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On the Process of Writing Site-Specific Textual Choreography

ABSTRACT

This article addresses a process of writing textual choreography. The authors have developed a co-authored and co-embodied site-specific approach to choreography as writing. They introduce the method they have developed and tell the readers about the urban site in which they employed it. Most importantly they describe the process of co-writing through an approach inspired by phenomenological research and its conceptions of lived experience description and interpretation. With the article the authors aim to introduce features of their lived experience of site-specific collaborative writing, to discuss some of the specific characteristics of their approach to textual choreography and to offer insight for others developing approaches to site-specific, embodied and somatic forms of writing. An additional motif is that the authors want to participate in the movement of extending choreography into the realms poetic and creative writing that is an increasingly addressed theme in both dance art and its artistic research.

Keywords: Textual choreography, writing, site-specificity, embodiment

INTRODUCTION

We are two dance artists and artist-researchers, who during the past few years have been developing an approach to textual choreography. Central to our method is a score on site-specific embodied exploration and a process of collaborative writing. So far, this work has generated a few published articles (Heimonen and Rouhiainen 2024; Heimonen and Rouhiainen 2023; Heimonen and Rouhiainen 2022; Rouhiainen and Heimonen 2021) and a video, *Writing the Shadow as Choreography* (2021). These outputs mainly present the choreographic outcomes of our collaboration and discuss how our method evolved. They likewise introduce how we relate to choreography and writing from a phenomenological perspective. Additionally, we elaborate upon the evolution of textual choreography and relate our way of writing choreography to the work by other current choreographers (Rouhiainen and Heimonen 2024). In short, our approach to textual choreography underlines and expands the connotations to writing that the term choreography entails. According to dance historian Susan Foster the word choreography relates to dance and rhythm, but additionally to place, both between the stage and the audience as well as more generally as location, and to the act of writing itself (Foster 2011). Following these insights textual choreography can be understood as a broad category that Joellen A. Meglin and Lynn Matluck Brooks (2016, 2) describe nextly:

Different angles or vantage points come into focus, depending on whether the object of inquiry is a text inhabited and inscribed by bodies, or a dance/movement practice

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originating in or shaped by a text. By “embodied texts,” we mean the choreographic manifestations of adapting literature – be it poetic, dramatic, or narrative in form – into the stylized movements of dance. By “textual choreographies,” we refer to the innumerable ways in which literature has imagined the ontological fact of existing in a body.

Our approach to textual choreography highlights how urban settings become inscribed in our bodies through movement exploration and on this basis we continue to generate written text. Important here is that our choreographic approach relates to place in a way that aims to give it agency and thus to challenge our conventional place-related actions and meanings (Hunter 2015).

Aside from the score that outlines the procedures we follow in our choreographic practice, we have not introduced the actual process of embodied exploration and writing in much detail before. The purpose of this article is to do so and thus to further delineate our partially intuitive practice and to articulate previously unnoticed aspects of our process. We undertake this task mainly through an analysis inspired by Max van Manen’s phenomenology of practice and lived experience description. Lived experience relates to the pre-reflective dimension of our lives in which we concretely live through experiences. In such situations we do not reflect upon them but rather are experientially involved and engaged in our diverse daily activities (van Manen 2014, 26, 31). In utilizing lived experience description to detail the choreographic process more concretely, we appreciate Max van Manen’s insights. He argues that:

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To write is to reflect; to write is to research. And in writing we may deepen and change ourselves in ways we cannot predict (...) So, writing a phenomenological text is a reflective process of attempting to recover and express the way we experience our life as we live it – and ultimately to be able to act practically in our lives with greater thoughtfulness and tact. (van Manen 2014, 20)

Whilst in this article we will first follow the incentive of describing our experience of site-specific exploration and writing, we will additionally include interpretation and loosely follow what van Manen calls thematic writing and insight cultivating writing (van Manen 2014). In such writing, what is focused on are themes inherent in the written experiential accounts. Here writing includes reflections on other source materials to support the contextualization of the discussed experiences. This understanding relates to hermeneutic phenomenology that, according to Linda Finlay, pays attention to contextual relatedness. It highlights how meanings occur in relation to the participant, the researcher and the research as a whole in their situatedness (Finlay 2011).

