  
that it was only censored, treated in the selection of  
sections, and that culturally it was deeply intact:  
how did this text, a shift from the bildungsroman of hesse  
(but still with the author's intentionally at the foreground)  
represent the youth?

how would eleni be able to represent it and present it in  
such an uncontrolled environment, and with stage colleagues  
either unable to hear or completely new to the material she  
was reading out (since there was far too much to memorise  
or treat as monologue, and she had been challenged into  
stillness for the first significant portion of the performance)

elias listens, and returns to the hockey –  
discus –  
javelin –  
hockey

louisa begins the first of three cycles of tai chi movements  
at points, the other women are invited to imitate her,  
an often resistant task due to the nature and shifting directions  
of movements.

there are sections of text relay  
some is familiar to the women, some not  
all of this text is pre-existing,  
taken from endurance writing in  
journals earlier in the year.

lifting the egg frame  
dropping the big shell  
cutting the sip cup  
limping to the bay  
tickets to the sea  
supper in the woods  
lorry to the woods  
tyres for the crime  
damage for the terry  
lipping for the truck  
backing up to the limp  
digging over the mulch  
cupping over the simple  
lidding mindless over the wind  
mulching tired in the lido  
summer over the wind bay  
ladling into the summer wind  
summer weather is delaying  
his williwaw his Williamson  
gore vidal gore vidal  
gore vidal gore vidal

Each day, his stomach produced three tomatoes. It is body served as a measure for time, and was the basis of a clockwork system, as for his navel would ripen and detach a juicy tomato, every eight hours exactly. The breed of tomato was consistent, but what you couldn't bank on was the rate of ripening, how it would emerge, the size it would grow to. if you collected a week's worth and packaged it as though it came from a farmers market, it would hold steady as simply an assortment.

Her hands were tied with a huge slough of poly ribbon. Like a satin ribbon, it ties at the wrists, but the poly separated into joyan, film, rather than stretching into a memorized fibre. Poly ribbon, she says, makes me think of festivities where it is expected that things will be glamorous, but really all the ribbon curving is a fundamental disappointment; a lot of aspiration. When I decorate, I always consider it when I don't hand it normally it can be quite the crowd pleasure, but otherwise it's upsetting. Maybe the right ethos is that it never should really be touched. Is that fair? If it is within touch by distance, there is something that poisons. Actually, ribbons should not be touched, they make me feel like being violently ill. I'm going to pray one hundred times that I wing up happy. I have performed seventy of these bows and all it leaves me is somewhat out of breath.

I have twenty keepsakes there I'll  
form from my skin that I scratch  
off. I don't shower anymore, but I  
moisturize constantly. In different  
light, different hues and seasons, I  
look at my skin and I am sometimes  
left dissatisfied, it's true. But not allllways

What is it  
supposed to be? my skin (What colour?  
, what has the sun done  
to it?)

You'll go a desert stretch with luminous  
skin, but then

Maria says when she  
puts on weight, she feels like a cube,  
like every direction of her torso is the same,  
so I thank her for her honesty, and think about how,  
as a builder of props in modern theatre, she might construct  
a Lucite fake cube around herself, how it would fit,  
a round world (that is, her body) in a square box, which her mind  
thought of and now her hands build. But it's my thought that  
she thinks of, to build it, and to phrase her body that way.

Owning is fragrance,  
deftness of touch  
ability to variegate, nuance.  
size of nib permanence of touch.

young Castiglione,  
which heron are you looking for?

m. Alaska	always
leaving	someway
through	over
though	sea
divest	limit
caution	correct
sapphire	dropping
daft	lakes
over	under
magic	powders
drips	taps
throats	meats
camels	lions
Zanzibar	smoking
terror	limit
dragee	portion
groping	at ease
freely	threats

urine		direct
morbid	stream	diversity
derivatives	cruelty	sea
mordant	tweak	limber
fresh	gradual	now
lambast		infection
masticate		cats
lashings		eyes
saw	wives	
drying		fawn
saying		trees
pyramids		canopy
geezers		blister
gold		nail
grass		sock
blanket		dirt
furrow		sockets
corn		model
grime		reflux
hair	causal	
ping		piety
cords		trite
casual		cave
criminal		oak
feudal		eggs
larynx		quail
trident		rehabilitate
volcano	marble	travesty
pig		laces
salmon		scabs
quail		spots
rehabilitate		engaging
travesty		asterisk
laces		lozenge
scabs		pastry
spots	mice	shell
engaging		link
asterisk		martyr
lozenge		grimace
pastry	armour	purple
shell		handle
link		lime
martyr		
grimace		
purple		
handle		
lime	bicycle	

vinegar  
more  
umbrella  
culotte  
boot  
water  
damn  
well  
wells  
overalls  
potato  
cream  
overcome  
magician  
spiral  
cochlear

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elia has also played flute material which takes data from stockhausen's fourier calculations of sound waves and does a crippled attempt at engaging flute 'phonemes' in a speech related, real time score.

working further from stockhausen's sketches,  
i take pitches and harmonic structures used by  
stockhausen to set text, taken similarly from the  
book of daniel, but a different section and in English.

this use of the 'song of the youths in the fire'  
is treated in reference to the statement about saying  
70 prayers; we look towards religious ritual, endurance  
belief, cause and motivation, and at points the vocal line  
that the women are imitating is multitracked, forcing the  
women to decide which line (if any) they will represent.

their level of confidence in relaying the pitch material  
is designed to fluctuate.

And at this time there is no prince, or prophet, or leader,  
no burnt offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense,  
no place to make an offering before thee or to find mercy.  
Yet with a contrite heart and a humble spirit  
may we be accepted,  
as though it were with burnt offerings of rams and bulls,  
and with tens of thousands of fat lambs;  
such may our sacrifice be in thy sight this day,  
and may we wholly follow thee,  
for there will be no shame for those who trust in thee.

brigitte wirfler arrives, and notifies me via text message.  
she has just completed a shift at work, and i let her into the  
space, her entry a radical shift. Her recording is recorded  
with a higher energy levels than any other, and is later  
repeated later in full by eleni.

