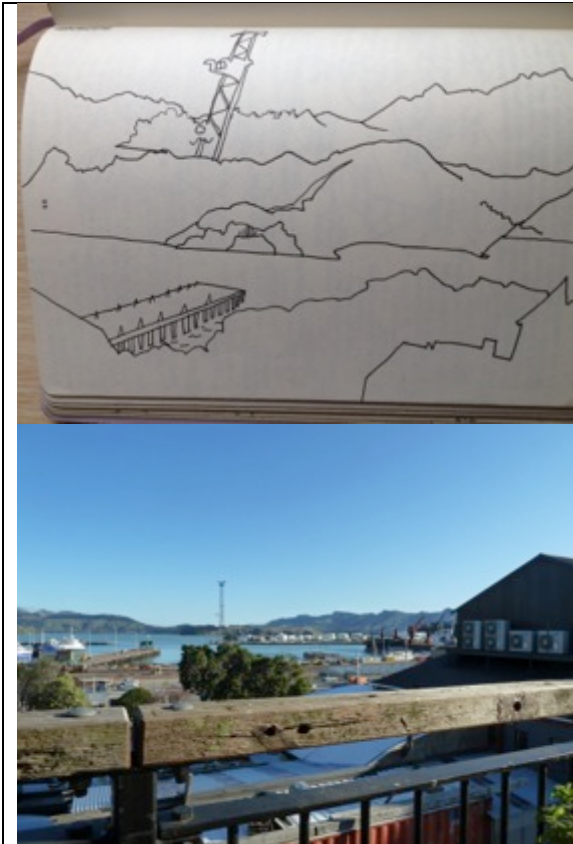


pastpresentfuture

helenmoore.create



Tēnā tātou e hui mai nei

Greetings to everyone gathered here

E ngā tāngata whenua, tēnā koutou katoa To the people of this land, greetings to you all.

E rere ana āku mihi i Aotearoa ki Hapanihi My greetings flow from NZ to Japan

Mai I te maunga o Aoraki ki te maunga o Osore From the mountain of Aoraki to Osore

Mai I kā puna karikari o Rākaihautū From the lakes/waterways that were dug out by Rākaihautū (in the South Island)

Ā, ka ūwhia nei ki ruka I a koutou katoa. And bestowed upon all of you gathered here.

Ko Helen Moore tōku ingoa – My name is Helen Moore

Nō Aotearoa ahau - I'm from New Zealand

Kei Ōtautahi tōku kāinga – My home is in Otautahi - Christchurch

I rū te whenua I Ōtautahi – There was an Earthquake in CHCH

I rū hoki te whenua I Tohoku – As there was here in Tōhoku.

I konei taku whanautanga I taua wā – A family member was also living there at that time.

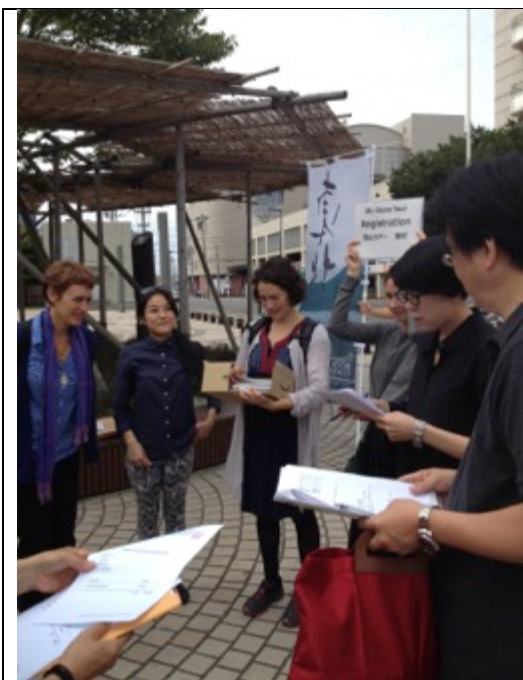
Kua rangitamirotia nei tātou e ēnei wheako – We are connected by these experiences

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa



herethereherethere

Japanese architect Shigeru Ban gave inspiration and hope to the city of Otautahi Christchurch with his design for the Cardboard Cathedral - visible here above the gravel piles of the city rebuild. As he said: "... something to encourage yourself".