The detailed descriptive writing that we present in the following sections has made us more acutely aware of some of the different nuances and phases involved in the process of generating our textual choreography. Thus, we have had the chance to learn and understand more about the specific characteristics of our approach and therefore to gain means of developing textual choreography further. This might also prove insightful for others developing approaches to site-specific, embodied and somatic forms of writing. We have witnessed a rising interest in the role that the body plays in creative

writing in the artistic research environments we are working in (cf. Cocker et al. n.d.). Yet there still is little detailed discussion of what bodily forms of writing practically entail. An additional motif for writing this article is that extending choreography into the realms poetic and creative writing is an increasingly addressed theme in both dance art and its research, and we want to participate in this movement by contributing to it with a new collaborative choreographic method (Rouhiainen et al. 2024).

GENERATING TEXTUAL CHOREOGRAPHY

For the reader to have sufficient contextual information, we will first introduce the main tenets of our choreographic approach and the particular case of textual choreography we will be addressing in the following sections of the article. The score that we created together includes embodied exploration of chosen sites through a phenomenologically-informed attitude of wonder (Heimonen and Rouhiainen 2022). This exploration is continued by the generation of words and texts according to the steps in the score that in its entirety reads in the following manner:

Phase 1

1. Explore the site by being attentive to how it resonates in and extends your body. Move in response to it. After some time in the site and sensing its impact, respond by writing down single words or two-word phrases in your notebook.
2. In the next few days, allowing the impact of the site to linger with you and using the words written at the site,

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write five to ten sentences, again conveying the sense of the contact with the site.

3. Then send your words and texts to each other.

Phase 2

4. Allowing the silent impact of the site as well as the resonance of the already written words and sentences to inform your writing:
 - a. Write sentences or a short text by using the first list of words that you yourself did not generate.
 - b. Write sentences or a short text by using the first sentences that you yourself did not generate.
5. Then send these new sentences or short texts to each other and use all of the previously produced texts in the next phase of writing.

Phase 3

6. Again allow the silent impact of the site as well as the resonance of the already written words and sentences to inform your writing:
 - a. Write sentences or a short text by using the first list of words generated by both of us.
 - b. Write sentences or a short text by using the first sentence groups generated by both of us.
 - c. Write sentences or a short text by using both the first list of words and the first sentence groups generated by both of us.
7. Edit all the texts generated into one piece of textual choreography. (Heimonen and Rouhiainen 2022, 87–88; 2024, 171.)

The score opens up a specific relationship with the environments in which we employed it. It also eventually allows us to present our embeddedness in them through the text we generate. In the following paragraphs we describe and analyze our experience of physically exploring the Hakaniemi bank in Helsinki and writing about it as the above-described score prompted us to do. We explored this bank for one hour on winter solstice December 21st in 2020. During the summer season the bank is the departure point of small ferries and boats cruising the archipelago of the Helsinki area. Whilst it is located by the sea, it is surrounded by busy streets, a market square as well as business and apartment buildings. We often pass this place as we go to work and go about our other daily routines. In describing our bodily and written exploration of this site in the following sections of the article, we aim to illuminate the experiential quality of our actual process of engaging with writing our textual choreography.

As we have both created the method and explored the chosen urban site together, we decided to bring the written descriptions of our lived experience into a close dialogue. The following text thus involves experiential accounts produced through interweaving both of our separately produced descriptive writings on our experiences. We recount our experiences first from the bodily exploration at the site and then those related more closely to the writing process. Our individual experiential accounts were articulated in aftermath by both of us separately recollecting on our visit at the site and the process of writing. We brought these accounts together through observing the similarities and differences in our described experiences. When the accounts contained similarities, we included them in the description by writing

about them as shared experiences and utilizing the pronoun we. When there were notable differences in our described experiences, we included them by utilizing our first names. In addition to the descriptive material, in the interpretative sections we compared our descriptions with our earlier experiences of dance and site-specific work. We also discussed them in relation to some choreographic conventions of site-specific dance in order to gain understanding about the distinct nature of our approach to textual choreography. Mostly, however, we dialogued with phenomenological insights on situatedness, embodiment as well as language and writing. The descriptive accounts are in italics, and the interpretation is in plain text.

