

# Making Space

Naam: Sarah Prescimone  
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Studenten nummer: 2221491  
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Begeleider: Dirk Dumon

### **Description of the setting-up of the project**

For this year the guerilla project changed name and became Making Space. During the first meeting with the choreographers and curators we discussed the why of this change. Making Space is a result of the wish of creating more interaction between audience and performer in the city. It has social and political value and this is also the aim for this year. To make space for dance in the city for the pedestrians to acknowledge. In our first meeting we shared our knowledge about the matter and our interests regarding this project. Soon we spoke about what we would like to do before hand, this in relation with preparatory workshop and the specific information for the students involved and the content of the workshop and we lightly discuss about the format and structure of the intensive week.

Together with Ulrika we analyzed the first prototype website, an useful tool for sharing information. We could review the new site, ask questions and give answers to make it more accessible and easier to navigate on.

### **Report on preparatory discussion**

On the 4th of october we had a second meeting to discuss deeply the structure of the workshop given from the five choreographers on the 5th of october. Heleen had an introduction and she suggested that the choreographer should formulate a research question to initiate the process. We also gathered information regarding the amount of dancers that will participate, what time we should meet and therefore we created the content of the workshop for the wednesday. The dancers of the second year would be 21 in total and they will be divided in groups for the total of 5 choreographer. In parallel with this project another choreographer will join the making space and work narrow with non-dancers on the same social and political aspect of making space.

The week of 17 to 22 of october would be a week of experimenting and sharing with the audience( the passengers). We also discuss the ability of performing state in space that a dancer's has to have, such as an acknowledgment of their surroundings, for this a straight awareness shift is needed into the created reality at that moment in space to initiate a movement, also the accessible focus that would lead as an invitation for the watchers. The people passing by are not responsible of beeing audience in a public space, so they have a free choise. So this relationship coexist together in one space even if leaded by different forces of energy.

Further, we shortly discuss about codes that are present in a public space and the do and the don't. This decision making takes the beginning directly from the surroundings and it's about bodily reading the situation and work with this dominant aspect of the situation and creating a relationship with each others. A question also arises if we need permission to dance freely in public spaces. Unfortunately we needs some documents and signatures but with a friendly smile and an open attitude you come quite far. Is also about creating a relationship with the non dancers body that surrounds the space. The most important is to have an human focus. beeing engage in the moment. Last but not least we prepared for the workshop and we separated the choreographers in 3 blocks, with students rotating from choreographer to choreographer. With all focusing and structuring the workshops on their own research theme.

## Workshop day

The day started with a short meeting of the choreographers and curators to discuss the development of the day and the studio's availability. After this we met with the student in studio 1 where we short introduced the project and ourselves. From 9 to 11 I followed as an observer the workshop of Vloeistof led by Anja and Yuri. They started with an inner reflection on the question of why do you perform on location and public space. After that we had a warming up game in different directions, soon we travel into a closer location to play the game of following the leader in this particular space, adding to this exercise was the awareness of the dominant aspect in that moment in time. Where the dancers was asked to be fully aware, 360 degrees of their own surroundings and the relation with sounds and proceedings. Soon the choreographer took the liberty to let the dancer become the watcher and observe the dancers in space with the aim to understand and read what the dancer was reading out of the space and translating into the own body. Around 11 we switched groups and we took a duo estafette run with the 100 hands. Where one dancer had to run to a particular in between space and have a clear relation with the space, as soon the first dancer arrived the other one departed. The ending point was koningsplein. There, Jjasper and Moira suggested to 'paint' the own body with the architectural material that one was perceiving. After they worked on the principle of proximity and the distance between 2 individuals. This evolved from duo to group awareness. Then we ended in a kind of site specific improvisation in groups where one group was researching and the other was observing.

