



## Stadterweitern

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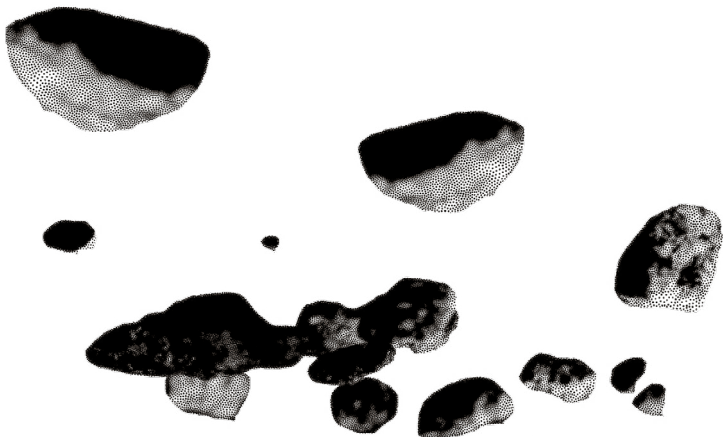
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# STADTERWEITERN TRACING A PRACTICE



Stadterweitern  
Tracing a practice

A project by Sabine Zahn  
May 2020 – January 2021  
Berlin



⌘ = one voice

⌘ = one voice

■ = one voice

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# INTRODUCTION

Sabine Zahn & Benoit Verjat,  
21st March 2021.

It's not true that connections are lying around just waiting for you to grasp them. You can walk past a corner 5000 times and not see anything. (...) to make this framing work until we can be affected in a way that we can see that corner differently, namely as being produced, not given.

- Christopher Dell,  
"The Improvisation of Space"  
lecture on 28th August 2020, Stadterweitern

The following pages invite you into a collection of materials that emerged during the course of Stadterweitern 2020.

Stadterweitern was a hybrid series of practice laboratories and linked public events, inquiring about how the city can be made and reflected through choreographic body practices. The work was deeply rooted in practice as research and conceived as participatory and public processes. In this scope it was the third phase in a trajectory initiated and directed by Sabine Zahn of engaging with the city as a physically enacted space.

From her solo movement practice and in many collaborations with architects, Sabine Zahn has developed a practice of being with the city in the present tense. In 2019, the practice translated into "Fremdgehen - a choreographic city expansion", a duet formed by a performer and a guest that shared a one hour sequence through Berlin's Anhalter Bahnhof district. Fremdgehen's creation process with four performers, a research designer and video artist<sup>1</sup>, fostered the emergence of research structures and directions, supported by feedback of guests experiencing the piece.

Stadterweitern embarked on amplifying that process. Four, one-week, practice-led labs were convened by practitioner duets<sup>2</sup>. The practice included manifold communication within the lab and participants, with guest researchers of the expanded program, with an audience and a remote digital audience. Other conditions shaped the practices fundamentally: different sites in Berlin, the weather variations between a cold May, hot August and a final freezing winter and last but not least, the contingent and deeply unsettling forces of the pandemic situation throughout all of the year 2020. Altogether, Stadterweitern created an intense field of practical and collaborative research, expressed through sketching, diagramming, poetic or analytic wording and incorporated filmmaking, that opened to speculation on scores, warmups, term usage, on perspectives and motivations.

The traces reproduced here, expressed in the language of the practice, refer therefore to specific contexts, moments, situated abstractions or embodied experiences from all the labs and the closing event on January 16th 2021 in CLB Berlin<sup>3</sup>. This publication is part

of the ongoing attempts to translate and communicate in order to make strands of the evolving practice available.

As such our research community crosses many practices, those of the participants but also those of the artists involved, many of whom have worked for many years with cities and environments. We offer this document as a stepping stone into new pathways, both for ourselves and anybody interested.

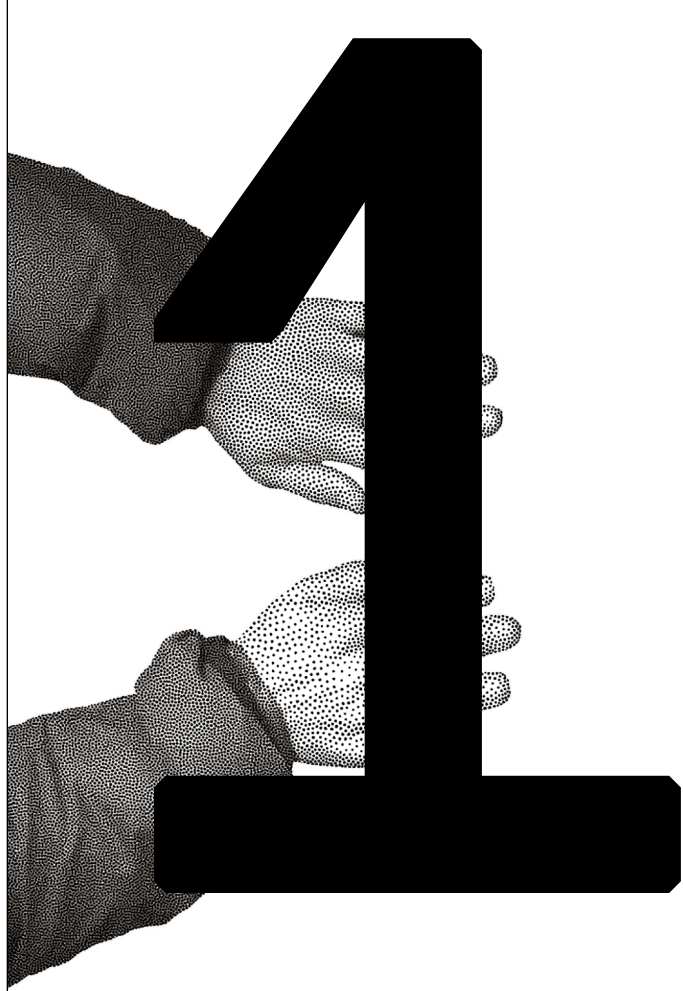
1 Arantxa Martínez, Joshua Rutter, Daniel Belasco Rogers, Sophia New, Benoît Verjat and Andrea Keiz.

2 Andrea Keiz/Daniel Belasco Rogers, Alice Chauchat/Sabine Zahn, Katja Munker/Joshua Rutter and Arantxa Martínez/Benoît Verjat.

3 [www.clb-berlin.de](http://www.clb-berlin.de)

# SCORES AND SOUVENIRS





# LAB EINS: SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

by Andrea Keiz & Daniel Belasco Rogers  
Berlin 5th - 9th may 2020

Proposing a foundation for the following labs, Lab 1 addresses our human senses, offering specific tools and techniques such as drawing machines and dowsing rods to experience different aspects of the urban space.

# 1. Audio recorder

This experiment is about listening through a device which mediates what you hear. It also changes how wind or airflow is heard, making it much more present.

Start with finding a place to stay a while and listen to the sounds of the area with and without the recorder. Note any changes. Start to walk around, guided by the sound. Do you move towards certain places? Can you say why? Use the audio recorder as a wind noise detector to guide you to windy or quiet areas. Note where they are. And finally, how do you perceive the differences of listening with and without audio equipment?

✎ The non hierarchy of sound makes me ready to explore. All the sounds have equal importance. I let my attention wander. Then I am hyper-close and perceptive with my ears, I expect to be able to hear what I see. I am surprised that I can't hear the colour of the flowers because they are very bright. I expect to hear the feet of the fly crawling over the flower. Sight is heightened by the sounds. Without the recorder my hearing is calmer. I don't focus on the loud noises but listen through them for quiet details too. They melt together. It is less irritating and more complex.

⌘ I got stuck at the local table-tennis table. The noise suddenly not only became bright but "full". I like light wind but do not hear it usually, now it is disturbingly loud. Crunching on the yellow gravel together with a mixture of people speaking. In the passage to Friedrichstraße the wind is suddenly silent. There is quite a different crunching sound on the ground over green plants. I set the sensitivity to the highest level. This is addictive. Maybe because my tinnitus in the audible world disappears? In the passageway, a group of seven young men talk excitedly. I enjoy the way they talk, although I know it is voyeuristic. The voices when they shout-how euphoric! Why do I find the voices of men more beautiful this loud? Two policewomen pass by. Every step makes all the metal on them rustle and ring. I have never heard that before. At some point I am amazed. Everything seems to be everywhere, I can no longer "locate" sounds. I cannot endure the cars. I flee to the birch trees in front of the 1980s houses. Without headphones and equipment, I feel the heat more strongly, I can think more linearly.

## 2. Air flow

This experiment is all about how the air moves around and through structures in the city.

