

Case Study
Sophia Lycouris
12th March 2004

Tape 1

1:27

AP

It's the 12th of March, Friday and Caroline and I are in London speaking with Sophia Lycouris today so thank you very much... this is the first tape of our interview for the database. We've had a discussion informally about the structure of that and are you happy with it to go on as we've discussed.

SL

Ah, yes, of course, yea.

AP

Good. So we talked a little bit about, perhaps before going into the formal questions, perhaps you wanted to just give a very brief overview of... what you do and where you're located the various spaces around that.

2:02

SL

OK... At the moment, because this changes with time and through time and, you know, if I had answered this question a year ago, perhaps I would have said something slightly different and same would happen next year... but at the minute I want to... focus my attention around this idea of inter-disciplinary choreography and that's what my... my actual title is at university... the kind of readership that I was awarded was a reader in choreography and that comes... is a continuation of the research that I did with the support of the AHRB and my fellowship and XXXX from that... and basically... what I set myself up to... explore in this idea of inter-disciplinary choreography... is how far I can extend choreographic practices to other media so that it still is choreography... and I take as a starting point... one of the possible definitions that one could use... that it is the manipulation of dynamics in space and time... normally and traditionally this idea was being applied to the dancing body... dancers... and to... theatre places... stages... but... it seems to me that one can apply... this process, this mechanism, in other spaces and in other media... and I have... as part of my... the work that I've done for... during my fellowship, my AHRB fellowship... I sort of tried to disconnect the idea of body and movement, which initially was part of the idea of choreography, so it's like... like a continuum. You have a body and movement and one can have different combinations... along the spectrum. So these allows me to work with video images, sounds... as choreographic material, which don't necessarily have images of bodies... so it's

not like... filming dancers, but using the video image as a dynamic material that can be manipulated choreographically... despite the fact that there might not be any... bodies, like, live bodies, or dancers, in them... and really important part of this is the idea of XXXX because in order to be able to work in this way, I have to... investigate and engage with practices from other... art forms or from other disciplines. I did start working with things like music, structures... also the film concepts... and I eventually... I was... more and more concentrating on the notion of space... and now I'm very interested in architectural principles, and this affects the overall definition of what it is that I'm doing, I mean I... the name that I give to my work at this present time is called XXXX Environments, so it's like the notion of space and a space that includes and assumes the viewer or the user, and it tends to be – although this is not exclusive – it tends to be site-specific and every-day XXXX spaces, although I have done, and still doing things that could happen in theatre stage, and XXXX in gallery spaces. So... yea, I think that's more or less... I don't know if it's clear...

6:29

AP

That's very clear. It sounds in some ways, because obviously the first formal question is the sense of where your research impulses are located, but it sounds to a certain extent that you've addressed that you've addressed those, but does that question make you think of other things.

6:41

SL

Ah, yes.

AP

OK.

SL

And I've got some notes here...

AP

Great! As soon as we start talking about "research" XXXX!

6:50

SL

OK! I have brought here... two points which was like the way which I sort of understood this question when I read it... the... the impulse for research, those impulses, they come from... from two... two different places which sometimes meet, other times they sort of... continue on their own and they kind of meet indirectly in my work. One is through my making process as an artist, like I do things and... as I do something I feel a need to do something more, so that's... that's like a research impulse, and it kind of generate, kind of... starts from the material itself and the artist process... And the second...starting point is in

relation to... conceptual frameworks of how to think about things which has a lot to do with my... function as an academic and my knowledge, my interaction with the institution and the material... in this country because I am Greek, I come from a very different place, a place where... the conceptual engagement in terms of questioning processes and ideas I wasn't so tired of the academic institution environment... in Greece, is more part of an alternative progressive artist community, so... this kind of practice is part of my artistic practice as a Greek artist but in this context in the... the British context, the university... offers support in this kind of work... so... my practice is conceptual to a large extent... and this is something that can be developed more in an institutional environment PROVIDED that... the rules and the... limitations of the institution don't go against this kind of development so... for example... issues about the relationship between the former audience is something that I was able to develop more through engaging more with... debates, critical debates and... teaching and all the issues that are very relevant to my... participation in an institutional environment... Yea, that's...

9:43

AP

That leads on quite nicely to the second question, really, which is about those institutional contacts.

SL

Alright, OK.

AP

I mean, we talk about research questions...

SL

Yea, yea...

AP

... a little bit in more detail later on...

SL

Yea, yea...

AP

... but this question of how appropriate...

SL

OK, OK

AP

... is that institutional demand...

