



Dance Research Matters Networks October 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to your October 2024 Dance Research Matters Network Newsletter

Cross-Network News

Dance Research Matters mid-point event

A highlights reel and video of presentations from the DRM mid-point event on 10th September are now available. Watch the highlights: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNIacbs4ZD4> and a video of all the presentations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6voKhDGm7U>

Network Updates

Critical Dance Pedagogy Network

On the 20th September the Critical Dance Pedagogy Network hosted the 'Pedagogy(ies) and practices' symposium at St Cecilia's Concert Room & Museum, University of Edinburgh and online. The event opened with a performance by Scottish Step and vocal artist Evie Waddell. This was followed by a programme of presentations, panel discussions and reflective sessions with guest contributors Dr Gaby Allard, Helen Weedon (Arts and Humanities Research Council), Kenny Burke (Artistic Director, The Dance School of Scotland, Knightswood Secondary School), Kerry Livingstone (Head of Dance, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), Scottish Ballet, Emma Smith (Health & Wellbeing Development and Widening Participation officer, DanceBase) and Professor Do Coyle. The keynote presentation was given by Dr Rosemary Martin from Nord University, Norway. The event concluded with a screening of 'United Nations?' Directed by Jonzi D and performed by Pomegranates 2024 dance artists, Traditional Dance Forum of Scotland.

Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network

The Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network was hosted as part of the 2024 [Moving Body – Moving Image](#) biennale at the Movement Lab, Barnard College. The biennale was founded by Gabri Christa in 2018 and provides a platform that gives voice to social justice and equity issues through the moving body on screen and in the digital world.

As part of the Moving Body – Moving Image biennale the Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network presented an installation featuring the work of DBDE artists and scholars. This work included: *Suspended Relief* by André M. Zachery, *Descent* by Antoine Marc, *Imaginal Cells: The Colour of Transformation* by Bryony Ella, *Sheila* by Gabri

Christa, *FOUNTAIN* by Alexandrina Hemsley (Yewande 103), *Cygnus* by Cara Hagan, and *Blues Time* by Jonathan González. The installation took place between the 7-10th and 14-18th October. On the 11th October the biennale presented a film screening featuring the work *The Noise My Leaves Make* by DBDE Network PI Tia-Monique Uzor alongside the works *Kankantri* by Gabri Christa (Suriname / USA), *Terra Mater - Mother Land* by Kantarama Gahigiri (Rwanda / Switzerland)

In addition the DBDE Network created an experimental laboratory to explore the theme of fugitivity in relation to environmental and social injustice through embodied epistemologies. The meeting of technology and Black dance practice creates new opportunities for critical knowledge production. As a form of ancestral technology, Africanist dance enables connections across African Diasporic histories, both sacred and secular, when performed which is then amplified in digital forms. The DBDE lab fostered an intimate space consisting of black artist-researchers and academics who brought insight and expertise. From the 11-13th October lab participants engaged in a series of technical playground investigations, round-table discussions, and workshops/sessions led by the group.

Future Ecologies: Producing Dance Network (FE:PDN)

On the 19th September the FE:PDN hosted 'Crip Ecologies of Producing Dance' in partnership with The Work Room and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. The event was led by Dr Sarah Hopfinger (RCS) and Anita Clark (The Work Room) with guest contributions from Dr Aby Watson, Laura Fisher, Salma Faraji.

The event invited disabled and non-disabled artists, producers, researchers, and anyone interested exploring alternative models of producing dance to explore the following questions:

- What kinds of ecologies of producing dance exist, and are emerging, when disability and crip are the focus?
- How do crip ecologies influence practice and approaches to making and producing dance?
- What crip models of producing are currently being practiced?
- What might future ecologies of crip producing look / sound / feel like?

Upcoming Events

(events arranged chronologically)

Future Ecologies: Producing Dance Network (FE:PDN)

30 October 2024, 2.30-4pm: 'Producing dance and critical world building – Through a Butoh lens' [online]

Zoom link for the event: <https://lcds-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/97674385354?pwd=uvJmRc30ekvPWc1O91QiDxfuMTXEky.1>

The Early Career Group of the FE:PDN are hosting a presentation and provocation on the theme of producing dance and critical world building through a Butoh lens.

Presentation: Critical world-building and Butoh by Elspeth Chan.

