



# Essay

WOW

*Blue*

Foto: Emilie Gregersen

# WOW – a multilayered reflection on collective movements

*By Andrea Deres, Carolina Bäckman, Ellesiv S. Vestreim, Sofia Karlsson and Quim Bigas*

The dancers' collective Fanclub – Carolina Bäckman, Andrea Deres, Sofia Karlsson and Ellesiv S. Vestreim – join forces with choreographer Quim Bigas in a collective reflection of, and beyond, their common work WOWOWOW, a dance piece investigating within and around the collective.

Through a practice of collective writing an intricate body of text is created where the individual authors are fused into a *collective voice*. Multiple formulations speak, interfere and negotiate simultaneously, dealing with the complexities and richness of being many in one.



*WOWOWOW booklet, p. 59 (graphic design J. Grønbech Jensen)*

## Background

In the work of WOWOWOW, *dance*<sup>1</sup> and *choreography*<sup>2</sup> are used as a means to circulate and deal with individual and/or shared experiences of the collective – a movement of collective movements. In a similar way this text takes as its basis each one of our personal (hi)stories<sup>3</sup> of collectivity, as well as the ongoing work of Fanclub (10 years of collective experience, entering in and out of collaborations, going from project to project). More specifically, it explores the collaboration between Fanclub and Quim Bigas.

This particular collaboration started back in 2016. Through a series of residencies, the work gradually developed and finally moulded into the shape of WOWOWOW<sup>4</sup>, premiering in Copenhagen in early 2019. The lengthy build-up of the work was great and provided the time and space it actually takes to figure out a suitable basis and structure for a collaboration. Time was taken to reflect together, uncovering the different agendas, roles and ambitions that often lie hidden between individual perspectives during an initial conversation. In this way the collaboration around WOWOWOW allowed for a spoken, intellectual dialogue in parallel with a silent, kinesthetic search for *collectivity*.

Now, together as a multi-layered brain and body, a set of 10 hands and 100 fingers, we dive into this written co-reflection around the collective. It is an attempt to round off a three-year long process, or perhaps an opportunity to re-formulate the project through a post-production perspective (to balance out the all too dominant pre-performance focus?), and possibly a way to see where we are now, and where to go next...

## An introduction to this particular collective writing

Fanclub have continuously developed and practised collective writing, at first as a way to write applications together and later on as a tool to find new depths in our collective identity. It ultimately consists of a series of online writing sessions in a shared Google document where the individual contributions remain concealed, allowing a fragmented line of thought(s) to interact and fuse into a collective body of text.

Early on in the WOWOWOW collaboration Quim proposed that we gathered together existing Fanclub texts: applications, publications, private notes, text messages, emails etc., which we – Fanclub and Quim – then dealt with through different tasks. In this way we attempted to see what kind of words had been present throughout the different processes and projects that the collective (Fanclub) had been involved in: what is the language of this particular collective? What dynamics

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- 1) In this context we define *dance* as a tool to stay in relation with the different bodies that are involved and taking place. The focus of dance as a tool towards being in movement, continuously affected.
  - 2) *Choreography* is here defined as the creation of a place in which the graphics of the body and the space trigger certain thoughts and environments – a movement towards making sense instead of a movement of sense-making.
  - 3) By questioning the “Hi” in history an approach towards multiple involvement is suggested as an alternative to the official history-making which often implies a singular entity. History is made up of *stories* – of her, him, they and it – and is in reality an ever-changing material depending on the perspective(s) of the author(s).
  - 4) A tumbling practice of collective where five dancers, music, lights and props are presented as an ecology of things, continuously unfolding in relation to its audience. More info at: <https://fanclubdance.com/wowowow/>

and movements can be read, traced back, transcribed? What kind of movement(s) still resonates within them/it? Furthermore, what individual/collective dreams and failures have been crucial for the development of this collective, and how is it manifested – as memories, histories, identities (for each individual) within the collective? As one approach to this, as well as a method to contextualize the notion of *collectivity* throughout this particular collective writing, we use parts of “Fanclub (hi)-story”: fragmented collective memories unfolded as our common/commoning history, which runs through the text like a red thread.

