



Transcription of recorded conversation

Dance Dialogues: Angela Goh & Chloe Chignell

10 September 2020

Tom Pritchard

Good evening everyone and welcome to this Dance Dialogues conversation between Angela Goh and Chloe Chignell.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging that I'm joining today's talk from the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and want to pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging and any First Nations people joining us today.

My name, for those of you who don't know me, my name is Tom Prichard and I'm the studio producer at Lucy Guerin Inc. I'm a white cis man in my mid 30s, with shorts and quietly receding brown hair and a beard and wearing a grey and white chequered shirt under a burgundy jumper. And using small red headphones. Behind me is a room with white walls with a painting of a forest and a small wooden mirror hanging on them.

So, on to tonight's talk, we're delighted to welcome Angela and Chloe and a trans-continental conversation exploring what practices now before I hand over to them, some brief reintroductions:

Angela Goh is a dancer and choreographer. Her work poses possibilities for disruption and transformation inside the aesthetics and conditions of techno capitalism, planetarity, and the post-Anthropocene. She lives and works in Sydney, and has toured across Australia, Europe, the UK, the US and Asia. She received the 2020 choreographic Award and the inaugural Sydney Dance Company beyond the studio fellowship 2020 to 2021. Welcome Angela



Chloe Chignell is a dancer and card for based in Brussels working across text choreography and publishing. In 2019, she opened rile*, a bookshop and project space for practices moving between publication and performance. Her most recent work poems and other emergencies premiered at Batard festival Brussels in 2020. She graduated from P.A.R.T.S in 2018. Chloe is also co-editor of This Container magazine currently in its eighth edition. Welcome, Chloe.

And so without further ado, over to over the two of you.

Angela Goh

Thanks, Tom. Hi everybody. I am zooming from my apartment in Sydney on Gadigal land and I have dark, almost black hair and wearing a black hoodie. And I have fairly light-coloured skin with freckles and dark features and I'm wearing some spectacles and Chloe's joining me.

Chloe Chignell

Thank you, Angela for inviting join in the conversation. My name is Chloe. I'm zooming in from Brussels. It's 9am here nine or 9:07am. I'm a white woman sitting wearing a beige sweater with a hoodie, long-ish brown hair. And I'm sitting in rile*, a bookshop and project space that I run so I have many books behind me on kind of silver archive shelves

Angela Goh

Yeah, I forgot to describe my background so I'm there's a mirror behind me, which is reflecting a window that has green trees outside. There's a plane coming over now, which is actually a rare occurrence these days.

And yeah, so we should just begin our discussion, Chloe. So, I thought to begin by posing a riddle for you. And that is what comes first, the artist or the practice. This is a kind of chicken egg question. And it kind of leads to some questions that I think we both have about the role of practice in the artists' life and art making. And so, the question is: do you think that having a practice is what makes one an artist, or being an artist is what allows one to develop a practice?

Chloe Chignell

Well, Yeah, where to start with the riddle, maybe would be to say that most often when I'm asked to define my practice, it's in relation to grant applications or applications for residency or co production or things like this. And in this attempt to be like, Okay, this is my practice because this is a way of identifying who I am as an artist, what I do and what I'm interested in, I feel like I'm all the time having to piece together actually the many disparate kinds of activities that I do in order to make work.

And I wonder like, it's a question for me, if I would really identify with the idea of practice, if it wasn't for that need of, like, communication with institutions, but also, I guess, the public in a broader sense, around my own methodology or process or like unfolding what it is what I understand it is to be making art and particularly performances. But yeah I think for myself when I'm in this process of...I think we could...I would more align myself with the artist is someone who makes works rather than the artist is someone who practices being an artist.

Angela Goh

Yeah, because I have this question around, like...does the artist produce the artworks or does the artist produce the practice, which is the basis for then the artworks to come out of? Or on the other hand does the does the artistic practice produce the identity of the artist. So, is it like an exercise in identity production? Or, like what? Because I feel like...when I think about being an artist, I think about making artworks. But of course, there's like, so much in between all of that, that that needs to occur. And...