EXPLORING THE HAKANIEMI BANK

The sky is cloaked by thick cloudiness. The whole environment seems to have lost its vibrancy, every colour tinted with melancholic greyness. The led-grey humidity and the merciless cold wind enter our skin immediately as we, Kirsi and Leena, stand at the Hakaniemi bank. This site is familiar to us, close to work and home. Yet now at noon on solstice, daylight is short, dimness prevails and the familiarity of this site retreats from us – the warmth escapes our bodies despite the layers of our clothes. Observing the bank in these conditions makes us want to withdraw. Our muscles alert and tense, we shrink. The aversion in our bodies hinders spontaneous initiative and exploration. Space unfolds between us and the site, an experienced remoteness between us and the diverse objects there splits open. In the first moment of our exploration, we simply stopped to gain sense of where we were. Very soon we were impressed by how the weather coloured

our relationship with the site and immediately marked our bodies. The severe weather made the site seem different, even foreign to us. Instead of enticing action and inspiring our active participation with it, as we had imagined, we suffered of its alienating force. Enduring weather conditions, temperatures, wind and light have a strong impact on our bodily orientation and thus for opportunities of movement. In dance improvisation one typical starting point in familiar environments is to follow bodily sensations first so as to allow them to inform the movement exploration (cf. Midgelow 2019). In contrast, here we first observed the environment and its tacit inscription into our bodies that impacted our inter-relatedness with it and continued to inform our choreographic endeavour. The unpleasant experience of being cold can be likened to the sensation of pain that makes us withdraw from the pain-causing source (Leder 1990). Withdrawal is a bodily activity, here the tensing and narrowing of our musculature that also limited our perception. Whilst this spontaneous activity had the function of protecting the body and keeping it warm, it simultaneously narrowed and hindered our relatedness to the world. Our experience was that the diverse objects and structures in the site became distant to us, requiring special effort to reach. The everydayness of the environment was lost, and we had to overcome the unfamiliarity in the familiar. This friction came to importantly feed our creative exploration as it triggered the affective and embodied orientation through which we were interrelated with the site.

Kirsi takes some tentative steps on the glittering and slippery pavement slabs, which too contain an austerity that rejects and prohibits any easy dwelling and exploration. Still, she persists in traversing through the bank, whilst her breath becomes shallow,

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locked, revealing the adversity. Our task of exploring the site keeps her there. As she continues to attune to the conditions, something in her calms down and she aligns with the wet trunks of the lime trees, the metal benches, edgy pavement slabs and the boatless docks at the bank. The weather conditions were not only in the air but permeated the other materialities at the Hakaniemi bank. The site opened to us as a situational event to whose constitutive elements the weather belongs. The situation impacted how Kirsi could move, with carefulness, time and shallow breathing. It impacted her overall immersion in the site as she also appreciated the task of exploring the site both she and Leena were committed to. Leena sees Kirsi starting her exploration and decidedly pushes herself to walk across the location. She does so for several times and in different directions. In so doing, she too gains a clearer image of the two neatly positioned rows of leafless trees, of a shabby signpost with ferry schedules from a previous year, of a closed wooden ticket booth accompanied by a row of rusty metallic benches with no awaiting passengers. She tries to sit on one seat. It is only a momentary bodily examination as the hard bench is not designed for comfort and she feels the biting temperature seeping into her body. Obviously, despite being immersed in a situation, we can personally direct and even force our bodies to move. When we do this, we extend or override our bodily sensations and intentions. Yet the body mostly begins to accommodate to such impulses, and they can allow for a fruitful interaction with the environment to emerge (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962). Leena pushed herself to move through a familiar routine that gradually allowed her to start paying attention to her immediate environment in which she noticed details she had not recognized before. Consequently, she was also able to allow her body to react to the environment's uninviting quality.

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We both slowly begin to notice more details by changing bodily perspectives and positions: kneeling to perceive moss, lichens, and cigarette butts on the ground, squatting to perceive the graffiti on the back of the information board, palpating the moist railings of the peers to feel the fibres of the wooden planks. In remaining in an explorative stance despite its uncomfortableness, in the end allowed us both to engage increasingly in motion and through it observe more features of the bank. In this instance, the call of things and arrival of objects into our awareness took the time that we needed to overcome the distance the weather conditions set up between us and them (Ahmed 2006). Here we also seemed to offer evidence to the fact that aside from passively becoming filled with perceptual content, perception requires movement and focusing for us to reach perceived objects (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962). We notice that a city worker in overalls is measuring the site with a construction laser. Offering foresight into the new buildings planned for the site, he goes about his business determinately not minding the hurried passers-by nor us moving and intermittently observing him working. We know that this site will disappear soon and is going to be replaced by new apartment and business buildings. This was why we decided to attend to this site in the first place as it soon will be impossible to witness its current singularity. The bank is in hibernation. A solitary boat is returning from open waters and underlines the inactivity. The boatless and shipless dock highlights that the waterways are waiting for a more opportune season – that might never again come. We were surprised by the fact that we witnessed activity that anticipated a future Hakaniemi bank that we knew of. We expected the new construction plans for the site to be concretely observable only on a later date. To us this opened an experienced view on the

