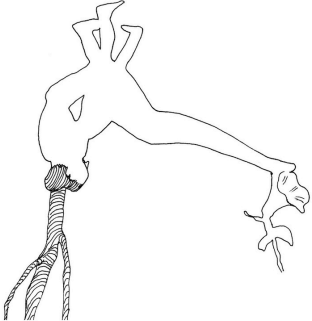




A being called Space for Practice

by Sabine Zahn, October 2023

Space for Practice was set up with the intention to cherish practicing physical practices with/in an outdoor environment. In doing so it should nurture choreographers and their ways of "work": nurture a choreographic side within the endeavors of Floating University as a culture/nature learning site and eventually nurture people who want to move with the city, the weather, a place. With this text I wanted to grasp some layers and experiences of this practicing, yet it tends to escape description. Maybe it helps to look at it like an animal and ask: what was it busy with?

This being (called *Space for Practice*) appeared from August 2022 every Wednesday morning at 9 am. It seemed to hibernate between January and March 2023 and reappeared again as of April¹. In the two weekly hours of its public existence it accommodated many organisms, trained to be resistant and flexible to the ever-so-many irregular conditions and was never quite sure if what it had learned on Wednesday would be applicable to the next one too. **Lean into your practice!**²

Space as time, Space for what?
Some minutes before 9 am. In Berlin this might be early. Entering the site I register the tone of this particular morning: the way my feet sound on the scaffolding planks and how this punctuates all the other sounding entities that embrace me immediately, embrace me like the air, like the light, like the temperatures. The temperature for example is always different behind the trees than just in front of it. The opening up of space (for practice) starts with entering the rainwater retention basin through this gate. The mathematical regularity of the Wednesday morning across a whole year is like a pin on a map around which something can happen. So I enter, tune into how clouds, sun and sky resonate with the air on the ground, that flows between leaves and branches, between my skin and the metal structures of Floating, today and now, starting a day. More people enter, like different species of birds, alighting and settling loosely around, both away from and close to each other, remote yet present. Space for registering.

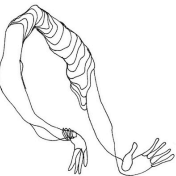
How to make it?
If *Space for Practice* was an animal, it could occasionally speak in human words. One phrase it repeated often was, "I've made it." I guess it wanted to say, "I've made it

to come to this place, in this weather, despite many reasons not to do so." A little relief, a little pride and a subtle delicious joy. Happy to exist and be here despite many reasons not to. In fact it might have intended to say, "We are here, we made it, at this time in the morning, in this place and in this weather." Curiously any weather condition contributes to this rather impish pride, be it a bright fresh blue sky or a cold grey winter breeze). So here we are, with this weather, on this morning and that by itself is an act. It is something we can do. **I remember we made the sun appear from the clouds.**

How many layers of this place and its situations are kept alive through a body and vice versa?
A tracing exercise on a warm spring day. I follow the calling that leads me in and out of knees, swirling arms, twisting backs, and seeing patterns of lines where the asphalt had been sealed. They are slightly elevated like healed scars in between tiny mounds of dirt. Dust, that until recently was soil, covering the whole asphalted basin. Following the traces inscribed in these dusty left-overs I see tyre marks, massive ones. My body would easily fit into them. The dust seems to be here only to make these marks appear and tell their story: the story of a machine clearing that happened just some weeks ago. Following traces through my millimetres, I crashed into the wooded slopes of the basin. In front of me was the heap of now dead trunks of willow trees, that had been exactly as old as Floating, growing in the five years we had been present here. I am struck numb, my body is there, nothing to say, nothing to move. If *Space for Practice* was an animal that I moved with, I had fallen off its galloping back, out of its momentum and crashed into the thorny undergrowth. I crashed into the political space, into warring interests and the inevitable visible inscriptions of power. As I crawl back, I am traced by the space while tracing it³, as if my skin had been scratched by it. I have to make an effort to get back into moving with the others. The animal called *Space for Practice* is breathing a little slower now, as if licking and digesting the traces it received.

How to make it work?
Here for encounters. To be with people through practices and to be with practices through people. Some of them known, yet none of them through this place. To meet, to find, to encounter, to pass, to join, to be, to cross, to cross in light...

We are practising in trios, scattered around the site. Not on the concrete, it is forbidden by the district administration. Not on the slopes, forbidden too. Only on the built structures, such as the platforms are human bodies allowed. A score that everyone has to perform. This Wednesday morning in August we share the platforms with students, artists and the organizers of a festival. All busy, walking back and forth, carrying tools, coffees, phones, looking for others, looking for chairs, looking for silent corners. As Floating fills with people, it fills with agencies and urgencies. It fills with proximities too, most of them unavoidable. *Space for Practice* is in full motion this morning. It engages in what we called **tensegrity**—a holding and pushing simultaneously through hands and arms with others, connecting and disconnecting quickly in the flow. As it starts to swirl us around each other, we grab whatever we can get hold of, extending a polestation, an ever expanding ball of sidestepping and bypassing people, plants, crates of beers, chairs, tables, poles, wooden walls. If *Space for Practice* was an animal, it is an ecstatically aware, adrenalin-driven, hyperspeedy spider on a rollercoaster widening mission. It weaves everyone in, also the central administrator of the Senate of Urban Development Berlin, who is here today for a business meeting. Nobody can circumvent the rule to stay on the platforms, so no body can circumvent the proximity and movements of others. Dance with the power, **stay on the platforms!** and expand proximities⁴! Surprised about its own vitality I wonders about its ever-changing nature, how it manages to come alive. Maybe it is simply many, a whole expanding family, a tiny tribe of weird and fragile yet surprisingly resilient creatures. Maybe the practice of practicing itself is what it is most busy with. Holding and navigating each time anew what it takes to engage with and within irregular conditions: the weather, the site and its activities, the unknown others, new and old rules, unpredictable proposals. **Fall into your back!** **"We will grab and howl!"** **Lean into your practice."**



