CARE AESTHETICS & MOVING BODIES

SCHEDULE: DAY 1

@VisualMedHums
@movbodlab_IMH
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Date: 9 July 2024
Time: 4PM–7.30PM
Venue: Williams Library, St Chad's College, Durham University

Care Aesthetics and Movement — **4.00PM**
A talk by James Thompson (University of Manchester) with a response from Emily Tupper, and a conversation chaired by Fiona Johnstone

James Thompson's talk will focus on the concept of care aesthetics and its claim that the practice of care can be understood as embodied, sensory and craft like – that is for its aesthetics. His current research moves away from considering the arts in care settings, to attend to the aesthetic experience created within healthcare contexts through the work of health and social care practitioners. James will discuss the origins of his interest in care aesthetics and then examine its application to work in contexts of older people care. He will draw on existing empirical work focusing on care for people in secure dementia wards and on male grooming in care homes, examining practices, movements, and micro moments of care through a care aesthetic lens. The talk will introduce his current AHRC project, and the Care Lab based at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester.

Drinks reception — **5.30PM**

Screening: A Young Girl in Her Nineties / Une jeune fille de 90ans (1hr 25) — **6.00PM**
With an introduction by Megan Girdwood

2016 film directed by Valeria Bruni Tedeschi and Yann Coridian.

SCHEDULE: DAY 2

Date: 10 July 2024
Time: 9.30PM–4PM
Venue: Cassidy Quad, St Chad's College, Durham University

The workshop on moving bodies and care aesthetics will explore how bodies move in and through practices of care both within healthcare settings and outside of them. We will explore what a focus on the moving body/moving bodies can reveal in terms of the aesthetics and therapeutic potentials of these practices.

Registration and tea and coffee — **9.00AM**

Formal introductions and "who is in the room" short mingling activity — **9.30AM**

Care Aesthetics and Movement — **9.45AM**
James Thompson

Durham University Institute for Medical Humanities

medhumsplatform.org

Dance in Institutional Spaces
Megan Girdwood, Kélina Gotman and Mary Coaten

10.30AM

This panel will explore narratives of dance and physical movement in a range of healthcare contexts. Dr Megan Girdwood will speak about her Leverhulme-funded project 'Kinaesthetic Modernism: Writing the Sense of Movement, 1880-1940,' which considers how the sense of movement was understood and represented across a range of cultural and institutional spaces, including the psychiatric ward. Professor Kélina Gotman will reflect on everyday practices of self-care – including stretches, breathwork, and so on – designed to 'keep young', within late nineteenth and early twentieth-century health and work regimens; this is part of a larger book project funded in 2022-23 by the Leverhulme Trust as 'Bodies that Work: Time-Discipline, Performance, Fatigue, 1900-1960'.

Both speakers will present short papers addressing aspects of their projects in relation to the workshop's theme, examining the intersection between movement, In response to the first two papers, Dr Mary Coaten will introduce her work and reflect on the place of dance in her therapeutic practice within the NHS. She will then run a brief exercise in movement for the workshop participants.

Break

11.30AM

Embodied Theory Lab II: Crip time, palliative time
Jana Melkumova-Reynolds

11.45AM

This workshop is an invitation to consider, experience and enact temporalities of care as existing outside the linear, progressive and productive time-paradigm characteristic of Western modernity. Through a series of somatic movement exercises, readings and discussions, we will explore the concepts of "crip time" – an anti-capitalist, anti-productivist form of inhabiting time that is welcoming to non-normative bodyminds; and "palliative time", a temporal imaginary, inspired by conversations with hospice workers, that eschews the injunction to progress towards cure.

This will be the second workshop run as part of the project Embodied Theory Lab that brings together artists, academics and activists to think through theoretical concepts and social, political and cultural idea(l)s in ways that make space for uncodified, tacit and embodied knowledges.

