

Project information

All applications must include links to full length video examples of your own work. Please do not submit trailers.

Link 1 : <https://vimeo.com/177359138> (Empty Gestures)

Link 2 : <https://tatenlyle.com/portfolio/the-chorus/> (The Chorus)

Link 3: <https://vimeo.com/245938607> (Meaningless Dance 18)

Motivation statement (max. 2000 characters)

Tate n Lyle is the collaborative practice of Rohanne Udall (b. London, 1990) and Paul Hughes (b. Dublin, 1991). Their playful work considers meaning and meaninglessness through oblique gestures, and takes place across choreographic, performance and visual arts contexts. Trained in fine art and philosophy, the practice is a meeting point between disciplines: a persistent and fidgeting enquiry that continually questions itself and its contexts.

We are applying to PACT to support the development of our new stage work, 'Can You Feel It?'. This would be our first evening-length piece for stages; marking a significant development for our practice. We have experimented with a breadth of materials and ideas; prioritising many small diverse works with what is close to hand. Now, with momentum and confidence, we want to invest our energies and skills into a lengthier and complex production, whilst retaining our refined skill and interest in the expansive potential of a seemingly simple proposition.

Our recent credits include: 'This', a performance for exhibition spaces (Rich Mix, London, May 18); performances, screenings, broadcasts and group exhibitions at Rhubaba (Edinburgh, Jan 18), Radiophrenia (Glasgow, Nov 17), DISKURS17 (Gießen, Germany, Oct 17), ICW (Blackpool, Jun 17), SET me Free (Venice and London, Sep 17) and Attenborough Arts Centre (Leicester, May 16).

We have received commissions from Dance on the Radio (Mar 17), Third Row Dance (Oct 16), and a DanceXchange DX Choreography Award (Dec 17). We have been supported through residencies at New Wolsey Theatre (Apr 15), Hospitalfield Arts (Arbroath, Nov 16) and Summer Lodge (Nottingham Trent University, Jul 17).

We are currently working towards a solo exhibition 'Better Out Than In' at ICW (Blackpool, Oct 18), a newly commissioned performance for DRAF (London, Oct 18), and a collaboration with sonic artist Fionn Duffy at a forthcoming residency at Siobhan Davies Dance (London, Jul 18).

Summary of project description (max. 2000 characters)

'Can You Feel It?' is a new project by Tate n Lyle; a performance for theatre stages to premiere in Autumn 2019. The piece is concerned with virtuosic performances of sensation, feeling and self-absorption; and draws from Spiritualism, Reiki, somatic dance and method acting. The work exposes the material practices of empathy, invocation and distance. In creating this work for the

stage, we grapple with contemporary ideas of performativity, sincerity and artifice, demonstration and actuality.

The collaboration between Tate n Lyle and lighting designer Alex Fernandes will be key to this new work; both in its development and the resulting piece. Our work process would take place both in the studio and in the theatre. Our practice is sensitive to the specifics and possibilities of contexts - in this vein, it feels vital that a work for the stage, responsive to its expectation, questions and history, incorporates the technologies (particularly the possibilities of lighting design) of the stage as an active and material practice. The relationship between the sensorial and unseen world of the actor, the audience's experience of seduction, and the (often unconsciously absorbed) potency of lighting will be key to the dynamics of this project.

Residencies are essential to our practice, allowing for an accelerated dialogue, critical reflection and the rapid testing of multiple ideas and tangential meanderings. Both intensive and playful, working on this project with Alex will arm us an increased technical literacy and confidence for the entirety our artistic careers. Additionally, outwith the production of 'Can You Feel It?' and the direct relationship with the team at PACT, this residency would represent a significant step for introducing ourselves to the artistic communities both in Germany and Europe more broadly -- vital at this time, both personally and politically, as artists based in the UK.

Project description (max. 8.000 characters)

In 'Can You Feel It?', two performers are bound by four phrases: "Can you feel it?", "Here", "I think I heard something" and "Oh". Their performance -- defined by gestures of reaching, feeling, sensing, and temperamental outbursts of confusion, fear, rapture and sensuality -- persists in its reference to an absent, historical, spiritual or imagined, presence. A performance of feeling; extrapolating and undermining the demonstrations of sensation and self-absorption that dominate somatic practice. The internally felt and the thought are proffered to the audience; sign posted through language and gesture; sent up in mocking exaggeration; delivered with tender sincerity. Does the audience also feel these feelings? Can they also believe? We are inspired by the techniques of manipulation, emotion and faith; one can know something is artificial and yet still see its real effects in bodies and the world. As in our other work, a tight formal rule opens up to a plethora of possibility and complexity: how much can be said when only certain words can be spoken? What other relations and references can be produced? The relations between the two performers, and between them and the audience are expanded, tested, transformed and transgressed. Ambiguity and hesitation become entangled in a tense game of gesture and touch, invitation and provocation.