This collective text is built up around different keywords and concepts which emerged through the process of WOWOWOW (collected in a booklet, accompanying the piece) and functions as a trigger to our collective writing. Each concept provides a different angle and possible entry point into the work: *The Tumbler, Practicing Collective, Positionings, The Swallower, Collective Body, Work*.

Parenthesis has been used consistently as a way to visibly weave individual(?) comments into the collective text. It is also used as a tool to open up additional connotations and understandings of a word that has been relevant within the WOWOWOW process. It adds extra layers of awareness, inviting complexities – negotiating, becoming one while staying many.

In other respects, the rules of this collective writing are simple: no rules other than the writing guidelines provided by Peripeti. For four weeks, the five of us added, rearranged, changed and “criss crossed” each other’s writing, rounding off with an additional four weeks of collective editing where we arranged and prepared for a public to read, relate and enter into the text.

A suggestion for the reader is to have a soft approach, reading casually, allowing for the mind to circulate (and hold) misunderstandings, contradictions, repetitions, and for the body to be part of the experience. Move around, stay put, read diagonally, use your gut feeling and acknowledge deliberate misspellings and subjects in flux.

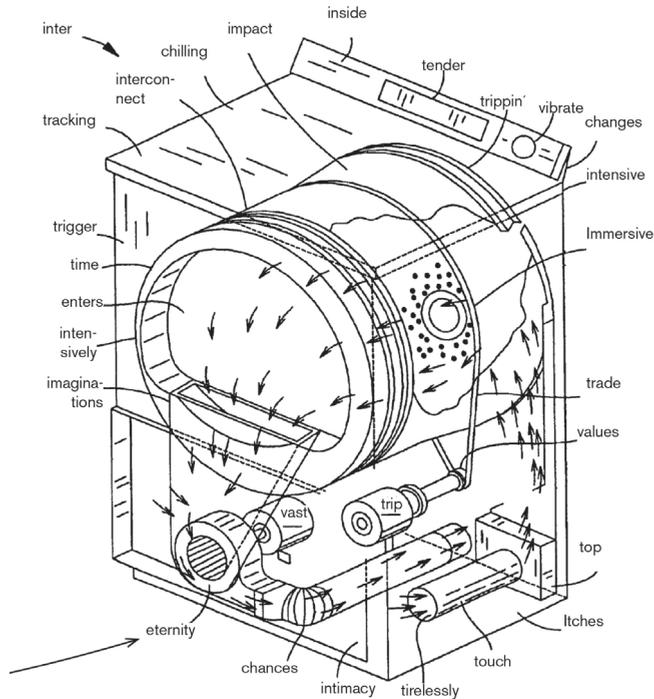
WOW – here we go, a collective writing by Fanclub and Quim Bigas.

### **Fanclub (Hi)story Pt. I**

Many years ago, a decade or so, we – the Fanclub members – got together with a wish to challenge the then very present hierarchies within the (Danish) dance scene, especially the role between the choreographer and the dancer, where the first was seen as the “creative artist” and the second as an employee. Fanclub wanted to be dancers with agency. Dancers that could define/affect their own development and artistry and at the same time affect the (local) working environment – independently of, or at least co-dependently with, a choreographer. This quest made us increasingly aware of the beast behind it all – the larger financial and cultural/political structures that conditioned our ways of working. However naïve, we tried to break free from these set structures and hierarchies – learning by doing and doing it because we felt something had to be done. What happened (surprise!) was that we unconsciously re-created similar structures and hierarchies within our own collective. A mirror effect of a pre-given: in order to make art we (felt we) had to get funding, and in order to do that, (we felt) we had to work within the system and fit into the larger structure. It affected how we formulated our applications, how we structured our work, what the work was about, where we could show it, how to communicate it “to a larger audience” etc. All

of these parameters were very much a part of shaping who we became as a young collective and (inevitably) created an internal turbulence – a tumbler of confusions, of (e)motions, that imploded our constellation. A state of crisis.