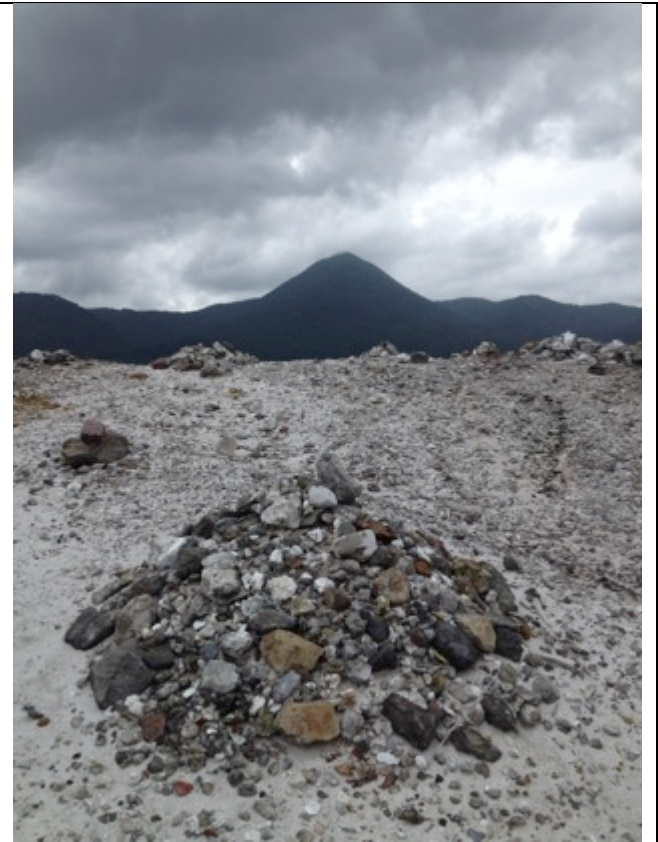
Starting out for Osorezan







Osorezan, considered one of the three holiest sites of Japan





Osorezan cultural visit – following a hallowed route

We journey to Mt.Osorezan (Mount Fear) in the far north edge of Honshu, the deep north. Travelling through an area described as an axe shape, passing islands along the coast and winding through tall forests to a place considered ‘otherworldly’. The temple site, founded in the 19th century in this remote place, can be snow bound for several months of the year.

Crossing the volcanic rock-strewn landscape is walking on the terrain of the imagination : visualising the mandala of the lotus flower with surrounding mountains as its eight petals and Lake Usori as its heart. Standing down at the lake with its stretch of white sand and gazing out to Mount Osorezan, becomes a conversation. Some will later say, *‘I felt the mountain looking back at me’*.

A smell of sulphur in the air indicates the presence of underground thermal activity. There are hot pools here that have a long history of pilgrims seeking benefits from their medicinal and healing properties. We also bathe in these waters.

Many offerings, including dolls, have been brought to this site by families, often remembering children who have passed away. Spinning pinwheels are placed like flowers on personalised rock piles. Empathy and acceptance can be sensed at the Temple for those that come with a need to express grief, in a way that other ceremonies or rituals may not have satisfied. Contamination and decontamination.



Arriving into PSi #21 Fluid States Tohoku event, Aomori Museum of Art.

During the opening performance beneath the screen images of PSi Rarotonga a lei is bestowed on Hayato Kosuge, director of the PSi#21 Fluid States 2015 Tohoku Organising Committee.

“As someone relating closely to the Pacific and Pacifika in my work this was a key moment for me at the PSi Tohoku opening ... making that fluid geographic and cultural connection between PSi events (Tohoku and Rarotonga, and Aotearoa New Zealand), both tangible and symbolic. It was a moment full of feeling to realise that connectedness afresh, just as I was 'arriving' into being present at Aomori.”

Everything coming to this moment ... bringing our histories of place, practices, and relationships with communities of practice, to this space of PSi Tohoku.

In Aotearoa we also talk about a place to stand acknowledging ancestral connections, histories of place, the past in front of us. I acknowledge the process of bringing this position into the following reflections on the rich multilayered PSi Tohoku programme, and the role of autobiography in noticing, recognising and responding to the events.

During the road trip for the P*S*i cultural visit to Osorezan, our local guide explains how Aomori is known for its delicious juicy apples, fresh seafood such as scallops (oishii !), and the famously popular Nebuta Matsuri, items from which are displayed to greet visitors at the local Shin-Aomori rail station and in the stunning Wa rasse Nebuta Museum, a building on Aomori city waterfront that houses the festival floats. Nearby 'A' Factory showcases apple products, local crafts and delicious foods.