Then it's, I mean, maybe we can move on to this thought about, like, it's interesting to see who tried to define these terms. And I also have like a question around who is it useful for to define these terms because I feel like actually, what I'm busy with is not necessarily kind of defining what my practice is, but I'm more so inside what it is like sometimes I find it hard to, to kind of share what it is that I do. Or it's hard to define what it is that I do, because I'm sort of inside it already, but upon that, sort of zooming out and with the possibility to reflect, then I then things become more clear about that

because you kind of see reoccurrences in modes of investigation and kind of like themes of investigation and ways of working and materials that I sort of go towards. But yeah, I don't think we didn't really do this research. But we had this question about like, Where did the term practice come from, or where did this enter into ... into the thing and... interrupt me at any point!

And then I think that maybe intuitively I'm thinking that it came around when, as a resistance to, like a having to be in a constant state of production. And so he's sort of like, as a resistance to the market and to try to be able to just be an artist rather than like, defined by a cycle of production and...and then I suppose that was sort of when also when other barriers around sort of started to dissolve.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah, I also have the feeling that this practice was also a way of acknowledging like that making artworks and in our case performance making performance, there's like so many different things that we need to do in order to make that one thing possible. So, it also felt like it was trying to shift also the narrative of like, what is it to be an artist that is like actually, we have to like we...we have to be in conversation with different people were both collaborators and also on the administrative side, you have to be able to talk, you have to kind of understand somehow your process of working, like all of these demands by both the artistic community and the industry at large, we could say that practice I think starts to like wrap and include those in a way that is like trying to make also visible I think, a certain kind of labour of art making.

And then I also agree with you that like from that point of making visible the labour, then that the artist and the work start to also kind of merge in a way that they're inseparable or the audience idea that the artist's experience of making the work is somehow central to the work. And that being then the artist and the work...or the artist is, is somehow a mediator of the work for the audience.

Angela Goh

Yeah, or like the artist is the work or the artist like yeah, in this if it's sort of, if it becomes about like producing the identity of the artist, then... then the artist sort of is the work somehow especially now



that it's ...you know, going back to this thing, like if it's if it's a resistance to kind of market forces or market pressures and pressures of production, to kind of try to establish, establish something like practice, then you know, now, these days, it's sort of much more than common that institutions want to already display practice or display process.

And that there's somehow this thing of like, staging the artist at work or and that becomes the work the artist at work is suddenly the work so and...yeah, I mean...I also have, like, it's funny when people say, like...I'm...I'm interested in your practice and then I always want to say, Well, what is what is it that you're all like, what is it that you're interested in? Because like, that's it, there's a lot of things with that. But I guess it means that I guess what that really saying is I'm interested in you, but now you is, you, your relationship to the world as it's perceived, the artwork that you make, the way that you think the relationships you have, the way that other people perceive you.

Like all of this, like practice seems to encompass life as an artist.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah. And then it's also like if then if it's also about showing practice or sharing practice in that sense, with the public then it's also like the work never ends, because also everything can be included in the practice. For me at least when I'm when I go into trying to describe what my practice is, it's like a composite of many different kinds of activities like reading and writing...speaking texts, recording them, writing them out again, working a lot through memory, and then dancing, recording the dancing, watching it, like filtering things like described...there's a lot of this.

Angela Goh

Is this how you... is this your answer when someone says so clearly describe your practice to me? It is what you say?

Chloe Chignell

Well, I had, um, for the last work that I made poems and other emergencies, they the festival Batard, they made a series of podcasts. And they, they asked me this the same question like what is your



practice? And then I was like, but what do you mean with practice? Like what? What kind of answer also are you interested in? Like whether you're wanting to know a bit about my life or really about like methodology or? And yeah, but then then they said like, basically like what do you do on a daily basis in relation to your art making?

And then, and then I, then I felt a bit like, to be honest, there's...there is not something...I mean, there's a consistency in my interest in specific questions. And like areas of thought, but in terms of the actual ways of like, thinking through those things and practicing them. And there's like many different activities. And I came through this podcast to realise that my main practice was having conversations with people. And I felt like that was somehow the thing that was like, most consistent through all of my work is that I talked to people about what I'm trying to work on.

