

SEEKING BLOSSOM IN WINTER

A National Theatre Wales Lab

“People think that their world will get smaller as they get older. My experience is just the opposite. Your senses become more active. You start to blossom.” Yoko Ono

What is the older artist to do? Seeking Blossom in Winter was an investigation into the possibilities afforded by many years of radical performance practice and experience, led by Kevin Lewis.

Bringing together four Wales-based artists in their 60s, with over 160 years of experience in extraordinary, radical performance practice between them, the project explored what happens when these artists encountered each other and started to play.

Kevin collaborated with Jill Greenhalgh, Phillip MacKenzie and Belinda Neave.

In Chapter Arts Centre in March I had the privilege of observing, documenting and occasionally provoking in the room. Early on the conversation was so rich and complex that the best thing I could do was just try to get it all down. We agreed afterwards that we’d publish it ‘warts and all’ - I’m of course typing at speed and sometimes am inaccurate to say the least - but that’s just what it is. As an archive of four extraordinary sensibilities in performance making in Wales (and way beyond) it strikes me as important to try and link to as many of the references as I could, and I hope that this may be useful to other artists who may want to attempt to reach as far and wide in their learning and their practice.

Alex Murdoch, Spring 2019

MONDAY

MAKING A START and SHARING PROCESSES

(They talk about the history of [Chapter](#), and supporting work.)

Phil mentions Isak Dinassen [‘The Blank Page’](#)

Kevin - So the idea for this project is ‘What is an ageing artist to do?’ I was leaving lolo and people kept saying to me ‘are you retiring?’. And I thought, no!

Phil - It would be great if on Friday when they come to the sharing if we just ask them to just imagine what they think we did here.

(They talk about how the project came together, Kevin and Phil put in the application to NTW and then Belinda and Jill were at the top of their list of the women they wanted to work with)

Phil - We don’t really know what the others do. I worked with Jill in 1984.

Kevin - I thought today we could share our processes.

Jill - I wonder how many shows / productions / countries we’ve made work in?

5 WORKSHOPS (including Me)

KEVIN’S WORKSHOP

1. A physical exercise, going back to a childlike sense of play, leading with a part of the body, the nose, the chin, the shoulder etc. Similar at the end to ‘The Game’ where each person picks up feelings and gestures from the other, nobody leading.

(This led to a conversation...)

Phil - What parts of your body are not working at the moment?

(Which led to...)

Belinda - You just have to carry on don't you? Never stop.

2. 1/2 an hour to create a sculpture / installation about your practice or your journey. After we look at them and the artist does not have to explain, the others take from it what they will.

Jill - I look at younger artists now and I think the think is, I don't give a fuck any more.

Kevin - You don't have to know what you're doing, I used to go and watch people that I was in awe of and now I realise they didn't know what they were doing either.

(We look at Phil's piece)

Me - There is a sense of something getting looser, it starts bold and graphic and then becomes more erratic

Kevin - Then it falls off the wall, the wall can't contain it.

(We look at my piece)

Phil - It seems childlike and sad, the aesthetic with the colour and then moving to glitter

Kevin - It feels like the sort of theatre I want to see

(We look at Jill's piece)

Jill - I have shown my work in all these countries. Wales is the place I have worked the least.

Kevin - We've all been exposed to World Theatre. At lolo we were members of a worldwide network of Children and Young People's Theatre (C&YP). We made a point of paying for actors to go. Not a lot of companies did that.

(We look at Belinda's piece)

Belinda - I collected the stones obsessively in Cyprus and brought them all back on the plane.

Kevin - There's something edgy and dangerous about the skeleton throwing a hand grenade over barbed wire.

Phil - It's an interesting exercise. I went on a festival of walking in France.

Belinda - I never 'meant' to do anything in my life and after was when I realised what I was doing. It's impossible to do something without it meaning something.

Jill - I say to students 'just do' - you can think your way out of doing anything.

Kevin - Those rehearsals where people are reluctant to start, JUST PLAY

Phil - See on Friday they could just come and see an installation

Kevin - I went to an R&D of a company in Cardiff and they said - there might be a guerrilla performance. They just had stuff on the walls. And sometimes they'd do 30 seconds of performing. It was Likely Story. Hannah McPake was working with them.

