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https://www.bth.se/events/digital-urbanism-ett-symposium-om-digital-teknik/

Performance and Presentation
Reflecting on the Experience of the Self in the Smart City
Daniel Spikol and Jeannette Ginslov
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Abstract

There is little doubt that the internet has changed the world. Now comes the next revolution: when our things connect with each other. In a few years, it's predicted that 100 billion devices and gadgets will be communicating with each other. This evolution of IoT has largely been driven by developments in technology. Computing power and connectivity are becoming smaller, cheaper and more energy efficient, making it possible to connect and augment an increasing range of objects. However, the interaction between people in the landscape, computational sensors, and the systems that collect, analyze, and make sense and present back to us the people are highly complex.

In order to reflect and understand on what it means to be human in the world we share with our technologies that reduce our individuals to data points we investigate dance, technology and lived experience through embodied relational biofeedback and materials of the human and non-humankind. Our approach is develop performance by combining the design of technology through the use of self-reflexive and hermeneutic methodologies to collapse anthropocentric ways of seeing the dancing body, with ways of feeling whilst embodying biosensor technologies.

Info on Team

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Deep Flow: a tentacular worlding of dance, embodied biometry

and lived experience entwining relational biofeedback

of the human and non-humankind.

Jeannette Ginslov

Figure 1 Jeannette Ginslov performing Deep Flow. Image: Daniel Spikol

I'm currently a final year PhD student at London South Bank University using a Practice as Research methodology to explore a performative *worlding* of phenomenology, dance and biometry. My current research is entitled: *Deep Flow: a tentacular worlding* of dance, embodied biometry and lived experience, entwining relational biofeedback of the human and non-humankind.

Deep Flow is a meditation, fascia release and somatic dance method, that I have developed over the last three years, using an embodied heart rate monitor, to *cat's cradle* (Haraway 2016) or performatively "dwell" and focus on the pre-reflective phenomena and materials

that arise when in states of flow. *Cat's cradling* emphasises processes of "*thinking* as well as *making* practices, pedagogical practices and performances" as Haraway (2016) notes that

> "it matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties"

Dwelling, on the other hand is a co-constitution towards the world wherein we find ourselves experiencing *"*autonomously alongside entities within the world" (Heidegger (1972). *Dwelling* is used in *Deep Flow* to explore not only a belonging *in-the-world* of an artistic practice but is also a means to become familiar with it, at home in it, making present the pre-reflective and experiential embodiment *within-the-world* or *worlding* that my research presents to me.

The *Deep Flow* method is inspired by psychologist Mihaly Msikszentmihalyi who investigates states of mental flow and loss of ego, the somatic dance practice of choreographer Margret Sara Gudjonsdottir, who originated the *Full Drop* to explore fascia release and dance performance with my own history of meditation and somatic dance practice. I'm currently researching Jon Kabat-Zinn's meditative work. Zin is the creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society.

Deep Flow turns our awareness inward to the centre of the body, "listening," to the *felt-sense,* the pre-reflective, direct experiences and the experiential 'mores' on the fringes of lived experience as Gendlin (2003) states that "(w)e act from the bodily sense of each situation. Without this we would not know where we are or what we are doing" Gendlin (2003) as the lived body, is "characterised as the 'messenger' of the unsaid" (and) such understanding is thus 'alive' in its excess, in that the role of ongoing experience is never exhausted" Les Todres (2007). *Deep Flow* then is a means to reinstall a sense of trust in our own subjectivity, sensuous embodiment, lived experience and interfaces with the Digital Subject, human and nonhuman materials.

As an artistic practice using embodied biometry, *Deep Flow* also recognises the relations between higher heart rate variability, the actions of the parasympathetic nervous system and states of flow, as a relational biofeedback system to counteract the quantification of lived experience created by the Anthropocene and Capitalocene.

