

Alexis Steeves - On-line artist-in-residence 2021 - Virtual Soloing in Tentacled Times

From September 2020, Crisp and Steeves commenced a regular meeting to exchange solo practices, choreographic questions, discuss lineages, the state of the State, the environment, culture and the daily distortions of living and dancing through the pandemic.

When I approached Rosalind in autumn 2020 we were both finding ways to teach movement online and it was nourishing to share processes. Navigating the possibilities and challenges of the screen, I think we also shared the unanticipated discovery that we could still “read” a person’s movement with nuance.

I was looking into my own dance lineage at the time and asked Rosalind to help me connect the dots back to her influences and their connections to the American dance scene in the 1970’s. I am fascinated by the values, efforts and principles of dance that persist, are passed on, travel widely and circle back on themselves. Beyond the aesthetics of movement, I am particularly interested in the choreographic canon of attention practices. While I had worked with my attention as a tool in many dance contexts, encountering Rosalind’s work (in 2013) confounded, delighted and, ultimately, liberated my relationship to my attention as THE guiding voice of my dancing.

The dancing we have done throughout this year and into this residency is a deepening of that research from inside a dialogue. We have held the structure lightly, allowing ample room for difference as well as the contagion of witnessing, and sometimes catching, the other’s rhythm, speed, humour or appetite for movement. As the new practices of the year began to accrete, I observed that I had established a variety of long-term conversations with other individuals and groups that seemed to feed-back to each other a bit like the tentacles of an octopus. Rosalind noted the extraordinary difference between her previous habitude of traveling to distinct dance communities for intensive periods of time and how that had reversed, in that, she was now residing at the centre of her own loci, communicating with multiple places on a daily basis. Perhaps this residency exemplifies just one dialogue within many, connecting bodies and ideas, like tentacles, in time and space, on screens and off.

ALEXIS STEEVES (1979) is a dance artist based between New York City and Stockholm. Deeply informed by her exchange with Rosalind Crisp, Steeves pursues ongoing research in solo live choreographic practices. Her work as a performer, collaborator, and teacher is further nourished by 18 years as a therapeutic bodywork practitioner. She is currently conducting graduate work in New Performative Practices at the Stockholm University of the Arts and holds a BA from Bard College. Her solo and collaborative praxis has been presented in Estonia, Germany, Spain, Sweden, the USA and UK. She has taught at the Tallinn University (TLU), Fine5 Dance Theater, Noore Tantsu Festival (NoTaFe), Bard High School Early College, Brooklyn Arts Exchange (BAX) and has been funded by the Estonian National Endowment for the Arts (KULKA) and the Estonian Foreign Ministry.