### THE TUMBLER



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*WOWOWOW booklet, p. 46 (graphic design J. Grønbech Jensen)*

### The Tumbler

The concept of *the Tumbler*<sup>5</sup> looks at how a common word, when repeated in infinity, can become a stranger – a non-sense, a collective of voices that can turn characters and things into worlds, tumbling in and out, until they seem unfamiliar. Every time we repeat a word the context and what it generates might shift slightly. Accumulation becomes a hybrid entity of constant becoming. To acknowledge what a word does to us and how it moves us becomes a major frame for the practice

5) What does the word do? (see image 'WOWOWOW-booklet, p. 46')

of collectivity.

“Are we a collective now? And now?”. In this place, created by alienation, another space can begin to appear. A place in which to practise the words we use as a way to understand how we move through and with our modes of communicating. We start to see things, again, in new ways. This is the game between a word and its working. The word and its multiple contexts. The word and the movements.

*The tumbler* has been in Fanclub’s vocabulary for years, in the beginning only as a movement to accentuate our speaking. A gesture of arms tumbling around themselves, occasionally an arm slipping out of sync – changing tempo, taking a detour, exploring “other” – then accelerating again, joining the common tumbling and altering it, just a little bit. Again. And again. At some point, the movement started to become connected with the term.

In a tumbler one is contained, yet one is falling down. A container that is constantly surviving the fall. A cup without a handle. A confusion. A collective embracing confusion. *The tumbler* continuously unfolds this kind of worlding within a collective and puts it into practice.

## Fanclub (Hi)story Pt. 2

From our state of crisis (our “little death”, as we also like to call it) we took on an internal quest to try and understand the individual(s) within Fanclub. Who we are as beings, dancers, friends... as initiators, producers, marketing people; who are we within our collective? These questions led us towards a deeper understanding of how to practise (our!) collectivity rather than merely defining us as being *a collective*. At this point in time we wrote the collective text ‘Partners in Crime’<sup>6</sup>, leaving behind a small trace of a collective in transformation through self-realization. This written work was a partner then and still is; it follows us like a steppingstone going from a “maybe place” or as a *re-membering* of where we have been. A deep dive that transformed itself into a (hi)story that became material inside of our collective movement over time. The work with self-realization/individuation<sup>7</sup> within a commoning process entailed similar movements that arose again in the process of WOWOWOW.

WOWOWOW was among other things built up around the flux and dynamics between the individual and the collective accentuations.

## Practicing Collective

A crux in the WOWOWOW process was to be able to acknowledge and work with the subjectivities of everyone involved and to find modes of doing that gives body to the meeting between us as people, constituted in different ways. The concept of *transindividuality* suggested by performance theorist Bojana Cvejić threw some light on that idea:

6) Published in Shared Risk Documentation (2014–2015). Available at: <http://risk.nu/shared-blog/partners-in-crime/>

7) Individuation can refer to the meaning described by philosopher Bernard Stiegler as essentially a process, where the I: “...as a psychic individual, can only be thought in relationship to we, which is a collective individual. The I is constituted in adopting a collective tradition, which it inherits and in which a plurality of I’s acknowledge each other’s existence.” Wikipedia contributors. (2019) Individuation. [online] Wikipedia. Available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individuation>

*(...) transindividuality happens in the situation in which the individual suspends the functions of its (interindividual) relations to the others, or, in other words, dis-individualizes itself by putting itself into question, by forcing itself to become aware of what in itself is more-than-individual. (Cvejić, 2016, p 6)*

In a way, this notion transcends the individual sensing and sense-making of collectivity, in order to be part of the event through generosity and (radical?) solidarity. The subject becomes subjected by the encounter – an encounter that no one can grasp as such but that unfolds through the involvement of some that could be many. On the other hand, the notion of complicities introduced by choreographer/performer/writer Martina Ruhsam also allows us to think of a meeting of functions and doings with a common aim:

*I think that a group that is organized as a complicity is used to setting up its own rules. It is in a way self-defined but at the same time it does not stand outside of the structures that we have. It is not something completely different. It always reacts on how the society is built or how it's structured. It is not an escapist concept. (Martina Ruhsam, 2010, p. 33–46)*

Yes. To be co-implicated in each other's doings and non-doings with care and trust(!). It is the involvement with what we do from the productive and artistic side that meets in the event of sharing a work with an audience.

