

alys longley

a kindness that goes further

my task here is to write a closing editorial piece
to write a closing editorial piece with a focus on how the thematics of radical kindness
and performance

c
u
t

cross the articles collected here in the process of doing this
writing i am thinking of the book *i never knew what time it was* by poet and art critic
david antin¹

and the idea of a non-proprietary form of writing an approach to writing that is
light hearted and thus could give permission for a light hearted kind of scholarship
that is fused with the logics of performance making and crafting
as practices of creativity imagination and experimentation²

(in the case of these comments experimentation with writing itself as it merges with
drawing, with colour, with light)

(and when i write light hearted that is not to say taking its work lightly, but making
space for forms of performance writing scholarship that work with a light touch engage
buoyancy make space for

b r e a t h
)

as a form of kindness
a permission to make new with vocabulary
to engage with convention and little spatial resistances

dematerializing
and becoming

air³

recognising kindness as an ecological practice as we hold each other in our mattering
moved by the necessity of water
we wonder *what is it to be held*⁴

from the lens of a circus practitioner the ability to hold is a technical practice of
support of learning supports

supports that we reconfigure

when touch becomes impossible

Indeed,

*one day, and that day will come, we will need to hold hands across our differences like we
never have wanted to before*⁵

and to be radical in our visibility
crossing beyond the normative

*there is no discipline higher than care for each other*⁶

one way to hold each other is in silence
care

in the reverence of silent

these deeply creative practices of space making

of holding space

to be seen as a body among bodies, welcomed, cared for

*the regenerative action of making with the body – of showing how the supposedly sick
or unhealthy body is capable of extraordinary, powerful poetry, physical performance
becomes profoundly significant*⁷

tended to in tiny radical acts of kindness

just because

this is kindness that doesn't need to be earned

kindness that is very close to being invisible

*our bumbling micro-gestures are deliberately and evidently inefficient and not “loving” enough to change anything. And despite that, we do them*⁸

or on the other side we have the breaking kind of kindness, the raging kindness of refusal and a care so deep that it cannot be contained

*a kindness that looks like breakage*⁹ a kindness that looks like breakage a kindness that looks like a dismembered city a kindness that looks like legible change in resisting the extractive status quo

and a standing alongside a standing with in witness

*born out of the absolute need to cherish the continually reborn other*¹⁰

*the rejuvenation of community spirit and collective activity*¹¹

*the placing of care in social life as central rather than incidental*¹²

*what is it to be held?*¹³

*my body seems to dematerialize and become air*¹⁴

there is nourishment in letting human time lapse to be in the arms of the weather

to experience time outside of calculated time
outside of human society

the time of a plant, the time of a stone

a decentered embrace in marginalized space

*By embracing in weaponized spaces and dancing on landfills, informal collectives might redistribute the weight of inequality. By welcoming the strangers, outcasts and refuse that inhabit the margins of our sense of self, they can extend into kinder communities.*¹⁵

she is

*embedding tenderness in public spaces/
against the grain*¹⁶

each article in this journal holds kindness in its hands to feel its weight to feel its potential
to test its boundaries its contradictions the spaces it offers and potentially simultaneously the spaces it shuts down

sometimes the imperative to hold to be kind to be generous prevents transformation when transformation is needed

in this journal we explore a kindness that goes further

Endnotes

- 1 David Antin. 2005. *I never knew what time it was*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 2 This visual approach to writing was achieved with the assistance of Jeffrey Holdaway, who created the visual layout and assisted with photography. The handdrawn cards I wrote and photographed as part of the writing process.
- 3 Rea Dennis. 2021. "Our body recognises kindness: Moving, nature and labours unacknowledged." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 251-270.
- 4 Laine Halpern Zisman. 2021. "Circus, In Crisis: Examining Care and Community in Circus Training." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 116-131.
- 5 Renée Newman. 2021. "Escape Velocity Walks the City: Kindness and intimacy in public space in the transgender and gender diverse teen experience." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 227-234.
- 6 Erik Ehn. 2021. "Still Small: Contemplation in action." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 74-98.
- 7 Katharine E. Low. 2021. "The potential of radical kindness as a methodology in applied theatre in arts and health." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 164-183.
- 8 Sarah Harper. 2021. "Tenderness Between Strangers: Intimate exchanges on banlieue wastelands." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 235-250.
- 9 Alys Longley. 2021. "The Other Country that You Are: A Performative Essay and Video Work exploring Radical Kindness in the Chilean Peoples Uprising of 2019." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 199-217.
- 10 Lisa Samuels. 2021. "Witness in kind." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 60-73.
- 11 Miriam Haughton. 2021. "As much graft as there is craft: Refusal, Value and the Affective Economy of the Irish Arts Sector." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 40-59.
- 12 Sue Mayo. 2021. "We Know...": Collective Care in Participatory Arts." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 184-198.
- 13 Halpern Zisman, 2021.
- 14 Dennis, 2021.
- 15 Astrid N. Korporaal. 2021. "Gathering Through the Image: A Performative Kind of Kinship." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 99-115.
- 16 Harper, 2021.
- 17 Kate Hunter. 2021. "Compassionate Irritability: Interdisciplinary collaboration as an act of kindness." 271-279.
- 18 Daniel Johnstone. 2021. "Ibsen's Phenomenology of Kindness: Self and Other in *The Wild Duck*." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 132-148.
- 19 Ehn, 2021.
- 20 Paula Guzzanti. 2021. "Documentary Screendance-making as a Practice of Kindness." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 218-226.
- 21 Sarah Burton. 2021. "Solidarity, now! Care, Collegiality, and Comprehending the Power Relations of "Academic Kindness" in the Neoliberal Academy." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 20-39.
- 22 Elena García-Martín. 2021. "Radical Kindness and Disability Identity on the Contemporary Spanish Stage." *Performance Paradigm 16*: 149-163.

Our bumbling micro-
gestures are deliberately
& evidently inefficient
& not "loving" enough
to change anything.
And despite that,
we do them.

ALYS LONGLEY is an interdisciplinary artist working with choreography and creative writing as expanded fields. She's an experienced interdisciplinary artist and has worked closely with scientists, geographers, poets, visual and fashion-based artists. Her books include *Radio Strainer* (2016) and *The Foreign Language of Motion* (2014). Her edited books include *Undisciplining Dance in Nine Movements and Eight Stumbles* (2018, Cambridge Scholars Press, with Carol Brown) and *Artistic Approaches to Cultural Mapping, Activating Imaginaries and Means of Knowing* (2018, Routledge, co-eds N. Duxbury and W. Garrett Petts). Alys is an Associate Professor in the Dance Studies Programme, University of Auckland.

© 2021 Alys Longley



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).