10:00

OK. I wrote here that I generally find this helpful! And that's why I'm doing it, otherwise I wouldn't do it! I would just... you know, it doesn't... I'm someone that can't... if I have too much conflict and something... doesn't work, I can't do it, no matter what the salary was going to be I would have to find another solution so the reason why I'm doing it is because at the moment the positive... elements are much more than the negative ones, so therefore I feel I am... doing things in... in... you know, in a positive and creative way. I don't know how long... will that... will last but that's how I feel at the moment. So... as I said before... part of my practice is sort of conceptual critical, it has to do with articulating questions of those kinds and... and trying to respond, to engage with these questions... This was always part of my artistic practice and, as I said, in the... by participating in the British academic community I find more support to develop this more. An example of this... when I applied for my AHRB fellowship... it was... it was really easy to put together the application, I mean I thought I wasn't going to get it, but I did get it in the end, because I thought I hadn't put enough work in that, so this application was a collection of different texts that I had... put together in relation to my work for the by-process of a XXXX event that we had... and I used this... description and these... justifications for my work the... research imperatives of the various projects. I used them as they were in that document for my application to the AHRB... however these texts, before they became part of the XXXX documents, they were part of my final applications to the London Arts, except that they were in a slightly less academic language, but the ideas were the same... and it's true that a few times in my professional path, like when I approach, like a venue manager or something, they just go... that my language is a bit too heavy, but that's not because I come from institutions, because that was the way I was always functioning, in that field. So this is... this is a good example for me of how, you know, these articulations, these... descriptions of what I was doing, they found their way from the professional practice into the institutional... vocabulary and they became very useful to me... since I got this fellowship again... 'cause I used them to apply and then I got a fellowship for three years, so... yes, it is indeed very helpful for these general reasons but also because in my... in my institution in particular I get a lot from interaction from my colleagues, through the teaching, through all the conversations that we do ABOUT the teaching in relation to our practice. I learned a lot of things which are directly relevant to my practice, so... and to a certain extent I miss a little bit my teaching when I had my AHRB XXXX regular... I mean I was doing some teaching but not enough so, after three years of working for my fellowship I felt it was time... to go back to a little bit more teaching!

14:06

AP

Well we'll talk a little bit in more detail about pedagogy, I think, a little bit later. So it's interesting how... what you're doing can work through a range of different contexts so... if we talk a little bit about the specifics of the funding context,

'cause that's the next question that you have on the list and just... if you could talk about how you've been funded over the past.

14:29

SL

Alright. OK... I started... if I try to trace my... my career in the UK, I started by using the structures that the system has for emerging artists which wasn't cash but it was, you know, support XXXX kind, like XXXX spaces, platforms, XXXX and all that. So I used this in combination... with the research budgets of the university... to do little things which helped me to...to create a profile...and to have a history of certain things that I did both in the UK and abroad by going to conferences most of the time and the university, they paid my expenses, but then I went to conferences to present projects rather than read papers so... that was helpful because I did get all the expenses to go anywhere that I liked...and to create the sort of international profile and to get this experience which was necessary for my... for the development of my work, from a professional point of view... And then once I got to that stage I think... yes, the first...I got a grant from London Arts, a research and development grant from London Arts initially... then I got my AHRB fellowship, and from then on I started getting grants from the Arts Council...and from East England Arts and from places so...it's a combination of these two. And I keep doing the same now, I'm trying to keep my... connection with XXXX like I regularly apply for much of the funding to use for my research budget for my projects and I keep applying to the normal funding bodies... the Arts Council and... and all that, but I have started thinking that it's time to expand a little bit and go more in kind of sponsorship and industry and collaboration with business because I think that this is where the future is basically because the grants from the... the... the sort of regular funding bodies like Arts Council and all that, sometimes they're so small and it takes such a long time to put together these applications that it's not worthwhile in the end... so... but I haven't done this yet, but that's what my plan is.

17:20

AP

And so is it that... each project will have a different source of funding or do different sources of funding contribute to the same project.

17:27

SL

... usually I need more than one... source of funding for... per project... but also I do have some regular support like for example the Jerwood Space... in London... I never really see funding like in terms of cash but... they have supported every single project that I did with rehearsal space so... this is a sort of... thread... a constant support that applies to all my projects and I... I have the feeling that if I continue working in the way that I work, which is interesting for them, I will keep having this... when I need to... rehearsals or something in London. (Looks through her notes) Yea... that's about... the funding.

18:27

AP

OK. I wanted to move on to... I mean the next question on the list I suppose kind of comes in, it doesn't tie directly to this question of funding, but...I suppose you may as well ask it in this... in this... under this context heading, and you might want to talk about... structures as well, and the sense of, you know, how you see what you see are the positive benefits of your practice as research to a wider practice-as-research community.

18:54

SL

Alright. OK. 'Cause I wasn't sure what that question meant!

AP

Well I think that's... it's very much up to people to define, 'cause obviously you... there's a spectrum of just saying "Well, through my existence and working through a different... through different practices, that is a benefit" I mean one of the areas... I suppose it does feed on from the funding issue because I think SOME practitioner-researchers compartmentalise what they do so that things that are... put forward for research are funded by AHRB, and other people will keep the sort of Arts Council things as separate, but other practitioners don't, so it's... from a sort of infrastructural point of view, THAT's really interesting to look at how different people negotiate that funding landscape so... how is the work that you do of a benefit to their community at large?