Jill - The key thing in this exercise is the not explaining

Kevin - Yes, we've all made an offer.

Jill - Someone asked Beethoven what his piece was about and he just played it again.

Kevin - Mark Long of the People Show said you can make shows from any premise and the meaning will reveal itself.

Jill - It's like we're getting a manifesto together.

Kevin - One of the people I spoke to about this said you should get a manifesto together.

Phil - Gore Vidal explaining democracy. If you get 2 people to share one bathroom, democracy will work. 35 people. It's over.

**** NOTE - THIS FIRST DAY IS NOT QUITE IN THE ORDER IT HAPPENED AS I MOVED BETWEEN WRITING NOTES IN MY BOOK AND THEN SETTLED ON TYPING ****

WALK and TALK ON YOUR PRACTICE

Person holding the stone speaks and passes on

Jill - My main practice is as a director of performance, over the last 10 years I've invented structures I can take around me. You can't tour big shows any more. I used to be invited to do workshops all over the place but I want to do work.

I can work for 4 days, I can make a performance that happens in that time and that can be offered to a festival.

Kevin - I've been doing a lot of thinking about what I've been doing over the last number of years, particularly because we're archiving. Publisher approached us about writing a book about C&YP theatre. With Sarah. Thinking a lot about a practical book rather than academic, an instruction manual or guide, inspiring, started to think about what IS our practice, in a sense it was made up as I went a long. I didn't go to drama school or study it at school. I went to a teacher training college just cos it was near a girl I wanted to be near. Drama was an eye-opener. I'd been on school trips to the theatre, Importance of Being Earnest. I remember the coach trip was more interesting. I remember a discussion with a lecturer, Baz Kershaw who'd done a lot in America, showed us Sam Shepherd, The Open Theatre, The Living Theatre, Bread and Puppet. A revelation. I remember an exercise about eye contact and being authentic. Some people made eye contact for ages. To cut long story short I realised the power of eye contact, I started using my body which I hadn't really done before. A real discovery. When I left I set up a theatre company with some other students. In those days at teacher training college you did psychology and education but also a 'main subject', so about a third of the time I studied theatre. We made giant puppets. I remember things we were given, articles like 'the shamanic element of popular entertainment' etc. I auditioned at Chapter. I got down to the last two for Finnegans Wake. I remember being in Mansfield a huge guy, smoking a fag, we'd been told to prepare a physical thing. He walked in and mumbled 'river'. I enjoyed the strangeness and not quite doing. In those days at Teacher Training College...what you didn't get was any notion of how to work with a group. As a nineteen year old I was terrified. Kids were really provocative.(interruption got distracted). My practice was a rag bag of things.

Belinda - I did ballet as a kid, then studied at the London School of Contemporary Dance at 16. Interesting place to be in late sixties. Then I was invited by Geoff Moore the director of Moving Being, to join company and move to Cardiff. I was asked on strength I could do a one handed cartwheel. Came to Wales. I enjoyed it. Stayed for 4 years. I joined Basic Space Dance Theatre, moved to Edinburgh for 2 years before returning to Cardiff to make solo show with project funding from Welsh Arts Council. Made several solo shows here, toured them. Also worked with a lot of different people and companies. Very diverse work. Then I got involved in admin for a while, from grassroots level. Built up a dance organization and ran festivals of dance over 6 years. Left to return to performance. I love it. I haven't made my own work for ages, because other things, grandchildren. And here I am.

Phil - My practice I think it would be quite interesting to talk about what it is now actually. I've had an interesting journey in 40 years, last 15 in Sherman Head of Creative learning, working with young people. Arseway round - people usually start by working with young people. When I left Sherman I thought I wonder what will happen if I don't do anything. I did a part-time Masters in Creative Writing. This time last week I'm sitting across from his Holiness in Mombasa who wants me to devise a programme about...all the work I'm doing is swapping the DNA of theatre. People ask me 'what is it you do' and forces you to put work under microscope. I work in all sort of arenas. I'd agree to do things just to see if I could do it. Basically the bottom line is to create conditions...whether with the elite or 16 year olds ...create conditions for the surprising unexpected irrational. That is my job. Make sure there is pleasure in the room. I really want to be here - and out of that comes pleasure. That is really so important. I became skilled at setting up improvisational structures that can generate material really quickly. All because of the people I've had good fortune to be mentored by, some are gone now. I try not to think about death that much but people keep dying... I never really suffered. People have but I have not. No doubt that will change. I learnt a lot from Grotowski about being patient about things happening and not forcing.