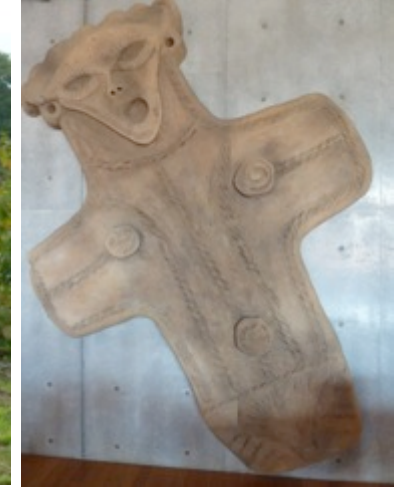




San'nai-Maruyama site, Aomori City, is close to Aomori Art Museum. It covers 24 hectares and contains the remains of pit dwellings and pillar-supported structures, large buildings, mounds and storage pits. Earthenware, stoneware and clay figures are among the many materials that have been unearthed here.

Jomon culture is said to have begun in 13,000 BC and continued for 10,000 years. Its creative energy worked sustainably with nature to manage natural resources. How might this worldview speak to the complex relationship of humans and nature in this moment of time?

PSi Tohoku - Sannai-Maruyama Jomon tour



Speaking of stones. Speaking with stones.



Behind the Stones, (Day 2 plenary session) - Takahiro OKUWAKI (Aomori Museum of Art)

Takahiro Okuwaki shared a video excerpt from *My Loving Stones, Winds of Aomori*, of poet Yoshimasu Gozo talking with stones. It highlighted the Aomori Museum of Art's intention to capture the energy of the ancient Jomon sensibility - an unchanging commitment to artistic creativity that supported survival.

The timing of this excerpt in the PSI programme felt doubly meaningful, as Yoshimasu is known to have made many journeys to Mt. Osore, a place he has called an 'intermediate zone between worlds'. The poet has recalled experiences of travelling to Mt. Osore and sitting with the female mediums where he was "trying to absorb the atmosphere they created with the instruments and noises they made so that I could do a similar thing myself. It took me thirty or forty years to realize this." Yoshimasu is known to sometimes hang a piece of rock called sanukite from his mouth when he performs.

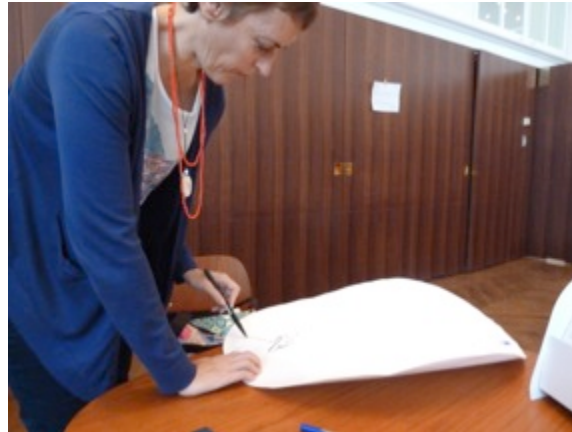
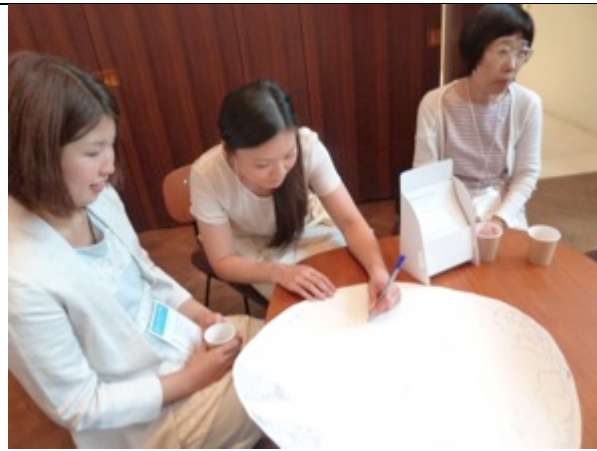
As an experimental poet he also considers the constant movement involved in physical travelling as a form of personal and spiritual pilgrimage.