Following the break, was the turn of the 3 students of Bach to deal with the 22 second year students. Eleni started with letting the dancer create by a 20 minutes research, their own "funnywalk" that could be inspired from the passengers and the architecture that the dancers perceived. In addition we followed the plan that we structured the day before and after a small spitting out of associations by the group that was gathered within the day. I gave the exercise to blend in and disappear in space. By defining the surrounding and the architecture structure as a body and to use the negative space (the space in between objects or bodies) and feeling this "empty" space with their own body by melting/ camouflaging their self into the space. The dancers took then the hiding element and the 'creating a negative space' within the body quite serious and was very nice to see how concentrated they were and how they researched on the architecture and bodily relation. The passenger were curious by this and a calm atmosphere was created. After the concept of Hiding. Ellis proposed the game Hide and seek. This game came up to me after researching the performer Lui bolin and his camouflaging in city. The game proposition was also used as a tool to having fun! but was mainly introduced to let the dancers see the space from new eyes and see possibility/ empty space to fit their body in. We then gave the group rules to play this game and explore their neighbourhood. Such as having a base, instead of count move, the seeker must search the hider with the use of the "funny walk", while the seeker found the hider he/she should take the same position before going back to the base. This game was a trial and error. Many questions arises about the structure and duration. It was very interesting to hear the different opinion of the dancers and choreographer on the matter. At 16.00 we decided to call it a day and to further discuss with the choreographer in general about the day. Where they give us advice on the preparatory question to enter the Making space week.

## **Concept description**

Overall we see and perceive another human body and because of this bodily exchanged information or experience we perceive our own body and our position in the world and space around us. But are we fully aware of the space between these bodies? Are we aware of the 'empty' space that circulate around us?

For Making space, I looked in the 'nothing' this emptiness and transparency was my source of inspiration. This space or 'Negative space' between the body itself. The relation, and the 'gap' between different bodies or 'the invisible bridge' hidden between objects.

I was inspired by the Chinese performance artist Liu Bolin and his political and social concerning concept of being invisible in public spaces. Liu Bolin is a master in camouflaging his body in different spaces. Also called: the invisible man.

I could relate this concept with the project of making space, and my thoughts on the invisible space that surround us.

In this project I wanted to mainly work on the empty space in one's body, the space around one's body and the spacial relation between one's and another body and our surroundings. I slowly realize that the space around our body and in relation with outside bodies was actually the so called negative space. For me became interesting to learn perceiving this in between energy and relatively, highlighting this in the process.

After studying negative space and the relation with the visual aspect of it, I came to the attempt of creating body illusions. The great thing about illusion is that they have camouflaging properties and 'depends how you look at it' characteristics.

So I exercise in connecting the extremities of the negative space, so therefore the distance between bodies became closer. The gap disappears and there was no more an evident open space.

But, after experimenting mainly on the body. I wanted to submerge in the social and political aspect that my Theme also could suggest.

So we researched on the space between the mover and the watchers, in this case the pedestrians or passengers.

I wanted to make space for first of all a silent dialogue. Then the attention was brought to the distance of words. The awareness on the distance in time and space when formulating a sentence. For example to directly and consciously being aware when you push the space button while typing.

This created calm situations and accessible atmosphere where the distance between performer and passenger became less during the week.

## Logbook

### Process and product description of the project

#### 17 October

On the first day of the Making Space Project, from 10 to 19.45 I worked with my duet in what I call the first phase of Negative space. I started with a small intro about my chosen theme. Then I threw them in the ocean of empty space. I asked them if they could tell me something that they did not know about themselves, this led to a philosophical conversation where I discovered more about them and the way of thinking. After that we worked on finding negative space inside the body, around the own body and around the body of someone else, This mainly in the studio, by first exploring and describing what they see or what they don't see! or do and not do, after in the others body. Here I explained the theory of proxemity and we worked intensively and constant on the concept of distance, where I also suggested to be invisible or to think that me, as an outsider was also invisible. Another exercise was based on constructing a position for example A, alone in space and connecting slowly to position B. The chosen movement quality was slow and intensive, later we worked on the same principle of being slow and aware by just blinking in front of each other. Later we Tried the same near the city hall, where different banners were exposed that had a clear black and white with tone, that suggested the negative space used. I asked them to integrate and copy the gesticulation and body position that they saw on the banners in the body by repeating while moving into another space and constantly change the distances. The focus was on how to gain awareness of the empty space in between people and their surroundings. After we went in front of the emmapassage where we connected with sound and the bodily response to it. Where we experimented with the same idea in relation with architectural surroundings and the distance