diverse time related contexts through which the bank gains social significance and meaning. It underlined its historicity. Previous activities and meanings related to the bank continue in people's memories and new ones continue to be constructed as the bank finds new concrete forms and is filled with different kinds of relational activities (Saarikangas 2013). We experienced a sense of loss and emptiness, as we envisaged ourselves being unable to return to the previous routines the material features of the bank still announced to us, such as taking a ferry ride to one of the many islands around Helsinki. It really is so that material objects have agency in the sense that they trigger certain kinds of activities in us and hinder others (Ahmed 2006). Our feeling expressed a bodily anticipation of a future where the material features pointing towards the past have been demolished and underlined our bodily emplacement in the site (Casey 1998; 1987).

The cold starts stiffening fingers and toes and there is a bodily need to start ending the exploration. Taking a look at the overall site from its edges, Kirsi and Leena allowed their focus to move to words. In different pace, one word after another enters their minds, as if given by the site. They do not invent or make up these words. They emerge on their own account and are surprisingly pertinent to the Hakaniemi bank on the particular moment in December. These they appreciate and write down in their notebooks or devices. Merleau-Ponty (1995/1962) writes about the body-subject as an anonymous subject that already understands the world prior to our personal or reflective consciousness so does. Waldenfels (2011) instead discusses how our thinking comes from elsewhere on the basis of the pathic interrogation that the world places on us. He considers that thinking is originally a spontaneous reaction to this interro-

gation. It seems to us that we witnessed similar processes, as the site related words flooded our consciousness, as if coming from nowhere. Here it seems that our bodily embeddedness in the Hakaniemi bank also called for the specific words that were anonymously given to us.

A PROBING COLLABORATIVE WRITING

A few weeks after exploring the Hakaniemi bank in person, Leena sits by her laptop in her study and opens the notes app on her phone. As she reads the single words or word clusters that she had earlier jotted down at the Hakaniemi bank, she almost simultaneously rewrites them down in a blank word-document on her computer. She writes up the text in several short lines of words. Fourteen rows of text pile on top of each other by the left margin of the document. Then she pauses to observe and linger with the words allowing them to stir her. And they indeed do. There is a time lapse after the site exploration and before the more intense writing process begins. In commencing on writing, the practicality of reading, writing and arranging the words from the site began to have an experienced effect, the affective quality and force the words carry started to move Leena.

For Kirsi the words written at the Hakaniemi bank with her stiff, cold fingers enter her room carrying a combination of dark remoteness and intimacy. The words engrave deeper into the layers of her body, and they transform her usually light room into a dusky one. Her breathing rhythm slows down, deep inhalations and exhalations emerge. Words create chains around her, reaching to the walls and corners. She feels imprisoned by their strong grip on her body, they are haunting, require a total pause. Each word seems to have a root of its own and to belong to a group of isolated, deserted,

odd words. Kirsi falls into the words, sometimes trying to get some sense of them by searching for their etymological origins, sometimes just staring at the words, and listening to their pulses. In the moments when the silence that dwells beyond the words is overwhelming, she gets up and walks around the room to dispel the ghosts and growing dark intensity pouring on her from the words. The bond between the words and her is strong, and yet it is almost non-existent: they are not dependent on her, they linger in the room with their contingent pace. Immediate bodily reactions and spatial relationships are triggered in Kirsi by the words with interlinks to meanings other words carry. The sensuous reverberation and sedimented significance that language and words bear are also inscribed in our bodies and even the material locations they relate to (Abram 2017/1996; Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962). In trying to gain a sense of the significance of the words that silently had a strong hold on Kirsi, she needed to move to gain some distance from their overwhelming impact.