Hi Brig, welcome to the space. I'd like you to think of yourself as someone who is completely over the top, really hammy, almost yelling in the space. If doing music theatre in a traditional way is considered giving 150%, I want you to think about giving 500%. Stars in your eyes, jazz hands, everything like that. Be the best and most boisterous Brig you can be, because baby, I'm giving you a honey of a part.

*(original, normal)*

Brigitte enters and takes two steps.

She is wearing boots which come up to her thighs.

She is a detective, and pretends that she's wearing a detective hat.

She is, of course, wearing a detective coat, one with a spare pair of gloves, a thiiiick notebook, or is that five notebooks. It's good to take on serious cases as well as the more frivolous ones, but Brigitte also knows that there are many complexities to cases which, if you compare mysterious crimes slash incidences to a curtain, are a mostly redundant piece of fabric which is pretty much all eyelets. All you need is a rod to thread it through, and the patience to do so. What I am saying, is that all crime is linked. Light will shine through, there is no curtain for this surface.

*(repeat, mincing, british)*

Brigitte enters and takes two steps.

She is wearing boots which come up to her thighs.

She is a detective, and pretends that she's wearing a detective hat. She is, of course, wearing a detective coat, one with a spare pair of gloves, a thiiiick notebook, or is that five notebooks. It's good to take on serious cases as well as the more frivolous ones, but Brigitte also knows that there are many complexities to cases which, if you compare mysterious crimes slash incidences to a curtain, are a mostly redundant piece of fabric which is pretty much all eyelets. All you need is a rod to thread it through, and the patience to do so.

What I am saying, is that all crime is linked. Light will shine through, there is no curtain for this surface.

*(repeat in southern accent)*

Brigitte enters and takes two steps.

She is wearing boots which come up to her thighs.

She is a detective, and pretends that she's wearing a detective hat.

She is, of course, wearing a detective coat, one with a spare pair of gloves, a thiiick notebook, or is that five notebooks. It's good to take on serious cases as well as the more frivolous ones, but Brigitte also knows that there are many complexities to cases which, if you compare mysterious crimes slash incidences to a curtain, are a mostly redundant piece of fabric which is pretty much all eyelets. All you need is a rod to thread it through, and the patience to do so. What I am saying, is that all crime is linked.

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Light will shine through, there is no curtain for this surface.

Is that an eye patch that she has as well?

Am I wearing a monocle?

I have been obsessed with the precepts of teaching and what methods we go through to obtain knowledge, or to what extent we're interested in doing so. immediately after finishing the London component of my degree and having told a school that I wouldn't be joining them for their august semester, I had been paralysed into action to formalize whatever education I had, and kept a list of things that I had learnt after the fact. The fact that this list dissolved into an obsolete place isn't so important, after all, it's intentionality which is important.

On the first day, I awoke with resolve, having spent a Sunday evening speaking about legibility of work. I called Eleni Schumacher and managed to secure her time. I didn't yet know what it would be, it was a hypothetical. At the time, it was going to be about this book I hadn't yet read, Peter Camenzind.

I called the venue and secured it for this date. I was just in time, you need to book two weeks in advance. I then called Elia, who was a little hesitant to agree because of a concert that is in rehearsal as I write this. I began trying to contact Brigitte, who was tutoring at state music camp, and at a rehearsal that evening managed to get Elia more interested. My mother, Louisa, arrived back from Melbourne, and upon their walking in the door I told them the great news that I had decided to mount a performance.

My father, who had driven back with her, was concerned; who was even going to come at such short notice, what exactly would happen? Why are you happy to lose money? I floated the idea of my mother being involved. Hesitant, she agreed, '*if I really needed the help*'. I put a little call on the internet to see if anyone's mother had an interest in appearing in theatre. I received some interest, but upon providing more information, the women in question (a friends' mother and a dogs' mother) declined of cowardice, and no-reply respectively.

I knew I needed the help, so I told mum, please, please, please, and explained the work as far as I understood - what I was trying to access, and she agreed. Can I get a round of applause? (Wait for a round of applause). No, a real round of applause for this bravery? No, another round of applause for my mother please, for none of us would be here today if not for her.

Applaud, because none of us would be here if not for her, and what is better than a community unified in watching a microcosm dictatorship on land which is pretty politically charged? Do you remember that brief mention earlier about Mussolini and all that. I guess I understand what that relation is. And I guess you can understand what this statement is in relation to that quote printed on your programs, about virtuosity and memory.

But Look at how much I've remembered to do!  
But look at how much I've remembered to do~  
but loooook at how muuuuch I've remembered to do  
but look at how much I've remembered to do  
But look how much I've remembered to do

Now, you must be louder

on the second day, I had a meeting about another project, which made me late for another meeting about the same project. This was when the rain was pretty astonishing.

I had a viewing of this space with a nice person who gave me a lift back to the station. I hope none of you had trouble finding parking for the whole time you're here. I ran to have that delayed meeting, because I had been so late I had delayed it, before running to catch a train to move my car, which was about to become a school bus zone. I cooked dinner that night, and then kept working, parsing through texts, realizing that *Peter Camenzind* did not approach language in a way that was cohesive to the dialectic, I mean, how do you say...

there was unease among volta collective members about my method of pricing tickets. I've explained it many ways, but I needed to signify the severity of the work and also the unimportance of tickets, how while I was desperate to fiddle and transform form // I was leaving licence to not achieve anywhere near that.

that this is an ideal rehearsal and as such, an ideal performance, which has deeper peaks and troughs and even in the event of imperfect performances, there's an honesty in the method of pre-emptive strikes of how to deal; how the performers are equipped, and then how the audience is equipped with power beyond their agency of presence or non presence.

on the third day I was going to have a meeting with another person, but that didn't end up making sense. I spent the day gathering sources, beginning to record, finding texts completely.

on the third day I was going to have a meeting with another person, but that didn't end up making sense. I spent the day gathering sources, beginning to record, finding texts completely.

on the fourth day I met with eleni for an early morning chat, where I heard about her recent time studying at atlantic in new york. I gave her a little surprise, and then went to meet the person I had missed the day before, Elia's boyfriend, who I had another coffee with.