Angela Goh

So, you're doing your practice right now?

Chloe Chignell

Yeah, exactly. This is a practice where we're doing an open practice session. But what do you say when? When someone says, I'm interested in your practice, and then you say...

Angela Goh

No, I don't say that because I'm like, always, obviously, like, really grateful when somebody is interested. And that's so nice. And that, I guess, When ... when I am asked to sort of define what is my practice... I have different strategies about that it depends on the context but usually what I like to do is kind of, say, filter it into saying well it's easier to kind of describe each project that I'm that I work on. Because they're all quite ... they're specific in their kind of in their investigations. But I suppose practice is also like, what the practice is about doing? Like what is it that you're doing consistently, I guess.

And so if I think of it in that terms, like what I'm doing consistently or what I what I'm aiming to do, or what is kind of use my imagination. That's sort of like, basically what I want to do with my life, and I



suppose my work and methods of working. I feel like that's both like a huge privilege to be able to have the space to do that. And also like a lot of work because an imagination requires feeding. So I guess like my practice is both using my imagination, but also making sure that I feed my imagination and that comes from many places like, like you say, like conversations with people. I am also mostly in conversation with people about what it is that I'm thinking about and working on.

Yep, falling down rabbit holes in really intense ways and trying to kind of borrow through so that they meet somehow. Yeah, combinations of reading and watching movies and watching other things and then dancing, moving my body, watching myself move my body, moving my body with other people. Yeah. So, there's a lot of facets to how one ... there's a lot of facets to like what an imagination needs to be able to kind of be able to work properly. And then but then in... in real terms, I think like what I do is make performances. That's actually usually when I say, Oh, I make performances. I mean, of course, like you can zoom in on that a bit more. Like how do you make performances, I don't know sometimes. But yeah, I think that making performances as a process, which I guess is the practice.

But yeah, what I do is make performances.

Chloe Chignell

Hmm. And do you think that the question of like, what is your practice? Or how do you relate to practice? Do you think that becomes useful as a way to also understand, like, what kinds of methodologies or process you use in making future work? Or do you feel like it's more a mode of like reflection about identifying what has happened? Or is it also like this difference between if it's possible to describe practice, or also to define it in a way that it ... it produces like a process that you can follow or things that you come to know that you're like, Ah, this is how I make work.

Angela Goh

Yeah, I think yes. Course. And then I think I mean, I haven't made that many works. So Well, I've made a few. So I guess it... I feel like it kind of needs to go in the thing where you, you do identify those things that like, Oh yeah, this is how I do something like this. Oh, yeah, I remember. But also trying to

not remember that, or trying to kind of keep space open for other types of encounters and leads to follow and ways to work.

But I think, yeah, I think it's possible to describe have been harder to define what ... what a practice is or at least for me. But yeah, this thing of how to like, I guess, for example, when I was making Sky Blue Mythic, which was the 20-minute work made for the framework of the Keir Choreographic Award earlier this year. You were staying at my house with me in Sydney. While I was like having some of my development time, and it was just a really intense time, I think I was like, very tired, very, sort of burnt out. And, and also, you know, there were these bushfires.

So it was like, ... there was a big question about what it means to go into the studio during a kind of crisis. But I guess like, there's many crises is always happening. So I guess that's a bigger question about what it means to be an artist in the world. But I found it very difficult to work and I would sort of go into the studio and sort of lie face down on the ground and wait for my time to be out for that day and then go home. And I was like, Oh my god, I'm not gonna be able to make work. Like, how? How can I do this?

And then I started to create this fiction for myself, where I was like, Oh, actually, maybe I only ever make one work in my whole life as an artist and that I continually make the same work over and over again, but each time it's in a different dimension, which already makes it different but related to the other past works and because I started to see sort of similarities in other words, like for one, no one can ever remember the title in the right order, and I find that totally amazing. And secondly, like, for some reason, there's always like a drink, like a candy drink or an energy drink or something of that comes in somehow. And then like, there's this thing where for some reason I don't...I don't set out to do it as a kind of motif but like I realised that my mouth is open and a lot of my works. And so, then ... because I was identifying these similarities, I was like, okay, so it's just the same work, actually, but in a different dimension.