(the empty space) between people. Soon I noticed that the chemistry of the dancers was spectacular and that they were both very sensible, soft and flowing movers. At the beginning I thought that only two people in space would be very fragile, this was in the beginning a small issue. But magically this fragility disappeared and they expanded their energy through space and in reaction they became very strong. This inner security led them to take more risks and both started, while exploring the negative space of their surrounding and partner work to lift each other. Later we moved in the shopping street where we worked again on the blinking and going from position A to B. By doing this, even though there was a big space in between the 'empty' space of the dancers. The audience reacted by deviate from their path. It seems that the dancers by focusing on each other, created an energy wall that let the passengers to stop and look for a while or change the route. After that we experienced something very special by moving a couple of meters further. I asked the dancers to create an open inner attitude and reaching an hand out and wait for an handshake of the passengers. This surprisingly, was very positive and many people greeted and shook hands. Then we shifted the hand to up and down, there were not many reactions. The inner world of the dancers changed enormously by these tiny shift. After, we tried with the hug and again many people approached the duo and even a kiss on the cheek was shared. At last we moved at the appearing and disappearing little fountains. Where we tried and connected the

going slow motion from position A to B through the negative space of the fountain at the heuvel.

### **18 october**

We started with gathering for a short amount of time in the black studio. There I explained the aim for this day, with a short explanation on how to use a fotocamera. The following exercise was: placing one's body in a negative space and focusing and making pictures of empty spaces. In addition to this exercise I suggested the dancers to try to sneak as a paparazzi through the streets, to become invisible. After a good 30 minutes research we gathered back to the studio, where I asked the dancers to replicate the pictures that they've made with the objects that were there at our disposal, later to place their body inside this negative space that they created. The goal was to collect a greater understanding of constructing and deconstructing the own body inside an empty space. Soon we also came in a re-attempt of yesterday session to describe what you see while moving. This exercise was quite a challenge for the dancers, so I suggested again to use their imagination, this injection was even harder for them, so I gave them examples and soon they were comfortable seeing and imagining the empty space as a new body. This created a playful atmosphere and some quite funny moments that led to new discoveries. For Allison and Eva, was this concept hard to embody but after awhile they succeed. Then again, I tried to give them more awareness of the silent moment in between their sentences and to try to mute some words. This in a chain led to a new discovery and a more comfortable approach for them; the describing of the surroundings without sound, the empty sound.

After the break, we re-organised. I gave them another exercise. To write down their own story in relation with: negative space, invisibility and filling the empty space with their imaginations. Soon I gave them post-its and we hit the road to place these sentences in the empty space that they found while traveling through the street by being aware of the in-between space of the passengers. When putting the post-its they had to construct their body into the empty space as an object by choice and while moving to the next one deconstruct this previously created structure. The awareness of the two about the non-space increased and we explored new spaces to enlarge this awareness by proposing a new space. This bigger shift while traveling was a difficult point for both. But because of their curiosity we found a new comfortable spot at the Schouwburg Promenade and again the fountains at the Heuvel, which really suited with the concept of appearing and disappearing. Therefore I also had ideas for costumes, rain suits!

I also asked the dancers to bring the toothbrush for tomorrow to explore the internal negative space inside their mouth so perhaps the describing could go easier.

An extra task for during dinner was to try to disappear in a crowd unnoticed.

Regularly we found moments to discuss what was happening inside and outside their body. We analyzed and gave feedback to the discoveries we made. This, to improve the awareness and the concept we will be working for this week.

## **19 october**

After the feedback in the meeting of yesterday evening. I choose that for today we would immediately start outside with the most challenging task for the dancers; The describing of the surroundings. We immediately put our raincoats and we travelled to the schouwburg promenade with the exercise: Be aware of the distance to each others bodies of the passenger and the distance to the buildings/surrounding while describing what you see. One's we arrived to our destination I suggested to start with saying out loud the colours you see. This was the key to unlock them and because of this they started to take greater speed and confidence in this exercise. The describing became easier and easier, so I again added a new layer! to echoing the sounds that they were hearing by the empty descriptions .This day we also tried different pathways/routes and we discussed the dinner disappearance and we experienced the toothbrush discoveries inside the negative space of the other bodies.