Kevin - I wonder if the next thing is did any questions come up? If I have the stone I'm available for questions.

Phil - Is one obligated to answer? No!

Phil - Kevin tell us about one of your magnificent failures and at what stage you knew it was a failure?

Kevin - Oh. I can't think of a truly magnificent one. Probably it would be in a performance. It would be me performing somewhere and realising the audience are ...probably teenagers actually...at a special school...a behavioural unit in Penarth. We were doing a show, actually I was directing not in it. It came back to me the other day. Some sort of show report I found. The kids were really disturbing the performance and I realise I hadn't prepared the actors, they were out of their depth. What I took away from that was embarrassment that the actors were unhappy, and I didn't know how to help them. Show wasn't designed for special needs schools...so yeah. All the shows at lolo happened on time, some were better than others, there was angst but we came up with something in the end.

Jill - I'm thinking we're all a lot more interesting than this.

Phil - What would you like to put in it's place Jill?

Jill - I don't know. Something about structuring so can only respond in say 5 words. Really concise.

Phil - Let's try. Stick to the question. Keep the energy going & if we get bored put our hands up.

Jill - I work a lot with people - young women - and lately I want to occupy the space that they are operating in.

Belinda - I like the normality of get ins and get outs. I never see myself as anything special. I find doing physical work, erecting show taking it down very grounding. I enjoy the physical work.

Kevin - What is the best about doing get in/outs?

Belinda - The lifting. Cabling. The precision. Rules I like rules.

Jill - what's your greatest achievement?

Belinda - Making a solo piece, by for myself. 19.....89/90?

Phil - The thing in 1980

Belinda - 81 I invited choreographers

Phil - 1st thing I saw at Chapter. That and Spalding Gray and Bob Carroll (*which Bob Carroll Phil?)

Belinda - I am an interpreter of other peoples ideas.

Jill - whats the biggest lie you've ever told Phil?

Phil - I was called into a meeting in Dupont (?), who'd given me enormous £££ with dancers and catwalk models. A lot at stake. I remember I had to stand with a flip chart and bluff, a wonderful act of bluff. It was rather prophetic. Oh I know I'll just do what I said I'll do! I'll tell my grandchildren this.

(the rules of the stone passing are changing)

Jill - A great indian artist said 'in india Jill we don't like the work of young people'. I almost kissed her feet. The cult of youth - cull them. I think a lot of them are making very boring work.

Phil - We live in the cult of youth

Jill - To expand on that, I had a job at the university - my friends said 'I'm so sorry' - in the east if you want a teacher you have to go begging. This is reversed in the west where the student is the client and it takes away the power of wisdom and knowledge and it pisses me off.

Belinda - The reason why I dance is I find it difficult to express self in words. Talking about failure. I was thinking about times when I found myself in position where I have to represent myself in words e.g. radio or meetings. I feel my brain's too slow, not a quick wit, I think it's really important to know where your strengths and weaknesses are.

Kevin - That resonates with me a lot. I find the act of standing up in front of people really difficult- at teacher training college when I was up there as myself, also in improv when I wanted to speak. People being verbally dextrous. John Muirhead - part of Theatre Machine with Keith Johnstone. The techniques of improv was actually about working with the other person. I like being silent in improvisation and clowning in the best sense of the word. Now I've left lol I can do workshops which is fantastic - as participant. I like being silent.

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Kevin - I made a solo performance in 85 I last performed 4 years ago. Made a number of them with different people helping me make them. Something incredibly lonely, and touring on your own, not even a SM sometimes. Also thought something really interesting. I like working with other people.

Belinda - I like that you can do whatever you like.