And so you can sort of see similar things in all of the works. And once I started thinking like that, it became really easy to work because I was like, Oh, I feel quite confident that I've already made this work. I just need to find out what it is in this particular dimension. And what makes it different to the other works or similar to the other works.

Also in a kind of way that was like a little bit cheeky about carving out some space for myself or some sort of freedom because the Keir Award is so with this framework of like, it must be new, something that you've never worked on before. Like, it has to be like a new brand new idea and a brand new work. And I was trying to like, I guess that's also how I work and my practice is like trying to find the edges of what's possible in the frameworks, and under the conditions that have been given to me and trying to be like, you know, I don't know a little bit cheeky with those ... with the conditions as a way to kind of find possibilities for myself that don't feel kind of edged in.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah. No, I also understand, I mean, I think it's, I really love this idea that it's funny for one work that's in different dimensions. But for me, it's also interesting, like, this space of when you're ... when you're starting to make a work ... And, like how ... how do you kind of identify like how to proceed with that work?

Because I think from... I think for both of us, it feels like ... that practice and process is also really dependent on the work itself, which is about the certain conditions that it's being, like, made in. But also in terms of like, what it's working on, and there will be like different processes or procedures that are... that feel relevant. Yeah, and you know, our conversation yesterday that I find it funny that like, when I ... I mean I, I have, I haven't made so many works, but every time that I start, I have no idea how I'm going to make the work that I want to make you. It always feels like I have somehow I've like put myself in a situation I'm like, but I, I have made a performance before. Surely I have ... there's like some skills or some like techniques or things from that, that I can apply to this. But I always ...it always feels like this.



I don't know whether it's habit or ... I mean, it's really a way of working that is that is also not about necessarily translating methodologies between projects, but like listening to the materials and suspending a kind of a sense of knowing what I need to do or what will happen in order for some other kind of relation to the materials, be it like dancing or writing.

And yeah, for example, with Poems and Other Emergencies, it's working on the relation between language and the body and looking at also, like, how the idea of the body is produced through language. And how choreography could good could produce ways to like write the body otherwise or give it other kinds of language.

So, the piece is there's a score, that is somehow the core of the piece, which is to say what you're doing and do what you're saying. And then from that score... so every action is...every physical action is partnered with a description. And then there's different ways that those like the description and the action relate to one another. And then throughout the piece there are like, yeah, they kind of also break apart and come back together and, also through the voice of the description, there's different somehow that kind of plurality of my own body starts to unfold. Whether it's like lifting my arm, lifting her arm, turning that head, so you have like this kind of ... also the body starts to really shift.

But I had really no idea how to like structure that score into a work. And I feel like it yeah, that it was only through like continuing to practice that score and to have people watch it to record it to somehow like, yeah, to like, prolong the experience of doing it so that it could somehow transform itself and the different options of like, different forms of description. A different kind of, ...yeah, subjects would kind of appear through just like continuing and continuing and also asking other people to do the score and seeing what they would do and ... and then it really feels like that the methodology for that work, it came in a way from a kind of distributed authorship, or that I was like, Okay, I am the dancer and I'm performing it, and I'm also performing as the choreographer.

And then I'm also attempting to be an audience when I'm watching my own video. And then inviting friends into also take on those different roles and colleagues to somehow like also pull apart that idea

of like, the author is like one central figure and then from that kind of separation where I could address myself.

I could be like, okay, Chloe, the dancer needs this kind of information from the choreographer and then the choreographer can be like, Chloe the dancer, you need to, like, you know, be on time today or it's like how, how you also separate those roles that you enter? Yeah, you produce a kind of fiction that makes it also possible to kind of make work inside, which is a long way around to, to the fiction of your multi dimensions.

Angela Goh

Yeah, but I think that's really nice too. I mean, because I'm like to create a fiction within which you can work also because I'm thinking about like, coming back to the idea of practicing...like, in a slightly different definition of the word, like practising is like, you know, it could also be said to be like rehearsing or testing or something like when you're when you're practising something is before you do something, even though like obviously practising is doing, but you're but like to practice fictions is to sort of like test fictions... test out ways of being and ways of working and ways of thinking and imagining.