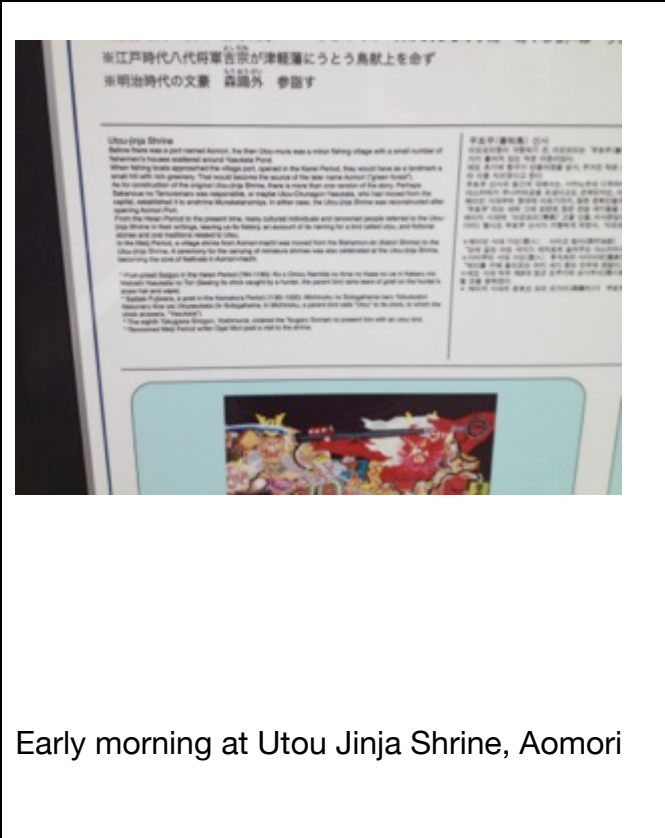
In response to audience questions, Takahiro commented that *"something is transmitted from Jomon earth stories that can speak to us now – [it] is contemporary. The laughter [of Gozo with the stones] comes from a deep engagement and reflection with the stones – realising the sense of where we are in this moment, with the stones ... worship of stones is still deeply rooted in Aomori today... stones remind us of the spirits of the earth existing from the past to now, and into the future..."* Takahiro also acknowledges how postcolonial perspectives bring recognition of stone as dynamic - a process of knowing ...

[Aomori Earth 2014 – Rope Pattern Poetry, Trails of Stones project explores the possibility of a new ART rooted in the earth, "Aomori EARTH"]

Drawing place

At the Common Room, a space where free refreshments and warm hospitality welcomed us each day of the conference, fellow participants were invited to contribute to and begin a collaborative drawing. Recording a place known well or closely identified with, where coastal water meets land. Our fluid connections and stories of place connecting us up.





Early morning at Utou Jinja Shrine, Aomori





Daily performance to greet the horizon

Walking in the warm air and gentle breeze down towards the harbour in Aomori city over each of several days, begins the noticing of diverse and repeated activity in that place and the tiny shifts in your own appreciation. Begins the recognition of strangers and they of you. At the waters edge there are morning rituals to stretch and wake the body: tai chi facing the sea, baiting a line for fishing, riding a bike along the harbour path, walking a dog, sitting with a friend. That precious time of freedom before the duties of the day must be attended to. Gaze out to the horizon, the blue mountain silhouettes against a watercolour sky, searching for Osorezan. The walking body as a living conversation between knowing and unknowing.



The light and heavy baggage of bringing your context with you
and the art of keeping space for the unexpected ...



Images from Tohoku by Japanese
photographers remain on a street in
Christchurch CBD



Leaving
as arriving
as present



Nearby local context at the time of Lieko Shiga's visit.

Travelling – where everything is waiting for you - known and unknown.

In April 2015, the New Zealand Japanese Embassy, the Japan Foundation and CPIT, sponsored the travelling exhibition *Tohoku, through the eyes of Japanese photographers* in Artbox gallery, a small portable container in Christchurch, similar to those used to restart the city after a devastating series of earthquakes that overlapped the timeframe of the triple disaster of Tohoku.

I had been expecting to view photographed scenes of destruction like those that had saturated our own media approach to a natural disaster impacting the built environment. But these were deliberately chosen beautiful images of nature from Meiki Lin, and compelling powerful black and white images of snow, fields, standing stones of Jomon sites in Akita and rural landscapes of Tohoku, from a range of artists that included Nao Tsuda, Ichiro Kojima and Teisuki Chiba. Images that have a renewed significance in the context of 3/11.