19:43

SL

OK. OK... Well, here, because there are some other questions later on about the... something similar, 'cause I had thought about the difference between the wider audience and the... the specialist like the... the... the academics and... but in that case... the practice-as-research community I assume it's kind of... academics...I mean it's difficult for me to... to assess how... how... how far it goes really, it's a very subjective...feeling... but I... I do find that people are engaged with... what I do in... informal context like...conversations in... restaurants or... or pubs or something! ... as well as in more formal...presentations in... in conferences and...debates... I mean they do... seem to ask... relevant questions, I mean that's how I can assess whether they are engaged or not, they do seem to... ask relevant questions and to...invite me to participate in panels and to present... in conferences, so that is...an indication that what I do is... being considered useful and relevant to the community... as a whole... but for me as well it's very useful to be in this environment because then I can test my ideas which like...an obvious thing, like to... to sort of...see which bits are being understood and which aren't ... so I guess there is an exchange...

process...but I... I wouldn't be able to sort of say, in a very sort of precise way how beneficial my work is to the community ...

22:10

AP

I mean that's...

SL

...the practice-as-research... community, it would be difficult for me to sort of...describe that.

22:18

AP

Yes, it's a question... I suppose it's that question of how you're seeing elements of what you do feeding to the, sort of, the discourse, around practice as research. I mean some people have identified their focus on the notion of embodied knowledges and how that's feeding through... on an institutional level.

22:39

SL

Right. OK... In my own institution you would... or... because that's...

AP

Both AND.

SL

Yea. yea...

AP

Well I mean it might be interesting to... to look at how your own institution differs from an institutional... context.

22:54

SL

OK... I mean I... I feel that my... I mean I don't know whether people really... have absorbed or c-... you know... completely the things that I am suggesting... but I think that I have a full evidence that they appreciate what...what I do because... I applied for readership and they just gave me the re-... just like that...all the basis of all these things are XXXX research now and the work that I've done during my fellowship, so this is a sort of formal recognition...and they do... I've got a lot of responsibility for post-graduate development... and they...I've got this fascination for the inter-disciplinary project and collaboration

with, kind of, scientists and engineers and all that, and they DO listen to what I say... also... many colleagues have recognised...how much I can go in the kind of inter-disciplinary... way... and I've got things like colleagues say "How useful it would've been if..." I was supervising seven students from the Fine Arts course, for example... that... they think that I would be... I could be really... useful as a supervisor on that course as well, which for me it's... it IS a good evidence that they have absorbed what it is that I'm doing and where I'm going, that my practice about the body and the space and... it... it can be applied to other... disciplines if we call them that... another discipline. Now the general... the more wider... context... I'm not sure... I'm not!

24:51

AP

No, I mean I know... I think, you know, that some of these questions are... are difficult to... to work through and some are more relevant to... to people than others are, but that's also part of the process of... of doing it.

25:03

SL

I mean, you know if we go... 'cause I am... I am part of the front... groups and one of these groups... it... sort of new technologies... group which is not an exclusively academic one, the sort of Dance and Technology... group which I don't... I don't like this expression because this notion of "dance" is very... restrictive? But never mind this is how the... the group is called and it is an international group and it's not... it's primarily... professional practice group rather than... an academic context but some of the people who are part of this group, they... have connections with academic institutions in the UK and also it's partly academic as well and... I have noticed... my ideas sort of being processed in this group in... in... in a positive way and people taking them on board and...setting things up... to support me or to... to create frameworks that work like mine can be supported, so I kind of assume that theyyyy... learn something from that, that they have learned something from that... and I see increasingly more... support like inviting me to... do things...like I was part of a... lab called the Digi-Lounge... hosted by Essex Dance which is a professional organisation for support of... dance in East England, but the lab was being coordinated by Scott de la Hunta who is an academic as well so there was a lot of...development about the concepts and the structures and... I had good discussions with Scott which is something that is been happening for some time now and it kind of...develops... more and more.

27:14

AP

OK.

SL
OK?

AP

... The next question is that question about the relationship between you thinking about the practice and the interview context and quite a few people who we've spoken to have put this question quite close to the beginning.

SL
OK.

AP

I'm... I mean going back to the original design of this, I had... I've deliberately had it at the end because I wanted it as a point to revisit so if you're happy with us saving that 'til the end...

27:41

SL
OK. Alright. OK.

AP

... I... just 'cause it's quite useful to think about after the course of the interview.

SL
OK! Alright!

AP

... The next section is... I should've said that that was... that was the section on context. This next section you've headed "Method and Process"... and so this is where we get into the specifics of what are your questions now. And it might be interesting because obviously you finished with the AHRB creative fellowship, but it might be interesting also to talk also about what your research questions were... THERE... and what you're doing now in terms of... so there's a point of comparison.