Kevin - At schools, the teachers feel slightly sorry for you. When you did something, and it'd just one person doing this. 9,10 -11 year olds. The conversations afterwards would be about the material, but also 'how could one person do all that stuff' - not in an ego way - I enjoyed that relationship to the audience. I couldn't do stand up though. Some of the most interesting stuff I've done recently is for babies. My wife got Creative Wales funding to do this. We put together actors, designers etc. This has been some of the most profound work I've done

Phil - Describe that moment in 60 words or less

Kevin - 16 babies and parents in the room, all looking at me, some feeding, some looking around. I breathe, I start to sing, and all eyes focus on performer, and I'm aware of this exchange and energy in the room. Some are smiling, I might drop something....

Phil - What's that eye contact with six month old baby?

Kevin - Wonderful. I feel completely at ease and alive, a moment of real aliveness.

Phil - What are your writing...(to me) - what's top of the page? Last 3 sentences?

Me - I'm experimenting with capturing all of it for a bit.

Phil - 1st moments are interesting. I used to give people tours of the building it used to bore me senseless. I used to find the most magical place in the building, it's one metre - the wing space. And people used to try it out. Oh I can feel it!

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Phil - Stein (Please check link Phil?) said the magic of theatre is - I can walk on to stage with a mop and say this is a forest and it's the only art form that can do this. It's the permission we give the space an act of magic.

Kevin - That sense of childhood play - passing an object around - capturing that transformation of things, objects.

Phil - Wendy Houston said 'I'm sick of people asking how is the work going? Why don't they say 'how is the play or pleasure going?'

Jill - I have a question for all of us - you have to answer less than 11 words or less. What is the one piece of wisdom about your practice you want to pass on?

During this pause I reflect - how quickly they all get to creativity

Jill - This is for the women. You have the right so take the right to tell your story.

Kevin - Sometimes the tide is in and sometime the tide is out

Belinda - Hmm. I have two...which

Phil - Wait. Watch. Respond. Less is more. And please stay connected.

Belinda - It's not about what you do, it's about what you don't do. The other is that the magic between the steps or the words...

Phil - Ah yes in music it's the silence

Belinda - It's lots of words but I'm not good at words so I'm allowed more!

Jill - it's not in the action it's in the anticipation

Phil - Aha that's also the DNA of true torture! Floggers say it's all about timing!

Kevin - The most interesting space is the space between two people

Phil - Did you make that up?

Kevin - No.

Phil - I'd forgotten the simple pleasure it is just making something - this morning with the stuff - just do it, no clue.

Kevin - Shall we do something different?

MAKING SOMETHING

Jill - I'd like to make something, say half an hour one person makes something - starts to direct the others and then one takes over.

Jill - 3 chairs. A table. Leonard Cohen 'Leaving the table'. Play on loop

Philip give me a gesture of surrender

All copy it.

2nd action Kevin is a gesture of triumph and follow him & two together.

and Belinda a gesture of great joy and copy her.

Go from beginning.

....

Kevin a single word first in your mind.

Kevin - Love

Belinda - No

Phil - Chair

Jill - Stand heads, turn left or right. Go from the beginning.

Cut the text it doesn't work, start again and do in 1/4 of time.

Belinda any gesture. Others copy. And another. Now Kevin.

Now Phil try and break it

***** Phil takes over *****

Phil - Kevin take a walk around the room lie on the floor,

Belinda same, position in relation,

And then Jill

And then Kevin a new position in the room.

and all three move at same time and stop at same time.

Let's repeat that in normal time. Normal time or half time. Precise as you can.

Choreography in half time. From Jill's work. Surrender, Triumph, Joy. (they practise)

- again and I encourage you to find as many points of stillness as you can.

- everything as elegant as it can possibly be, take loads of time.

(then Phil goes silent for long time and they do)

...now when we get to end of the sequence and improvise and everything you do is in response to what's just happened. If an opportunity comes for eye contact take it. No such thing as a mistake. embrace it.

(song ends)

Just keep the next track going

Belinda takes over

(back to Leaving the table track)

(They practise from beginning, Phil in B's place, Belinda mirrors the feeling of things from the director chair for them to work from)

I want it be like you're thinking it. And when you get up and move it's at the same time.

Start doing.