Earlier, in 2013, at *The Physics Room* (a local Christchurch gallery), Sendai artist Lieko Shiga made an artist visit with *RASEN KAIGAN: The Spiral Shore*, a photography exhibition that relates to the Japan earthquake area. She described the act of taking a photograph as

' a prayer, a fleeting pause in the passage of time... taking a photograph is making a space that is no-time – not the past, not the present, not the future. The process of making this no-time space is like a ceremony for me. But I also know that I am courting time; I cannot run away from time. That's my life, my destiny.' <http://physicsroom.org.nz/events/lieko-shiga-artist-lecture>

Marilyn Ivy will discuss some of these photographers and their works during the opening P*Si* Tohoku plenary session, and also in the essay *The end of the line: Tohoku in the photographic imagination*, her contribution to the publication *In the wake: Japanese Photographers respond to 3/11 (MFA Boston)*. Ivy comments on roles that 'arts of catastrophe' can perform, including "the radical potential of aesthetic transformation and performative renewal 'beyond contamination'".



heretherebecomingtherehere

Prior to leaving for Japan and Aomori I join a last walk with artists and participants from a Physics Room Gallery workshop. We walk a nearby section of the Avon river, where only an unkept broken road and occasional traces of domestic gardens remain. Locals sometimes forage in these abandoned spaces. The return of rare birds and other wild life has been noticed - nature reclaiming the area. The ground here is officially designated as 'red zoned' following the clearing of houses, and is considered no longer strong enough to support rebuilding after the earthquakes of Christchurch. Not empty however. Full. Of something. The so-called intangible. Memories. Presence of lived lives...

I recall and write about these local events, not to diminish the voices of P*Si* Tohoku and the complex context of disaster in the Tohoko region, but rather to witness and acknowledge with warm thanks how those voices connected and spoke back to me, re-activating reflection.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa





pastpresentfuture.

The day of flying out to Japan for P*Si* Tohoku. I go down to the part of the Avon River passing through the CBD in Otautahi Christchurch, whose indigenous name is Otakaro. Ōtākaro, meaning “the place of a game”, is named after the children who played on the river’s banks as the food gathering work was being done by Maori during the time of indigenous occupation, prior to colonization.

[At that time] most people were seasonal visitors to Ōtākaro. Fish and birds were preserved for use over the winter months when fresh kai was in short supply. Springs feeding into the river were used by tohunga for healing purposes. These were sited in the Ōrakipaoa (Fendalton) area in the Wairarapa and Waiwhetū streams.

<http://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/ti-kouka-whenua/otakaro/>

The human decision making involved in colonisation processes impacted on the natural environment here in the past, leading to what has been described as almost total elimination of wetlands and displacement of native vegetation. Water-laden sands and silts were subsequently impacted by the recent earthquake shaking many years later, affecting the stability of the built environment and infrastructure, particularly near waterways. In geographical time, past, present and future were intertwining.

Nearby, at a tree on the river, is a plaque placed in memory of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the atomic bombing events currently being remembered 70 years later.

At P*Si* Tohoku sessions, the complex relationship between Atomic war and atomic energy is recognised alongside the impact of human decision making that results in catastrophe.

Travelling as pilgrimage

... time being present paying attention ...



the train will soon be arriving

Transporting the body as not knower

Experiencing the travelling train is quite different from the puzzles of planning and imagining your journey from afar, and researching how to arrive at a destination described as 'peripheral'. However the guidance that the train system provides, with its prompts and rituals for the unknowing, makes travelling without the benefit of local language very possible. Anxiety is soothed by the predictability of a consistent voice-over, musically explaining where the train will stop and which stations are imminent. The rhythm of train movement and repetitive sound of closing doors become constant companions. Unexpected acts of grace seem to arrive from nowhere. When there is no interactive destination screen on board, the driver of a local train might momentarily disappear from his seat, only to return with a print-out of the stops. Fear into joy. I seem to have fallen in love with the Japanese rail system and my Japan Rail Pass. In a place where timing felt critical, I find time becoming my new best friend. To the extent of jumping on a train even if a little unsure of its destination. Simply on the basis of the time reliably displayed at the platform.



Tokyo to Aomori

Travelling on the Tohoku shinkansen line close to Fukushima. Incredibly emotional near to Sendai. Imagining the train tracks as arteries through which we are flowing. Connecting up the body-land.