Is this my source of caffeine addiction over the last week? I'm pretty dependent by now. I then went to get a score for Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*, and spent the day enhancing my existing understanding of the piece and the concepts and structures he was interested in. This text, FROM TAPE LOOPS TO MIDI: KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN'S FORTY YEARS OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC by Michael Manion was definitely the most informative / what kind of information is even on the internet anymore? I'm so glad my library membership still extends to include digital databases for the next year.

In the afternoon, I went back into the city to see a development stage of a work. I sat near some bowls which smelled a lot of spices. A woman was painting crosses (though not Christian ones, on a piece of bark or something like that), which was then projected onto a back drop. Very much a piece-of- urban city type of story, I guess it was somewhat about family histories, which you might compare to this performance, which is doing much of the same, I suppose.

There was then a little opening which I watched the commencement speeches for, and then watched a nice girl in the corner, who was singing earnest folk songs in an affected twang which would have worked had she been less aware of how few people were listening to her and the strains of strings. I left quickly and went home to work on the musical derivatives of the Stockhausen.

on the fifth day I started the day working on this, and then went to Elia's house for dinner. Elia was sure she wanted to take part. We ate fritters, and while we bided time, dancing in a medley of internet selections, and Elia wasn't feeling so well so she stayed to rest, feeling a little burnt out.

I eventually headed on to another group of friends, finding a sombrero along the way. my tip to you is to not be attached to anything you ever pick up, if you value anything it will disappoint you. try to refute me.

Brigitte also expressed interest in taking part.

on the sixth day I began to wake up late. I worked through the day and went to a talk about post-internet art. I then went to buy objects for making objects appropriate to this performance, before dropping in on a friend. Dropping a friend of this friend at a train station made me a little tardy for a dinner, but when I arrived I had a nice time.

We went to a little concert of a friend of ours and I left; live performance is such a great forum for thinking about other things until it actually engages you, but it's quite alright if it doesn't.

I went home and began working on costumes for my performers. Bibs, team colours, the basketball imagery trying to be a bit cute and aware of this sporting stadium situation we're in, but dealing with more bounce in ball, more humorous parallels to space jam, taller teams, more ethnic diversity in general and hence a kind of friction about which demographic dominates the industry. The promotional image was of a women's basketball team in aerial view. Maybe it ties in a way to a big listing project I had begun which was working with idiosyncrasies of vocabulary used in shows by Amy Sherman Palladino, including *Roseanne*, *Gilmore Girls*, and *Bunheads*, which tried to identify the discrepancies in language as signifier for character development.

In episode four of *Gilmore Girls*' second season, Lorelai undercuts her good friend and fresh business partner Sookie, and Sookie then abruptly changes the subject to women's basketball when Luke asks her how plans for the inn are going. In *Bunheads*, basketball is deemed a dead end sport, earnest, clean cut, and for a bad team, mostly redundant, when Sasha quits ballet to be a cheerleader and rebel, because she's having issues at home and gets in

trouble when she turns up with a swimming costume tan. Madame Fanny is so mad and makes an example of her.

Kenny Ortega directs some episodes of *Gilmore Girls*, and is also famous for directing *High School Musical*, which famously has basketball choreography and is a dream of Disney diversity. but what does it say about women in adjunct to basketball. What's the reason, why does Lorelai say 'sure, the tall girls need an outlet' what do we end up prioritizing more; our physical appearance, or our age? They are separable, aren't they. So I wanted to put these ladies all on the same team, and began tracing algorithms and calculations from Stockhausen's notes onto the surface of these, arranging these calculations of the size of waveforms which were components, fragments of sound.

But then I was also working with these clear plastic elements.

We have all these water bottles in the space which obviously read as a simile for humankind in that they are water filled vessels, identical in content, produced by bulk, value placed on the way they are packaged or their provenance despite the actual worth, and then it's also a very practical option and is a sweet line to the endurance that might be associated with forms of theatre and live art. I was making masks for the performers, to be giant water bottles, giving you a strong, interesting image and forcing you to look, at least

for long fragments of time, at these faceless, expressive bodies, trying to listen to what I'm asking of them.

on the seventh day I realized these designed images were entirely redundant.

the space is not a theatre, it's not a gallery, and object elements would definitely cloud the seven levels of comprehensibility, and interrupt the flow of information without being demonstrative.

I cannot light this space in a way that has true meaning beyond the function of the space, nor would there be a reason to.

Talking about this project more and more, different slants occur, and I try to avoid language which paints my feelings about making work that is too existentialist, because I don't feel that way. It computes that I talk more in Sydney than I did in London, because I'm pretending to know more about what I'm talking about.

I worked through the day. I was wondering how to translate explicit notation and structural division into the space besides what I have done in a very crude way to other source materials.

The floor as a score? Masking tape layouts? Uninteresting. Discarded, I'm trying to be brave enough to allow you to be numbingly bored, amazing troughs, astonishing peaks.

On day eight I worked through the day and in the evening had a rehearsal before I saw Brigitte, meeting her new dog, talking to her mother about what I had been up to in the last year and what I was trying to do now.

I drove her to my house and we talked and listened to music, and then I ran through the training track with her.

It went well.

I think her voice is very enchanting.