After lunch, I wanted to include the passengers in our process and project. We put a sign up : 'Camouflage me'! with paint on the side. Here, the passenger could paint the dancers. After a good long while and some hesitations from the passengers some people, mostly children started to paint Eva and Allison. Adult began to interact as well. The dancers became a piece of street art and the passengers were included with open dialogues about what was going on.

Then, we did a recap of everything we did so far by following a structured route, such as; The handshake, the hug, the toothbrush and we compress this in a long and cold research at the heuvel fountains with painted raincoats. This day was quite mentally heavy for me and the dancers because of the many impressions of the passengers, the mood shifting weather and the mid-week-wednesday experience. So we went back to the studio to conclude the day with the routine of talking about the past day and to fill in the questionnaire that each day was waiting for them.

For dinner, I gave again the task to disappear in a crowd and then we went to see games of sympathy.

## **20 october**

Today we started at 12.30, I wanted to give the dancers more breathing time before the long day that was waiting for them. We started our day immediately outside again, it was raining. I asked maria to assist me while painting and fully camouflage the dancers in the shopping street space. This took quite a long time, were the dancers had to be very still and this was again without any doubt hard to maintain. After lunch we left the studio without our protective raincoats that were still wet from before. We bought rain boots and worked along the settled route with different assignments.

A new element was introduced. The bubbles. I choose for this Item to bring awareness about the created inner world bubble. We tried also different tasks, for example with the already existing gestures of the banners that we found on day one and to travel through the negative space of the bubble madness in different speeds, this led to the running through the passengers empty space aspect. This created evidently a reaction by the passengers. Which when they saw the bubbles also tried to avoid them and therefore also moving inside the negative space, the running brought more air to the narrow street and of course where the passengers surprised by this different energy. After putting all the pieces to the puzzle we did a run through. This took approximately 2 hours, because the choice to move slowly from empty space to empty space. So we were ready to eat!

After a fast dinner, we reproduced the last part at the heuvels-fountains for the crowdfunders.

They were really surprised and replied to Heleen with, This duet was a true present for us!! So after this very positive and suddisfing reaction on a late afternoon and still the nightwalk to come we tried to loop it back, to surprise and to find new possibility for ourselves. We rewinded the route that we set for the day and ended up at our original starting point, the Schouwburg promenade. This experience was surprisingly energizing for both dancers. They were fully committed to the exercises and were really open to the passenger which led to very surprising reactions and interactions with other groups participants. They fully emerged into space and they embodied the concept. I was very happy with this outcome and the passengers that even stalked us to see where the dancers were going to find themselves.

## **21 october**

On this day i wanted to try new routes, the dancers were also excited to find new possibility. So I introduced a new aspect, the puzzle and the hide and seek, the last from the workshop. The first an exercise from my past guerilla experience, that I wanted to share with them. We also explored the previous task more in depth and I asked them to fill the empty space with bubbles while puzzle the body into the empty space and later we watched the other groups.

Heleen asked us finally to perform the fountain part again before a film crew, we were surrounded by different crowds, and remarkable many positive meeting and reactions.

## **22 october**

The last day I asked the dancers to bring again black clothes, we wanted to be incognito. We met today at 10.00 and worked until 12.00. We brought the puzzle back. we left the toothbrush and the bubbles out and choose remarkably and in preference of the dancers again another route. This gave me a new idea for a new impulse. The espionage task, were the dancers had to follow the contour of the building and only walk inside the negative space. This looked quite suspicious for most passengers. We added the focus shift into an empty space which was less suspicious and more gentle and the "leave me behind" which was a transition from the handshakes and hugs to the fountains, where the dancers shifted levels while walking and hugging. We also left the camouflage clothing into a shop, so the dancers could disappear into the shop with the normal clothing and reappear as a part of the building, a fragment. At last we presented this new shortly developed first part.