(Belinda then cuts all the work on the floor, and keep the work at the table.)

Kevin takes over

Kevin - Just sit as long as you can and then start the table sequence. Any new music.

So now it's really nice to see your eyes so they can be wider, looking out as if there was an audience. The smile of triumph to joy is nice. 2nd time a bit more. You may end up laughing.

(Kevin watches then picks up stuff that 'started to happen')

Kevin - there was a formality at the beginning all v serious, and then Jill when you moved and looked...

Let's start again and make the gestures even tinier. Play with scale, third time can change. And it ends when someone stands up.

(Kevin asks me to cut out the music at any point)

- carry on doing what your doing. (silence)
- the tiniest stuff is interesting. Being aware of each other doing this strange thing is interesting.
- (new music) - ignore the music don't play with it.

(Kevin does random playlist and then goes back to Leonard Cohen)

All - It's interesting what the music does it creates layers.

Jill - Les Vieux - Jacques Brel

Kevin - the tiniest gesture

TEA BREAK

QUESTIONS AND THOUGHTS

Kevin - I asked a bunch of people our question. Carol Pluckrose said 'what's the space between now and then?' Other questions were -

What is the song that we are singing?

What does / can an ageing artist offer?

As a long time artist - what are the gems of difference you can offer?

From where you started off what has the journey of making work been like?

What is the difference about how and what you want to make now?

What is your wisdom worth?
The cult of youth. Cull them.
When do you know when to stop?

Marc Rhys at the NTW Creative Conversation held a session about passing on the baton.

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Kevin - Stillness takes ages to learn

Jill - The moment before. Before the fall. Is what keeps the tension.

Phil - Elan!

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Phil - What's emerging?

Jill - What's this all got to do with what an ageing artist is to do?

Me - Is it about a respect for mastery?

Jill - You get it in classical forms. In India art is devotion. Here it's self expression. In India you honour your guru or gods.

Kevin - We used to take a lot of time. And honour the gift. Take care of the audience. A gift to the audience. The most important thing is the other artist on stage. Generosity.

Jill - I used to say to 1st years - you walk across a room and keep my attention and that's all I want you to do. It's not about your feelings. It's about how you make the audience feel.

Phil - 'Stop being interesting'

Kevin - 'Be interested'

Kevin and I talk about Philippe Gaulier's Clown show Les Assiettes with Pierre Byland - where all he did was drop thousands of plates. And people would beg him to do it.

Kevin - There was a lot of talk the Creative Conversation for NTW, a lot of worthwhile discussion, a bit about training, but not about what makes a good performance, about quality.

Jill - What shall we do tomorrow?

Phil - Simon talked about 'living archives' - what does that mean to people?

Kevin - Why don't we set a task - if each of us were a living archive in a room what would be transmit? Mark Long spoke in a box. Could we each make a 3 min performance?

Jill - Diana Taylor at NYU said 'the archive is the repertoire'.

Kevin - Thinking about lolo, we used objects to represent other things. The shows still live in our bodies, particularly if you toured them a lot.

Me - What did you learn from each other's approach earlier?

Jill - When you have experience you know what works and doesn't work. We have slightly different vocabulary but are talking about the same thing. I'd like to do a 45 minute exercise. I have less and less exercises now, I just drill down into to 5 or 6 more and more.

Phil - I have a thing with archives. Who are they for? What's the point?

Kevin - Perhaps we do the 4 or 5 exercises we've refined?

Belinda - I don't teach. I do. I think it's a big responsibility. Just because you can do something it doesn't mean you can teach. I spend most of my time doing.

Me - What does it feel like to be talk about being an archive? Does it feel like it's implied it's not present and continuous, that word, like it's being boxed up and put away.

Phil - The box is never sealed.

Jill - The archive exists so someone can find out. What do they want to know? We have to find the right questions.

Phil - How do you find the right question?

Belinda - What are we trying to achieve - is it about other people or is it about us?

Kevin - Us.

Belinda - Is it about the past or the future?

Kevin - I'm interested in both.

Jill - It's what you know because of what you've done in the past.

Kevin - Or do we know less? Beginners mind?

Phil - Do you still go to the theatre a lot?