And maybe that's also quite central to the kind of work of the artist is to kind of practice other ways of being or to like to test other ways of being and, and to practice... to practice ... creating a fiction in order to work and to make work is, is sort of the basis of creation, I suppose, and, and finding ways... and I think fiction producing fiction is as a container to work in is really important to be able to kind of protect the work itself from these outside pressures of either life and other things or but especially pressure of professionalisation because like you say like Chloe the dancer, Chloe the choreographer, Chloe the audience, observing and witnessing what's what Chloe the dancer and the choreographer is doing.

But there's also then like, Chloe, the, I don't know, doing all the meetings and Chloe who's the face of the, like interacting The closer the interface with the, with the institution or query the interface with

the, with the professional side of things. And that somehow I feel like also to create these, these fictions to set the work in is like, for me, at least I find so important because I feel like one of the main things I need to do is protect the kind of time and space to be in that to be creating that because there's so many pressures of professionalisation which are which I find is like, of course necessary work and I'm... I'm also like, happy to do that and grateful for that but at the same time I don't ... when I've like been like I can't do that today and I'm like in the studio then I feel like oh now I can do like the real work which is different, which operates in like a different time scale with a different atmosphere and energy and requires a different atmosphere.

It's like so ... it's so hard to change gears like the process of changing gears, it takes so much energy for me that I find that I ... it's like, I can't just switch between things I have so in that way I have to like find ways to protect the work which, I guess, sometimes is like creating these fictions around the world so they exist in a different world?

Chloe Chignell

Yeah. To come back to this idea of practice, like if it's then to create this fiction around the work also means that you can step in and out of it. So, that is it is also it has its limits and like each work has a certain, like... a space where it is the work and it is not also the work.

And then my understanding of also how practice has come to function within the art world is also to provide this kind of continuity between things in situations where you never can step out because your practices, the way you have relations, the way you talk about things, like... the way you think, yeah, there is no there is sounds a little bit scary, but there is somehow no outside to practice.

Angela Goh

Well, not when practice is the production of the identity of the artist, which is also the life of the artist because art and life is already like so collapsed in top of itself. Yeah, I never thought about it in that way. It's like, creating something to step in something that has limits because ... because also like, if,

for something to have certain limits, like it also means it's like, it becomes a container, which is helpful because otherwise like, it's endless, and that's, you know, somewhat scary or somewhat more difficult.

Chloe Chignell

And that there's also then these like different forms of attachment to that artwork. When you have ...when you're able to create whether it's a fiction or some other kind of containing device, it also it also means that the work and the artist are different structures. Which means that you can, you can also change your relation to the work you can step into it differently you can step out of it, meaning that also your experience of being inside the work performing it is not fixed because that's not necessarily the centre of what the work is.

And I think...yeah, with my own work that I've, I've been like... writing a lot and slowly and slowly that writing has also taken its own space. Within... yeah within the process of making works, but also outside of it, I write texts that have nothing to do with making a performance. But understand also writing somehow through a choreographic frame or through like thinking as a choreographer.

Um, but what I've really enjoyed with this, like publishing text and making performance is the different kinds of attachment that I have to those things. That when I'm performing and we spoke about this also a bit yesterday, that I have to be present as an author, even if I'm, in one instance, I'm not a choreographer, but I'm dancing a work I have to be present and labouring and also authoring simultaneous to the audience being there.

Whereas in writing text there is, and publishing text, there's a separation that's possible that I also write something, and I leave it and I come back a week later, and it's there. And then I made whatever kind of body was produced through that work. And I can meet it again. So, you have this... and then also when it's published it, it gets sent somewhere and you don't have to be there with it. But it's... it's still somehow it is... yeah, it's still pertaining the same... it's still pertaining and authorship, which is also of course, like, embodied but then...yeah, it has a different sense of...yeah, attachment to labour and location.