I then drove her home and worked a little further.

on the ninth day elia had asked if her rehearsal could begin at 9 or so in the morning. it did. we rehearsed upstairs in my house, I made her a coffee, my dad had taught me how. Upstairs there is carpet, and we both had runny noses. She did very well. I then bought us a frozen yoghurt which we ate talking about family. I then bought bottled water from a reluctant shopkeeper.

on the ninth day I went shoe shopping with my mum, mildly attached to buying a pair of Birkenstock sandals. we bumped into our neighbours having lunch, eating out.

I had been missing a coffee and hydration pattern, so, recovered, we wound up buying some real value groceries.

Arriving home, we both did some work, and it wasn't until after dinner that we had rehearsal and she demonstrated her tai chi pattern to me. It was not easy to follow.

on the tenth day I wrote and recorded this.  
I had a rehearsal with eleni in the morning,  
which was the first time I explained the  
contents of the training track for this piece  
before we pressed play.

It's amazing how many ways there are to  
articulate a single movement. Or maybe  
it's not so amazing.

on the eleventh day

on the twelfth day we are here.

+++

recorded over two nights, the above constitutes half an hour of text. the high energy entrance of brigitte disintegrates entirely, and in recording the text, ivan becomes incoherent at points, microsleeping and misreading words, before resuming the next morning in a deeper, morning voice. the tone is smoothed back over and brigitte becomes subsumed by the general restriction and tyranny of space and score, which the women are often invited to throw off and break free of.

70 iterations of the prayer have been expressed,  
sung with such different voices and comprehensibility.

finished with her three rounds of tai chi,  
louisa is directed to begin taking slow circles around the space,  
the last thirty prayers in a way, also a reference to  
12 hour endurance performance by fran barrett  
which had happened in front of similar audience just prior to  
the beginning of the project.

elia follows. they are supposed to mark each lap with a count  
but in performance they don't.

eleni is supposed to relay the same text as brigitte.  
but during performance, ivan becomes ashamed of  
how the 12 days of development (which were actually 13)  
are presented, and gestures to eleni to return to  
communicating the cesar aira text.

elia is invited to relay a text while she completes the 30  
prayers with louisa, but does not.  
the text is taken from the website of australian beauty  
product company Aesop, and is an interview with artist  
sissel tolaas.

the text was chosen in structural reflection and counterpoint to the nicholas ridout text about tragedia endogonidia, for its context, language, and the way it indicates tolaas' sense of geography via smell; I was obsessed at the time with how she constructed a specific experience to act as a mapping point of a whole geography

#### Sissel Tolaas

With her personal library of 7,000 smells and 2,500 molecules, Sissel Tolaas can replicate the scent of outer space, a World War 1 battlefield and a homeless person. But how much longer can she resist making perfume, wonders TONY MARCUS.

Sissel Tolaas once went to a film premiere wearing a designer suit and the perfume of a man who lived on the street. His smell, she said, was 'complex'. Complex?

‘Consisting of the replicated smell of wet paper, alcohol, sweat, vomit, dust, dirt.’

The smell of the man was very present in the room. Really quite marked. ‘No one,’ she says, ‘suspected me. Sometimes I like to smell the opposite of the way I look.’

And while this might sound like a rather glib and exploitative stunt – a middle-class provocateur ‘toying’ with the involuntary odour of someone intensely vulnerable (not to mention stigmatised) – it was not done lightly or insensitively. ‘For me,’ she says, ‘every smell is beautiful and interesting. I have no prejudices. I learn to love them all.’

Tolaas likens smelling without prejudice to living without prejudice. She does a lot of work with kids, primarily to make this point. ‘I really don’t want kids to think about smells in terms of good or bad. This is how I work when I introduce the children to different smells. The issue of prejudice is essential.’

She is a scientist and artist; she works with smell. She won’t use the word ‘perfume’ to describe what she does. Based in Berlin, she was born in 1964 and is now globally renowned – for a long time she was the sole practitioner in her field. She consults and speaks with NASA and on United Nations arts/climate panels. She works for major brands (Ikea wanted something on the smell of Sweden) and has been commissioned and exhibited by MIT, MoMA, Tate, Venice Biennale and Beijing Olympics.

Her background is academic – degrees, residencies and postgraduate studies at different universities (Warsaw, Oslo, Oxford, Harvard Medical School, Stanford) – she comes into smell (not perfume) from studying visual art and chemistry. She has several undergraduate degrees (mathematics, linguistics, chemical science, visual art) and has a doctorate in chemistry.

Her Berlin flat has a laboratory and storage zone; there are refrigeration units for the 7,000 smells (stored in vacuum-sealed tins) and 2,500 molecules she has collected from around the world. The labels reveal her library: ‘Smoky/fishy. Senegal. 1994.’ Or ‘Sweat. Argentine. In the bars.’

Perfume (and smell) is molecular. There are an infinite number of scent molecules; a single flower might consist of hundreds of individual molecules. Together they make the perfume of the flower. Tolaas uses a piece of technology called Headspace – normally reserved for the perfume industry. It looks like a goldfish bowl with a TV remote attached. It reveals the molecular structure of whatever smell you put in the bowl, pinpointing exactly which molecules, for example, make a rose smell like a rose. And once you know which molecules create a certain real-world smell, if you recombine those molecules, working from the lab up, you re-create the smell.

'What I do is replication. I am able to replicate reality endlessly for my purposes,' says Tolaas.

As we speak she has returned from Kansas City and a three-year project researching and re-creating smells of the city and its people. The Kansas show will reach completion when she has established 'stations' through the city where people can sample the smells she has reproduced. 'You can catalogue every neighbourhood precisely. Through smell,' she says

What is an interesting smell in Kansas City? 'Cupcakes. There was this cupcake smell in a certain part of the city. We couldn't work this out but we decided to follow our noses and ended up at the sewage facility. They were covering up the sewage smell with the smell of cupcakes.' Like pumping cupcake perfume molecules out into the air? 'Yes.'