28:18

SL
OK. OK... As I said the... my AHRB fellowship was dealing with the idea of inter-disciplinary choreography practice-based research and inter-disciplinary choreography... the... spectrum between body and movement... all these things were part of my title for this application to the AHRB. The Difference, and I'm still doing the same thing... the only essential difference is that... at the time before... before I started working... for this fellowship... my ideal of inter-disciplinarity was limited to, sort of, engagement interaction with other art forms, but through the

fellowship it became... obvious that I was going into areas that were not necessarily artistic forms and also that I was focussing to one element, so... so what happened was that I realised that my research is about space, the use of space, more than anything else... and because space has to do with architecture... I should've found myself interacting with architectural concepts and ideas... then I wasn't anymore in some interaction with another art form, and while I can say that architecture is an art form, you know this is like... philosophical conversation whether architecture is an art form or not... because not strictly... you know, it's not music, painting or... film or something like that... so this is really the difference that in terms of the inter-disciplinary element I opened up to other areas but in terms of the area of choreography I actually focussed on the idea of space more than anything else... Now some additional parts that have to do with what are my research questions and the... the... the focus that I have... There is this idea of composition and compositional systems so this idea of inter-disciplinarity, I'm always trying to understand what it is that keeps something together, which is like a project, piece of work, it's a composition of some kind, so what are the rules of keeping, of holding the thing... together as one project. So that connects with... models of composition which are... it's a constantly interesting area for me how... hybrid compositions occur, like, using different elements... choreography is... traditional choreography is a form of composition with these given elements, but if one keeps mixing the elements of composition, like I'm using sound with movement then they are part of one system, how does this work, so that's another research question that I was investigating through my AHRB... during my... the work that I've done for the AHRB fellowship and I'm still interested in that... Another thing is the relationship between... the work with the project and the viewer or the user... And another one which is... sounds a little bit secondary... but it's not, in fact, is the... the difference between... the boundary between what is considered live and non-live... and it's interesting even in terms of the... the discussion about research outcomes in the research units and all that... the performance, what is performance and what is visual art and... that for me is very interesting because I think that the idea of "the live" is not necessarily an issue of having a live performer or something, it's like... the liveness of the event and what XXXX so, they're interested in where something stops being live, or is live, is another... research question, and... and, uhm, yea...

33:10

AP

And is there a formal process by which you devise those research questions? Because they're more around, sort of, areas for exploration, obviously some people respond to institutional demands for questions in different ways, and some people come up with very defined questions, some people with broad areas for exploration.

33:34

SL

...I think it is a mixture of different things. I do have questions that... occur, just like that, because... because I'm thinking about something, because I saw something somebody else did, because I did something and it didn't work in a way, it worked in another way, and I XXXX these questions... but also occasionally I have to write things for my institution, for the different reports, or I have to... come up with... teaching materials or... I even have to come up with promotional materials...or write leaflets... you know, all these range of things, so sometimes... the precise articulation of a question happens to be responding to a task like this... as well, like whether I'm going to have to write a report about my research or something... every, I don't know... a quarterly report, I can't remember when we do things like that, or... when I have to write a funding application and I have to say in words, in text, what it is that I am applying for. Sometimes the research question becomes clearer... in my head through these processes... And of course, if I have to present that in an institutional environment, I make sure I use that language. If... I have to use it somewhere else, I make sure I don't use that language because then people will sort of... it will alienate people, so...I... play this little... game but it's essentially it's the same thing, being... told... in different languages, and I think I am more successful with institutional language rather than the more, sort of, every-day language... because I'm a foreigner and you know these things... my English is the English that I learned in universities so, that's my... my normal English for me so I have to put more effort to sort of make it... casual... language.

35:51

AP

OK. And that actually takes us quite nicely into the next question which is about how your practices engage with research epistemology. So it's really that... in a way it touches on the issue of the languages of the academy through which you speak, so how what you do feeds into the sense of constructing knowledges, research knowledges.

36:12

SL

OK...OK... I did have... my own question here , saying that I wasn't sure what "research epistemologies"... means...

AP

Feel free to problematize the notion of epistemology as well.

SL

OK, OK... I mean...my own assumption, you know, from the kind of general... sense of philosophy which is not at all... precise, you know... epistemology is a way of knowing...a method, a theory of knowing... so therefore research epistemology for me is ways of... knowing how to do research? Or ways of doing

research... therefore... sort of, methodology... it kind of relates to methodology... So... my... what I've written down here about this... is that the... the... the skill... or this issue of research epistemology... has to do with a skill of... structuring a process and... scaling... plan it... in space and time... so that things happen practically... and also in the appropriate order and without prescribing too much, so there are all these elements have to be part of... this... proc-... this methodology and... that's what I am trying to find, this kind of methodologies that are going to be effective in relation to all of these things so that something happens... practically 'cause every project... is like a practical project, there are things that have to materialise somehow and... stages that have happened in a particular order, 'cause otherwise... the project will not benefit if things happen in the wrong order. But also a process that is quite open so that you can sort of take things on as... as you go along... so that's what I am trying... to... explore and then... to communicate to... to the community and... mainly I'm trying... to... use this in my PhD supervision, because it's all of this... practice-based research projects and all that... and the fact that I am responsible for a number of projects like this makes me... be a little bit more thorough than I would have been if I were just doing it for my own purpose which sort of ... yea, 'cause otherwise I might have been a little bit more superficial, but really feeling responsible for the students and that we have to go really deeply into that, so I benefit indirectly from trying to respond to the different questions and problems that the students have.