And, I'm also interested in like, thinking about performance, like how can how can this attachment shift or like what is the relation that you have to like somehow being present with the audience? Or this question of like, what kind of relation do you want to make possible with the audience? Which I think is also related to like how you understand the relation between practice, making artwork, and the artist. Like... if there's a certain kind of position that I think also particularly like occupy in relation to those things, which is also about like, the kind of relation that you want to have with the audience.

Angela Goh

Yeah...yeah, I feel like when I'm making work, I'm always thinking about the audience... or not maybe not about the audience, but about how this ... what is the mode of engagement with this? Which is that it will be performed for an audience. And what does that mean? And I like that I'm sort of interested in that too.

Like... when I'm performing I... I kind of always ... I'm kind of, like curious about why people are there and what they're doing there and how are they watching and, you know, it's quite weird. And I'm... I'm always, like, so curious about that, because I feel like I know why I'm there. Because I have to be there to make the thing happen. And, and I know like, all about the work and, you know, I'm there ...like ... I understand my function there. And so, ... I understand the function of the audience obviously but I but individually about like, what their what this is producing for them ... like it's... there's a there's an unknown because also I don't ... I don't necessarily have like an idea in mind about like I want you to feel this exact way at this exact moment.

I'm like, curious when ... I'm most interested actually in my in my own what I'm doing when people have, like, you know some people are like buckling over laughing at this moment and some people look like extremely terrified at the same thing and some people like the kind of bored and some people look ... and someone is also like crying and I'm just like that that for me makes it so interesting because then there's like ... it feeds back into some kind of question about like, Well what does this mean?

Chloe Chignell

But then also the role of the performance for like gathering this public moment of gathering around something that actually we don't know what to do is. And that's also it's, yeah, that, that its use is precisely in the ways in which we have no idea how to use it or something like and it's like this kind of public thinking around an imagining and ...

Angela Goh

Well, that's, I think one of the most beautiful things about like seeing performances or coming together to see things is that yeah exactly coming together for this moment to encounter something that no one knows what to do with. And so then it then it starts this kind of process of processing and thinking and like produces something in the world. And I think that that's like... that's some of the most powerful experiences I've had. Yeah.

Tom Pritchard

Seems like because I good chance to jump to some questions, if that's okay?

So, the first question we've got here is about breaking habits and patterns in your practice. So. have either of you any advice on... on breaking habits and patterns in terms of choreography and the creative process? So yes, this is kind of looking into strategies maybe or something like that.

Angela Goh

Advice...wow.

Tom Pritchard

Well, maybe... maybe it's about experiences of acknowledging patterns, and then what, you know, how you ...how you work with that.

Angela Goh

Um, I mean, when I was talking before about making this fiction for myself, that I only ever make one work, but it's this it's the same work but in different dimensions, which makes it already different every time. That that ... I felt like that kind of freed me because it was also like, a willingness to not be afraid of repeating things because like... you know, I can... I can repeat things, and they're already different. I mean, but then I guess... it's I guess, one has to consider whether they're good habits or bad habits or whether they're like, habits that lead places and don't. I mean, because I think ...what I think a bad habit is, in terms of like, this idea of like breaking your habits is trying to break your habits all the time. Like if that's a habit, then...then that's kind of hard because you have to like continually produce everything from nothing.

I mean, it's like what Chloe was saying about, like, not knowing how to make a work at the beginning and then being like, wait, but I know I've done this before, and finding the tools that are there.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah, I remember last year I was at a performance in a venue called Buddha in Belgium. And it was a weekend of kind of... they didn't really call it practice sharing, but it was showings of various kinds of performances that had, like, very different kinds of formats that was like some discursive and some more like, yeah, performative, like dancing or very various things. And there was this artist Jennifer Lacey is a choreographer...an American choreographer based in in Paris. And, and in her presentation. She said like that the best definition she could come up with for methodology was how I'm doing what I'm doing when I'm doing it.

And I found this to be like a really... I have like, remembered it. Or it's like it comes back like what I've done in the studio... is like to also really take the time before deciding that you want to change how you work, also to take the time to just really to work how you work in a way. Like this, this articulation of how I'm doing what I'm doing when I'm doing it. There's also so many like layers of activity and yeah, generation that I also find it super generative to, like, really go into the habit, and maybe like through, through repetition and going in and in and in, something else will unfold.

