

How to stand in Australia?
By falling down?

The centre. A central point. A holographic point. A cluster of points. Moving.

Walking species. Walking across continents through time.

Danish biochemist Jesper Hofmeyer has evolved a thinking around swarms. An environment of swarms. Talking of the body as a series of overlapping swarms, or a swarm of swarms, a correlation emerged with our experiences of Central Australia, striking a resonant harmony. We have used this as a base point of departure in unwinding a form for a performance, *Dictionary of Atmospheres*, which aims to pull into focus our experiences from three Triple Alice laboratories in the Central Desert 1999-2001.

Ancient geology. Quartz country. Oft shattered. It feels intelligent. The trackings and markings of millennia reside alongside changes and shifts in weather which occur extremely fast. Quartz is an excellent conductor - zero impedance, crystalline conductivity. The intelligence of the computer chip, instantaneous passing of information and climatic change. Sands of time.

the country inhabits and leaves its seeds strewn in our membranes

The impossibility of the straight line. After wandering in undulating bush I remember coming incredulously upon the gash of a road, this foreign arbitrary incision that did not arise from this place.

Amongst the endless folds and intricacies, the only remotely straight line is to be found in trajectories of sight and focus. Swoops, curves and jitters of birds meet the emanations which arise out of these vast stretches of country. The swell, surf and foldings of gigantic multidimensional curvaceous planes, coordinates and points as independent variables.

Meanderings. Dots. Drifts. Swarms.

Planes and leaps of scale. The relaxing of the eye takes in a wide scanning, a drift that allows dots to leap out, to then zoom in.

I am asking the dancers to work with the power of the dreamer. With soarings and swift shifts in plane and scale. The release of measured reality into the impossible and the surreal, amplified and intense states of focus, absorptions and lurchings. These juxtapositions arise and create momentary form. Tapping the swell of a giant invisible ocean. Centering around and drawing from underground watercourses. The strands and interweavings of water in grains of sand. Unseen but smelt. Highly present.

I am asking the dancers to work with bodies made up of a myriad of points or dots and to feel each dot moving separately and in crystalline incremental stops. Corresponding to the complex movements of a body, simultaneous movement of many different parts occurs on multiple planes and in a wide range of speeds, as points drawn in different directions, as vaporous and volatile tributaries, as weather systems, energetic systems.

In the choreography we have:-

- quartz flow
- desert acrobats
- silica tales
- invitations
- walkings / carryings / leanings / hurlings
- shamed, grieving and laughter
- violent acts
- secret
- bodies & beings

The drawing of breath into the smallest crevice from the far horizon. Air and skin. An exchange. One form of inside and outside.

an exchange

the intelligence of country meeting the intelligence of body

in a transparency

a play

training instinct - the listening - receptor

the instantaneous snap of cognition and recognition striking through

streaking way beyond thought processes
the gentle cellular sense of subtle response
a reciprocity
solid substance
and the unseen, the unheard
the felt

a manipulated body - yes
but in this instance
distinctly crystalline
I want to see a transparency
at play
because that is how it is

the body as geology
bone and nerve body
granular geomorphic body
seismic body
ash body
making up the riverbed
reed body
hollow
wind body
viscosity
tumbling turbulences
volatile body
lucid water body

the precariousness
the trembling precipice of a baby's first steps

white quartz shattered
conductivity - binary shuttle, data flow
an electric field, a charged space
the switches
Hijikata's images: watch/watched; hold/held
inversions
violate/violated

the hosting of the shell
who is inhabiting who?
and what?

stuart said - the land's ghostbreath

foldings
dead breath
sparse
beyond the limit, where there is no sustenance

a certain type of performative substance?

gatherings
the gnawings of topology
breathing to falldown
walking weather
pursuing change
helter skelter

to be articulate

an uncertain breath

transaction

Dictionary of Atmospheres was performed 4-7 September 2005 in the Mparntwe/Todd Riverbed, Alice Springs.

slow wink of an ancient eyelid

Dictionary of Atmospheres presents the body as a meandering topography, a roaming through shifts in terrain and flickers of scale. It is a range of perforations, folds, indentations and ridges which sweep and mould and precipitate different senses of domain. *Dictionary* relates back into our own experiences of the land and its metaphysical invitation. It is also inevitably permeated by our experiences of meeting and working with Dorothy Napangardi and traditional Aboriginal women artists from the Nyirripi Community. The dancers create moving climates which traverse relationships as much as they traverse space. *Dictionary* is a rolling sequence of cyclic patterns which reflect the specific textures, shapes and rhythms - the terrain, weather systems and atmospherics of the Central Desert.

seeping

living systems
interconnected
implicit in the dots are multiple meanderings on different planes
multi-dimensional body-mind
overlappings of a swarm intelligence
collectively detailed dynamics
floating brain of the non-self
millions of receptors
interconnected webs of sign-relations many cell generations back in time
substrata
pulling sustenance through the soles of our feet
readings in the sky and in the terrain
vigilance and instinct
heavings and shudderings
multiple places of being and non-being
rolling in an ephemeral dance
held in the net of relations

sit down together

resonant, reverberant and rippling ground

dwelling place

country
a point of being

One of the Aboriginal men in the riverbed who we'd been talking to, came by laughing and waving his hand encouraging us just before the performance began:

"Any Dreaming - All Dreaming - Everyone's Dreaming!"