Finally, *Deep Flow* is a performative call for a "subjective turn" to prize open the **"black boxes"** of biomedical technology. The biosensor instruments of biomedical technology are "made invisible by their own success" running efficiently with users focusing only on quantified data, "its inputs and outputs and not on its internal complexity" (Latour 1999). "Black Boxing" does not foreground experiential and pre-reflective embodied experiences of the user and produce data that inform, form and shape the Quantified Self. By opening the "Black Boxes" of technology one is able to *cat's cradle* the Chthuluscene back into the lived experience of embodying biosensor technology. Here one attempts to *stay with trouble* (Haraway 2016), to unsettle the experiences of the *Quantified Self,* digital identifiers and data profiling, and as a means to re-insert the *Qualified Self* between the inputs and outputs, the intrusions and extrusions, used in biometry, data harvesting and Metric Culture.
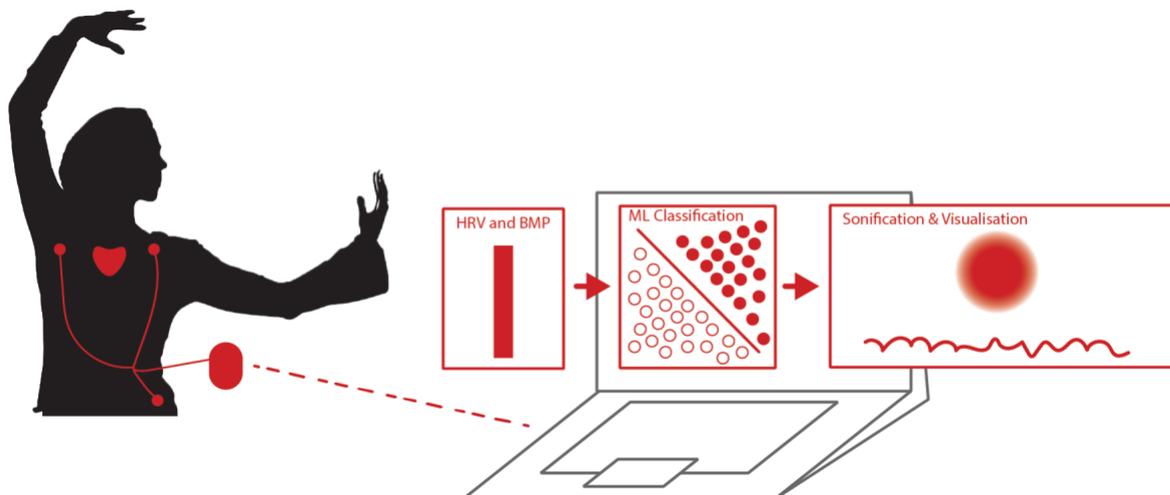

Figure 2: Image by Daniel Spikol

Since 2018 I have been collaborating and developing with Daniel Spikol, a prototype heart rate monitor using Bitalino that includes "open signal biosensors, bioelectronics, biomedical equipment and DiY hardware & software for biomedical engineering and biotechnology"

[https://bitalino.com/en/] and **Wekinator** that is a free, open source software originally created in 2009 by Rebecca Fiebrink. It allows anyone to use machine learning to build new musical instruments, gestural game controllers, computer vision or computer listening systems, and more.
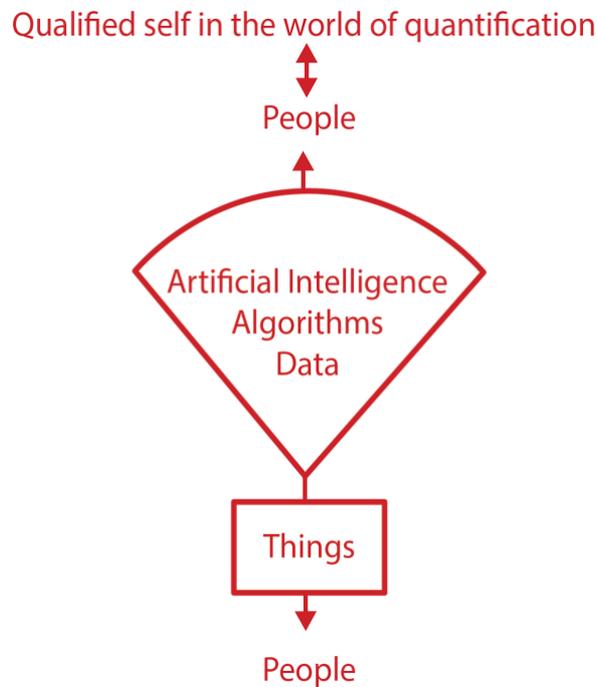
Qualified self in the world of quantification

People

Artificial Intelligence
Algorithms
Data

Things

People

Figure 3: Image by Daniel Spikol

Our aim is to develop performance by combining the design of technology, by re-inserting the qualified self through the use of self-reflexive and hermeneutic methodologies to collapse anthropocentric ways of seeing the dancing body, with ways of feeling whilst embodying biosensor technologies.