Merging Cvejić's transindividual approach with Ruhsam's proposal of complicities provides a structure from which we can ask ourselves: "How do we make this happen?" at the same time as embracing our subjective modes of understanding it. During the process, we decided not to negotiate with the purpose of consensus but to allow modes of seeing and doing to be integrated in the practice. In a way, the practice itself and the individual reflection before and after moving open up possible resonances that will take place in the doing: communication and affect instead of agreement and consensus.

### **Fanclub (Hi)story Pt. 3**

The turning point following Fanclubs "little death" in 2014 crystalized into a crucial question: *What happens if we artistically give emphasis to the dancer and through that reflect on our internal dynamics, finding a language between us that could generate and give space to differences as individuals and creative beings?* This approach paved the way for new beginnings. Could this "new" mode of thinking be a suggestion, a new approach, to avoid merely mirroring the working conditions we were in, and instead help us to "free" ourselves. Or at least build a distance from the frames and modes of production that we found to be so limiting (for us). Here we touched upon the core of one very important aspect of what collectivity might be about, as well as how dance and choreography, the collective and the individual, stand in relation to each other but not necessarily always in a relationship with set frames of hierarchical values. We found that *the dancer*, as we see her, has her own valid and important ways of working that could (better?) inspire the structures of and within Fanclub. A transferrer of information through a soft mode. A mediator with more of a synergy with the collective energies. A constant negotiation and a synthesis between internal and external structures, things and beings, between systems and the movements created there.



*According to Sloterdijk, contemporary world society is best understood as “foamy” or “froth-like”: its structure is that of an aggregation of immunological “bubbles,” i.e. small-scale spheres of shared concerns and risks, which are mutually constitutive but mutually impermeable. (Bergthaller, 2016, p. 163)*

He goes on to suggest that in our time, when facing ecological crises and challenges, we need a new style of thinking, a co-immunism:

*“(...) a general immunology (...) demands that one transcends all previous distinctions between own and foreign”. And it thus places human beings under an absolute ethical imperative that is at once utterly peremptory and impossible to fulfil, effectively requiring the individual to become “a fakir of coexistence with everyone and everything, and to reduce [her] footprint in the environment to the trail of a feather”. (Bergthaller, 2016, p. 171)*

Collectivity, as in practising collectivity, then (perhaps as a suggestion to co-immunology), can relate to the practice of ecology, where collectivity stands as an important substratum of the ecology, forming ecosystems. Ecosystems where different species rely upon each other and together form the necessary synthesis, the preliminary for life. Creating movements between them. Negotiation space. Movement as negotiation is a preliminary/premise for all life.

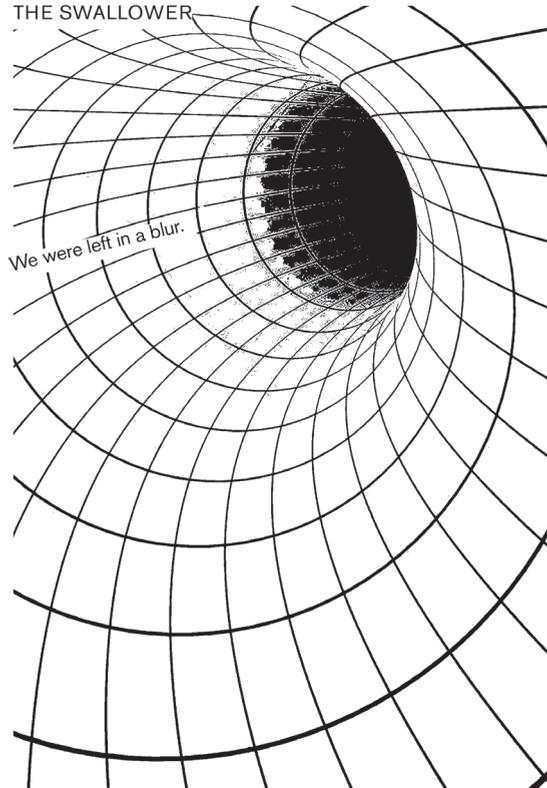
Through movement (intense presence, increased attendance) we may be able to train ourselves to include what we cannot explain, something that is not limited to favouring human cognition and utility values. Phenomena that eventually form like concrete bodies, things in space with vitality and power and a right to occupy, occupy place. A collective space. All phenomena are radiation. An action in relation to another cultivates a phenomenon. The morning dawn and sunset, the seasons, the plants and all manifestations of creations have a sense that is not measurable, but which is nevertheless concrete.