Beginning to understand this daily life blood of rail journeying and the postwar significance of the new shinkansen train for Japan, will later make encountering the performance works of Eiko Otake - filmed in the exclusion zone, and shared during the PSi Tohoku programme - even more meaningful.

“as Eiko later recalled, “I thought about taking some photos of the stations in Fukushima and of dancing in both Fukushima and Philadelphia. In that way, my body would carry a piece of Fukushima for the people in Philadelphia.” The journey had started in what Eiko conceived as a series called ‘A Body in Stations’.” She performs the railway tracks. The stations now empty.

<http://japanfocus.org/-Eiko-Otake/4295/article.html>

“her body is there like a ghost ...”

In her plenary session, Marilyn Ivy discusses Eiko’s body as literally being on the line, as an ethically political act, a pilgrimage, in a place that is not a set or backdrop ...

“but the articulation of being there...”

sōteigai beyond conception



Chair of Panel Session 3, Nana Kaneko, Eliza Tan

BEYOND THE CLOUD: *my body is my land, my land is my body*

Keiko Courdy shares interviews with Fukushima inhabitants filmed since the man-made nuclear meltdown disaster. In her respectful web documentary work, the use of black and white is deliberate, de-sensationalising the context and inviting connection with those living with the complexities of invisible contamination. Locals tell their stories through this humane agentic approach that becomes an opportunity for viewers to process and connect to events on this human level...

Keiko is curious about the relationship of place and body in recovery after severe trauma, and how geographies might influence our identity. Questions arise ... about the extent to which we are our surrounding world ... what if your place is contaminated and your body is part of it ... how do we live when our senses can no longer be trusted ... and the dilemma, the “impossible choice to stay or go...”

PERFORMING RECOVERY– *music making and disaster relief in post-tsumami Japan*

Nana Kaneko’s presentation provoked consideration for what supports local communities to strengthen their own sense of agency for recreating community and their lives. Following disaster, Matsuri festivals as participatory communal processes, revived local music making and traditions and contributed to rebuilding community connections and livelihoods, whereas some outsider interventions undertaken *for* rather than *with* a community brought in other agendas over time.

What is art's role in the fluid states of crisis and recovery?

A question posed by Gunhild Borggreen resonates with other questions and reflections arising during research presentations, discussions and informal conversations, where spaces are created for the expression of dilemma, the grief of not knowing how to respond, and the sharing of diverse artistic practices made in response to crisis ...

... is art powerless in a context such as Fukushima?... can it still be 'an eye by which culture sees itself' ... in a situation that is a 'shameful crime against nature, with no answers' ... 'can we live with less ... in order to live with these events?' ... we are all responsible ... artists draw us in to consider the events and implications for humans ... their bodies in the place of invisible contamination focusing us differently from the media ... bearing witness ... recoding a traumatic encounter...to see differently ... their practice as an encounter bringing change... in a way that strengthens identification with the situation ... the arts as ways of knowing awaken the senses and engage us with situations that cannot be momentarily solved ... post World War II those energies endured to inform our coming together in this time and place ... we have to keep the memory of trauma alive ... I don't know what is a valid position... do we have to know what to do ... is it about how to be...the creative process ... open to the emergent ... the intuitive response to engage... an encounter shifts the artist performer and audience relationship ... not just cathartic arts therapy ... "with" ...

[voices mingling]



Pilgrimage Working Group

It feels appropriate to meet in an outside space at the underground level of Aomori Museum of Art. Surrounded on two sides by the exterior of the white gallery and on the other by dramatic high concrete walls supporting the edge of the earth under the grassy surrounds of the field above. The area cross-hatched by trenches.

The setting has presence, fulfilling the museum mission and the architectural intention of the building to be inspired and influenced by the nearby San'nai Maruyama site of prehistoric Jomon culture, its histories and ancient building techniques.

The Museum of Art building was described by some participants during the conference, as a space where it was possible to feel lost or disoriented ... creating a sense of journeying - even an imagining of a world within a world ... revealing itself through walking the space.



[There was a request not to photograph performances during some sessions]

During Pilgrimage Working Group sessions, experimental, poetic and participatory performances move between the underground cavernous concrete area, a bathroom inside the building, and up onto the sunny lush grass of the outdoors level. Inclusive participatory walking interacts with presentations and video, creating a programme that becomes a culturally diverse, embodied experience.