39:52

AP

'Cause that question as well is... can be about that sense of... how your specific practice as research can raise issues about the general sense of research methods 'cause... yes, I mean epistemology to my mind is thinking about formal structures of knowledge so, how... how is the way you work... the way that you work feed into that sense... more general sense of research within the academy 'cause that's one of the issues around practice as research is that it problematizes research full stop, so...

40:26

SL

Ehm... I'm not sure...

AP

I mean the way in which you describe, the way in which you go about your work, do you see that as feeding into... perhaps broader practices within the academy.

40:42

SL

I... I see it feeding... you know, the immediate example is the work of the students, the undergraduate students... and the PhD students and... as I say, because it's not... it's not a one-way process, that's the thing is... it doesn't come

from me...to those places... it's an interaction between the space and the place I am with my own work and what happens with these particular students, whether they are undergraduates or postgraduates, so... it's not... it's not really feeding, it's kind of interacting in a... in a very complex process where some that I take it from that and I give it back in a different way... is a more effective way of... of describing that, it just doesn't feed by itself and... just my stuff as if... I mean because it's not coming from somewhere else, that's what I'm saying, it's like all interconnected, so it would feed into that in one way if my work was coming from somewhere else, but it doesn't come from somewhere else, it's kind of connected with the process...

AP

Right.

SL

... the institutional process...in terms of the critical aspect of it and not the bureaucratic, because sometimes... there is this... separation of the bureaucratic aspect of the institution and the critical, the creative... I am luckily more connected with the critical... it's a coincidence you know, it's like I am in a place where I'm not... squashed, you know, by too much bureaucracy, so therefore I feel free to do all the things that I want to... and... to not think about the negative ones.

42:44

AP

OK. This takes us... the next question is... just trying to think of ways in which to link it, but I won't bother trying to link it into it... although I suppose it does ...it does link into the sense of research knowledges and the formalisation of research knowledges because it's the question around... networks of citation and if...

SL

Yea, that's what I didn't know what it means .

AP

Trying to think of networks of citation in a way to broaden out, 'cause obviously in traditional critical theoretical writing practices...

SL

Yea, OK, we have the citations.

AP

... we have inter-textual references and citations...how is that working within practice as research if we're getting beyond... I mean we'll be getting on to the question of documentation a bit later, but if we're talking about those... exactly those engagements with undergraduates, postgraduates, colleagues... and also your sense of what you've done in the past and what you have planned for the

future and how...are you able to see a way of, I suppose, of mapping those interconnections. I suppose it's a way of... of talking a bit more about problematizing that sense of feeding into which is quite an operational, unidirectional thing and that notion of... of webs of interaction, again.

43:47

SL

OK... Hmmmmm...

AP

Has it been something that you've... thought about in terms of how to... in a way, I suppose document trace-make-visible those networks of citation, yea, your... influence.

44:16

SL

I don't... I mean I haven't... before I saw this question, I had never thought about this process, kind of, circulation I guess, of... concepts and approaches and... now, I hadn't... I've got some... notes... here... I think... I mean, there are a few things... there isn't very much I can say but... for example the... the regional Parip group, the Midlands group of...which I am a member... I quite enjoy being there because there is some sort of history and some sort of... communality of what... you are creating... kind of, defining, are communality, in that group... and that happened quite... organically, so I guess it is a manifestation of the process, kind of a network of things kind of circulating... by themselves, sort of organically, rather than people sort of imposing definitions and frameworks of things... I mean I... I feel that we share their... this idea of the... artist academic, like a group of people who are... part of institutional environments because that is the work that they do as artists, I really find that I've got this communality with these people...and I was... the first one who mentioned that... because I was thinking of myself as such, but then I felt that the others are the same, and I did say "I think this is what we..." sort of "...do" and... this was a little bit of the... the points that we wanted to discuss in our session in the last conference in Bristol, as a group. So that's one...idea of "network", of networking but... I see... I'm not sure that I can find other examples of that, I'm not... I'm not sure.

47:18

AP

Well I think it's that issue of... you know, communities of practitioner-scholars, practitioner-researchers, whate-...however you want to term it making work and referencing each other and cultural expressions around them, which of course when you're... when you're working in terms of peer review to journal articles, that becomes... that... there's that sense of visibility within that. Within other kinds of practices, there isn't that visibility, but it's interesting that you raised the issue of the local groups because there's a sense of... a semi-formal structure that allows, perhaps, an acknowledgement of those communications, somehow.