#### **Fanclub (Hi)story Pt. 4**

Finally, when the collaboration with Quim came to be, we could meet in our mutual quest to invite and accept different roles and modes as they come and go. To remain aware of them and to constantly negotiate them. Not a *we* as in a closed bubble hard to penetrate, only functioning internally and with internal hierarchies, but instead a *we* that was (and still is) more equipped to include otherness. More equipped, perhaps, in negotiating with something yet to become.

A new circumstance arose within this collaboration – instead of Fanclub reaching out to the choreographer Quim, he himself had reached out to Fanclub. From the start there has been a shared curiosity about a new way of collaborating, where the roles of choreographer and dancer were clearly defined, but at the same time entwined. This might be a small detail but it really changed something. We had experienced the awkwardness of being in an all too unclear collaboration, since Fanclub’s structure of inviting from the position of dancer often seemed to create great confusion – work roles getting blurry, the balance getting unruly... and there it is again: the static hierarchies wanting to claim the situation(!). Of course, it has a lot to do with how the invitation is formulated (which Fanclub has spent a lot of time discussing and fine-tuning), but it seems like human beings panic very easily if the frames of the room into which they are invited are *too* fluid.

Maybe it generates a frightening feeling of being swallowed by masses of probabilities, (a quantum mechanical chewing gum based on the principles of what is already there) of uncertainty.



WOWOWOW booklet, p. 13 (graphic design J. Grønbech Jensen)

### The Swallower

*The Swallower*<sup>9</sup> examines: what if everything is already there, always ready at any time? That what(ever) we do is always the right thing to do (although always with an ethical imperative, no?). Through this *always ready*-thinking, potential actions have the collective movement as a constant negotiator. A silent work is activated in between *us*, filled with the individual's choices. Choices serving as potentials, a promise of a collective body. I am me, but still not yet completely me. I am the circumstances I find myself in and I am the consequence of the place we share. As philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy puts it: "Being could not speak of itself except in this unique manner: 'we are.'" (Nancy, 2000, p. 33) I am the score and I am an instruction and I am a subject trying to deal with a structure that is constantly swallowing me in. With many others.

9) An agency that takes place through the event and the encounter in which everything counts. Represented in the WOWOWOW set design as a black spiraling curtain, as well as a page in the booklet (see image 'WOWOWOW-booklet, p. 13').

Everything is swallowed, whole.

The Swallower is also that performative element that constantly points to what could count. Everything that happens in the event becomes part of the event. The body of the dancers are a trigger to understanding the conditions of the event as well as moving through them by reformulating different questions. By moving within a score that puts us in a perceptual mood, we might enlarge the sense of space towards the audience (infiltrating *them* into an *us*). Therefore, we might address the creation of spaces and the way they work on us. That mode of working may slightly meet the experimental turn of the arts during the twentieth century, introduced by art historian Dorothea Von Hantelmann:

*(...) the turn toward the subject and his or her experiences does not imply a narcissistic turn to the self. The work with and on the self presupposes an engagement with outer projects or content in the same way that such an engagement with projects or content also implies or leads to work on oneself.* (Von Hantelmann. 2014.)

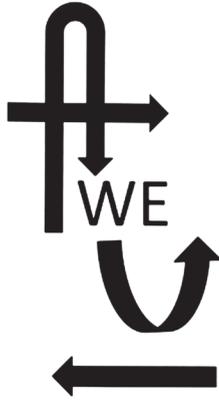
The work has evolved so as to create an ecology which facilitates an encounter between audience and performers in which the question of collectivity is addressed through the different organizations that are part of the event.

The Swallower is a radical affirmation of where we are, as well as a mode to approach the many places that comes to arise when we meet. Be where you are and let the structure take you in, instead of you wanting to *be* the structure. We are not the structure we are just part of it. As we move with our bodies, we accept to be part of something that isn't what we rehearsed but that happens through the time we have spent together. It is already there. It is happening.