- **Circulation #6 (of salt, contamination and pilgrimage)**, Melbourne-based Mick Douglas' art project, involved the group in an exchange, bringing salt to the conference from their places of departure. Participants performed a filmed intervention with the salt, walking bare foot in the site to a source of water.

Initially awareness of the salt as a physical material – vibrant and glistening. Then holding it while walking the space, in response to an invitation to make a gesture. The sensations of stinging skin felt as salt was poured and pressed through the metal grate of a drain. Distant sounds of water dripping, grains dropping, amplified in the darkness. Hidden. Dispersed through unknown waterways... transformed. Notions of global-local connection, fluidity, travelling and decontamination arise.

Circulation #6 is part of a wider project, creating connections between PSi Tohoku and other PSi sites such as PSi Bahamas, Rarotonga, Croatia and Phillipines <http://theplaygroundnz.com/sampling-salting-sounding-circulation-6/> and continuing on to *Performing Mobilities* PSi#21 Melbourne, a PSi site event that followed on from PSi Tohoku.



Presence in time and space ... reconnecting to the body through the experience of walking to create the path. Remembering how poet Gary Snyder suggests that place and scale of place is measured against the body...

- the working group participates with Lori Ohtani (Honolulu), who begins with a poem in her site specific Butoh performance 'Shadow Walking', intended to *"act as the initial first steps of a metaphorical movement timeline for the body to experience a journey back to the roots of its founder ... and discover a connection to the Tohoku homeland of Hijikata Tasumi."*

In her artist statement Ohtani acknowledges the integral influence of teachers, family and ancestors in being connected to the 'ancient place of one's existence'.

She seeks the group's support in "creating this journey ... *a sensorial investigation of the beginnings of the land where Butoh came into being ... maybe some message or strong feeling will form? This I am hoping for ... what are the beginnings of ourselves ...?*"*

- Hitomi Seino also leads the group outside onto the grassy field. A series of 'blind' walking experiences raise consciousness of our natural speed of walking, and how we move our bodies in time and space. Simple directions for varying pace, rhythm, breath and emotional energy provoke us to respond. Alternating walking and observing one another, gaining insights into the diversity of responses and movement's role in self knowledge, how we hold ourselves, shifting our weight to create the way to go ... and staying grounded...

* sourced from the artist's notes



walk the walk instead of talk the talk

Dancer Dominique Baron-Bonarjee holds a black flag when she introduces her three year *Black Walk* project “a pilgrimage into the corporeality of contemporary citizenship”. She invites reflection on what black might mean for each of us. Then refers to a recent Malevich exhibition at the Tate Modern that showed Malevich’s painting “Black Square’ (1915), considered a radical gesture in its the time and suggesting the possibility of a ‘clean slate’. Beyond representation.

“... it is in zero, in zero that the true movement of being begins ...”

Dominique describes how walking through many cities with the black flag has led to participation and ongoing interest along the way: “it brings a sense of ceremony to everyday life ... a possibility of hope ...”

She sees the intimacy of walking with strangers, who may not have even introduced themselves or their motivations for joining her, as about belonging. Sacred.



“Aomori is both an actual and metaphorical place; a place of possibility, believing in wishes, hope, dreams and desires, building new communities through dance...”



Butoh at PSi Tohoku ... corporeality, spirituality, pilgrimage...

Encountering Butoh and its connections to Tohoku is a rich opportunity at PSi Tohoku. Possibilities for cross pollination between working group and panel sessions, plenary addresses and performance events were supported by this multilayered programme.

Takashi Morishita's Plenary session *Hikikata Tatsumi's Butoh – a trip exploring its origin*, Identified “the two starting points” of Hikikata's butoh as “ the catastrophic ruins of Tokyo postwar and his homeland of Akita” offering a deeper understanding of butoh's historical context. As did being present in the north – being *in place*, not only learning about it.

The Pilgrimage Working group programme, with many contributions connected to Butoh practices, including its rebirth into new cultural contexts, also interwove with live performance.

Experiencing the butoh performances *Three Dancers: to the New Era* in the Aomori Museum of Art theatre, and downtown performances as part of the Aomori Fringe at Black Box, was to encounter a way of being that defies language.