You can use an external tool like a piece of flimsy plastic or feather to reveal the movement of air. Or use your own skin, ears or hair to sense the movement of air too. Examine the air movement on a small scale such as around your own body or a piece of street furniture. Examine the air movement on a large scale such as the working area of the day e.g. Ernst-Reuter Platz. Notice if there are differences between using external tools and your body.

⌘ The wind transports voices and brings them to me. The wind moves a tree. The tree touches my head. I touch the flowers and push it as if I was the wind. A fake wind. The wind moves the trees and their shadows. It moves the light on the surface of my body. So the wind moves trees. And the trees move the light.

⌘ A thing looks alive only because it goes against the flow. Swimming in the air. Suddenly an angle of light lets me see the pollen floating in the currents. It all becomes 3D. Will: movement as muscle, intention, neurons, combustion, machinery. Or movement as response to airflow, being carried, transference of energy, no will. The will of the seed with its parachute construction.

■ The wind also reaches my body, my senses and perception. My face feels the wind direction for example. My lower legs do not feel its direction! Hairs on my body are the only sensors of air intensity and direction. On hairless skin it is only a change of temperature. In this noisy and cold place, air perception grants me intimate moments of perception. What a great place Ernst-Reuter Platz is!

### 3. Intangible drawing

A GPS is a way of making a drawing you cannot see. As you move around, it records your location as points that can be joined up as lines. It is very good for tracing the affordances of the city. The accuracy of the GPS is affected by how much sky is visible. You have to make very big drawings. Just moving your body on the spot won't be large enough to be recorded as movement.

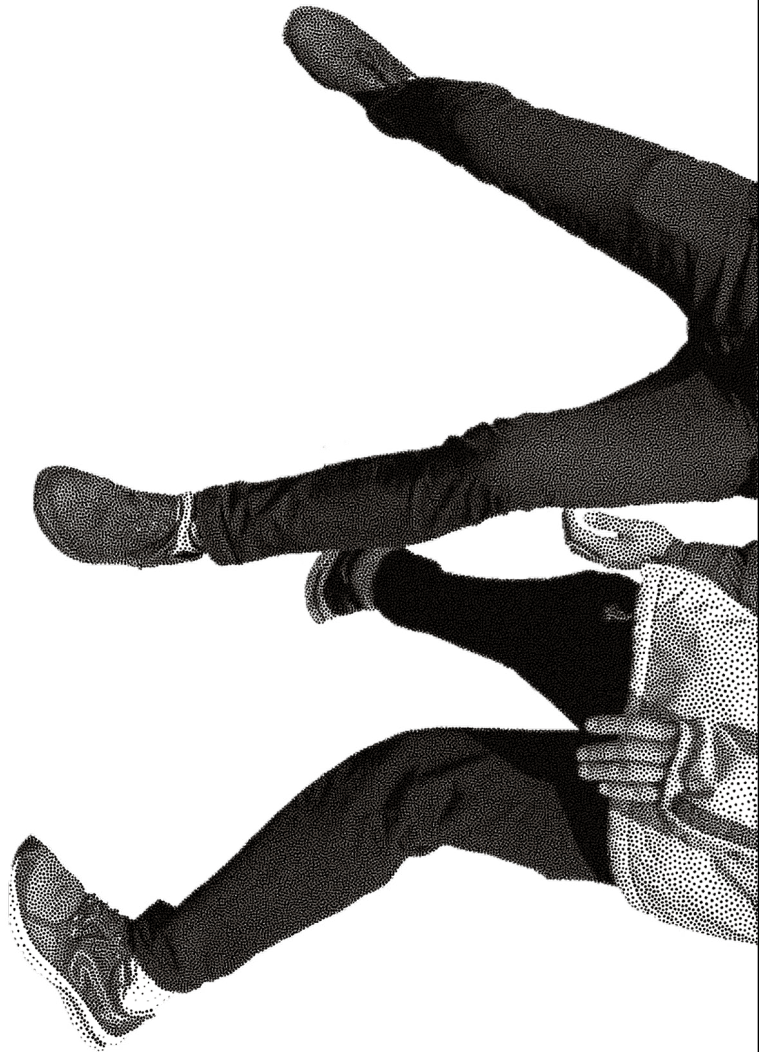
Trace the edges of different surfaces that you see on the ground, marking the boundary between different paving materials for example, or the edges of walkways. Think about a shape or a word you might like to virtually draw across a large open area of the city. How does the knowledge that you are drawing by moving affect your motion?

⌘ That was just such a very clear assignment. To run around the boundaries of Leipziger Platz, structural boundaries. I was free to draw letters or words, because the GPS really recorded every 2 seconds. I then drew letters and symbols and spirals and a big heart. Dan also sent me the drawing afterwards. It felt very strong, like a registered letter. Leaving a trace in the city. I am now inscribing my handwriting on the square. And Leipziger Platz was not as bad as I had imagined, because of the sun and because we were 10-15 people. I could see everyone and that sustained me.

⌘ I went into Mehringplatz and tried to imagine what it looked like from above. I walked around the low walls and so on. It's very formal that way. In the end, I didn't really feel like doing that anymore, so I made circles, turning around myself. Dan said you can also interfere with the signal and I tried that. I held my hand over it to see if it worked, because somehow its stupid if you only see these lines in the end.

■ I begin to stride at some point, striding with a tonic energetic forwardness. The somatic effect of a task that changes the physical state. I discover the line of the former Berlin wall embedded in the ground, across the square. Should it act as a reminder, as a scar? Paradoxically it starts directly in front of the Vodafone store. The Vodafone sign sits right on top of it. When will we read the newborn lines of the city as reminders or scars? Lines are about precedence, about power. Who draws the line through Leipziger Platz? All these lines in the city, these perspective lines and vanishing point inventions from the Renaissance. They bind my perception and movement up in a game that centres around itself. Who invented all these right angles and straight lines? Mr. Angle, the old strategist!





# LAB ZWEI: HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR?

by Alice Chauchat & Sabine Zahn  
Berlin 9th - 13th June 2020

Lab 2 looked at ways to dwell with the city  
as a physical and temporary activity and  
consequently explored forms of neighbourhood  
as varieties of togetherness and coexistence.



## 1. Dwelling. Individual score

Take 1 hour to establish your dwelling place.

Occupy yourself in that place.

Devise a score to pass on,  
based on what you have been doing.

Choose a title for it.

15 min to exchange scores and do them,  
again 1 hr.

⌘ Very few people pass by. I relax, leaning on an exposed fence in the middle of the passageway. I try to make myself comfortable. I have the image of myself being a bloke - that is leaning unquestioned in public space, leaning around, hanging around. If I am from here, I'd simply be part of the normal environment. This attitude sustains me in this very exposed position.

⌘ I drift into and in between the housing blocks, yards, grass. Older tenants shuffle along the pathways. I adapt to their slow rhythm, how they do not really pay attention, yet know that the others are there. As long term neighbours they don't have to set up a conversation. Everything is known. No special attention is needed.

■ As I was sitting I started to see all the small beetles and flies, all the small insects around. Sitting there in such a different body and scale I understood that I am simply an environment for them. They scramble on my hand on the stone, like the scramble on the stone itself. I am the environment for others.

#### KNOWING

Recognize everything you perceive with an attitude of knowing it already. The sounds of the church bell, the flowers, the people. Greet them by thinking, “Ah, yes, it’s 12 o’clock. Ah yes, the old neighbour from above. Ah yes, the daffodils.”

#### BE THE FOREST

Walk around the area intuitively. Find interest in people, traffic, animals, sounds. Behave so as not to frighten them. Find a place to stay. Be a guest for what is around you. Be a host for what is around you.

#### MILLE FEUILLE DURATIONAL

Find a place that just fits your body. Place yourself there, clean up and collect some dust in your hand for the wind to blow away. Follow the trajectory of people or another thing that crosses your field of vision. If they are uneasy, smile and look away. Follow the entire duration of sounds crossing your field of perception. Keep an eye on someone or something you think is vulnerable. Do a dance when you think they need protection.

## 2. Migration. Individual score

Keep moving continuously. You can use the negotiation of weight for this experiment. Like acknowledging the ways of balancing your upright locomotion from your trochanter bones and hips into the ground. You can shift, give into momentum, catch yourself falling again while walking, running, standing etc. Realise or observe what or to whom you're gravitating towards or away from. Observe how you are infected and affected by other movements around. Moments of synchronization or correspondence.

※ I am taken by momentum. Although I hate running, the cars quickly cured me. Then there's this wall here. Taken by the texture along my thighs. And then there is this gap between the cobblestones. Taken by texture under my feet. Standing with the wind. Stilled by wind, caressing my neck and space, caressing my nervous system and noise caressing my eardrums. The city massages me. Dancing with people's trajectories and speeds. I think of this and that. Yet it is not towards or away from but along movement and its qualities. The sensuousness of moving, a sensuousness of perceiving movement, the sensuousness of corresponding. It begins as I am entrained or contaminated, it ends as a person might become aware and annoyed or as traffic is in the way or as another movement catches me. I am moved around by movement.