At least I think also in relation to addressing that problems in the worker something rather than to turn away from them you really ... I feel like often I go in, repeat it or like unfold it or like exacerbate it in a way. Like, you give it really a full presence or something.

Angela Goh

Yeah, no, I think ... a thought comes to mind about, like, the tools that one has. And this ... this quote, I don't remember who said this, but that... that, like, if the only tool you have is a hammer, then everything begins to start to look like a nail.

But then it's like, well... maybe like, you only have a limited amount of a tool set to be able to like make your artwork or make your performances or whatever. But then the work has to be to like, so yeah, I only have a hammer but like, of course, I want everything to become a nail. But then it's about like finding out what else the hammer can do, like so to be in constant kind of re-enchantment of the tools that you have.

Because then the things that you're using them... that you're applying them to can also continue to change. But that it feels like... I mean, I feel like I at least need a few anchors of like to both know that I know how to proceed, but also to kind of not not know particularly... to also keep that open, so that I don't assume that I ... that I don't assume that I know how to proceed but that I believe that I somehow know ... so that I can... maybe that has a lot to do with the work of kind of building something around intuition.

Tom Pritchard

So, we've got another question that's, kind of, related to this sense of making work, I guess, as part of the practice, the ongoing practice. Question is, I'm wondering if you have a concept when you start the work, or do you name it when it's finished? So, there's... feels like there's two things in there about what ... what is it that begins the process of making a work and the notion of naming something. So



Chloe, I don't know if you want to maybe speak to some of that just in terms of the importance of text within your work.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah, I always I don't really ever go into the studio without there already being a frame in some senses. Like, whether it's working towards a performance or if it's working on a set of materials I could score or if I'm going to the studio to write also.

Often, there's a lot of text that comes before I start making a work. Yeah, I'm hesitant to say there's a concept before I enter the studio, although often there is, like.... that is a part of like the framing that makes it possible for me to stop working. And that there is some question that I'm interested in, or problems that I will put in in the space. But that also, yeah, transforms through working on it.

I also, I mean, I haven't made so many works, but for the ones that I have made, usually the title comes pretty quickly. But I think and then it doesn't I mean, I have also a lot of anxiety around making titles for works. But yeah, often it like it comes early, mainly also due to, like, the rhythms needed and like production when you have to start marketing the work or it like gets announced publicly, you have to know something about it.

So a lot of these things become, like, a bit like speculative ways to also be like, Okay, this work is going to kind of do this and it's somehow before you're actually there with the work so there's always a bit this like back and forth between, somehow, how the questions are functioning like in the studio in the work and then yeah ...the framing around it that also kind of projects it forwards and then sometimes also pulls it back.

Yeah, but I wouldn't say that it's necessarily like concept first, then practice. For me it I can't really divide those so clearly.

Angela Goh

Yeah, I think I was to kind of divide them so clearly, but the question about kind of like, the genesis of a particular work, and when one, kind of ,knows about how to say what work is, or say what ... what's kind of important to that work.

Yeah, of course, like there's a... there's like a concept beforehand, because most of the time, like, in a practical sense, like you've had to write an application to be able to get the opportunity to, like, begin making the work. So you have to kind of, like, define, you know, some parameters around like, you know, what's the artistic rationale kind of thing, but then I always try to kind of, again, try to protect the work from being influenced too much from that because that's like, you know, an application is not the same as a work and it requires a slightly a different type of language and definition.

But from me I think it's also, like, after the premiere I know much more about what the work is than beforehand, even though I know how to speak about what I'm ... what has been the interests that have folded into this work, what have been the questions, what ...what have been the lines of research, what have been the references, what ...what I can like also pinpoint as reference points for an audience to be able to like see this work, but it seems like after actually doing it, then I've learnt a lot more about what it is that the work is doing.