She re-created the smell of the First World War for the German Museum of Military History in Dresden. She interviewed soldiers about their experiences in more recent wars. 'I worked to make the smell of the battlefield. Of dead human bodies. It became a very extreme smell. But a smell I'd never smelled in my life before. I made it in my own flat and my 14-year-old daughter got quite upset. She was saying, "When is the smell of World War I going to be over?"'

There is obviously a connection between smell and the imagination. There are commercial perfumes that are daring enough to smell of black leather, pigskin luggage, tobacco and damp, mossy forests. Tolaas has made a limited edition that smells of coal.

What does she think about the commercial perfume industry? She laughs. 'No comment.'

Tolaas does not wear commercial perfumes. Or deodorant. But since 2004 she has been sponsored and supported by IFF (International Flavors & Fragrances Inc), a huge chemical-perfume company. They make the molecules that go into perfumes, cleaning products and food products – even household goods. They are one of the handful of companies who, explains Tolaas, 'control smell and taste on the planet'.

She notes the difference between those who work to disguise the smell of things and her own work, which is to reveal and collect the smells (or perfumes) of life.

'We have the right to know what's out there before it is decided to cover it up. As soon as a smell comes along we are covering it up. Whether it comes from the body, the neighbourhood, we cover it up. We clean the floor with products that smell of granny smiths. We don't have the chance to discover our own body smell. I think you should find out first, before you decide to cover it up. I think certain smells are there for a purpose, for the information they gave you. Something amazing could happen if we thought about this differently.'

There is also a space project. After Tolaas spoke at a NASA conference last year, a Norwegian astronaut contacted her. 'He described the smell in space as rotten burned meat and dust. Very metallic.' She will be creating such a thing to help train astronauts.

The French writer and thinker Georges Perec would have loved the way she catalogues strange corners of life. He was convinced we would see our world more clearly, more wonderfully, if we came at things from unexpected but highly precise details, the microcosm revealing the bigger picture. Perec enjoyed lists. Could you list all the smells you meet in a day? Could you question them, inspired by Tolaas? How many, if any at all, are natural? How many are created by companies such as IFF, so that reality, or at least its smell, is lost to us, buried and masked?

But despite her unspoken misgivings about the perfume industry, Tolaas wants to engage in a dialogue with it and even join the fray.

'I have,' she says, 'some mind-blowing molecules.' What are they? A flower? Something from nature? 'They are abstract.'

She continues 'I would love to do something but it would have to be right. I would like to go to the North Pole and slowly work my way back to Europe – looking at the different countries, seasons, natures. I would like to go into space. To record. And collect molecules.'

So she is prepared to work with the perfume industry, and she would like to make a difference to it. She exclaims emphatically: 'This is what I do!'

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eleni leaves the room brusquely to go to the toilet. at the 4 hour point, she only thinks she's part way through. louisa and elia have lost count of how many laps of the space they've made, which ivan knows because he asks, and brigitte's score has played through. the score is completed. eleni returns and the audience applauds.

## ON SPORTS MOTIFS

looking at my wall where I have tacked  
charts of initial thoughts, I have written on the corner of a big sheet of paper:

“ I like sports because there are rules “

while my interest in the sports aspect was to ground this ‘team’ of performers, dealing with all these restrictions, rules and environment, within another structure which would hopefully free them to play physically with certain imagery. directions for movements include reference to stylised gestures from our workshop, to do with these short explosive movements associated with the sport.

my chosen performers come from very different backgrounds, so their methods of working together in a space were not as homogenous as, say, a group of actors working under an almost improvisatory context, trying to take offers. the team mentality, the idea of the physical exertion of doing this 4 hour work was clearly associative, and in initial sketches there were sections of reading out strategies and team plays, interested in the fact that they all had a ball to bounce in terms of material: with earphones in, it is very difficult to listen to the space, to become aware of who and where one is.

as detailed in brigitte’s 12-day speech, the sports motif would have seeped into the design too. I had been developing a very anti-aesthetic approach, trying to destroy my desire to stylise and use

symbols which are possibly beyond the clear reading capacity of my audience.

when the women asked me what they should wear on the day, I told them to dress as though they were going to a basketball game.

interestingly, they all asked whether they were watching or playing.

perhaps the space was athletic enough, with the stasis of the exercise bike, positioned so the rider, elevated, could just look out to the setting sun or the darkness, or just look at their own reflection. the performance was deliberately contained in the space, despite the fact that so much else was visible through the walls.

another foreword 10/7/13

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As I choose to begin this, semantics come up.  
What is the appropriate word with which to discuss  
the often abusive transaction of performance, or,  
more broadly, the command-aggression that I find  
intrinsic to my understanding art and literature?

Being a young mind grappling with the necessity to  
communicate using 'language', I currently seek  
solace in my understanding of the articulated thoughts  
of others. This is a contrast to the Ivan Cheng that  
you may (or may not) have spoken to 9 months or so  
ago, who was more interested in listening silently to

people express thought, pleading stupidity, ignorance, or a willingness to form an opinion carefully.

I am terrified of my continual compulsion to be perceived as 'smart', using other structures and intellects to half communicate my own specious thoughts, in exactly the manner laid out here. *Camenzind* was an attempt to process and revolutionise this puerile formalism. I claim a fascination with notation of language, and from the point look at the performer struggling to lend integrity to a statement in foreign language; foreign performance language.

What fits?  
What is necessary?  
What is curation?  
What is purpose?

So it bears salt to provide a loose bibliography of my last year; Proust, Sebald, Bolano, Aira, Miller, Vonnegut, Sartre, Bernhard, Lacan, Barthes - I'm still just catching up. I feel a little like a writer who I've read three books by only recently: Chris Kraus, except I'm her young self, trying to amuse and swiftly slide across topics until I can charmingly joke in each one, when it becomes native (though it won't). I suppose I'm also getting ready to articulate the kind of feminism that she articulates, something I recognize but had not read (after all, haven't I been preoccupied with reading men?). Obtuse tone is by design. This book list also is a direct reflection of my own reading aspirations and those of friends I admire.