The term ‘audience’ is too passive in relation to these live encounters. Reaching into the workings of the creative unconscious was an inquiry of becoming for both viewer and performer... the unexpected intensity of being present with a shapeshifting field of emergence... drawing breath at the virtuosity of the-body-as-knower metamorphosing ... asking - was the subconscious now on the outside rather than assumed as hidden within ... the thinking body not separate from the feeling mind...

...a wrapped body, self releasing with a knife...was *this* a body in crisis? ... how was it speaking to the current situation ... just as Butoh birthed in a time of revolt, protest at nuclear devastation, and search for identity postwar ... a conversation between knowing and unknowing ...

Back and here



[something unfolding]

Turning spring to Japan's early autumn.

A friend Misa decides on a picnic with her friends, laughing under the blossoms of the cherry trees.

Begin watching Japanese postwar films from the video store.



Spring winds from the nor'west begin ... oppressively hot today ... petals flying ...

I wake dreaming of something that won't go away. A cloud sits on my shoulder above the garden.

Via the internet I see people I am connected with, walking the desert of Australia with the indigenous landowners of land exploited for mining.

Walkatjorra walkabout 'a pilgrimage across Wangkatja country in the spirit of the ancestors'. They post an image of a protest banner 'Uranium for Fukushima came from this place'.

<http://walkingforcountry.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/WalkForCountry>



coming and going
distance malleable

A return to Lyttelton whose harbour port image was posted as a first way of connecting to PSi Tohoku conference, and as a mihi place greeting to the port city of Aomori. Whakaraupo, the Lyttelton harbour, is ringed by volcanic peaks. Hot water springs bubble up on parts of the shore near the Ngai Tahu settlement of Raupaki and its marae.

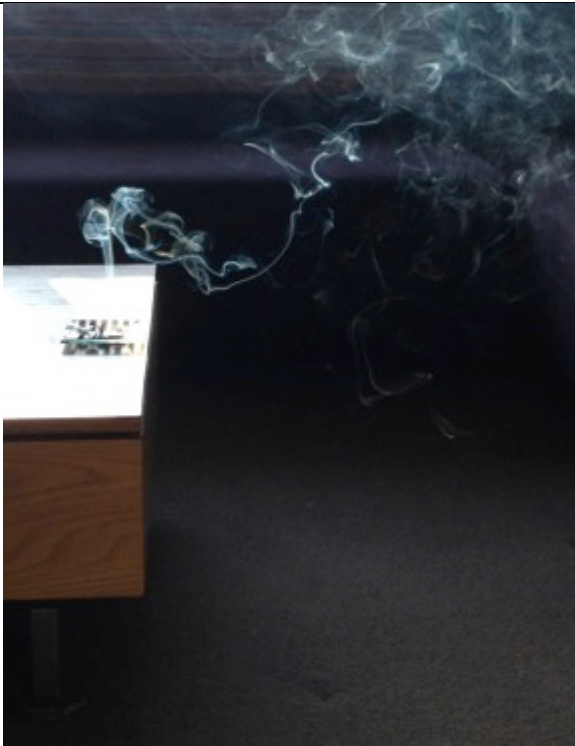
It is early morning and a friend tells me in the street how she has just walked part of the port road that has been closed off for several years due to the rockfalls from the Canterbury earthquakes. She describes being there as a zen experience of smelling the earth. Nature claiming back the man-made.

Through natural disaster, awareness of living in geological time re-entered our consciousness. How will we reimagine our relationship with the natural world and the material world, that comes from this learning? Questions are also being raised locally about another form of disaster - that is human induced. A tension between the valuing of creative community-based recovery initiatives that arose during the disaster period, and official decision-making about the future that is 'needed'.

... stones remind us of spirits of the earth existing from past to now and into the future ...
Takahiro Okuwaki

And so we walk the rocks above Harbour Basin, a place we know on the Pacific Rim. How do we want to live in relation to that horizon? Seeing again the harbour's entrance to the sea that connects us all... tides moving in and out to the Pacific ocean and on and out, up and up and across through to Japan in the north ...

the body and breath across time and place



Charcoal incense from Osorezan

Ko au ko koe, ko koe ko au

I am you and you are me, I am the environment, the environment is me

... we are creating a re-imagining, a becoming,
as in ancient cultures, and post World War II
when artists explored new energies and creative ways of being that worked with the
tension of those contexts,
... do we have an awareness of what is available to us to support the navigation of the next
unknown part of the journey ...