For Leena the words bring back recollections of the bank but most importantly they quiver with an appealing affective sense. More than individual images of birds, tree trunks, stones, boats or impressions of the weather, it is their ambiguous sensuous qualities that seem to call for her attention now. She lets this sensuous sense sink in as she wonders what do to with the words, how to interconnect them into sentences, as the score asks her to do. Whilst the words are both familiar, individually they have a truncated expression. It is as if they needed each other to be able to offer a reader more encompassing evocative content. Leena tests combining a few words and this opens a very absorbing and pleasurable process of writing. She devours the words as if she was tasting them, she even has to move her hands and fingers as if to palpate the many connotations and denotations they contain. She intuit-

tively interlinks them in ways that to her are not all that common. As the word combinations proceed into lines of text, they enliven and augment the sense of the individual words opening a situation. It is as if the Hakaniemi bank, the traces of the bank that she continues to carry in her being, write through her. The bank is pulled into a bodily presence through the process of writing. It feels uncanny how the sentences and, in the end, the whole paragraph, evoke the bank and its dormant and non-functional quality. The interplay between Leena's previous experience of the bank and the meanings the words carry that happens in the writing move the bank into the text. The bank finds an emergent life on the page of the word document. The words invited Leena's attention and offered her a general impression or a sense of a style of being that is not expressible in single words but through their inter-relations (Merleau-Ponty 1993). Her attempt at combining the words called for bodily gestures to grasp how to express the sense of the bank they and her body still carried in them. Interestingly, in phenomenology it is argued that language is gestural, based in our bodily expressive gestures (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962; Gallagher 2005). The consequent sentences brought the bank into presence, as if the bank itself was an active agent in the writing. Remarkable here was that the bank and Leena's body still entailed a direct connection that became expressible in the writing. The bank found life on the page. In phenomenological terms, as Abram states, "it is not the human body alone but rather the whole of the sensuous world that provides the deep structure of language" (Abram 2017/1996, 85). Language thus holds an intimate relationship with the world through us and we to the world through it. Abram borrows Merleau-Ponty to further highlight that language is both our life and the life of

things and that it is “the very voice of the trees, the waves, and the forests” (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 155 as reported by Abram 2017/1996, 86). This quotation relates to the fact that in phenomenological understanding the world becomes articulated in language, in best cases in ways that things call for, even if language cannot fully express pre-linguistic reality (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962).

This circulation of words has a spell on Kirsi, the wording fills her thoughts and days even without thinking until she has to send the present formulations to Leena. Excitement of receiving her words and sentences: her wording is elegant offering subtle nuances and textures. Words written by her are valuable as themselves and as material for weaving new combinations; fresh air enters the room. And the words written through Kirsi get another tone or shade alongside Leena’s forming a multi-directional event of elements which hang together intimately and remotely: their relatedness is veiled, changing. The engulfing and enjoyable experience of writing continues in heightened form as Leena begins to explore the words and text that Kirsi had produced. As Leena reads through Kirsi’s writing she is surprised, perplexed and triggered by Kirsi’s formulations. To her they seem sharp, to the point and interestingly abrupt, as if keenly following shifts in Kirsi’s singular perception and experience of the Hakaniemi bank. Yet Kirsi’s writing is familiar too, Leena easily relates to Kirsi’s wordings and again they move Leena, stimulate new recollections and a need once again to try to grasp the escaping affective sense of our encounter with the bank. The writing had an engaging, powerful and even spontaneous impact on us. After receiving each other’s texts, we both gained encouraging new inspiration to continue our writing. For Kirsi, Leena’s material offered new attention to her writing and allowed her to write

more fluently and about a more complex event. It allowed her to appreciate both Hakaniemi bank's intimacy and remoteness as the bank continues to present itself in shifting ways. For Leena, Kirsi's perceptible text felt both familiar and different and incited new ways of encountering and writing about the bank. Sharing the written materials enriched both of our opportunity to address the bank. Meaning emerges when perspectives blend, gear into each other and strengthen their significance (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962). Our collaborative writing intensified the sense of relevance we felt our writing had in conveying the import of the bank we carried.

In following the steps of the score, on each stepping, another reality is being moulded by the words, through the words. In this process the strictness of the score keeps Kirsi on track and pushes her to pause and breathe with each word carefully. The mixture of the freedom and severity of the rules of the score creates a sphere of serious playfulness in the small room Kirsi is in. It also brings her consolation since her choices are limited. Yet this way of writing is a new one, compromising her previous ways and habits of writing, it offers no hiding place. Leena works with her sentences and words much like she did when doing so with the words she had produced at the site. She tastes and tests their quality by placing the words one after another, this by how they appeal to her. There is no obvious rational for doing so, it is simply the sense, the connotations they carry and how they seem to open up and to continue developing the expression the bank still holds in her. The score created a structuring framework for the shared writing for both of us. It offered both a comforting boundary and a space for an intuitive and fresh creative exploration. Through it we palpated the sense the words carried and how they enlivened characteristics of the bank.