Over our five years of collaboration, our work has developed in its complexity and nuance: from the rigid minimalism of 'Empty Gestures', to the fidget-y inattention of 'Some Possibilities'. Our latest work 'This', an improvised performance for exhibition spaces, draws from slapstick to perform processes of thinking. It is a wild piece, involving spontaneous enquiry into the collapsable tables we perform with, and makes significant demands on the performers in terms of real-time composition and negotiating relationships with our audiences. 'Can You Feel It?' goes one step further, as the first demand we make of ourselves to work with 'acting' - to repeatedly 'fake' emotion, to control and reproduce the intense gestures of 'hysteria', fury, tender eroticism and ironic scorn. While the flavours and questions of 'acting' are key to the work, our research will look into occult and spiritual practice, cultural representations of 'the psychic', and emulations of sensation and feeling in artificial intelligence. In creating this work for the stage, we grapple with contemporary ideas of performativity, sincerity and artifice, demonstration and actuality.

'Can You Feel It?' will be our first evening-length performance for theatre stages; its creation will contribute significantly to our aims of presenting our work with greater visibility and confidence, on increasingly professional platforms. We are seeking to invest in the work the time and technical resources that this will require -- and to create a work that can easily tour to different theatre spaces, both nationally and internationally. We feel confident that this piece is the next step for our practice - in that it will both challenge and develop our work (both artistically and institutionally), whilst also sharing our ideas and questions with audiences with enticing and playful articulacy.

Key to the development of this work at PACT would be the capacity to collaborate with the lighting designer Alex Fernandes. A friend and early collaborator, Alex has designed for artists including Made In China, Vlatka Horvat and Sleepwalk Collective; and most recently has worked with Forced Entertainment touring 'Real Magic' and 'Out of Order.' It is rarely the case that we can explore lighting design as a technology and practice during the making of a work. To have these resources accessible at the earliest stages of a process, and to insist on lighting as an autonomous creative practice that can instigate its own questions and forces, would be invaluable. Alex makes intelligent, sensitive and innovative choices with whatever resources at hand; we trust that working with him will open our eyes in the long term to the possibilities of light; and ensure that our first major work for the stage confidently incorporates its technical possibilities with nuance.

Not only beneficial to our artistic development and collaborative partnerships, the inclusion of lighting into the development of 'Can You Feel It?' is specific and vital. Aesthetically, this is a project we envision as extremely minimal, aside from the presence of our own bodies -- additionally, we believe it should be a precise and carefully choreographed work. So far it has been developed through long-form improvisation, and we imagine further work will take place through continued rigorous exploration in this vein; mapping out dynamics, modulations of emotion; determining snap changes and periods of looseness or composure. Lighting will play a key part in structuring these choreographies, perhaps signaling changes of state, transporting both performers and audience; or persisting in creating an incongruent atmosphere to the performers behavior. The relationship between the absent and unseen world of the actor and the often unconsciously absorbed potency of lighting will be key to the dynamics of this project's capacity to seduce, absorb and convince.

So far, the exploration of 'Can You Feel It?' has taken place as an aside to other projects. However, we have confirmed support from Derby Theatre, where we will undertake a week-long R&D in Spring 2019. The bulk of creation will then take place during this residency at PACT. We aim to premiere the work in the UK in Autumn 2019, following a final week of rehearsals supported by Dance4, in Nottingham. Additionally, this project will involve a one-day symposium 'Pulling The Rug Out', held at the Live Art Development Agency in London in March 2019, in which invited speakers, artists and researchers will come together to discuss the concept of the undercut and the knowing smirk in performance practices. Identifying our practice as research, we feel it imperative to engage with discourse and share our knowledge beyond the production of artworks. Alongside these partnerships, we will be making a bid to Arts Council England in Autumn 2018.

As a collaborative enquiry, residencies and concentrated studio time are essential to our practice. They provide uninterrupted space for an accelerated dialogue; combining critical reflection with the rapid testing of multiple ideas. They are also a vital opportunity to become sensitive to irresponsible and tangential distractions to which we would otherwise not give due focus. We trust that this residency with PACT will enrich the breadth of our practice; both directly generating new and tangential artworks, or giving rise to the core insights that drive larger projects into our future.

Additionally, outwith the production of 'Can You Feel It?', this residency would represent a significant step for us, in building our relationship with the artistic community both in Germany and Europe more

broadly. In working at PACT Zollverein we would encounter artists and institutions within a supportive and critically engaged network - and also chat, hang out, and find out what's happening in different parts of the continent first hand. This kind of exchange can be deeply informative and generative. These essential connections also have a new political relevance and importance in the context of Brexit. We recently presented work, and made some new friends, in Gießen when we were invited to present our work at DISKURS'17; and Paul was invited as a critic to Rough Proposals festival at Mousonturm Frankfurt; if we were to be at PACT we would use this opportunity to deepen these relationships within Germany.