### **Fanclub (Hi)story Pt. 5**

The experience of being swallowed by or lost in frames that are “too” fluid taught us that to be in a state of unknown, or just to wait out unclear energies in a group dynamic, is an almost impossible task. Certain situations might emphasize this, for example when getting closer to a premiere date (woohaaa!). Often a rather unpleasant display of power kicks in and wants to take over the situation. Fear of failure, I guess. And actually, it is in those moments that the collective practice goes into error mode – for everyone involved. Within the process with Quim we practised failure as a pre-given, as a thing happening ALL THE TIME. And I would say that this is why we – human beings – practise things. Not for the sake of success, but to learn new and other stuff. A hierarchy in sway, flexible as chewing gum. At least that is the world I would like to see my children grow up in. Less success and single-handed power – more listening and learning. More WOWOWOW!

This starting point allowed us to reflect and practise failure as well as being engaged in a *possible* collective. A very important point after realizing the importance of aiming towards a practice of collectivity instead of assuming that *we* – now merged with Quim – were now a collective (tadaaa!). During this period, finding that five very active individuals (with different family/life situations) have a limited possibility to meet, we embraced absence as presence, reformulated words, thoughts and actions, and started to open up possible lines of action that brought *us* together. Forming and re-forming collective bodies, shaping and re-shaping (from tissues of chewing gum).



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*WOWOWOW-booklet, p. 15 (graphic design J. Grønbech Jensen)*

### **Collective Body**

Through the notion of *Collective Body*<sup>10</sup> the gaze erases the borders between the inner and outer informer. Non-human and human materials are all taken into consideration as a potential part of (this) collective. I see, I move, I move, I see. A fleeting feeling of wholeness continuously disappearing/reappearing. Moving. I see you. (You sense). We move each other and, between us, there is a movement that only others can see. We meet in the collective perspective where we co-implicate each other, support each other and give space to one another.

An extension, a reverse motion. How is the collective body, as a material with internal programming for circulation and rest, change and continuity? As containers for inner and outer processes: with shell, skin, tissues, frames that interact with the outer world, conceal and occupy through various channels such as bodies, biological, living and non-living matter that operates in a multitude of relationships, with each other and the environment. A collective mattering.

When the word *collective* comes in, the reverberations from the outside also constitutes us. Let's suggest that there is a thin gap, or a border, that makes up the skin – or the tissue, that both surrounds, separates and connects, the inside and the outside of a collective. Sides that are interconnected, as in a synthesis, always interacting with each other under the constant influence of internal and external forces. Forces that pull and stretch, shrink, attract, repel, balance, produce energy, heat, light...

There is a sense of touch through the surfaces or borders that emerge. Borders that one truly owns, like the border that makes up the surface of our skin, that both marks a sense of an outside and

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10) Memory and absence, we are collective through what we've done, and what we're doing.

an inside. A field of contact between the world and the self. A negotiator. A sensor. In this regard Professor of Law and Theory, Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, in connection to Michel Serres' perspective on the sensorial view of the body, mentions "how bodies and senses are mingled (in themselves) and intermingled":

*Serres traces the meeting of the body with the world on the skin. Where he thinks of the skin as the membrane that has both an inside and an outside yet whose stimulation cannot always be attributed causally to one of the two. (...) the skin is a variety of contingency: in it, through it, with it, the world and my body touch each other, the feeling and the felt (...) I mix with the world which mixes with me. Skin intervenes between several things in the world and makes them mingle.* (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 115)

Each collective creates its own tissue. Its own skin. Affected by and affecting. Shaping and reshaping. A thin bubble that can mould into or avert from the environment *in between things*: invisible/visible borderlines, points of arrival/departures, of consensus/negotiation. An encounter, where practising collectivity becomes crucial in creating a third space where new identities can form and take shape. Borders can function as a place for negotiation and creation rather than a place where stagnant ideas are avowed. A place where practising collectivity can function as a permeable state.

Let's work it from here, then.

### **Work (Words Worlds)**

Listening to the WOWOWOW playlist<sup>11</sup> makes me think of how much work being together requires. Relating and taking each other and other(s) in: you, me, them, that, plant, mirror, cord, reflection-in-mirror, ball, bench, her, bucket... Again, and again. Noticing. Taking into consideration. Feeling and letting oneself be affected/affecting. Negotiating this and that, on the spot. Letting it show. A conscious decision to devote oneself to complexity, resisting the contemporary compulsion for an easy fix. I believe that dance, as life, is a network of endless complexities, a rhizomatic connecting tissue that contains a multiple *you*, never to be solved but always to be worked (with). The dancer is collective and individual at once.