■ I remember specifically relating to the buildings, like the block on the corner, the Humana building, like that whole block forcing itself on my awareness. Just the size and the mass. Really relating to it quite literally, what gravitation could actually mean. I remember the lines made by the paving, the concrete. The flagstones. And how the angles of the lines had a strong effect on me, like the sense of perspective and relationship to large objects far away. There was a lot of a tilting, diagonal feeling. I literally walked in large undulating circle shapes around the intersection of Karl-Marx Allee and the other big one (Otto Braun Strasse) and I remember the awkwardness of stopping at the pedestrian lights, you know I didn't want to stop. So I would circle around the area before I would cross on the green light. I stopped though a couple of times and it felt really weird. I think my experience in this exercise has mostly been encoded by the poetic nature of it.

■ How could I escape velocity?  
Gravity or attraction.  
Falling through the city.  
Civil orbits.  
The orbiting citizen.  
The only way is down baby.  
How is space, actually space, inflected?  
Voyager.  
A turning of the head.  
Slingshot.  
Flighty.  
Escape.  
Velocity.  
I never did land.

### 3. Mitwelten. Group score

At all times, either do something that no one else around you is doing or do something that someone else around you is doing.

Make sure you always know whether you're doing one or the other.

Work within an area where other people are present, possibly dwelling, lingering, spending time.

■ There was this woman, who phoned next to S., who approached her. My reading was that S. was interested in what she was doing and therefore wanted to stay a bit in her sphere. Although she did something completely different in her performance and had nothing to do with it. But there was somehow an interesting connection in this differentness. I had read that in the beginning as a rejection. For a short moment I feared that she'd address S. somehow. And then I realized, no, it's not that at all, it's really like "you do this, I do that and somehow we do something together". The other thing was seeing A. there dancing and me thinking, ah dancing is a possibility. And it's not bad at all.

※ A. who wanted to climb the tree and got help. She asked one of the men if he could make her a tree ladder. That is, to use the normal outside world to fulfill your own plan. And he wasn't even surprised that there was already another woman lying on the tree.

■ Incredible dimension of density of the places we were in. There are so many logics that can be entered into. And to enter into them I have to change myself. One very concrete example was that I was following some birds at one point, today I thought, "I'm gonna follow some sparrows." Sparrows are very difficult, they are very very nervous, and they jump, meters at a time! Pigeons wobble instead, crows take you for a walk and then see what happens. But sparrows are just like, "Out of here! Out of here!" They led me to a green bit, to walk behind people sitting on benches and of course I had to change the way I walk to enter into the sparrow-tracking logic. It brought me to a very strange part of the green space, very close to people from behind, which starts to vibrate for me quite quickly, because there were cops around. But this little bit of green behind benches to sit, is mostly invisible to me. As soon as I enter into some other kind of activity I can actually infiltrate that area. With no problem as well. It was like the people on benches were in another world.

※ I was surprised by and welcomed the proposal Mitwelten. Because I was like, "OK why not. Whatever, yes". So first I sat down like most people. Then I thought "OK, let's do something different". I went to the volleyball place and started to touch the earth for a few minutes. And soon a kid came. It was an area with a lot of sand. People were not necessarily there but I brought a kind of inclination. So someone responded. As soon as you do something, you open a kind of opportunity. Not even following in the literal way, but to "behave close" - or something like that.

※ It was very hot that day, so I went more often to the shallow fountain under the TV tower. There I noticed three boys, obviously brothers, playing in the water. Their agility and loud joy set themselves apart from the rather subdued bustle at the edge of the pool. I tried to make contact with them, but they turned away as I trudged after them, copying their actions. Were they afraid of me? After lingering for a while in the area of grass and trees, sitting in the hot sand in the blazing sun, I returned to the well. In the meantime, the three brothers had come up with a new game, they were doing sports exercises, in and around the water. As they did push-ups with their hands on the edge of the pool, I joined in their challenge. During Corona I had started doing push ups at home. So I also did push-ups with my hands on the edge of the pool, but my body was outside the pool. I was their reflection. And now their fear of the older woman evaporated, we competed, had great fun and exchanged ideas about this common movement. Their mother joined us and enthusiastically took photos of the four of us.

■ I started to move my arms around me, I wanted to get into dancing. But I was stumbling a bit on the idea and action of dancing. I saw a lot of people dancing before, but now there was no one. So I looked for ways to support my dance. I enjoyed very much how the dancing and moving of my arms sharpened my perception like the visual sense. I literally started to see better, I saw details like ants on the tree skin next to me. Someone was filming me and in a split second I had the impression that the filming person had been exchanged by another person approaching me from the back. Someone on the telephone. And then, in a weird way we were sharing a neighbourhood or we made one even. Yet also not making it, not really acknowledging this making, but at the same time dealing and working with it. Me dancing, her on the telephone, we were circling around the trees, moving towards the building site fence. We were going back from it, she was leaving, I was staying, I was going away, she was coming back. No complicity, but a physical tolerance to be there in this moment.





# LAB DREI: NON-HUMAN PERSPECTIVES

by Joshua Rutter & Katja Munker  
Berlin 25th - 29th August 2020

Lab 3 sought to open non-human perspectives of the city, by finding active, sensuous and embodied ways to stimulate and diversify our relations with other organisms in the city.

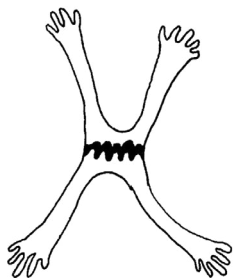
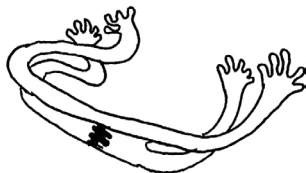
## 1. Gravity score for individuals

Gravity is a shared force affecting all things and beings. It causes things/beings of mass to be brought together. The strength of attraction depends on their mass and distance.

Our human bodies are equipped with nerve cells that can sense forces that push and pull on the body.

- Choose an outdoor environment
- Move in that environment
- Use the sensitivity of your body to sense multidirectional attraction towards different things, masses, beings and 'sound out' gravitational attractions with your sensing-moving body.
- Expand your sensitivity of being pushed and pulled in multidirectional ways towards the unknown and use that to explore your environment.
- Differentiate the gravitational attraction towards living beings (including plants) and inanimate matter.





⌘ We did the score together as a mass of people, moving out from the yard of Haus der Statistik into the big public car park and spilling into the neighbouring street. I was becoming very aware of my eyes and how through seeing I tried to make sense of what would be huge enough to attract me in terms of the gravitational law. I couldn't feel the attraction otherwise, so my brain tried to be smart through my eyes to instill attraction. Maybe it was more a process of learning different kinds of attraction, of making other attractions possible. And of course the gravitational force at work was the one towards the earth, for everything/body.

⌘ I became aware of these big bodies of cars around. One big black car wing stays as a vivid image. Black, shiny, high, for sure heavy. Once you focus, you're stuck with it. Maybe this giving in to where the focus goes is then another kind of gravitational attraction. The gravity of perception. The cars pose a lot of problems here. They are very private treasures taking public space, very present and heavy masses. Getting close means negotiation between giving in and ending up with my whole surface on the black car wing (Will the alarm go off? Will the owner get me into trouble? etc.) or camouflaging and passing by closely.

■ Gravity: when I just think of down to earth I might think I have to get up - when I additionally think of multi-gravitational directions, my heart & eyes rise and I play wild and find laughter.

⌘ The back of some bloke crossing my way. It's just how the moving of this back couples with my speed, direction, perception, vision, that it reinforces movement. Movement reinforces gravity, reinforces attraction. Is movement the attraction? The more I tune in, the less I can get away. Once there, gravity has you. But then gravity also goes in all directions!

⌘ I witness a body hanging in between two white airbags, supported at the ends and freely swinging in the center - skeletal, elastic material, breathing movements, a cord dropping from the trousers at the belly shows that gravity is pulling here. I can't believe that this is possible but the flesh tells me it is comfortable - body as a bridge.

## 2. Pigeon score for individuals

Pigeons are plentiful in cities. This score is based on a simple relational task that can generate complex situations in public space.

- Find a place in the city where pigeons gather.
- Approach one carefully, you don't want to scare it away.
- As you get closer, the pigeon will move to avoid you. Follow it.
- You want to find the right speed so that the pigeon is continually avoiding you as you continually follow it, without it flying away in panic.
- In this way you will enter into a kind of dance together, and the pigeon will lead you on a unique parcours through the environment.
- If the pigeon flies away you can follow it and try again, or find another one.