Camenzind was a lot of firsts for me. It was the first work in which I didn't perform, the first work which used only women, the first which dealt directly with catering to my perception of the performer's strengths, the first in which I deliberately tried to make something difficult, which begged to not be liked or to have people switch off it (while I was also desperate to have approval, having developed my

practice over the last year abroad, away from this audience). So over 12 days, or 13, I suppose, I made a work from the conception that I wanted to make a 4 hour work, do it at the Redfern Oval venue, and the intent of returning to a kind of object theatre. I will discuss this briefly before continuing.

The last time I directed a play, I chose a somewhat dated translation of Strindberg's Creditors. Nothing was cut. We were faithful to the text. I worked with the actors for a few months in developing a movement language with which they could articulate a different 'arc' to what the often charged text would implicate, and this was extremely difficult. Resistance to success as theatre was designed.

Using a squash court and viewing mezzanine as the performance space meant that acoustically, the text would always disappear. Working with a fluid, contact-contemporary dance language became difficult with loaves of shellacked artisan bread littered through the space (a nod to the idea of moulding personalities and sculpture as paragon of visual art), the crumbs and brittle loaves.

The casting was of a close group of actors (Harriet Gordon-Anderson, Eleni Schumacher, Stephen Sharpe), whose romantic history half echoed the text (though this was not so much by design as ignorance), but they often acted as a unit in dealing with their nervousness about how I was asking them to work, what I wanted from them as a 'director'.

Being new to the art of directing, and (as I have laboured) often an inefficient communicator, I did not always deal with their questions or needs as performers in the most measured way, nor was I (as their director), as detached and supportive as I currently understand as respectful. Frustrated with the scene and with desire to destroy the image and shake during a matinee performance, I entered the performance space and ripped up some of the tarquet, thoroughly abusing the role I had prescribed for myself and upsetting my actors in a way that I did not anticipate. While I received forgiveness after apologising for my unheralded and abusive behaviour, the idea of abrupt, external agency still interested me.

In the early days of Camenzind I wrote in a clause for myself, allowing my real-time intervention in space, whether by addressing performers directly, text message, hand written notes, sudden modifications to the space. I moved away from this. In the performance I was determined to restrict my agency to an artist watching his own work, rather than making it, and limited my interferences to a planned switching lights off and then on, based on the time rather than content. To have been constantly modifying and suggesting ideas to my ‘audience’ (that is, the performers), would be to alter the seven levels of comprehensibility and compromise the integrity of the event.

The making of Creditors had been a formative time though; with Eleni Schumacher’s online reminiscing about the pain of the loaves that she was eating from Bourke St Bakery, the actors mentioned reviving the production, having the benefit of a few years formal training. I had the desire to direct again. I wanted to take an existing text and stage it, set it in an interesting space with relationship to the text, and due to the short time allowed for rehearsal, use an in ear cueing system for the actors. My head at the time was filled with the podcasts from the Nature Theater of Oklahoma and as such with Elevator Repair Service (who perhaps most famously staged The Great Gatsby in its

entirety as Gatz). I was interested in how they were interrogating what the relevance and nature of performance was to themselves, society, and audience, and how that was relevant to ideas I was thinking about.

Spurred into action by conversation about the development of an upcoming project (*epoché-lacan-orbits*), I acted on impulse, booking the space, combing through texts I liked, and setting a performance slot of 4 hours. The unnecessary choice of four hours was designed to shift perception of the work by observer; it would very easily be the defining descriptor for a lot of punters. In discussion after the show, it was noted that the naming of 4 hours rather than 3 tipped it more into the realm of endurance for audience. I would not call *Camenzind* an endurance performance; to me, endurance performance attempts to be a more crystallised idea, a repetitive action which is imbued with transformation and failure, linked indelibly to the resistance of the performing body. It is more along the lines of long-form theatre or performance installation, interested in the relationship (or subsuming) of the performing body to the textual content, structure and setting.

My understanding of what the performance would be rapidly evolved over a few days. Attaching Eleni Schumacher to the project before anything existed shaped how it would exist. Attaching it to the presenting program of new music organisation Volta Collective created a desire to situate it to a degree as ‘contemporary music’, or to at least interrogate the form and relevance of these musical vocabularies and how they’re performed and presented, and gave me the responsibility, as a trained, contemporary classical musician, of how to deal with this expectation. Dealing with the brotherhood of Hermann Hesse then convinced me that I had counterpoint this with a great group of females alongside Eleni, all different and anonymous to each other. That they are all tacitly without religion didn’t hurt either. I attached Elia Bosshard, a flautist with a dance history, Brigitte Wirfler, a double and electric bass player as well as alto singer, and Louisa Lau, my mother, who in her youth was an oboe player and now practices tai chi. My relationships with these women were intrinsic to the work that evolved.

I rehearsed them separately, familiarising them with a method of physically responding to direction, which would be dictated by ‘scores’ which I would prepare, of my voice instructing them to perform movements, be a vessel for textual and musical language. These sessions were structured to happen within an hour with three components:

1. Stillness and then Movement.  
Emphasis on the movement inherent in stillness, moving from and with core energy, idea of unpredictable movements; to think to turn left if you intend to turn right, tricking the body from mind, giving the blank face an interior.
2. Text-based relaying  
Dynamic speech styles and playing with words. The text recorded was sometimes repeated, but often not, delivered at different speeds and different coherencies. Developing coping mechanisms
3. Pitch-based relaying.  
Straightforward meandering, and then the confrontation of multiple, equally important lines which can be followed. A surfeit of information to communicate, which cannot be predicted but is relentlessly similar and without cadence.

Giving them a performance vocabulary, heavily influenced by precepts of space and time learned from working under Robert Wilson, I was asking them to respond to directions in a very formal manner, full of body tension, exhausting in its stillness.