The gentle and open attitude of Allison and Eva led to surprisingly kind and magical moment between the passengers and them. Many smiles and hopefully empty spaces that were filled with love! The feedback of the dancers was even tho it was an heavy week, they wanted to continue explore this concept.

### **Overall meetings notes:**

- Adapting with the space
- behaviour change/ Be instinctively
- How do you frame it? Which context?
- The border/territory of a person
- Destabilize the dancers to get more out of them
- A narrative starts to appear/Human relationship
- simplicity in interaction
- What to do when people stay?How to get the attention of people?
- Going back to the question, what do I want to cause?
- Go back to the first research question, answered it
- What do you want to say to the audience?
- What happened in that particular difficult moment?
- Why do people Stand? -identification
- Create a strategy to make people curious
- The cohexition in the same place
- People tell you a lot of information about behaviour
- What are the dancers busy with, wich are the rules?
- The material and language should be an extension of your theme
- What is the source, where does it come from- echo!
- Letting the passenger be part of the process!!
- Letting go of the performative skills, be more receptive as a dancer
- It's about taking a contrast in the streets
- that's it- simple human connections!
- showing the behaviour,what do you perceive as audience
- Try new entrances/approaches
- How to start something in a public space?
- Distance from the dancers/create more interaction
- People aspect a lot- People glue immediately a feeling on it
- Go back an answer the research question again and again from another perspective
- Change the dynamic of the space/what is your code?
- how do you establish a relation?

- What is the social political experience?
- You choose for a monumental space/pleasant shift of dimension
- Healing the city with hugs
- How do people respond? is it predictable?
- people always want to know what is going on, what is happening?
- people are not quite interested in art
- create a dialogue to instruct the passengers, who is in front of you ?-suggest

### **Learning points.**

It is good to formulate question about every aspect possible to prevent any surprise. Is very helpfull to regularly going back to your research questions.

it is good to be as specific or as confusionary as you want to be towards the dances regarding the task or the pedestrians. And to learn what could be the potential result of the experiment you are doing in that space with your chosen theme.

Also a focus point is on how you place the audience, where and what kind of audience do you want: passive-active-stationary-moving-non?. What is the aim, what is your desire to share, communicate in that particular space, what do you want the audience to see/experience realize from a social and political viewing point? what do you want to communicate and how specific do you want to be in your explanations for the passengers.

A good preparation is more than the half of the work. It is good to take sufficient (45 min break, to recover from the cold and outside impressions) The exploring and research time of bodies in space is extremely valuable through the week, it takes time, patience is the right key. to learn about the behavior of people around a dance project in space and to learn how to cope with many different kind of reactions you need to experiment!.

The variety is endless, the adaptation capacities and the surprise factor is around every corner and in every empty or full space. Working on long duration and intensively is very mind blowing for my discoveries and for the improvement of the research. It is an endless nutritious canal. It is encouraging for the result to try new pathways/routes. To stay in dialogue with the dancers and surrounding passengers. An open attitude is pleasant, accepting and easy to follow and comprehend!

Simplicity can be helpful to reach more audience, to let the passengers be affected and involved while performing or researching on the streets is the biggest part about learning about human behaviour.

**Pictures of the process:**

















## Questionnaire:

1. What was today's biggest challenge?
2. Which response did you get from your surroundings? Give examples:
3. Did you feel part of the surroundings? Why?
4. How was it to move the body in space today? Why?
5. Did you find the assignments clear? Explain:
6. What surprised you the most today?
7. Could you disappear in space?
8. Give 20 associative words about today:
9. Automatic writing about today(5min):

## Scan's examples:

**Making Space**

Questions:      Name: *Nilsen Svante*      Date: *20/10/16*

1. What was today's biggest challenge? *Actually today I didn't feel that was a big challenge, because everything came natural.*
2. Which response did you get from your surroundings? Give examples:
3. Did you feel part of the surroundings? Why? *Yes, we were the surroundings.*
4. How was it to move the body in space today? Why? *Today I felt relaxed and focus and for that reason was a good sensation inside the body and space was organic.*
5. Did you find the assignments clear? Explain: *Yes*;
6. What surprised you the most today? *The environment around us who make us being present 100% all the time.*

