

Contextual Statement

***Still-ing* [Installation] by Sara Giddens (2017).**

Presented at *Talking, Thinking, Dancing* (The international Centre for Choreography, Nottingham, June 2017).

Still-ing, concerned with the employment of stillness within choreographic practices, resulted in a seven screen video installation of my research made for the main studio at the International Centre for Choreography. I use the word still-ing to suggest, to draw attention to a stillness that is active, is becoming, is alive with potential.

The installation brought together three pieces of practice-as-research into one space.

1. An ambulant performance, *The Dream-Walk*, made for Wirksworth Art and Architecture Trail.
2. *Still moving: moving still*, the first piece of choreography ever made for Nottingham Contemporary's gallery and thoroughfares.
3. *Dialoguing and dwelling*, a series of one to one solos focussed on stillness, and what that means physically to my thirteen participants.

The installation reflected many of the concerns inherent in the work. Developing a "slower ontology" (1994: 215) as Gaston Bachelard expresses in, 'The Poetics of Space' (1994, 1958) and drawing particularly upon Martin Heideggers' essay 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (1978, 1951), all three works created space-times for still-ing, building dwelling places, and locating the works purposefully within the 'fourfold.' (Heidegger 1978: 352). Significantly for such site-specific work, it is in this "fourfold" made up of the earth, sky, mortals and divinities, that space meets time through the sky and earth and in relation to its sun and moon and the passing of the seasons.

The work opened debate and offered new insights into how curators, producers and artists might engage meaningfully with 'activating audiences' and challenged many of the presumptions that such a term holds. Through accompanying written and verbal articulations, a developed working model was made evident, allowing for the meaningful integration of the movements and words of others who (have) people(d) the spaces and offering an approach to 'activating audiences' that is generous, fulfilling and individual.

Still-ing invites a space-time for audiences to step into, with their own experiences and histories, to become part of the meaning-making process from their own unique stand-points. The work is interdisciplinary, combining insights from dance, performance, somatics, phenomenology and ethnography, and is currently informing and being extended into a commissioned site-specific work to open *Stilling and Slowing*, a conference concerned with slower practices and commissioned by DanceXchange and Birmingham Conservatoire.

Still-ing was presented as part of a major Erasmus+ funded project, Artistic Doctorates in Europe (ADiE), at The International Centre for Choreography. ADiE, is a partnership between Zodiak Centre for New Dance, Kiasma Theatre Museum and University of the Arts Helsinki (FI), Weld and Stockholm University of the Arts (SE), Dance4, The University of Chichester and Middlesex University

(UK). Duration: 90 minutes. Commissioned by Artistic Doctorates in Europe through Erasmus+ and produced by International Centre for Choreography.

Made by Sara Giddens (direction & choreography) and Tony Judge (film-maker). Fully documented.
<https://vimeo.com/248950753>