■ As I look for pigeons I notice other birds I can't name. I try to understand where it will be easy to find pigeons, where they like to be. Sometimes there are many, sometimes almost none. To follow asks you to be subtle and gentle so they don't fly away. I had to learn the good distance, the good attitude to be a good neighbor and follower. Sometimes they put me in a difficult position as they are perched on some bench or running along the tram rails. Then I have to ignore the human rules and take small risks to stay with them. This makes me go in and out of the score. After some time I start to consider this as part of the proposition. It unties my usual behaviour. When the pigeon I'm following escapes I try to quickly find a new target. Once, in the course of the action, the target became an old man. It was not a choice but an immediate transposition of the man as a pigeon. I deployed my art of shadowing pigeons to follow the man for a while. As his suspicion arose, I had to pretend I was lost or looking for someone to stay camouflaged. A lot of uncanny feelings come up, like the question of control and power. It is really obvious how I am or could be the invader, posing problems for the pigeon. But maybe that's my making sense of it. How this feeling of power is both interesting and shameful.

■ As I want to stay with "my" pigeon I am constantly checking the environment, while staying attentive to the pigeon. After some pigeons flew away because so many other people were around, I started to insinuate and anticipate better and better those other movements. Kids are especially rivals here. A small kid about 2-3 years old was getting attentive to my attention. I understood how I needed to block him running between me and the pigeon, blocking both the pigeon from his fast movements and bodily taking enough space so that the kid would read it and take another route. Making territory here.

■ I found different activities in the score; mimicking dynamics, engaging in a dance, blocking, getting close, calming (the pigeon) down and camouflaging (myself). I would have liked to have explored the dancing further. It had to do with a different, lighter, less directly focussed concentration on the pigeon and its movements. In fact it is not so much on the pigeon itself but more on taking up impulses and also allowing myself to be playful, to enjoy what I do. I went in curves and allowed my own movements to stimulate myself and the situation. Somehow the dance included more options and included myself as an option too.

### 3. Forest score for many individuals in a city

Multi-cell organisms like trees, pigeons or humans are created by single-cell organisms plus matrix material plus water. A human organism for example, includes 30 trillion body cells and additionally 39 trillion foreign bacteria. Plant cells and animal cells are basically the same, but with slightly different organelles and metabolisms, including the opposite processing of  $O^2$  and  $CO^2$ .

- Go for a walk along a street where you find trees.
- Walk from tree to tree.
- Let your animal cells find, meet and exchange with tree plant cells. Let your walk arrive at a city square with pedestrian traffic (like Alexanderplatz).
- Bring your attention towards your 30 trillion animal cells and the 39 trillion bacteria and imagine these cells communicating like a forest.
- Change the city square to a forest.

⌘ I follow the group on the way to Alexanderplatz, from tree to tree. I collect a branch on the floor. I leave the branch trailing behind me while holding it. In my hand I can feel all the vibrations and soon the qualities of the floor through them. While feeling the vibration I made the connection with roots. Trying to feel through the stick vibration the effort a root would need to find its way through the concrete or the very densely packed soil. We arrive at Alexanderplatz and my concern is now to find a good place to root, a soft and rich soil. After a while it becomes so present that I almost lose sensibility by the amount of information. I'm overloaded by the noisy vibrations created by the asphalt in my hand.

⌘ I thought that we would do something together. But then we approached Alexanderplatz and everyone dispersed. After I got freed of that idea, interestingly, the experience of being together in a group came back to me because I noticed where the people were.

■ I think we were working as couples and I was with Benoît. First we went down Otto Braun Straße following the line of trees along the street that were closer to the cars than to us. I remember being especially stimulated by the sentence in the score saying: Let your animal cells find, meet and EXCHANGE with tree plant cells. I remember approaching the trees and touching their bark ready to exchange my animal cells with their vegetable ones. This practice worked for me as a portal to bring some consciousness to a multispecies experience. As a way to 'invent enduring multispecies' as D. Haraway writes in 'Staying with the Trouble'. After approximately 45 mins of practice I remember touching the bark of the only tree situated in between the two roads of Alexanderstr. Placing my two hands on its bark I could follow its movement very clearly. The strength of the wind and the vibrations of the traffic. It was, I think, the first time I acknowledged the trees living in Alexanderplatz.





## LAB VIER: BODY OF BODIES

By Arantxa Martínez  
Berlin 10th - 13th November 2020

Lab 4 had to be conducted in a reduced version since all public events had to be cancelled due to lockdown measures. Only members of the core team could join. Sharing the everyday traces with remote team members dissolved the limits between practice and observation even more. They served as a basis for a collage composed by Arantxa Martínez, who facilitated the lab. The final text comprises the activities, its language and concerns.

## Composing a Body of bodies

Lab 4 proposed considering our individual bodies as part of one multiple living organism in which sensations would likely happen and be experienced in a very different way than we are used to. This multiple body was composed, not exclusively, by each of our 5 human bodies, a video camera and every(thing) we encountered as we moved through Berlin.

Very soon a language issue arose that was clearly opposed to a finished and fixed idea of knowledge. We agreed to assign only temporary names to things in the context of the experimentation. The temporary name that we found for this multiple living organism was “body of bodies”.

One of the most problematic terms for the practice were the pronouns ‘I’, ‘you’ and ‘we’ and the possessive pronouns ‘my’, ‘your’, ‘our’, ‘hers’ etc., as they would implicitly support the fantasy of the “individual subject” and not the fantasy of the “body of bodies”.

Lab 4 was confronted with this problem even more, as the sensory practices indicated a nervous system and the affects and emotions



that could be engaged or revealed by a certain activity. These kind of questions constantly challenged our usual understanding of sensorial experience:

- To whom did the stimulus, response or experience in the fiction of a body of bodies belong?
- How is it at all possible to speak of stimulus, response or experience if it cannot be mine, yours, ours, etc.?
- From which viewpoint is it possible to speak at all?
- Where is the perceptive moment located?

What follows is a short lexicon for the temporary terminology we used in the context of Lab 4 in order to name and understand the practice.

## PRACTICE

Exercises that push each individual body to extend its own sensations into the individual bodies of others and vice versa. To feel the stimulation of others' senses through others' nervous systems, aiming to blur the perception of one's own limits and our idea of the self. The practice places these conditions in the urban space in order to practice the city through them.

## TONICITY

A precise and insistent activity that is maintained over a certain amount of time. It also refers to the capacity to generate a specific activity or quality, again and again, through time in a sustained way.

## SUSPENSION

A way of not yet naming things and suspending the labelling of certain states, in order to avoid assigning metaphors or images to the body of bodies, such as “slime mould” for example, because it closes many possibilities of what the body of bodies can be.

## LOCATION

Refers to the nervous system and locates the stimulus, response or sensory experience, assuming that all of them belong to the body of bodies and not to a single individual body. The term location means where the sensation happens. Location can also be understood as a thickening or density of happening that, ideally, would never solidify. The use of this term tries to accentuate the activity of sensing, deconstructing it from the process of individual subjectivity.

## PERIPHERY

This term is used in relation to the term location, defining the area that is far away from a sensory impulse. It implies the viewpoint from the location. The area called periphery, can be extended. Therefore it is possible to talk about layers of periphery and integrate everything that surrounds the body of bodies, close or far away.

## CENTRE

Even if the idea of a perspective must be assumed, the term centre is not useful for our research. There is no centre and periphery but location and periphery.

The term underlines the ability of the body of bodies to process information by communicating it. The term gives value to the action of communication without giving too much importance to what is communicated. We observed that the body of bodies needs more time to process information because its nervous system is multiple.

Body of bodies is a living multiple organism composed of a minimum of 3 human bodies and the environment within which it continuously exchanges its living activity. A part of this is that Lab 4 resists defining too soon what the body of bodies could be. It prefers to let the practices reflect behaviours and qualities that could describe what the body of bodies is.

Body of bodies does not have a fixed shape or size. Its shaping quality may be a reflex that makes the interaction with certain conditions possible. Its size is probably equivalent to its awareness.

Body of bodies has an affirmative quality that we could understand as *tonicity* (see the lexicon above for terms in italics). When the body of bodies acknowledges that something is happening, it has the tendency to insist on it for enough time, as if it were telling itself, “Body of bodies is doing this now! It’s moving, it’s moving! It’s doing this now!”. In this sense, body of bodies experiences time in a ‘continuous present’ form.

Body of bodies tends to suspend any resolution of whatever activity it could be doing. It doesn't project a result or even a predefined form, it enjoys doing and not producing. Through the activity of doing, the body of bodies can engage in many different rhythms, gestures, patterns and energies etc.