I was suggesting that all of these women to act/react as I would; from the choice of speech inflection patterns, to the amount of time it should take to respond to an imperative, and make them aware that this; my shaping as the score-maker, was constantly occurring. I then suggested that they try to deal with this, and the issue of their personal representation in the space.

So the work became about  
youth vs age,  
religion vs belief,  
composers vs dictators,  
reading vs understanding,  
physical vs verbalised,  
linear vs scattered,  
the rift of gender, and  
the inability/ease of mapping this.

Nothing was ever commented on directly, but implications of the designed structure (if at all communicated by the performers) intended to shape the statement of the text, which would always exist ("be exigent") even if the methods they were forced to articulate it with rendered it unsuccessful.

My performers agreed to be involved with the understanding that I would not explain the whole conception of the work to them – the structure, content, references, deliberate concessions, but I found it hard to resist. This is a new model of working for me, and while it felt like an accomplishment, there is still more care to develop in the process, more consideration. I am very grateful for their participation and their often extremely beautiful performances.

the following is the only email exchange  
that is included in this document;  
between IC and EB the day after the performance.  
conversations about the work continued  
and the publication of this document was delayed  
by IC being in the USA for 7 weeks.  
much else was and has been said,  
but much is also inferred within this document.

these emails were written  
before the second foreword  
we're folding back again and again  
and what are we preceding?

**Elia Bosshard**

to me

hey ivan,

How did you feel about last night? Especially being able to watch it all. i was surprised by your introduction! Great! Though not sure what you were talking about as I had this great funky music to shuffle around to .

The picc stuff was mostly fine. Though when I first started playing- I wasn't sure if I was given an instruction to play or not because you said "lets play some music" and then played the Stockhausen, all cool, but then I thought- does that include me playing it??

Then came a clear instruction to play, and I felt a bit abashed that I had followed your instruction incorrectly and played too early. So was listening to the Stockhausen just supposed to get me into a mood?

The picc stuff we rehearsed, was mostly fine but the plateaus you mentioned- do you mean plateaus of silence, or in lack of "virtuosity". So I can't really answer your question just yet...

Lastly, with picc stuff, in the last hr you asked me to pick up my piccolo but there was no clear instruction to play, so that time I just listened to the Stockhausen.

I have a few other thoughts- they are all neutral observations, with no intention of meaning things to be different to how they were.

I felt intimidated when Bridget entered the space. I had never met her and she was extremely dominating with her monologue-like role. This is all fine, but I was unsure of how to interact with her, and also with Eleni, as they did so much animated (really great!) speaking, and I felt most of my language was conveyed through the piccolo or movement. A much more abstract method of communication. I felt my reaction to their dominance was to do nothing at all, though it took me a while to feel comfortable with this.

i wasn't prepared for large periods of silence in the recorded instruction- and I think that made me a little hesitant, as I didn't want to just make things up. Again I felt my reaction was to do nothing, or very very little. And it was hard to break out of that at times. I felt less involved with others the further we got into the performance, and became more engrossed in an internal dialogue. I felt like I decayed with the time. I know if there had been more instruction I would've expelled more energy. Perhaps this is what you wanted. Though i don't know, beacuse there were so many energy conflicts throughout with the other performers.

Thanks so much for involving me. I found it so interesting, and challenging in many ways. I think I've learned a lot from it- about myself and listening to a space.

See you soon :) Elia

Ivan Cheng <ivancheng91@gmail.com>

to Elia

Hey!

Big thanks for your email. I really value your thoughts. I'm putting together a package of thoughts as promised, would you mind part of this email being part of it?

I noticed the picc early gesang, and enjoyed it, with your back to the audience. I had no issue with your simply listening to the latter; I do not have any issue with what you chose to do, and indeed I was really trying to encourage the ambiguities in what would happen. The first playing of Stockhausen was supposed to make you think about interpretation, about how you might translate things into certain sounds, what tricks you'd use, with my being aware that I wasn't going to ask you to do very much in terms of interesting sounds (associated in my book with 'contemporary performance') during the medley of note names. It was to kind of give you a sense of ternary form, a landmark to think 'oh, i thought about how I was going to play this two hours ago, how will I do it now'. I should have been clearer about not playing, and just listening. I'll repeat, that I had no issue with any of the choices made by any of the performers. I'd say that they were all pretty circumstantial, and are the responses that I asked for.

The contrast from two 'unison' moments in the first hour (where you all lifted one arm together, twice, and then, less clear, the same 'warm up') to moments in the last few hours where it was more reliant on what I had mentioned in passing (about how it would end, whether things should have changed, like whether you should still be singing the 'prayers' in the same way, whether being left 'out of breath') was interesting, and then the actual levels of contrast that could be achieved in the space while being dependent on an often quiet and subdued voice in your head was super interesting to me. Whether this made for 'successful' work was not clear; to me there were moments which I felt very much 'yes yes yes' in, as well as moments in which i wanted to believe it was 'yes yes yes' because i knew i had constructed them as such, and you may remember that at one point I was saying that I'd have real agency in the space, asking you to do other things, moving objects, changing things. And I did, turning off and turning on the lights, getting water for some people and dropping it, indicating to you all with my hands and expressions at different times, bringing brig in through the lift. But I never really gave you anything strong to bounce off; there was no direction to take 'offers' from each other, that you should work together to break the pattern of what was being asked and to form a performance that deeply belonged to you; to achieve that point which I was trying to reach of making a performance that was really essential; performers really struggling to deliver something, and trying different methods to realise it; being able to deliver the text with real integrity as well

adding something very truthful and engaging (which is how I would classify a great interpretation of a score).

