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You are listening to The Red Line Sessions - a new series of podcasts from South East Dance as part of their Dramaturg in Residence programme.

Over the next weeks you can join dramaturgs Lou Cope and Luke Pell for a number of reflections, discussions and exclusive interviews with artists that shed light on how the work we see on and off stage gets made.

The podcasts will be uploaded every week to to The Red Line website or you can sign up to the South East Dance mailing list and we'll deliver them to your inbox

Be sure also to join The Red Line facebook group where you can comment, ask questions and suggest future topics. You can also join in the conversation on twitter by tweeting @southeastdance #DiR

The Red Line Sessions Podcast 9 – Luke Pell – A Serious Shift Part 2

Begin

Begin. Again

Begin. Here. There.

I've begun. I began. I'd just begun. There.

But, - And – You, were there. Are There.

But, – And - Now, I'm here

But, – And. Did you begin?

Here. From the same place. Were you. There.

Here. Are we, we, an - us.

You and me, I, a one.

One... hmmm?

What about, They.

Theirs

Ours

What about ours

What about all of us

First, from different firsts

us ergggg and them ergg

*Us.Usness.Youness.Weness.Meness.Themness.Theirness.Thereness.Thisness.This
mess.Ourmess.*

Were we, alongside, us underneath, you above, them below, theirs ahead

A head. A heart. A, a, a,

and, and, and...

...and it darkly brightly seems that these terms are no longer sufficient for our purposes

Hello, I'm Luke Pell and welcome back to 'The Redline Sessions' and this second part of a couple of podcasts from me entitled 'A Serious Shift'

In the first part we heard from artists Caroline Bowditch, Claire Cunningham and Robert Softley Gale

This part takes some time to reflect on what was talked about then and some of what was surfaced in my earlier podcasts

Last time Robert Softley Gale – Artistic Director of Bird of Paradise Theatre Company talked about wanting to communicate ideas to people and having to figure out where they are coming from and what might get in the way ...

>How about the assumption that we are a we - that we begin from the same place or similar places

>How about assumption

>How about power structures, acknowledging power structures? – how, interconnected systems of power play out in all of the spaces, places where work is made - and how, who or what it is supported by bears force on what is done and what is un-done ...

...whether that is seen, acknowledged, named or not

In all of the processes with the artists I've spoken with in these podcasts when working with them as dramaturg we take the time to notice this in the micro - in the moment of a space, on a stage, a rehearsal. And in the macro, the wider weave, the longer deeper arc, the more complex constellations of patterns and structures, social sculptures, growing rhizomes that surround and stem from a work

We will choose to think about what's compelling to whom and for why?

-Which movement patterns, speech patterns, speed patterns are being given voice and value

-How are we valuing or deciding upon varying notions of virtuosity, humour, beauty, significance, challenge,

- Which narratives and perspectives are present and from what position are they told – proposed, projected or rejected

When I join an artist in a process or project I'm often engaged to be keeping a watch out for:

>The training or perpetuation of – gender bias, body fascism, aesthetic prejudice, the appropriation of – movement language, of vocabularies, histories of oppression, whether a work is really doing something – at that moment – or is it only skimming a surface, or

- >Where a value, a choice, an approach comes from and where might it be positioning an artist or their work in relationship to a particular discourse or set of lived experiences that are often excluded in dance and performance
 - >What does it do to tell stories of the body and environment, how does it contribute to un-telling, undoing established histories of different bodies of experience and knowledge
 - >How we might understand and appreciate things – the human and non-human, more than human - understand our own and other worlds so very differently if they are re-remembered from another perspective.
 - > What other worlds are we affording, inviting, straddling, stepping, seeping into, leaning on/against, expanding, enhancing, exacerbating, encroaching
 - > On whose time / whose terms / what time / what terms
 - >What don't we know
 - >What comes from coming together?
 - > How do we listen deeply and delve into conflicting perspectives, share space and time, interest, intersect and ask difficult questions,
 - >How are we called to think again on what is assumed or taken as a given
 - > Where does our knowledge fall short?
 - >What could that point to
 - > What's possible
 - > In closing
 - >Opening
 - > In letting go
- >What is it to take the time to not know
to make the time to not know**