47:56

SL

I mean I... I feel... I mean I haven't... I haven't got other connections and I don't feel... it's perhaps... that we need more networking, or I need to be more XXXX, so you know, if like I'm sitting here XXXX do something... but perhaps I haven't got to that stage to be able to refer to other people's work sort of regularly because I'm not participating enough to... debates or meetings or... conferences... but of course it's not because I don't want to...

AP

Yea.

SL

...it's a matter of time as well and how...many things one can fit in-... into the day, but I think I'm actually behind in terms of that now that I understand...

48:45

AP

But of course there's also people who've experienced your work who are taking that... in the sense of bodies of knowledge, people who have been involved with you, whether that's at a, sort of, supervisory... level or whether it's audience members and how... how they're taking... through those kinds of knowledges.

49:02

SL

Yes... I mean that's, to be honest, that's what I'm more interested in... to sort of get my... research and my work to a wider audience... and perhaps I'll talk about that a bit later on in terms of the knowledges and everything...it has to do more with corporeal... experiences and all that and so... I'm really interested in a wider audience experiencing that rather than the academic community... And perhaps that's why... I am not... it's not my...I mean I try to go to as much as I can to... academic meetings but... it wouldn't be my first priority if... if I had to choose between ten different things, I would try to work for something that would be represented to a wider audience, I think.

50:01

AP

OK. I'll move on to the next... couple of questions which... which are XXXX so it's really that sense of, you know, what is... what are your devising actuation processes and how does that relate to the broader context in which you work so that, in terms of your specific... performance practices, how they relate to other things that you do.

50:21

SL

...OK. I've got this note here... which says "observe", think" and "make"... these three things but they are not the same in this order at all and they are in different orders and... different percentages of each of these things and when I say "observe" I say observe in my own...stuff and what I do but also other people's... work and thinking about my own stuff and other people's work and making... my making this... engagement with my materials... that kind of...accelerates, actuates... actuates the... the process, like... if I'm working on a project... another one might come out of that... moment, because something happened in... in... in what I was doing which I wasn't expecting and... that initiates something else, not necessarily at this point but it... it's an available at a certain point which I pick up... up... another point in time... Now... oh...how this relates to broader contexts...

51:51

AP

It's really... it's a question about relating your performances practices, really, with writing practices and teaching practices, I mean that's kind of, I suppose, the sub-text of that is those... that devising process, how...how does that map onto other things.

52:04

SL

... It... it... it is very directly connected with my teaching. That's... quite straightforward and... constant that it... it feeds into my... my teaching directly... now... and... and that happens because I'm fortunate to have a position in an institution where... I don't have to teach things that are not related to my research because people do have to do that in other places, you have to teach modules that are completely unrelated to what they're interested in but...that doesn't happen to me, so everything that I do is kind of... integrated around these basic issues so... it's very easy to... to feed my experience in my... my new... whatever I find, in the teaching, because it's there... waiting for... for new content... Now, in terms of the writing...this is a bit of a...obscure area because I do not... I find it very difficult to express myself through writing, I mean this is a... strange thing to say 'cause... I... wrote a PhD and, you know, I write papers but... I do all these things because I feel I have to, and I try doing them as little as possible. In a... in a... I know that there's some sort of laziness there as well which has to do with... fighting with the conventions and trying to find a different kind of writing... which I know that I can do that, to sort of... write in a way that is more creative and more performative and... rather than the strict academic... but the XXXX to sort of push this a bit more so I do write things when I... absolutely have to write... something and... most of the times I don't have enough time to push this so that it becomes something that I enjoy more, because I do it at the last minute and... only when it is absolutely necessary... then it just... I just do it... really quickly, so I never...develop it XXXX XXXX vicious circle, basically and... if I can have a choice of the... mode of dissemination, I will not write a

paper... I would just do...anything else apart from writing a paper... and... I will not read a paper. I mean, you know...even if... even in conferences where they ask you to submit the paper and they, before the conference, and they have the proceedings, I end up just...talking through a kind of XXXX in a different way, because I can't read papers in conferences , I don't see the... the purpose of that, 'cause people can read them if you have it there so... I will always look for a different way of disseminating a thing, rather than a paper or reading a paper.

AP

55:37

OK. The next question is... is the sense of how... how you... develop, I suppose, the rationale for the process and the evaluation of those practices that you're engaged in.