Body of bodies has no *centre* and its structure doesn't organize around this idea. Body of bodies has a nervous system to perceive and Lab 4 uses the term *location* to speak about where sensation happens and the term *periphery* to define the area at a distance from the *location*.

When body of bodies works on developing the awareness of its *periphery*, it tends to activate a push & pull physicality and to use counterbalance to provide stability to its body. These two physical modes — push & pull and counterbalance — increase its own perception of body articulation and connectivity. The awareness of *periphery* easily brings the city into awareness.

Body of bodies is a living multiple organism and perceives through its senses. From the five senses that are attributed to humans, body of bodies adds synaesthesia to its sensory reper-

toire. This 6th sense makes the perception of one stimulus from two different *locations* possible, regardless of the difference of distance between stimulus and location a or b. In this kind of organism, synaesthesia is the sense in charge of sensory *communicability* (see above) through its multiple and complex nervous system. Synaesthesia allows sensorial communication at a distance, which means between *locations* that are far away from each other and do not have direct contact.

*Communicability* is one of the body of bodies' ways to process information. As the body of bodies' nervous system is multiple, communication processes usually take more time than in a single nervous system but body of bodies is also able to interact and respond to faster communication processes through particular methods. Sustaining certain movement repetitions or rhythmical patterns could be examples of fast communication that usually increases the speed of body of bodies' behaviour. This form of communicability produces immediate responses in body of bodies, to configure a new shape, change the activity or maintain the same action without needing to negotiate. It simply acts!

Body of bodies can also use its voice(s) to communicate and it does so in a very intuitive and spontaneous way—mostly to process affective information. Laughing or expressing surprise through voice was a recurrent phenomena during the practical work. Lab 4 agreed that the use of the voice to practice the city could be a new and interesting area of experimentation. Which city layers could voice access?

From an energetic point of view, projecting the voice activates muscles and this muscular tone produces heat. In this way, body of bodies used voice as an additional way to create heat and keep an optimal temperature in cold outdoor environments.

It has already been said that body of bodies does not have a fixed shape or size but it is also true that practices of sensory differentiation organize body of bodies in specific ways. With the sense of hearing, for example, body of bodies tends to considerably extend its shape while focusing on this sense, detaching some of its multiple parts and opening spacial gaps between them. This shape possibility supports body of bodies' capacity to hear simultaneously through all its ears (at least 6 ears). The gaps

between the parts allow the ears to circle round one another and visibly produce a slow turning movement pattern. This communication between all the ears as well as the circling movement tendency takes time. This time has volume and produces a very full, sonic equalized sound of the city as result.

Regarding the body of bodies' appearance, it can go from over-exposure to disappearance depending on its activity. The practice of hearing the city, for example, produces a very defined appearance of body of bodies without making clear what it is doing. This can very often affect other people in the surroundings as they can easily assimilate or read body of bodies as simply a "group of people" but they have great difficulties guessing what the group is doing. The silence that listening implies pushes the appearance of body of bodies to over-exposure (it becomes a very obvious presence) and suspends it, giving a very readable shape to a very ambiguous presence.

Body of bodies survives thanks to the broader affordance of its motor system, supported by an engaged sense of communication. Many aspects of body of bodies' life needs almost no negotiation to organize. It finds temporal

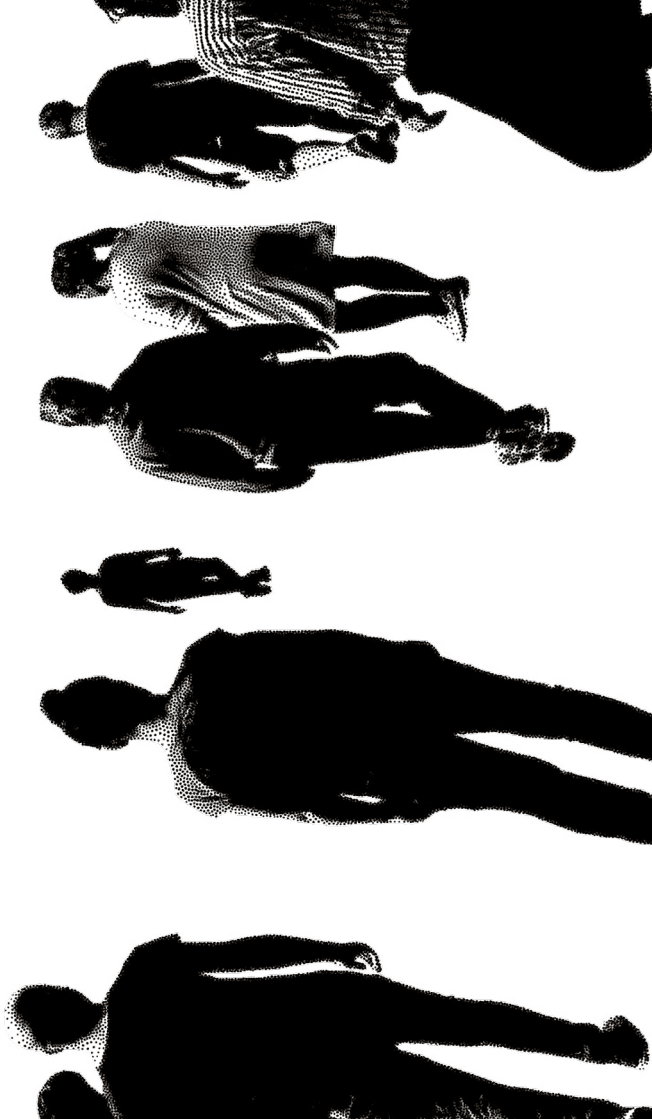
configurations through a tuning capacity that body of bodies develops through *practice* and that provides a very vigorous physicality ready to adapt or to transform. The multiple parts of body of bodies are articulated and depend on each other. They show a mixture of roughness and care to each other that allows a great range of playfulness.



# PRACTICING WHAT?

On January 16th 2021 the expanded team met in CLB Berlin to conclude Stadterweitern with a final session. From the experience of all labs we looked again at what practicing means in both urban and choreographic practice and how or where it possibly corresponds.

Alice Chauchat and Markus Bader shared the landscape and life form of their respective practices. Participants were equipped with wireless headphones so they could be in the city while listening to their voices. The day concluded with a term-making session convened by Benoît Verjat and fed by the four labs.



## Alice Chauchat: A choreographers perspective

Stadterweiterung final session January 16th 2021  
CLB Berlin, input by Alice Chauchat

I will practice talking about practice and give myself a frame for this: I will try to take 2 minutes for one thought. So I'm moving towards having 10 thoughts, I will probably not manage but that is not the point (we'll come to this). I also propose that you practice listening, for this I'll give you a very simple score:

I propose that you practice listening without selecting – that you listen to my words, to the city, to the movements of your breath and to the movements around you

that's your score: to practice listening without selecting – to my words, to the city, to the movements of your breath and to the movements around you

The term practice, in the context of dance, became quite popular in the European, so-



called ‘contemporary dance scene’ during the 2000’s. I speak from my perspective within this field. Coming from about a decade of interest in semiotics, text and the textuality of the body, its movement and its appearance, there was a shift towards practice based choreography. This was a shift away from representation and visual composition. Dancing, as an activity, had been assigned the purpose of serving representation – images, compositions – geared towards a spectatorship that would read what is happening. There was maybe a sort of functional inversion where activity became more central and supported by the structural and visual composition, foregrounding activity for the audience’s attention. So that where activity was supporting the elaboration of images, visual composition now supported attention to the activity itself.

Practice based choreography would mean structuring practices and give them to be seen. So people began inventing practices, with a lot of joy and creativity.

Another development that is still happening is the focus on individual practice; a tailor-made, personal practice, i.e a shift from studying pre-established techniques towards an ongoing

physical, attentional, experiential set of activities that apparently emerge out of precariousness, from the need to develop some continuity in one’s own life. This might be a stabilizing function. My own interest lies not so much in stabilizing but destabilizing.

You’re still practicing listening without selecting – listening to my words, to the city, to the movements of your breath and to the movements around you

As you can notice, in my understanding of practice there is an underlying notion which is the notion of a score. The practice I’m talking about is deliberately composed or constructed, there is a set of circumstances and an orientation of attention that will in turn orient the activity of the body (and vice versa, an orientation of the physical activity that in turn orients attention). At the same time, the score never prescribes how it is to be performed. There is an open-endedness and a directionality at the same time. When people speak about practices they often speak about scores, but the word practice also names the activity, i.e the engagement with the score (you practice a practice...)