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And strange enough, since Kirsi lives nearby Hakaniemi bank, when attuning to the words she feels the presence of the site as a chilly shadow breathing beside her, at the left side of her ribcage. In palpating the words and breathing the shadow of the site, she becomes imprinted by their obscure nature. The enveloping reality created by collaborative writing makes the site first more familiar, and then, the foreign nature of it keeps spreading. In addition, Kirsi can no longer discern which one of them, Leena or herself, had written which words or sentences. The words that emerged through them both started to alter the way Kirsi perceives her surroundings. She has started to become an other through this process of collaborative writing. Leena is taken by the fact that by exploring the bank in writing the depth of its impact dawns on her in ways she had no idea it could. Together with both of their words, the bank seems to have endless opportunity to be born again, and none of its expression fulfil or quench the mark it had left her with. The bank dances in the words and the words give the bank a new life. How interesting is this, as they had observed and encountered the bank in hibernation and as it soon no longer will physically exist. She becomes more entangled with the opportunities the words hold and how through them the bank can move, come into uncanny expression and retain an at least indirect existence.

To conclude this section, here is a short excerpt of the text (full length 1408 words) that we generated by exploring the Hakaniemi bank in Helsinki through the above score:

The spatial waters and skies pierce an urban landscape.
Edges, rigorously structured space.
Muddy deep water.
A challengingly cold breeze.

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A loose stone paving.

A seagull swimming the bay.

The hubbub of roaring cars.

A circumscribed islet tightly guarded by streets, lanes, alleys, bridges and a highway.

Efficient function.

A junkie stooping on the shoreline, freezing.

Trees growing in boxes escaped into hibernation. Moss and lichens deploying their tired generosity. Passers-by proceeding in their ways.

Boatless and shipless docks echo the past.

Aversive melancholy.

Do not fall under. Will anybody be saved?

Rows of empty metallic benches. The Hakaniemi bank at some prior moment.

One pitiful boat returning from sea.

Suddenly, without warning, wet lime tree trunks in a row slide under the breastbone.

(Heimonen and Rouhiainen 2022, 76)

IN CONCLUSION

With this article, we have aimed to describe something of what it was like in concrete practice to engage with our approach to textual choreography at the Hakaniemi bank. Through recounting and contemplating our experiences we aimed at discussing how the writing of our textual choreography actually emerges. In this process, it became very obvious that the score plays an important role in orienting what and how we pay attention in the urban environments we explore, what we do in them as well as how we continue working with words so as to develop a piece of textual choreography. The phenomenologically-influenced score opens a specific horizon that steers our orientation, our bodily and writing activities. What to us becomes evident through our description and interpretation, is that the body-subject, as an anonymous yet situated and linguistically inscribed pre-reflective bodily agency, plays an important role throughout to process of generating textual choreography. It is its connection to the site that brings forth sensations, perceptions, recollections, prompts for actions, thoughts and eventually words that the textual choreography draws upon.

Embodied relatedness is embedded, meaning that our bodily viewpoints are dependent on the situations we find ourselves in. At Hakaniemi bank, relying on the anonymity of the body-subject, we spontaneously related to the site as it called us to do. However, we likewise drew on our personal preferences and intentionally directed our actions towards more specific goals. More interestingly though the previous sections of this article point to the fact that both our bodies and the urban setting we explored carried memories as traces

of previous experiences and occurrences. On the one hand, we could open up to the experience of exploring the Hakaniemi bank in aftermath through the words we generated there. This experience we could additionally expand on through our continued process of writing. On the other hand, the bank itself provided information about the previous activities it has subtended, for example, in the closed ticket booth, the torn timetables on the billboard. What is more is that words previously inscribed in us found new forms and relations as they emerged in our consciousness as responses to our exploration at the bank. In the end, in continuing writing with them, they became inscriptions of the Hakaniemi bank. The way in which words emerged in our consciousness at the site and the manner in which they evoked our bodily experiences and recollections bespeak of the material and gestural basis of language (Gallagher 2005). Our approach also invokes the original expressivity of language, by generating unforeseen textual material that offers evidence to a situationally specific co-embodiment of the Hakaniemi bank. After all, as David Abram notes:

The enigma that is language, constituted as much by silence as by sounds, is not an inert or static structure, but an evolving bodily field. It is like a vast living fabric continually being woven by those who speak. (Abram 2017/1996, 83)

And continues:

A living language is continually being made and remade, woven out of the silence by those who speak. . . And this silence is that of our wordless participations, of our perceptual

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immersion in the depths of an animate, expressive world.
(Abram 2017/1996, 84)

All in all, what the above-discussion on our engagement with textual choreography highlights is the significance that situated embodiment has for writing.