55:53

SL

OK...I wrote here...this I find difficult ...and... then I thought that this is about methodology again...and methodology emerges from... responding to research questions... in an informed way... taking account of the...the materials, media, tools which are being used, and also taking account of the various contexts like... the... the space-time, the social context, historical political... disciplinary... context... so...the... for me... the rationale... I can't go any further than... trying to devise a type of methodology... a type for me, like that would... 'cause the rationale for me is the justification, the thing that justifies... so if the methodology fine, for me, then I feel happy with it... then I don't need another justification... but perhaps... I do... that's where I... my own contribution stops...then... in relation to...that's for the process, now in terms of the production... to my opinion production has more to do with...professional practice... it's the... the sort of the delivery, the quality of the work...or even... in XXXX commercial practice like how do I make something well so that I can sell it, because if I can't sell it... then I'm not distributing anything, I'm not... disseminating anything so... and this notion of selling... selling it for money, but also selling it in conferences even, you know, you have to... to get your work accepted and it's accepted if it is well-done, well-produced... in this level of... this quality... is something that we learn through... professional practice, I think, I knew it from before but then I said XXXX one needs to follow in order for a thing to... to work... Now evaluation is the most difficult way to think and... I wrote here "I tend to not do it... thoroughly enough or perhaps in a way... that it is easily accessible to others" so that's maybe the point that... the process of evaluation is constantly in my head, it's like... I'm always, sort of... assessing the response of... of the audience, the people, the country, the students, everything, it's an automatic process in my head but this... point, from the point of coming up with an evaluation that can be accessed by another person, it's miles away... and I do feel that one needs to... to spend... time for that, to structure it, to... to sort of translate it, to... to make it coherent and... in order to be useful for other people or transparent, if you like, otherwise... it remains in my head and... it works like this because it's constantly

there and whatever I'm doing, my... my choices operate in relation to this course of evaluation of what has happened before and what's happening in the present moment...but it just stays there and doesn't... it's not being externalised... I... the... the other thing is... oh I think I've put... these in a different question... but I'm just going to mention it now...I feel that in order to... evaluate you need... an additional person... like, so I can't do it on my own... I need another person to work with me... during the project and to... have a dialogue but... I'm not sure that we can afford, you know, we can afford to pay someone to do that... so... I would've done it better, I guess, if... I had some support for that, for that part than... rather than me have it with the project having to make sure that I keep records of all the things and then... do this additional work of making it presentable for other people to access it. So that's kind of the weakest one... in terms of... communicating it, not in terms of... functioning with this...

61:12

AP

It's more of an informal, reflective process.

SL

Yea. And a personal process rather than...

CR

Ah... Sorry!

SL

Tape!

CR

Yea.

Tape 2

2:34

AP

It's the 12th of March, it's Tape two and we're still talking with Sophia Lycouris in London... and we've covered the headings "Context", "Method" and "Process" and we're now... the next heading is "Development"... kick off with the first question on that which is, how does your practice engage with issues of pedagogy. You've already talked briefly about teaching, but if you want to talk a little bit more about that...

SL

OK...Again, I'm not entirely sure what "pedagogy", you know, what kind of assumptions and definitions are collected in this term...and I would have thought that it might have something to do as well with... effectiveness of teaching, like

how to do effective teaching, as well... and I want to sort of point out that although my teaching is very connected to my research, the connection has to do with the content rather than the method of teaching... teaching methodologies and... I don't think that my research connects at all with... how I can improve my teaching in terms of... you know, how to structure a session or something, I don't think that that has anything to do... however, it's very directly related with the content of my teaching, like my... the content of my teaching is being formed by my research, my research is being formed by the content AND the experience of my teaching... and it's all like one... one very... well-connected... exchange process basically... but I constantly worry about the effectiveness of teaching as a technique, the technique of teaching... I'm always worried about this and... I feel that I never had a training... it's this kind of issues that make me feel insecure about how to deliver the teaching... practically... 'cause I didn't have a training, so... I'm kind of improvising or learning through trying things... and because the current... at the current moment there are all these problems and restructurings and... problems with recruitment with different courses and all that, I'm... I'm always worried about that and I wish that my research would help me to kind of make my teaching more effective, but it just doesn't, it's not something that relates... however, I need to clarify that this applies to the undergraduate teaching, not the postgraduate, so there is this divide that... I feel I should do something so that my undergraduate teaching is more... more effective... but I feel that my postgraduate teaching is at a very good level, I... I feel comfortable with it and... happy with it... and I guess... the reason for this is because postgraduate teaching is... more defined as a research in itself rather than, I don't know... delivering things to students or... providing skills or something and that's why it works better because it's... it's a research process... the...

6:30

AP

I was going to ask if that was because it matches...

SL

...the postgraduate teaching itself...

AP

... more closely.

SL

...yea... yea. I mean I don't have questions of practicalities. I know how long... a PhD tutorial is going to last and... how can make this work, but with the undergraduate teaching I'm always... I never know, like, how to use the time for them... being given... from somewhere else, so I have three hours, I have to fill them, I'm not sure how to do that... the tutorials I can decide myself... how to do them, that they have to be two hours because of these reasons and they have to be every... a monthly meeting or something, it's up to me... so I can use my experience rather than having to feel... these empty spaces that other people are

giving me, I don't feel I have the skill to do that for the undergraduate teaching, so sometimes...the content that I have invested so much... sort of... doesn't really work that well... because of the wrong structures that I don't know how to deal with .