*"Work, work, work, work, work"* (Rihanna feat. Drake, 2016)

*"Yes. Work it!"* (Missy Elliot, 2002)

Assuming that there are many ways to be a collective, we are sensitive towards modes of doing that are still opening (up?) and that, therefore, escape the assumption of knowing what's collective. Are we a collective now? When does it happen? Is the collective a job? Can you even say that you work "as a member of a collective"?

From our experience, the nature of collective work tends to be inefficient, time consuming, maybe useless and often without measurable results. Can the practice of collective work then open up towards some kind of anti-neoliberal research? In which frames, then, should this practise take place?

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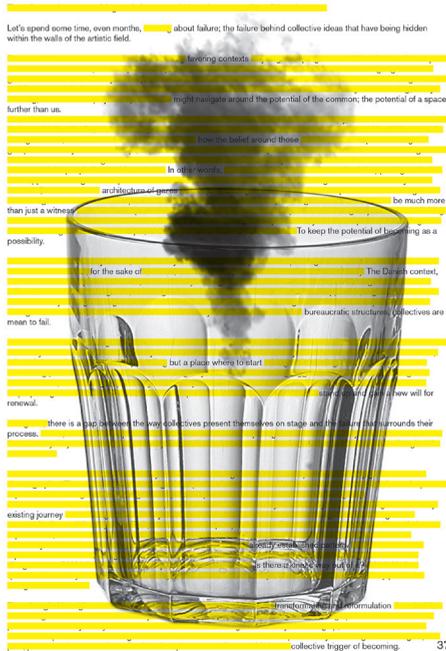
11) [https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5jbIcz7D9i1xkl3quQrpZE?si=b1aqqvpDQ\\_O61-SSXIGlog](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5jbIcz7D9i1xkl3quQrpZE?si=b1aqqvpDQ_O61-SSXIGlog)

“Now that you’re here//Whoa oh work.” (C. D. Wilson, 2016)

“She works hard for the money//So you better treat her right.” (D. Summer, 1983)

The production apparatus and the practice of collectivity often collide with the demands of time within a production frame. We’ve had five (paid) weeks to produce a work (WOWOWOW that is). And we’ve had many (unpaid) weeks to think of a context (what do we really mean here?) that would make sense to us in relation to the possible practice of collective movements.

With time, we as artists have been able to look for modes that allow us to be available while taking care of the encounter with an audience. We DO have a sense that something happened before the event and that something will still happen afterwords/afterwards. As individuals we already are a continuum of five people that contains knowledge and memories of what they have been. WOWOWOW is a meeting of different trajectories cruising, affecting, deviating and spinning from many different places. What we are part of is a moment in time on the trajectory to something. A moment in time towards an inclusive *WE*.



WOWOWOW booklet, p. 36 (graphic design J. Grønbech Jensen)

## Fanclub (Hi)story Pt. 6

What happens after WOWOWOW (just another period in our collective life)? It is still an ongoing resourceful acceptance of each and every one of us – strengths as well as weaknesses, weaknesses as strengths – with all of the parts that are measurable, as well as immeasurable? Everything included – tumbling, tumbling – nothing excluded. Everything excluded – tumbling, tumbling – everything included.

## Weaving the Threads (a Conclusion)

During the collaborative process of the dance piece WOWOWOW a weaving of different concepts emerged – from individual and shared experiences, practices and re-experiences, for example.: *The Tumbler, Practicing Collective, Positionings, The Swallower, Collective Body* and *Work*. These concepts underlie/underline some topics and open up concerns we take into account while co-reflecting around our collective movement.