Elspeth Chan's presentation will discuss how the unique corporeality of Butoh creates ruptures to ontological hierarchies, producing a decolonized embodiment as a means of critical world-building. Elspeth is a member of the Early Career Group whose academic pursuits delve deeply into the realm of Butoh, where she not only explores its potential for critical world building but also its therapeutic potential. Elspeth ventured to the UK to pursue her passion for dance, earning a Master's degree in Dance Research with distinction. In 2023 she performed in a number of Butoh performances including '[Collapse London](#)' by Dominique Savitri Bonarjee and this year she organised her first Butoh movement workshop at Goldsmith University. Elspeth's presentation will include a reflection on *Fagaala* (2004), a choreography created through Butoh and African contemporary dance by Germaine Acogny and Kota Yamakazi. The Q and A will be facilitated by 'Dr Funmi Adewole Elliott.

Provocation: If dance is approached as a transdiscipline what would it mean to produce dance?

by Dr 'Funmi Adewole Elliott in discussion with Elspeth Chan and attendees.

Elspeth Chan graduated with a degree in Cinema & TV from Hong Kong Baptist University before moving to the UK for a Master's degree in Dance Research. During a 10 year stint as a full-time art administrator she served as a Project Manager for the Hong Kong Dance Federation (HKDF) where she managed educational, training, and outreach programmes. Her writings have been featured in various publications, including the International Association of Theatre Critics (Hong Kong), *dance journal/hk*, and *Dance News*. Her passion in Butoh was shared at the University of East London's academic conference in April 2024, and the Global Dance Conference on 'Dancing with Decolonisation' in August the same year.

'Funmi Adewole Elliott is the Early Career Group lead for the Future Ecologies: Producing Dance Network. She is a senior lecturer in Dance based at De Montfort University, Leicester.

[Dancing Otherwise Network: Exploring Pluriversal Practices](#)

6 November 2024, 4.45–7.30pm: 'Enacting the Dance Pluriverse: Strategies for Organising Otherwise'. Online webinar.

This online event gathers presentations and discussions on how a dance pluriverse - a more horizontally organized industry with space for many, divergent voices to coexist - can be organised. What structures bring artists together, what frameworks support marginalised practices, and what production and distribution practices could be developed to create plurivocal development?

The aim of the event is to build dialogue with different voices engaged in 'curating' this type of pluriversal space. Presenters will talk about how, in practical terms, they have employed strategies in their work aimed at acting and 'being otherwise' (working differently). They will offer insights into tools and techniques that they have found useful in their work, and reflect on particular modes of relating 'otherwise' which they have employed with individuals, collectives and organizations to bring about change.

The network is interested in perspectives and experiences that help understand how the dance industry in the UK can become more inclusive in a real sense (not just to tick boxes). What frameworks do we need? What structures? What understandings of power? What models of distribution of resources?

Register to attend: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/enacting-the-dance-pluriverse-strategies-for-organising-otherwise-tickets-1026761359867?aff=oddtcreator>

15 November 2024, 2.30-4pm: 'Dancing Otherwise at the Being Human Festival', Bath Science and Literary Institute, Queens Square, Bath. Free event. Details and booking link coming soon.

12 February 2025, 12-7.30pm: 'Moving Otherwise: Making Change' at Kingston University. Free and open to the public. Details and booking link coming soon.

[South Asian Dance Equity \(SADE\): The Arts that British South Asian Dance Ignores Network](#)

December 2024: 'South Asian Dance and Ableism'. Coordinated by Balbir Singh Dance Company, Leeds

[Critical Dance Pedagogy Network](#)

The Network has announced [four hybrid symposium events](#) which will be hosted across the UK and Northern Ireland.

10 January 2025: 'Leadership and Futures' at Queen's University Belfast and online.

Links to Networks' main pages

(in alphabetical order)

Critical Dance Pedagogy Network:

<https://www.criticaldancepedagogy.org/home>

Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network

<https://www.digitalblkdance.org>

<https://twitter.com/DBDEproject>

<https://www.instagram.com/dbdeproject>

Dancing Otherwise Network

<https://dancingotherwise.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/dancingotherwise/>

Future Ecologies Network (FE:PDN)

<https://rescen.net/FE:PDN/>

FE:PDN Early Career Group's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ecgfepdn/>

South Asian Dance Equity (SADE)

<https://www.akademi.co.uk/sade-project-launch/>

<https://www.sampad.org.uk/projects/south-asian-dance-equity-sade/>

<https://www.instagram.com/southasiandanceequity/>