Score Two

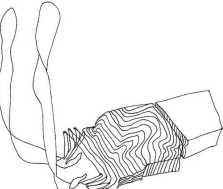
by Lea Martini

How to hold Space for Practice

Space for Practice is held by everyone present, as a collective space for and through movement practice. It is based on everybody taking on the responsibility to hold the space together and find the practice in relation to each other. Some simple guidelines are:

- Start punctually, i.e. start and close together.
- Communicate before you start. Is there something about your present condition that everybody needs to know in order to practice well? Check in quickly with each other.
- Appropriate the movement proposals for what you need and are curious about today. Adapt them (or don't) to the site and the weather conditions, your own "weather" and all other conditions at stake. Make it work and go for it.
- Habit (Floating): Take care of it, enjoy it, don't leave trash, dirty dishes etc. You can use what is there, unless it is labelled by someone. If others are on site, it might be helpful to check in about the usage of locations. It is a place to co-inhabit, which needs to be practised too.

In short: Take care, make it work, enjoy!



Score One

by Chrysaline Gau

Landescape Imprint 30 min
Body practice through touch, for a trio
The group of three people chooses a place to practice.
One person receives. Two people transmit!
Let's go for a long promenade in and around
Walk eyes closed 30 min.
Identify for a group of three people.
Warm up 15 min.
Take the time to connect.
Good morning to the rainwater basin.
Place with the place of the rainwater basin.
Have a secret morning dance.
See Small Litters Touch feet.
One person walks with their eyes closed.
The second person guides their body through body contact
and is responsible for their partner.
The guide punctuates the walk with moments in which they invite their partner to open their eyes for a short moment and let them be touched by what they see/felt.
Each walk lasts 20 min.
Close the session together.
after exchanging about your journey.
Do the same with the rhegma.
Pebbles and rhegma dance 10 min.
Play with different intensities.
Move in ways you need and want.
The dance to want you up.
Wraping, tapping, tracing.
Play with the rhegma and spaces you find
in between pebbles and rhegma.
Change the roles—choose another place—start
a new round.
Each round lasts 7 min.
Monitors of a landscape opens 20 min.
A short dance, same trio
One person is dancing.
Choose a place where the dance will take place
experience it as an offer to your partners and
to the rhizome basin.
Two people are supporting while watching at a distance
including the landscape. Each dance lasts 3 min.
Take a moment to exchange afterwards.

Some captures of Space for Practice

by Lea Martini, December 2024

A constant accumulation and re-activation of kinesthetic memories.

I remember a person holding my arm very carefully and tight to her body, guiding me with closed eyes around. I would have been competent to be less protected, but I didn't say anything. Instead I enjoyed the carefulness, it brought a hypersensitivity to touching and being touched by the materiality of the space.

After every *Space for Practice* I leave with a different sense of time. I come in rushing, a podcast hanging in my ears, hustling to get an overview on the news. I leave as if having been far away from Berlin, playing in the mud. Traces of bosque in folds of clothes and behind the ears.

Moving on the wooden beams. They can be a narrow space, while still leaving too much distance between bodies. They can be slippery, they can be dry, they can invite to rest on them, let them be the ground.

Some people I only see during the time of *Space for Practice*. It's likely we wouldn't recognize each other somewhere else. We even talked about this specificity of encountering.

The intimacy of water in the oral cavity while discovering moving water lentils on the wet expanded surface.

A three months old baby was part of the group.

We dive again into practicing the score "I am the periphery". Groups of bodies are approaching us, they come close, passing, talking. Are we their periphery? Liberation of re-action. It doesn't matter what I do. Horizontal evaluation of impulses, no quest for defining or further development.

Haven't seen this much water in a long time.

How to get in touch with fluids within? The liver and its connection to spring has a short appearance. Where is it placed again?

So why not a head on the stairs. Why not trying out things. Why not letting them go. With ease.

Thin lines crossing in the inside of the head. From the intimacy of two to the intimacy of more. From the intimacy of the back to the intimacy of an all-aroundness.



Visual report

Sophia Tabakovic

Berlin running since 2022

Report

converted and facilitated by Sabine Zahn with seasons

texts by Chrysaline Gau, Lea Martini, Sabine Zahn

drawings by Sophia Tabakovic

graphic design by Esther Hernandez

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More at: floating-berlin.org/programmespace-for-practice/

and Herman, 2023.

Benita Beyer, Magdalene Mendel, Lea Martini

Space for Practice with Rhina conceived and facilitated

by Lea Martini with seasons by Alja Müller,

Benita Beyer, Magdalene Mendel, Lea Martini

and Herman, 2023.

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