From our experience *collective* can be seen as an always ongoing communication. We talk and practise as a continuous movement towards finding *a common*. A premise that simultaneously is a communicative and a physical practice. The tumbler, representing a constant falling down, a loss of weight and centre, is a place to project the ongoingness and the many collective-selves *we* are yet to become. The subject(s) become an active part of the collective practice and it becomes relevant to acknowledge the way one takes in and moves on from there. A porous movement filled with many touching bubbles, engaged in reciprocity, where *the body* expands its notions in order to be part of the collective mattering. To come into being in alliance with the many different agencies that are part of an event. To become co-implicated in a movement that constantly takes you in, however and wherever you are. You are swallowed by the encounter as well as *becoming* the swallower. A radical affirmation of where *you* are. Of where *we* are together.

We are here. You listen to us. I hear you. We-You-I sense our-your-my body and the place it's offered to us-you-me by what we-you-I have created together.

Our (potentially endless) possibilities of thinking and taking a stance, open up even more the different subjectivities happening in the moment *we* meet. The altering positionings we take and embrace, mentally and physically, functions as a starting point from where to move. Being with one another without the sake of entering a consensus of *togetherness*. Then, finally, the collective body becomes not only our five bodies performing, but the many things in between. The many *-ings* in between that also acts during the event of a performance.

*The* collective becomes a constant reformulation of its own collectivity, which only (?) leaves the possibility to be practised continuously. There is no *collective* without the ongoing movement forward. *Forward* not necessarily as a movement towards the future or aim-oriented, but as a movement that keeps on opening towards a common (tumbling) movement – yet to happen. A movement on the verge of, or actually, failing.

We embrace the failure of collectives as something that is never there. It is a promise, an attempt, a practice towards the fluidity of now....and now.... and now.... and then.... now

## [WOW ]

I believe...

In the moon as a companion.

That a certain amount of distance can create the most intimate relation

- maybe it's about respect.

We can make it.

"We can work it out.

Life is very short, and there's no time for fussing and

fighting, my friend" (Lennon/McCartney, 1973)

Things can be re-discovered.

Collectives are blurry and that's a good thing.

I believe...

in the significance of being in the sphere of the unknown

"Come on down to the edge of the sea today

And write a letter there in the sand." (N. Young, 2016)

### BELIEFS

I hold dear when my neighbors visit unannounced and I believe algorithms are not capable of finding the love of my life. I believe in the moon as a companion, I hold dear skiing with my parents in winter holidays and I believe multinational enterprises have contributed to the way we think about collectives.

I believe that a certain amount of distance can create the most intimate relation, I believe in collectives as family, I believe that there is a mouse right there, I believe in the power of fantasy – and I believe in words as places where to go from.

I believe in staying curious to the world.

I believe in not giving a second chance.

I hold dear the ability to trust, I believe in life as a practice, I believe that dreams can come true, I believe death may be the greatest of all human blessings and I hold dear the company of the people that I have already lost.

I believe in the significance of being in the sphere of the unknown, I believe that repetition can create normative behavior and I believe in stage arts as a mirror of society.

## Abstract

Through a collective writing five dance artists share their individual and common experiences of *collective*, weaving together an intricate body of text. A playful and sincere approach towards different collective settings, modes and textures, exploring the rich complexity of being many in one – what it can entail, unfold and generate.

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### Fanclub (DK/SE/NO)

is a dancers' collective based in Copenhagen that invite into different collaborations people they find fascinating. In 2010 Andrea Deres, Carolina Bäckman, Ellesiv S. Vestreim and Sofia Karlsson got together with a common wish to challenge the working formats within the Danish dance scene. Since then their collective has been in an ongoing re-formulation and their work has increasingly gone into an explorative motion, using perspectives from the collective ways of working, as well as their role as dancers and self-producing artists, as a means to explore in depth themes and questions relating to society – of being together in the world. Their work ranges from bigger and smaller stage productions, video art, events, concerts, sharing structures and writing rituals.

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### Quim Bigas Bassart (ES)

is an artist working within the fields of choreography, performance arts, information and education. His interest in dance lies in the choreographical, the conversational, the practice, the encounter, with a focus on movement research, social interactions and information procedures. His works is diverse, located around concerns and triggers on the gaze, the idea of experience, the present, performativity and commitment in an artistic environment. Quim currently lives between Copenhagen, where he facilitates sessions as a regular staff member of Choreography at the Danish National School of Performing Arts, and Barcelona, where he develops his own work as well as collaborating with other artists.

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