7:40

AP

OK. ...I suppose the next... the next question around this, and I suppose it's the circumstances of... the teaching... although other issues as well... What are the resource and plant context, i.e....in-house support within your institution, but also obviously you're making work, you know, where are you making work. What are the contexts in which you're doing this and what kind of support, whether that's people support, equipment, just... and space. And heating! You know, those... those kinds of issues.

8:14

SL

...At the beginning... I used as much as I could... academic space and equipment, 'cause I didn't have anything ... so... I was trying to use the computers, editing suites, video cameras... and... space... when the students were on holiday, obviously and... all the space and equipment are, sort of, free...I don't use equipment anymore because... technology is becoming more and more crucial in my work so I need to, sort of, have a computer or two computers, which are very specific, the way they are set up, otherwise I can't do what I'm doing so... video cameras and other... tools... so I try to buy them and... through the grants or through... my credit cards! ... my salary! But... I can't work any more on, sort of, equipment that I use from the university. However, there are certain... occasions where I need additional bits that... like, one more computer or... another video camera which I wouldn't normally use on a, sort of, every day development of the project. So then, I would check if I can get this from my institution, if it's free at... that period of time... otherwise, I'm going to have to hire it... from somewhere else... In terms of space...I don't use it that much because my institution is XXXX at the minute, I'm based in London so it's an issue of me, sort of, deciding to spend some time there which means that I have to pay... some one to stay, for myself or... bring people and I don't have... there's no accommodation for the collaborators or the performers... so that doesn't happen so much but... it has happened in the past... in an older project where I went myself with my collaborators... it was a performance piece and we rehearsed in the... in the studios of the university for a week or something and... I found somewhere which we stay and I didn't have to pay... for hotels and stuff... and also sometimes I do things with the students, like I did a little project at the end of February... the... one of my colleagues... Frank Abbot... who is very interested in computer games... he... organised the computer games festival conference at the... the Broadway Media Centre in Nottingham and... the... the organising group...they wanted me to... create a little event with a... a computer game called The Eye Toy... which is a... camera-based XXXX... like the... the player of the game... they play the game through

moving from the camera rather than using a joy stick... so somebody from the organising committee thought that this would be a good thing for a choreographer to do something with it and I happened to know about this particular game at the time because in my own projects I work with camera-based sensors, so it's the same technology and I was looking at it and thinking "It works so well and it's so cheap and we have to..." sort of "reinvent the wheel trying to, kind of XXXX sensors and stuff again and again... so they invited me to do something and I worked with four students... to actually do the piece and we rehearsed in Nottingham, I stayed there one more day or something, and... we used the university's equipment, the university's studio and... the students... and... the... the thing was being presented in Nottingham as well. So in that case I do that. In terms of other kind of support... I've heard... I mean, other researchers... they... they do have research assistants... they have people who are doing the admin of the research project...or they... they buy in specialists, like a program, to do something or... something, special skills... that hasn't happened to me because I think none of my projects was of that scale... or... it wasn't being described as such although it was! ... so I ended up... doing all of these things, you know, the admin of the project... together with some specialist things to actually do them myself like for example, it is a specialist thing to... design a leaflet. I have no skills whatsoever... to design a leaflet, but I end up designing my leaflets! so... Now in terms of other... additional resources... as I said earlier... I tend to use the Jerwood Space... in London... to... for rehearsal, if I need to... rehearse something...sometimes I can work here... that's the space where the XXXX ...space we use it... but it's not... I mean some people use it as a rehearsal space, I can't use it as a... because it's like a passage... but theoretically I could... I could do that... and... and what else?... and that's it, basically...

AP
OK...

SL
In terms of resources.

14:24
AP

...Which I think f-... slides quite easily into the next question which is really about... the context for which you are devising pieces of work. 'Cause obviously the one with the computer game that sounds as though...that's made for an ac-... specifically academic context?

SL
Ah, eh, No! It was not academic! It wasn't academic and... and I think that was the success. I mean that... that was the aim... of this particular festival and of the person, Frank Abbot, who organised it... to sort of make, sort of, hybrid thing that would embrace at the same time different users and different interests like

people who just go there for the games and do very simple things or have other sessions which are more... conceptual or, you know, about issues and... thorough discussions and debates... so it was a sort of playful... conceptual... event...with debates, there were no pap-... I mean there was not... one session with a paper, it was a festival and... it didn't happen at the university, it happened at the Broadway Media Centre in Nottingham...which is a professional organisation with an art cinema and... various facilities for video editing and... webcast and... version of professional companies in Nottingham are being based in that centre and... do website design and...stuff like that... so...that was a particularly well-conceived and materialised, in a hybrid way, event... and I did... I did appreciate this because I think this is the only way... to... increase dissemination but, you know, by finding ways, kind of casual ways, of engaging with people rather than being kind of strictly... academic...

[missing transcription]