Engagement is interesting. It's open-ended, it does not aim for a particular result, at no moment is the practice accomplished. It is also self-reflexive, there is an attention and an observation of the activity (which itself might be an activity of attention) and there's also repetition. It's a repeated engagement with the set-up, for its own sake. That is to say, it is not a preparation, it is not the production of something other than itself.

In dance it is a mixed activity of perceiving and expressing.

And so you're listening without  
selecting – to my words, to the city,  
to the movements of your breath  
and to the movements around you

In the context of dance, practice is an aesthetic practice. It is always the fabrication and the engagement with (attending to) poetic, sensorial, conceptual and imaginary hypotheses – an experiential situation which is constructed and surrendered to, or committed to. The set-up or conditions of possibility for the practice in my work tends to be a score. The scores tend to be a concise text that is given to the dancers. It is often a paradoxical task, a task that challenges

habits or assumptions about dancing with other people. In other words, practice for me is an open-ended commitment to investigate the problems posed by a score. Hypothesis and problem, in a way, are intimately connected. The hypothesis is, for example: What if we could not select? And the problem is how to do it in spite of our perceptual, attentional habits and limitations. Practicing means figuring out how to do, and through this process of figuring out, it involves a lot of failing and touching the edges of what the task can be. It also involves discovering what is not said but implicitly engaged with by practicing the score. It's a guided mindset that wants to discover which imaginary, physical and other possibilities the score opens.

Making up scores is a practice in itself: a continuous back and forth between testing a score and changing it. Practicing a score is also making up the score – coming up with ways to engage – and it's also studying what it engages. In that sense the authorship of a practice is very vague. I said at the beginning it's a volitional act, a decision about the direction or orientation of one's activity, but it's also a constant abandonment of the drive to define, to prescribe what this could be.

... And you're listening without selecting  
– listening to my words, and to the city,  
and to the movements of your breath and  
to the movements around you

For dance as an art form, the question of the public arises. In my experience, practices have become more and more autonomous from the moment of performing in front of a public. The practices I'm engaged with and which most of you are engaged with are, de facto, collective. They produce a public and they fabricate a quality of publicness. They are the invention of how to produce, how to engage, how to cultivate, how to challenge, how to inhabit a shared space or situation. A side effect of practice being a repetitive thing is another construction of collectives, by the fact of knowing each other and practicing together over and over again as well as developing a language together?. The practice is told before doing it through the transmission of the score, and then it is described as an experience, as the practitioners tell and discuss their experience. There again, collective study happens as people discover together what their engagement with the score brought up. "What happened" is taken as essential information for the practice in this

particular occurrence and what it is as an abstract frame, through the observation of recurring issues.

Regarding the question of publicness and performance, I notice the development of much crafting and poetic interest in the making of and engaging with scores. It is for itself, a practice for the sake of the practice, and practicing is also an aesthetic experience. In that sense, dance practice can also be a medium, a format of art, in which the audience is at once the practitioner and the maker.

My new, young and excited experience with *Stadterweitern* is that, if you place your practice in a context where not everyone is engaged with it, your practice becomes an environment for other practices. It doesn't display itself as spectacle but it offers itself as part of the context's fabric.

And so you're listening without selecting  
– to my words, to the city, to the movements of your breath and to the movements around you

Why is practice important to me? There's an artistic interest and there's a pedagogical

interest. My work as an artist and as a teacher has merged into one another even though the structural context varies. One central interest of mine is that by practicing, we can suspend the sensation of knowing.

Assuming that one doesn't know what it is or rather, that one does know what it is but this knowledge has to be brought out through a trick—of not taking things for granted, of not imagining that it is something to be mastered, grasped, understood but to be approached with curiosity (in German, *Neugier* means curiosity but etymologically refers to the excitement for what is new—not already known). There's a trick here, because the more you practice, the easier or the more tempting it will be to possibly imagine that we're accumulating knowledge. But the practice is to ask again, "What if I didn't know?". It means placing ourselves in a situation of not knowing, insisting on that which we don't know, and mitigating the importance of what we do know.

... And you're listening without selecting  
– listening to my words, to the city, to  
the movements of your breath and to the  
movements around you

Suspending the sensation of knowing is an important agenda in educational contexts. It's an anti-authoritarian posture, particularly regarding the position of the teacher. Practice in this sense dismantles the possibility of proof, of verification and of evaluation. Leaving these relationships between teacher and student, we are left to cultivate together our commitment and the sharing of our experience.

Even though most practices, when they are consistently practiced, will eventually lead to the development of specific techniques, it's important to engage in them without attaching to a particular use they may have. This is how we can invent or find different usages.

Thank you for listening without  
selecting – to my words, to the city,  
to the movements of your breath  
and to the movements around you.

## Markus Bader: A urban practitioners perspective

Stadterweiteren final session January 16th 2021  
CLB Berlin, input by Markus Bader

I brought some questions that Sabine sent me in preparation for the talk and a series of points that came out of the discussion in the Floating University Berlin<sup>1</sup> about practice and urban practice. Apart from that I bring my own process of coming to the term. I come from architecture, which is very different to dance and my excitement about *Stadterweiteren* comes from this difference. In architecture we tend to use terms like ‘user’, ‘designer’, ‘investor’ and ‘politician’. All these terms are trying to talk about how space is produced. The ‘user’ will be the person using the space, the ‘designer’ will be the person who conceives the space and the ‘investor’ will be the person who finances and enables the space to happen. The ‘politician’ is probably someone who sets the frameworks for these relations to happen between the ‘user’, ‘designer’ and ‘investor’.

I’ve come to the point in my practice where I am not so interested in this kind of static understanding of architecture, but very much

inspired by Henri Lefebvre's "Right to the city" and his idea that space is co-produced by all of our actions. In this a very different understanding of the term 'space' starts to appear, one linked to practice. If all our collective actions produce the city, then the city is not materially dead around us but it's all of us. And that's a radical shift for someone from architecture who is trained to think of walls and windows, roofs and ceilings, floors and materials. So we are dealing with the term doing.

For me doing is interesting because it allows us to question how we do things. How do we do this architecture? How does that connect to how we would like to see our set of actions and how we would like to shift our set of actions?

Another set of terms that I came across, which is important for practice and space are the commons and the commoners, decision-taking and self-reflection. The commons in German translates as das Gemeinwesen. In my understanding the commons is a resource that can be described a little more openly. The commoners are living in intense relation to these commons, to this resource. They collectively manage and benefit from this resource and they collectively decide on a set of rules or practices attached to

this resource. They are basically practicing. It's a self-reflective, self-organized practice around a common, shared resource or interest. The thing is very much the understanding of Elinor Ostrom, who was awarded a Nobel Prize in Economics for studying the commons as a form of collective management.

I find it interesting that the idea of the commons is rigid and fluid. The fluidity comes from the decision-making of the people themselves and that links very much to something that Alice was saying about practice: it's open-ended but directional. I would very much agree. The commons probably also have very similar criteria. It's not a result to be achieved and then you are done with your commoning. It is very directional, however. It has an opinion, it has styles, it has ways of doing. And these ways of doing are collectively reflected upon and found in a shared decision-making process.

So what if these collective practices, rather than individual ones, are brought to the city? This is where it links to urban practice, urban practice being a shared practice, a collective practice. The urban being the city as an action, as complexity, in its conflict, its tolerance, its diversity and its collectivity.

Sabine asked me:  
Is everything urban practice,  
what happens in the city?

My personal view of this is a bit simple. As I said, I am coming from architecture, interested in understanding this self reflective, collective doing of space and architecture and city and including that in the terminology of artistic production. I felt that the existing artistic and architectural terminologies are frustrating to a certain extent. They exclude some of the aspects of this open-ended and collective practice as I experienced it. So I started to use this new term, urban practice, which is rooted in the arts and architecture. I was looking for active links to other fields such as urban planning, fine arts, performative arts etc. but also social areas, the environment, and even economics. What I like very much in these exercises here, is that I get much more aware of my body and where it is. So I would say that urban practice has a strong standing in the arts and it looks for dynamic links into many other fields that constitute this bigger, shared environment.

What is the aesthetic component?  
Is urban practice an artistic practice?

I would say yes, as I mentioned before. Urban practice is looking for ways of expression. What I really like about the term practice, is that it includes repetition, exercise, the idea that I do it again and again and I look at it, trying to understand how these practices create and impose relationships – reflecting on it, doing it again, and doing it slightly differently. To what extent this could be described as aesthetic, I don't know. Maybe there is an aesthetics in doing. Probably talking to people about dance, we could immediately start an exciting conversation. So I would say yes, but I don't know how to describe it.

