

Studio 5: Self-Made

Embodied Reflexivity: Exploring Ways of Being in Contact Improvisation

Despite the improvised nature of our practice, after 50 years of history, contact dancers have accumulated a wealth of techniques, norms, scripts and more broadly, ways of being. However, into our dance spaces we also bring identities and idiosyncrasies different than those of 50 years ago, shaped by a collective that feels increasingly complex, diverse and problematic. This self-directed session is an invitation to inquire our identities and beliefs as dancers of contact improvisation and how do they fit or not with the rest of our lives.

The session includes supportive invitations that attempt to remain non-directive and without an agenda. At the beginning, a movement meditation invites participants into a relaxed and looser sense of being and then to bring into mental and embodied awareness our many ways of being inside and outside the dancefloor. Thereafter, tentative prompts facilitate the emergence and exploration of alternative ways of perceiving our experience of moving and interacting bodies. Participants can interact with the prompts and materialise aspects of their experience so that others can find affordances to see new ways of being and moving through the diverse other.

Riccardo Volpato is an explorer of many ways of experiencing experience, fond of play, diversity and integration, rather than specialisation and mastery. Studious and contemplative, he completed degrees in social science, decision science and is currently pursuing a doctorate in psychology and computing science, studying how humans intimately relate with new technologies that do not neatly fit the categories of neither tools nor agents. Riccardo is also a long-term practitioner of many embodied ways of being, student of various meditation techniques for 15 years, qi gong practice with Sukhema aka Larry Butler and authentic movement. In the world of contact improvisation, Riccardo is part of The Glasgow Jam, a collective facilitating contact improvisation events in leafy Glasgow.