In the last podcast Claire Cunningham talked about different perceptual modalities – meaning the differing ways in which we all perceive ourselves and the world around us because of our unique morphologies and sensory perceptions

She mentioned conversations we regularly have about turning or tuning channels up and down

The layers of information in a work that speak to different perceptual modalities, who's are recognized and prioritised, the un/conscious ordering and arrangement of aesthetic, social and political values.

For example the *Sight lines, seating position, how a space is arranged for who*

Considering different embodied relationships to particular objects, to space, to surface, to planes, lines, curves, coordination, organisation, ...

The presence of the SLI interpreter as part of the dramaturgy of a work, another presence on stage, relationships, how are these things considered from the outset, *is it a man or a women or someone who isn't identifying specifically to one gender, where are they located within the work...how are all of these things considered*

Claire also mentioned that everything can be received as or contribute to meaning making...I tend to think that we make meaning from the information we are afforded, that we find that resonates in some way with our lived experience – so how do we consider the abundance and breadth of that

It's often said it's the job of the artist to 'take the audience there',
Where? – To where they want to be, think they'd like to be where they've been already, or somewhere else?

>Who's work is it to take people where...

> To make who feel emboldened, brighter, more vividly or not about what

>How are all of these elements considered as part of the weave of the work

At the beginning of my the podcast Caroline Bowditch spoke about access as an artistic opportunity, as another way into artistic conversations, Caroline and I have talked before about

- > What does it offer / do to or for the work and for the people experiencing it
- > Who is this open to
- > Who am I open to, opening to
- > What are the other aspects that I might make choices about – what unfamiliar perspectives...
- > Who is your work in conversation with and how, what kind of conversation is it...
Sprawling, swift, fleeting, forceful, heated, joyous, awkward, clipped, painful, playful, passionate, soft, gentle, strong, careful, considerate ...
- > What am I holding too tightly on to and what could I be letting go
- > Loosening, to let something else in

- > What do you consider when you make work
- > Whose voices and dramaturgies are shaping the work
 - > Who is being asked to do what work in each moment – you / the audience ...
- > Who is asking who to shift, for what, for why
- > Why are you making this dance, this choreography
- > Why do I you to make this dance and how do I get to do
- > Who's responsible, accountable, honest

In her last podcast taken from SED's Trailing Identity Day Lou Cope wondered what are the ways that performance can expand and extend us audience, as makers and human creatures

The Red Line Sessions so far have spoken about dramaturgy, making dance and choreography and raised questions about gender, sexual identity, class, colour, age, physicality, perception, privilege, who gets in and how ... assumption, expectation, experience, choice, desire, freedom, integrity

In my first podcast I talked about some of the questions I ask an artist when I work with them ... reflecting on our podcasts so far – my conversation with Janice Parker, Caroline Bowditch, Claire Cunningham, Robert Softley Gale and Lou's conversations with Gary Clarke, Amy Bell and Colin Poole and Charlie Morrissey and work I have been doing recently with Farah Saleh, Ella Mesma and Katherine Hollinson I've been prompted to come back to and expand and review some of the things I do with artists when we begin, the questions we ask together –

- Drawing family trees constellations, maps that trace... AND Imagine
- Who is your performance family? AND Who could be your performance family
- Who are or were theirs / AND who could be yours?
- What was happening in the world locally, globally at those times, in those movements, moments? - AND now AND next?
- What was, is AND will be happening with your body, your relationship to and understanding of it and others?
- How do these things shape our routes in? AND what could be possible in an abundance of other routes ahead

Thanks for listening to The Red Line sessions, this week there will be a live Q&A on the Facebook forum on Thursday – the 31 May from 12pm-2pm, hope you can join us there.