Many of these appearances of urban practice that we've been seeing over the last years – temporary architecture and environments – that we could all inhabit collectively, work by different rules. Here, resource sharing and decision making is different, where people interact with each other on different terms than in regular institutional setups. This is what excites me about urban practice, it opens temporary parallel worlds as experimental setups for how city-making and conviviality

could evolve. I am sure there is an aesthetic in that. It is a very open question for the people on the design side, to keep pushing for the aesthetic question, because there also seems to be a very repetitive appearance that comes into that. Because of limited funding there is the need for speed in setting up large complex environments and taking them down again and collaborating with everybody.

What is urban practice in the context of everyday life?

It's interesting, because urban practice asks for distinction while simultaneously blurring these distinctions. The definition of architecture I grew up with differentiates architecture as a practice very much from living and private life. It is a professional practice, going to an office, drawing by hand on very specialised paper with very specialised craft tools in a very specialized way. It's a set of codes and styles attached to a profession. Its expression is distinct in its ways of speaking to the rest of life. What it tries to do with these tools of the trade, is to talk about space and time at the same time. To be able to project futures, to predict or project how an urban setting should look around us over a period of time. So if

that's architecture, distinct from everyday life in terms of scale and style, what is urban practice? For me it's also an attempt to create deep links between that abstract notion of space and the very concrete, lived, immediate, bodily ones and the ones rooted in human relations. So urban practice is taking the specialisation of the architect away and blending it with experiences.

We also like to use the terms 'everyday expert' and 'situated knowledge', which are terms that open up the sphere of expertise of the architect to knowledge acquired in different ways. These knowledges are as relevant to the production of space and city as the specialized architect's knowledge is. Urban practice is potentially a form to look for links between these knowledges and for finding ways to engage with one another.

What are the levels of urban practice?

So I jump to the papers produced in the Floating University. It talks about overcoming the distinct layers. The doing is fundamental, that is not necessarily planned but different from planning. What is important is the site where this doing happens. There is an interac-



tion with the site that should be fruitful and encounter different site-related specificities. Site does not only mean the physical space but its social, political and beyond-human conditions, inhabitants and interests. For me, urban practice is very much about doing things together, about finding convivial moments and asking questions of this moment. How do we engage?

The Floating concept of urban practice also promotes concepts, theory, discourse and critical thinking. I read it as critical self-reflection during these activities and the process of doing. The last point here is context, relation, situation and imaginaries. I really like the idea of imaginaries, which come from a discussion with Saskia (Hebert) who is also here today. She offers these imaginaries as a powerful thought. How do we transform our cities and environments so that they are more suitable for a collective future on this planet, being more sensitive and aware about our resources. We need to find new imaginaries to conceptualize this doing together. How do we invent a new story for this?

If there were these imaginaries, urban practice could go one step further. In a testing ground,

these urban imaginaries could be acted out and tested and inhabited instead of discussed on a conceptual level. Used, touched, twisted, kicked, loved and torn apart, together.

I'd like to insert a last point here. I use it a lot when I am asked to conceptualize these temporary moments of project environments.

I like to say that everything is equally important.

For me it's a radical contradiction of the idea of expertise and traditional knowledge-acquisition, where some forms of knowledge are prioritised over others. The bodily and social knowledge would always be put second after pure thought or production. When everything is equally important, it means that eating is as important as discussing, thinking, discovering new concepts, sleeping, sitting and jumping.

1 Floating University Berlin, a temporary laboratory for expanded urban practice in the rainwater retention basin of Tempelhof airfield. [www.floating-berlin.org](http://www.floating-berlin.org)

## Term-making

Stadterweitern final session  
January 16th 2021 CLB Berlin,  
score by Benoît Verjat

Naming or term-making became  
part of our collective practice.

Our terms do not need a definition.  
They embrace nuances which circulate between  
practice, conversation, scores and imagination.

What terms do you need for an urban  
or embodied practice in conversation  
with the city?

We propose that you:

1. Have a hot soup.
2. Find a partner and go for a walk or find a place to rest.
3. Pick two terms you remember from your practice.
4. Describe to one another other:

- a. The CIRCUMSTANCES in which the term appeared and became necessary.
  - b. The EFFECT of the term  
– how has it affected what you do?
5. Take notes for each other about the circumstances and effects.
  6. Be ready to share your terms, their context and effects to the group afterwards.

The following terms were collected during the final session on Jan. 16th, 2021 in CLB as a result of the score above. They appear in the order in which they were named.

People who contributed were:  
Andrea Keiz, Saskia Hebert, Joshua Rutter,  
Arantxa Martínez, Alice Chauchat, Markus Bader, Ute Lindenbeck, Sabine Zahn, Judith Brückmann, Constanze Flamme, Benoît Verjat, Martin Peschken, Daniel Belasco Rogers and Sophia New.

## DWELLING

I didn't know this word before and it took me a while to understand what it is. It's very connected to the allowance of owning the place, wherever I am. I love that it's a little mindshift. When I think of dwelling, making myself comfortable, allowing myself to inhabit wherever I am, there is a nice shift in the physical and mindset. What I can do privately, without others recognizing it, on my own, I am not bothering anyone with what I do. I just do it.

We kind of hijacked the word from the urban discourse to see what it does. We took it directly as an activity, a temporary procedure, not attached to the material manifestation of an apartment for example. The activity is about sustaining your own presence in a place but also sustaining the place through your presence. This is linked to an ecology of attention. As we were dealing with dwelling as making the city in and with public space, a fundamental part is how you place your action within the fields of attention at stake, to both melt it in and still enlarge it. In this respect, dwelling is a very careful way of managing your own and other people's attention.

What is a skillful dweller? Maybe one that can dwell everywhere, even in difficult places like Alexanderplatz. There dwelling became labour.

#### THE VENTURE OF THE PUBLIC

This term comes from Karl Jaspers, quoting Hannah Arendt. In German it is “das Wagnis der Öffentlichkeit”. It connects with what we are all doing here. A risk to go into public space, to expose oneself while practicing, to not know what comes out of it. For me it is the core of what practice is, literally the lab work. Going into the practice, not being in control of the outcome but triggering responses or resonances with what one does.

#### FLOW

This term didn't come out of the practice here, but a lecture series about mental health in a sports science context. The concept of flow comes up a lot for sports people or the other example was jazz musicians. It was referred to as an optimal experience (a bit creepy) like a

chain of dopamine responses in the brain. Quite precise conditions have to be in place to experience it. It's about being absorbed by what you are doing and working at the limits of your ability. I identify it strongly with something that an artistic practice can produce, a kind of opening or expanding of experience. This year has opened me to a kind of irrepressible or open flow, in that it can happen everywhere and unexpectedly and I embrace that.

#### ENTITY

It appeared in the very beginning of the work in the city that Sabine proposed to all of us, in 2019 when we met to start creating Fremdgehen.

An entity is something that we perceive, it can be in many directions, there is no hierarchy, it can be everything and nothing, but there is a moment where we choose what an entity is, and what it is not. We decide that something can be an entity the moment we fix attention to it. In frames perception, it stops it and tries to capture something. I like the *entity* because it is very open. Seeing how this project developed

and what directions it has taken, it was the right term to start with. In a way it produced these multidimensional ways of working.

#### NEIGHBOURING

Arantxa told me just now that Sabine proposed *neighbouring* as a practice during the *Fremd-gehen* work, as a practice of being with something. I thought of that word in preparation for Lab 2 as a response to the word *dwelling*.

When we dwell somewhere, it is already inhabited, therefore we have neighbours. The way we activated it in *Stadterweitern*, was to conceive of everything around us (the *entities*?) as being the mutual environment of each other. Everything around is the environment but we are also the environment for everything around us.

As Arantxa said, in *Fremdgehen*, *neighbouring* had a lot to do with distance and measuring, about calibrating the proper space and time, how long you stay, how far are you away, so that there is not too much intimacy but there is a necessity to produce some comfort. As we used it now in the lab in relation to *dwelling*. It had to do with calibrating the performativity, negotiating how we allow others to take us in,

to not hide, but to invite our presence to be incorporated into the continuum of everything that is there.

#### BENDING ATTENTION

Is the name of a practice we developed in the 4th lab, originating from *neighbouring*. It is about having a certain distance from the thing you chose. You find something that you want to neighbour and move towards it and before you reach your destination, your spatial shift opens up the possibility of being attracted to something else. Through sharing a temporality with this one thing, you opened up to the environment of the neighbour itself and discovered something. It was always very surprising.

#### BEING A NEIGHBOUR

With all similarities there was one shift throughout the time in those two modalities of *neighbouring*. In the context of *Fremdgehen* it was directed to one neighbour at a time, so you have one entity to neighbour with. In the

lab in June though, it was very much about being one of the neighbours in that whole situation.

#### NAHBEREICH

I discovered a term today through the instructions. The Nahbereich - the proximate sphere or area around oneself. It really helped me shift my attention to the environment.