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9. Automatic writing about today (5min):  
 Today was really full and nice. Starting with the painting was a bit trying for the body but it worked out beautifully. Then going through the whole structure was a bit frustrating, I think mostly because I felt like thinking constantly about a thousand things.  
 Then there was the stress for the crowdfunding and it was frustrating waiting for them, and because of that I noticed that I should just perform to perform and not necessarily for an audience or whatsoever. Then doing the whole piece was amazing and so much fun. I'm really happy with the result.

10. Remarks/Thoughts/Something Else:  
 Thank you Sarah &

**Making Space**  
 Questions: Name: Eva Date: 09/10

1. What was today's biggest challenge?  
 Opening myself up in the morning, I could feel a big difference in myself in being open to myself and the surroundings.
2. Which response did you get from your surroundings? Give examples:  
 They were different in the afternoon especially I felt better reactions than yesterday but not all as good as get happy reactions from people who volunteered on painting the planet.
3. Did you feel part of the surroundings? Why?  
 I felt part of the buildings and objects but didn't feel as if I could blend in with the people or really become invisible.
4. How was it to move the body in space today? Why?  
 The morning was hard but throughout the day until the end of the day it improved.
5. Did you find the assignments clear? Explain:  
 Yes, I don't feel like we did a lot of new assignments.
6. What surprised you the most today?  
 How easy it can be to lose yourself in fun if you let go. I recognized it a bit when we were playing with the bubbles.

**Making Space**  
 Questions: Name: Eva Date: 17/10

1. What was today's biggest challenge?  
 When outside (inside) turning the switch of not performing / performing on in a little amount of time.
2. Which response did you get from your surroundings? Give examples:  
 Surprisingly nice ones, (positive)  
 1) people stayed to watch but also comments of people who don't understand what is happening, and some of these reactions can be quite rude. There was some thing wrong with us.
3. Did you feel part of the surroundings? Why?  
 No, I felt like we were in our own space and/or atmosphere or had created our own.
4. How was it to move the body in space today? Why?  
 It was good but I notice that I see an huge shift searching, also because of working with Allison, a dancer who I don't know really well yet.
5. Did you find the assignments clear? Explain:  
 Yes, it's nice that a lot is free for own interpretation.
6. What surprised you the most today?  
 Two things:  
 1) the amount of nice and positive reactions / comments.  
 2) the interaction and atmosphere between Allison and myself.

**Making Space**  
 Questions: Name: Date: 18-10

1. What was today's biggest challenge? Talking or describing what I see. While I'm moving on the street, I wanted to make sense.
2. Which response did you get from your surroundings? Give examples: I had a feeling that I was part of the surroundings.
3. Did you feel part of the surroundings? Why? Yes when I was inside and no when I was outside, because I felt less comfortable.
4. How was it to move the body in space today? Why? Was challenging because of the structure that we created based on the image from outside.
5. Did you find the assignments clear? Explain: Yes but not in the way that I setted because I had difficulties on the of speaking that made me feel unatural.
6. What surprised you the most today? Nothing I felt the same energy as the previous day.

### Making Space

Questions:

Name: Eva

Date: 18/10

1. What was today's biggest challenge?

The creating personas and/o. images to objects or constructions. To let go of the mind and let the fantasy ~~lead~~ / imagination lead.

2. Which response did you get from your surroundings? Give examples:

Very much more looking, I feel like I was not always as open to the public or surroundings as before.

3. Did you feel part of the surroundings? Why?

At times yes and others no. I feel like the change of weather has a big influence on me and the surroundings.

4. How was it to move the body in space today? Why?

I feel like through the day I was able to let go more of the mind and just let the body lead.

5. Did you find the assignments clear? Explain:

No, not everything. I think this had a lot to do with myself personally, I felt my mind often being tired today.

6. What surprised you the most today?

The amount and dynamic of dancing at the end of the day at the schouwburg and after that.