

LOOKING AGAIN TO SEE - 2014

some notes on what i think i have seen // lisa skwirblies

“In order to be moved, you have to have some weight ...”

... is one of the provoking thoughts that stuck with me long after I had heard it in *Some crosscuts of some of our improbable bodies*. It got me thinking, when do elusive practices such as thinking and dancing develop weight? And what or whom and how do they move from there? Do my thoughts have any weight? Do they *matter*? We are most of the time made believe that the so-called *hard* sciences are the legitimate treasurers of truth production. This scientific rationality has developed a lot of hegemonic weight since Enlightenment started moving its advocates. Thinking differently, challenging truth claims, betraying Enlightenment reasonability thus needs to start with questioning the *ways* we are used to produce, transmit and store knowledge. Challenging the epistemologies one has been trained and educated in is a painful and tedious undertaking. To give an example, I had to visit *Some crosscuts* twice, before being able to fully letting myself being moved by the new form of thinking suggested in the work. In my first visit I felt lost, confused, couldn't read the signs that I thought were given to me to decipher. Only later I realized how much I have been clinging in this first visit to an epistemological frame that is not applicable for *Some crosscuts*, or rather, that is undermined by Julien and his collaborators. Only later, namely in my second visit, could I realize how much I had given in to the routine of a professional spectator, of looking for moments of meaning-production and analysing the particular modes of representation, in order to give a coherent 'feedback' afterwards. What is offered in *Some crosscuts* instead, is what the Belgium philosopher Isabelle Stengers, calls a *milieu* for a de-colonised thinking, a milieu that allows to “slow down reasoning” in Stenger's words, and that allows us “to arouse a slightly different awareness of the problems and situations mobilizing us” (Stengers 2011). *Some crosscuts* invites me to do exactly that, to trade my position as a spectator for the one of a co-researcher, a fellow thinker. It challenges me not to 'feed back' afterwards, but to 'feed into' the accumulation of new imaginaries produced during the interaction of watching, thinking, moving, imagining. It is an invitation to 'think along', to add weight to the collection of collaborative thought production, to let my own thoughts and associations be moved by the ones produced right in front of me. *Some crosscuts* creates a milieu for the dancers, as well as the fellow-audience-philosophers, that allows to consider the world with other questions than those of the hegemonic discourses. A milieu, in which thinking belongs to no one and everyone, in which there can be no right or wrong. Through its open and ongoing process it produces ever-new events that allow ever-new links into yet un-discovered trajectories of the rhizomatic active archive.

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The archive is commonly understood as an institution that stores the remains of the past. It amasses that which *can* be stored. This also means that the question of what gets to remain is closely linked to the question of what is documentable. Therefore is the common archive's content usually filled with documents and objects. What is kept outside the archive's doors is the document's ephemeral Other: the so-called live arts. This simply means that the 'archival logic' emphasises disappearance to justify the practice of conserving remains. The archive maintains

one memory at the expense of another and curates memory as well as it buries memory. Julien's *active archive*, as it showed in *Some crosscuts*, but also in his project *Strata*, challenges this archival logic of documentability that limits us to an understanding of the archive as a storage-unit housing documents. Instead, his work accounts for the after-life of such elusive and immaterial practices like moving, thinking, dancing – and sets the conventional image of the stable storage-house-archive *in motion*. Julien found in the crosscut of choreography, philosophy and drawing an alternative, an active and affective archive that does not imagine new ways of how dance *is* remembered, but how we can produce, transmit and store knowledge *through* dance.