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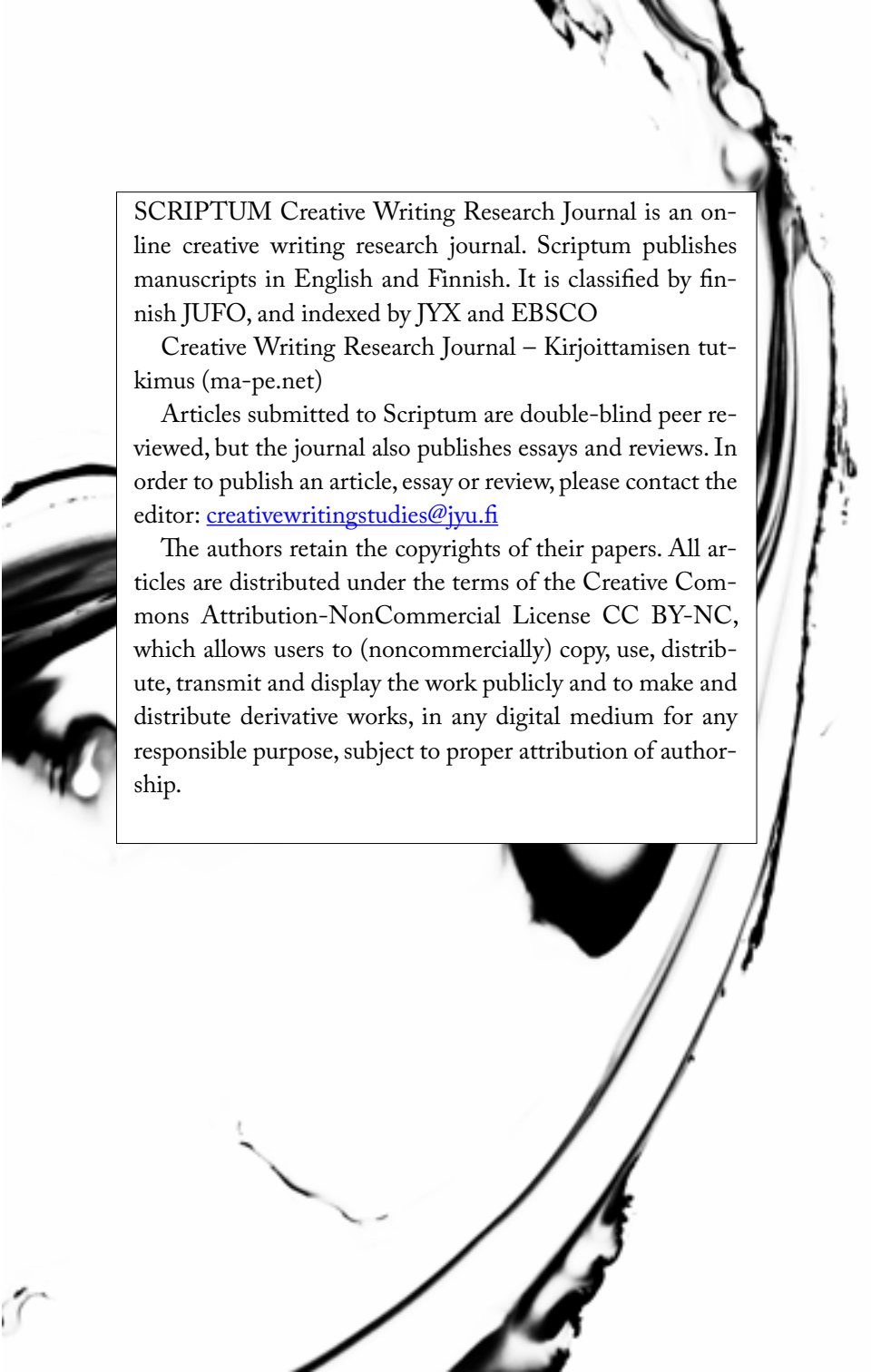
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