Lunch: hot buffet at St Chad's College, Durham University

1.15PM

The Art of Careful Walking
Dee Heddon

2.00PM

The practice of care in applied and social theatre contexts - care as an aesthetic practice - has been the focus of recent scholarly attention (including Thompson, 2023; Fisher-Stuart and Thompson, eds., 2020). In this presentation, I apply that focus on care to the act and art of walking, seeking to attend to, trouble, and hold the tension between what can appear increasingly like a neoliberal imperative - you will walk (for your own good)! - and the systemic structural barriers that impede access to walking. Walking is a contested space: who walks, why, where, and with what affects? In this paper, I focus on three artworks commissioned as part of the AHRC-funded project, Walking Publics / Walking Arts, to explore the ways in which the contested spaces of walking are addressed through structures of care which attend to the specificities of bodies in places. The case studies explored include Kate Green's collaboration with a dementia day care centre, Shonagh Short's collaboration with mums on the daily school run, and Laura Bradshaw and Steven Anderson's audio walk made for a hospice setting.

The Walkbook: Recipes for Walking & Wellbeing

2.45PM

Join Dee for a walk which encounters a number of the recipes from The Walkbook, a resource filled with 30 recipes created by artists, each one addressing barriers to walking. The pace will be slow, the terrain gentle!

Reflections and goodbyes

3.30PM

End

4.00PM

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Prof. James Thompson is Professor of Applied Theatre at The University of Manchester. He was the co-founder of the TiPP Centre and founder of In Place of War and now runs a research project on Care Aesthetics and co-directs The Care Lab, at the Whitworth Art Gallery. He has run theatre projects internationally and has written widely on applied theatre and socially engaged arts. His new book *Care Aesthetics: for Careful Art and Artful Care* was published in 2022.

Dr. Emily Tupper is Assistant Professor in Medical Humanities, Department for Sport and Exercise Sciences at Durham University. Her current research explores the intersections between movement and care in 'movement volunteering' groups – groups that combine the movement of the body with caring activities such as improving community spaces and helping others to move. She is based in the Moving Bodies Lab in the newly established Discovery Research Platform for Medical Humanities.

Dr. Megan Girdwood is an academic, with an interest in twentieth-century literature, particularly modernist performance cultures, histories of the body, sensory studies, and dance. Megan was recently awarded a Leverhulme Research Fellowship for her project 'Kinaesthetic Modernism: Writing the Sense of Movement, 1880-1940', which aims to examine how understandings of kinaesthesia, the sense of movement, shaped modernist literary cultures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She is an affiliate of the Institute for Medical Humanities and a core member of the Moving Bodies Lab.

Prof. Kélina Gotman is Professor of Performance and the humanities in the English Department at King's, and author of *Choreomania: Dance and Disorder* (Oxford Studies in Dance Theory, Oxford University Press, 2018, winner of the David Bradby Award for outstanding research in international theatre and performance, Theatre and Performance Research Association) and *Essays on Theatre and Change: Towards a Poetics Of* (Routledge, 2018), as well as co-editor of *Foucault's Theatres* (Manchester University Press, 2019).

Dr. Mary Coaten is a dance movement psychotherapist and practitioner/researcher who has worked in the NHS in both the acute mental health and community outpatient settings i.e. a psychological therapies trauma focused service. In 2020, Mary completed her doctorate at the Institute for Medical Humanities. Her research explored the impact of group dance movement psychotherapy in the context of the acute mental health setting, with a focus on psychosis spectrum disorder.

Dr. Jana Melkumova-Reynolds is an Assistant Professor in Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science, where she convenes the MSc in Culture and Society. She is a cultural theorist whose research straddles together approaches from the social sciences and from the arts and humanities. Her areas of expertise include disability studies, crip theory, time and temporalities, embodiment, material and visual culture. Her work is underpinned by feminist and queer epistemologies and methodologies. Her writing has appeared in *Time & Society*, *Choreographic Practices*, *Fashion Theory: Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, and edited volumes such as *Wearable Objects and Curative Things* (Palgrave 2024), *Dangerous Bodies* (Palgrave 2023), *Bodies in Flux* (Brill 2019), etc.

Prof. Dee Heddon holds the James Arnott Chair in Drama at the University of Glasgow. She is the author of *Autobiography and Performance* (2008), co-author of *Devising Performance* (2005), co-editor of *It's All Allowed: The Performances of Adrian Howells*, and has published widely on walking art. She is co-founder of the ongoing creative research project (with Misha Myers) The Walking Library. Walking Publics/Walking Arts was an AHRC-funded research project, which explored how people brought walking and creativity together during COVID-19 restrictions, and how creative approaches can support more people to walk.

This event is supported by the Discovery Research Platform for Medical Humanities, Durham University. It is a collaboration between the Moving Bodies Lab and the Visual and Material Lab.