Being within the proximate sphere was a really good way to approach the concept of *neighbouring*. I could not look at people from a far distance and I could not judge, like I do normally. Normally, I create a feeling of safety through judging from a distance. As I could not do that, I had to get close and then I saw the people and what they were doing. It was more intimate. And I didn't know anything about them before. For me that is *neighbouring*, I do not judge and I get into contact somehow on the first go.

#### ATTRACTION

In Lab 3 Katja introduced *attraction* in terms of the physical law of masses attracting each other. The smaller is attracted to the bigger, related to the law of gravity. Gravity produces dynamics. In the lab I was struggling, because I felt I was embodying something that I have to understand cognitively before starting. But it came to me afterwards. The word relates to physical dynamics for me, sensation. It makes me go in a direction without having to know what I am actually going towards. Something sets me in motion and has a force, like gravity. It has consequences and dealing with these consequences is interesting. I used to work with the term *curiosity* in the practice and in sharing the practice. Attraction is *Anziehung*, eine *Hingezogenheit* - being pulled towards something. Maybe *attraction* expresses a feature of curiosity, a physical dynamic. It's not about making a decision to move towards something interesting.

## DRIFTING

*Drifting* is an unpurposeful and involuntary experience. Unlike *dwelling*, one strives not to become part of something, some space, an environment. I am simply moving through the city. Something is deciding where I go. It actually works even better on the bike. Because the movement is more dynamic, it lets you change direction in a quick and easy way. It is detached from wanting. It is non-target-oriented and a wonderful state of being. No one tells you where to go, you don't have to follow anything. Because even with a GPS, (a proposal from Lab 1) I realized I often think I have to be original or to do it 'well', or talk about it intelligently afterwards. *Drifting* frees me from all these necessities, it stays unrecorded. I enjoy this state very much. *Drifting* is a fantastic way for me to be in the world.

## THRESHOLDS

I like the sound of it in German: 'Schwelle'. As a photographer in the streets, it's a physical moment, maybe emotional and a poetic moment of a shift of perception. How far or how long do

I walk intentionally? When do I skip or shift into *drifting* or the *flow*, as mentioned before? There are thresholds in the observation of how the surrounding reacts to us, mirroring it. How do people meet in space, reflect on each other, are willing to meet or to approach things? Rather than the idea of a *threshold* as something that needs to be passed, like an architectural barrier, 'Schwelle' for me could be a moment where we, as a community, decide where to lower the *threshold*. The physical act of moving or behaving differently in the streets. How easily do I allow myself to navigate over the *threshold*, finding the rabbit hole? Do I allow myself to float into this other moment?

## SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

Translation has been an ongoing task for the 2-3 years we have worked together. We had to find terms and metaphors to share our discoveries. We also translated our thoughts and practices into documents and traces, using GPS, photos and video, drawings, words or stories. Every time we talk about an entity in the very beginning, we ask ourselves how do we represent this *entity* in a way that it doesn't get

flattened? What is the quality of the abstraction we create when using this particular term or image? To *translate*, you remove information but in the same move you amplify features. *Translation* is a moment of learning.

#### ATTACHING

For me these labs were experiments in concentration, trying out different types of concentration. Not the typical ones that you do when you study something. There you concentrate on your environment, your body and your environment at the same time. Trying to get *attached*, to single something out in the city and let the rest play in the background or in the surrounding. This helps to concentrate on an awareness in the sense of belonging.

#### SCALING

*Scaling* is the experience of how we are and live simultaneously with one another at so many different *scales*. That has something to do with

concept and processes of how to do *neighbouring* and *dwelling*. I can add this to my sensual capacity.

#### HABIT

Practice has this idea of *habit* or a habitual activity. *Stadterweitern* also raises this issue of collective visibility and invisibility by questioning the *habitual*. Especially today, I was wondering how we were feeling in terms of in/visibility of the practices in and amongst the everyday.

#### VERUNSELBSTVERSTÄNDLICHUNG

It could translate it as ‘the process of undoing the familiarity of something’. You could be much more aware of what you could find if you didn’t take everything for granted so much.

For me it comes back to what Markus said in his lecture, that everything is equally important. We’ve been talking about this since *Fremdgehen* in another way, of suspending the



back- and foregrounding activity of making sense of the city. It means practicing taking things in on an equal level. To suspend a habitual narrative based on foregrounding certain items connected to a certain way of making sense. Likewise it is not about an alternative narrative. The suspension of the habit of foregrounding/backgrounding activity is not important as an ability in itself, but the consequences are. What does it make you do in terms of relating to and making (sense) of the city? How does it make you act and possibly struggle? The suspension challenges one's own actions and therefore changes completely what a place can be.

#### EMBEDDEDNESS

It is a basic condition within the practice for me, but needs to be practiced as well. It seems obvious that as one is present, one is in and with the situations. However, especially in performing arts, you could do the opposite: create a spectacle or adopt the position of a voyeur. But with *embeddedness* it's really about acting from within, being a part of everything, having no special status. You

need to accept the *embeddedness* in the first place and then work with it. As you insert your activity you negotiate it as an everyday life activity in the city. So you also work from your knowledge as an "ordinary citizen" and try to expand what that could mean among other "ordinary citizens". In short, as Josh put it, don't pretend you're not there.

#### PRACTICE

Affirming through a practice that things are possible. And it's not a big deal, but it needs to be done for them to be possible. So there the expansion of what the city could be, is in a very concrete way not in the good manners, it is not holding back, but it is affirming through doing.

#### AFFECTION

Christopher Dell brought this in as a basic strand of artistic practice, to develop structures and differentiated systems. How to train *affection* and how to work with being *affected*. Linked to our bodily practice as an urban

practice here it made so much sense for me. Training *affection* as a complex skill in a complicated environment, but like a door that enables other differentiated and maybe complex acting to happen. This is precisely what is needed I believe.

#### DOING THE CITY

*Stadterweitern* started with the claim of making the city through immaterial and embodied practices from the field of dance, somatics and choreography. Making the city is a widely used term in urbanism. In the course of working I started to think that *doing* might be a more helpful term to understand some distinct qualities of what we and I did here. *Doing* refers to the present and somehow to a small-scale dimension of immediate action. It inhabits the future only as far as it actualizes the potential of action and perception in the present being present. *Doing* has to do with continuity and repetition, with transforming in a continuous and almost implicit way.

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WITH MANY NEW DIRECTIONS TO FOLLOW. MORE MATERIAL  
ON THE PROCESS IN THE FORM OF FILMS, PHOTOS,  
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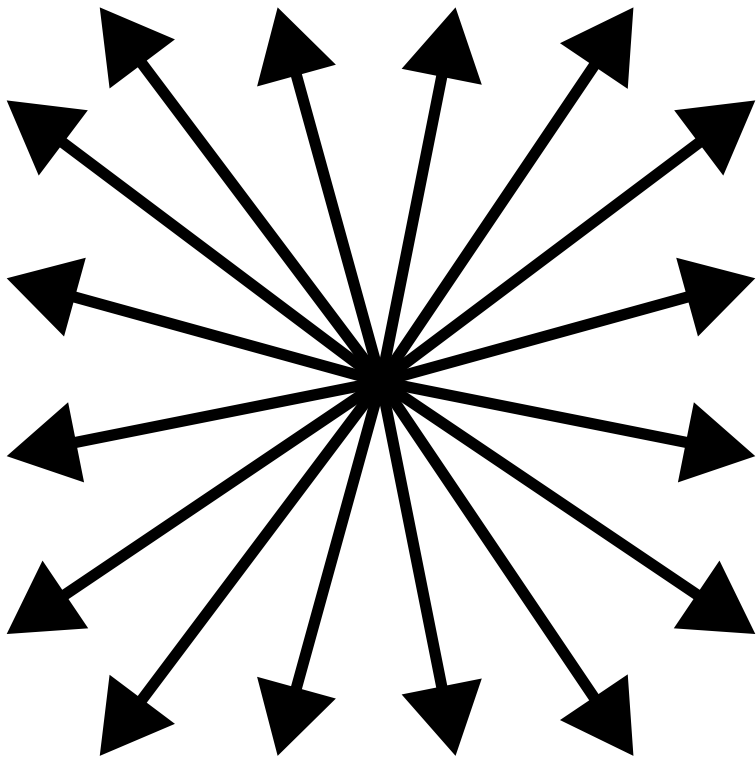
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Stadterweitern was a hybrid series of practice laboratories and linked public events, inquiring about how the city can be made and reflected through choreographic practices. The work was deeply rooted in practice as research and conceived as participatory and public processes. Initiated and directed by Sabine Zahn it engaged with the city as physically enacted space.