The difficulty was that there was no 'warm up' together, no 'chamber music rehearsals' where you came together, gauged each other's energy, only an odd little standing together upstairs while I, the person that brought you all together was downstairs. The person probably with the most 'training' in trying to activate an emotional connection between you all was Eleni, with her experience in working with people directly in many plays (as opposed to your chamber music experience in which you often know the people you're playing with, and there are other priorities, like intonation, and phrasing, before you're able to really unlock yourself in playing. And being unfamiliar with you as a performing musician, I don't know how much you've had that pleasure, of almost transcending the need to deal with the text or audience, rather knowing the path that you're walking and being able to illuminate everything and thus have people come to it. Does that make sense? So my goal was to try and push you to a point to try to employ 'tricks' of performance, to make a successful performance, playing with your existing understanding of yourself as a performer, but not setting up circumstances or giving you real time (you always were aware that some other demand, which might ask for a very different skill set would come up) or space (crowded by others, with mystifying but kind of relevant appliances in the way).

What I asked you all to do was so hard! I'm not sure what I would have done, though I constructed the tracks to be something that I would ideally respond well to (with my imperfect understanding of how I perform in space). You'll remember that I gave you a way of standing. I also brought back a few ways of moving, but for you kind of stripped away autonomy or ability to stylise it/incorporate it into the existing movement language I had asked you to do (which was linked to your memory of struggling to learn something anyway) by talking about your father and shotput, making the implication that these actions were to be quite real. And oh my god, when you were throwing the javelin, the discus, all that, it was incredible. I was wondering when I was going to let you stop, or how you were coping. You're right, you didn't have so many words, though most of the others didn't have continuous instruction either. It was my perception that you were somewhat experienced in moving, and knowing that you were a contemporary music performer, I wanted to push you to deal with this, see where you would go despite how 'down' on improvisation I had been in rehearsals, which had been triggered by that talk we had had about the improvisation you did with that theatre group, and also my memory of doing improvisations which I thought were pretty awful.

I don't know that I'd agree with you in saying that they dominated the space. I'll answer about Eleni first; for the first hour I forced her to stand entirely still, and then she had a whole lot of text to 'read' in completion, which is so difficult under the pressure of 'performing it' of selling it to the audience when the first hour had been really more abstract, with my mum's quiet speech + your

movements, then piccolo bits. Last night, speaking with her, she said (and this is not a quote) that while she was talking she was often thinking 'oh gosh, why didn't I do that, I just know in future that I'll look back and think I should have done something else, but HANG ON why am I thinking this when I can do anything here, and I've been told I should do anything, but here I am, with big chunks of text, a book, not a monologue, which is not something that as an actor you can easily tap into as a spellbinding emotional performance; the nature of the language was just interesting, observational, sometimes lightly humorous. Eleni is incredible at emotionally connecting to a character and I have seen her do things which are completely heartbreakingly, incredibly characters, but here I asked her to be her, and held her back from being a 'character' by asking her to read. So the way she dealt with it, and the flagging energy in the room was to observe, sometimes run around, be distracted and distracting, trying to articulate something, and indicate some frustration, but there was never anything that could be stronger. I think that maybe the awareness of space made that difficult.

As for Brigitte, I brought her into the space, not warmed up, but I had given her a pep talk outside about really ramping up the energy in the room, really bringing it. In her recordings, I started off with a real peak of energy with those accents, and I remember recording that monologue late on Thursday night after CACHE in POINT, which is where I wrote it. I literally fell asleep as I wrote it, and then resumed recording the next morning. So it was designed to really dominate the space, because the point that it was supposed to come in was where I had expected you three to have perhaps flagged a little, and if you had somehow all escaped from the tyranny of what I was saying, then she still would have been a very different force of energy, with the detective stuff (an attempt at disambiguation). I do understand that she did dominate the space for a while: I began her monologue with 'Brigitte takes two steps' which she does, and then she forces the audience to look at her and what she is wearing, saying things which aren't true about what she's wearing and then putting on a different accent. This is opposed to what I asked the rest of you to do, which was simply to expect that the audience would look at you, though I didn't aid this at all by setting up no lights, giving you no costumes, just talking about things in very notated terms (rather than designed or performative). You were supposed to almost feel gazes slipping off you a bit and try to reclaim them by boosting your energy silently into the space. During Brig's monologue, you all start singing, bits of music which are very much repetitive, and are settings of a prayer from the bible. How would you deal with the contrast of what Brig was saying (if that was at all 'comprehensible' and would it be reactionary. At the point where you were all asked to stand completely still while she kept on talking had her talking in very circular ways about being unsure about the direction and shaping and process of making the work. I have no idea how the audience perceived this. I was very caught up in feeling so ashamed, in a kind of exhibitionist way, and was hoping that people would understand it as a kind of paradox; that while this was indulgent and

explanatory, not all of it was, but giving them the chance to take this point and judge the whole thing on it.

What I meant by the 'plateaus in contrast to the more extreme moments' which I mentioned in the text message was in reference to virtuosity, in reference to how you think you performed as a flautist. At times, it felt very much like you were listening to instructions of what to play rather than grabbing at notes like a playful game, like you're at an arcade playing whack-a-mole or something like that. It wasn't necessarily pushing and grabbing command of the space and sound, until you were, and you really just went for it, and tried the tonguing thing and tried to give over to it. The 'cheap trick' of 'cascading' helped, I think. The big enterprise was that the musical material that I read to you was not music, and it was your goal to try and overcome the blankness and very scientific nature of the source material and make it into something else. I don't think I can judge how it came across to someone not privy to the process or what I was trying to achieve; people have their own ways of listening to music, and of judging what works and what is pleasurable.

So, I guess I'll say that all I can say about it is that it definitely happened. I don't know if it was particularly successful as a performance (though what is a performance...), and as an exercise (which it definitely was), it perhaps lacked the rules to really change it from a 'hmm, that makes me think' exercise into a 'ohhhh, wait, so this is this and this is that, so now i think this', which is what it was trying to be.

Huge thank you, no really, thank you so much, for being game in participating. I really value you and your time, and am glad to hear you say that you learnt something. I just hope you can figure out exactly what it is; I think I'm still trying to figure that out, as well as answer the question of why I'm trying to figure it out.

Much love,  
Ivan