Because sometimes I think it's not necessarily about what I'm doing... because at some point I also let the work... kind of like... I don't know I, like, release it from my ... like, it must be this and people must get this from it, which is what I've gotten from it. But somehow like the work kind of like, I don't know, peels off of me somehow. And then I begin to really understand what the work is once I see what it does.

Tom Pritchard

Jumping to the end of the process, I guess. So, if that's the kind of concept coming in, there's a question here from Lana that's: does audience inform your concept work or practice how or why not? So, the work is made and the audience comes in, what role do they play in terms of concepts and practice?

Angela Goh

For me, the idea of the audience is pretty essential to like my idea of what I do. Because if I describe myself... I'm an artist that makes performances and I kind of think like, performances kind of require an audience in some way. I mean, you know, that's very, that's very conventional way to think about what a performance is, of course, but in the end that... that is how I how I'm framing that.

So... it's a funny relationship though because... I don't, like... I don't necessarily think like my work has like a message as such. So, in that way, I'm not trying to like get across something so specific or, what's the word, like so prescriptive. So, what I'm doing is like, of course, very specific, but I'm always, I guess, hoping that it's not prescriptive to an audience. So, in that way, I think that it's both the idea of the audience is both central and also expansive. I'm not sure how to articulate that.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah, yeah, I mean, I would also agree that, for me those a way of making work that is also doing a lot of different kinds of showings. So really practising often with an audience and even if that audience is colleagues or friends, or showing my parents their video and asking them what they think, like all of these things... or all of these encounters are ways of also gathering information about what the performance is doing.

Like, what is ...I'm always interested in asking that the audience, what did you do whilst you're watching this piece? Like what was it that you felt occupied with like, were you... were you in a place of like metaphor where you were trying to like, position actions with meaning? Or were you in like more of an abstract space where you were, like, enjoying aesthetically, like shapes and lines and movements? Or to also really asked like, what actually...yeah, what actually did this performance ask you to do as an audience?

And I think, for me, I want to work towards using performance also as a way to unfold, a practice of reading in the sense of, like, making a public situation where we look at something together. And then

there can be many different readings and interpretations of, of what that is, ... which doesn't come from a place of like wanting the performances I make to be everything, but wanting to understand the situatedness of gaze and interpretation and ... but yeah, for me it's always an interesting question.

And it feeds back so much into the making of the work like, what is the work asking you to do as an audience?

Angela Goh

Well, I feel like the audience is always present with me in when I'm making the work because, like what I usually do is like record myself, like, all the time and watch it because I'm curious about how it looks because I know it's gonna be looked at. And...like for me, when I'm making the work, it feels like what it what it looks like is more important than how I feel while I'm doing it, because I'm not necessarily trying to ... although like, of course, I want to feel also nice for me that's because like, that's, like I don't want to suffer... but that, like somehow it isn't, when I'm engaging with the... with performance as a material...or like maybe that's the way to say it like that I'm engaging with performance as a material.

So, I'm not engaging it as a mode for me to feel something but as a way to kind of, like sculpting something that to be to be seen, and... because that's how it's going to be to be encountered. So, that idea of the gaze of something is quite, quite present there and like ... to be able to kind of create images and... and things that ... that I think kind of would be interesting to offer someone to look at because there's like, something there.

But then in saying that, I also think that... I very much think that ...or I like to think this that, what to say about my work is that what you're seeing isn't actually necessarily what is happening. Like, I sort of was thinking about that when... when thinking about kind of access and stuff like I've had my work audio described before. And I'm always so curious about like, what is it to describe what's happening? Does that describe the work because I really have this sense that like, what... what is ... what can be seen isn't the only thing that's going on in the room. And yeah, so I have some questions around that also.



Tom Pritchard

That feels like a nice riddle to finish on, having started with a riddle and finish with a slightly different one.

So, thank you both, Angela and Chloe, for the last hour. I think we would agree that was really fascinating unpacking of what practices and all the ways it kind of weaves through life and performance and... and all these different things. So, thank you for your generosity over the last hour.

Angela Goh

Thank you for having us, Tom. And thanks so much, Chloe.

Chloe Chignell

Yeah, thank you Angela, and Lucy Guerin Inc and Tom. It's been a real pleasure this morning.

END