Kevin - It's part of the responsibility of running at theatre company.

Jill - I just feel I've always seen it all before.

Kevin - At the NTW Open Space we asked - 'what's urgent to make now?'

Jill - It's different for all of us

Phil - Your tolerance to terror gets larger so you keep upping the stakes. I'm fascinated by what we put ourselves up for..

This building...

TUESDAY - EVERYONE RUNS A WORKSHOP

Jill workshop

Jill - whats your definition of presence?

Answers -

- be here now
- have clear focussed thought
- intention
- like the cat chasing a bird in the garden.

Jill - Try and clap just before me.

First positions in all classical dance; ballet, Kathakali etc are about body in jeopardy - tension

Noh exercise with walking leaning forward

Presence doesn't come because 'you feel it' it's because you're working

- hand waving normally, slow
- then again with partner creating opposition
- then again with actor using muscle memory

We watch - it's completely compelling
and the audience breathe with it, lean forward

- as soon as we see bullshit we know.

The audience's eyes never lie. Always know when something is engaged.

Kevin workshop

We imagine we are walking in a -
Cathedral
forest
rainy forest
art gallery
Mars

Now same with a moment where you cross worlds. Do not plan.

'its the same thing as Jill - if you're there and the mind and body are one - it works. When you fake it it immediately falls away'

Big thing I got from Grotowski is theatre doesn't need to copy film it needs to do what theatre does, it doesn't need the bells and whistles.

Most of the work was about imagination - giving space to the audience to imagine.

Balancing the space - Lecoq

in 2s then 3s

Creates status, finding the game, John Wright

Finding the play, you can hide the game and it can just be a domestic scene.

Or master / servant.

Phil - I spend my life doing this sort of thing

Kevin - The challenge is to be great at it.

Kevin - there is a mischief, the intensity has more power if there's play

Belinda workshop

Walking across room with eyes shut
and then getting up from floor - when you want to move
then chorus moving (whoever in front is lead - shoaling)

Phil workshop

writing out words and put them opposite in space in room
sacrifice, optimism/pessimism, integrity, patience, connection
stand where you are on the continuum between two opposites, close eyes and think, don't have to
share with others, some might be quite unappealing. What are the words if you are an artist?
What's the worst thing - e.g. dishonest?

Kevin - you could take any of these and plough deeper. A suggestion for this afternoon, was to
find the application I wrote with Phil - to see if it speaks to us

Jill - we could make anything but what is it about ageing that we're interested in?

Phil - it informs everything that we do?

Kevin - What's your name, title of your lab, how are the artists you're working with connected, how
would you describe the work to a good friend, what's your central theme/q, how will you work to-
gether, where we can find you online, etc

Kevin looks at the application and reads it out.

Phil - I think the questions are really interesting.

Jill - Can you read them without the word ageing

Kevin - (reads again without the word ageing)

Kevin - What is an artist to do
How to keep learning, how does an artist relate to the population
How does an artist relate to younger
Does experience count for anything
In what way does life experience inform

Phil - The word ageing makes it sentimental, it's not necessary

Kevin - What about disrespectful answers to the questions

e.g. What does experience count for, nothing?

Jill - I woke up early and wondered what it could be going forward. I thought the table work was functioning. And this thing of having lots of pieces of card, the development of actions, in between things there can be moments of the cards, and you may or may not show the question.

I got stuck on 'I remember when' there's something particularly about this building. This building was, I came to Cardiff because Chapter was the centre of what was happening

Kevin - I remember when this room was full of riots and naked people

Belinda - Dentist chairs

Jill - Questions like...

Kevin - What is your wisdom worth?

Jill - ...in the middle of moments of choreography

Phil - Do you know [Peter Handke 'Self Accusation'](#) - if I recall it - it's from a younger persons point of view. I wonder what an older persons version would be?

Belinda - I made a version of the 'Left handed woman'. 'Self Accusation' was a huge impact for me. It was referred to as a 'speakdance' at the time. I did it as a solo show. I did it a lot. It had quite an effect on me. Very positive. An epiphany. Like counselling.

It starts with 'I come to the world, I learnt good from bad etc'

'I failed to toe the line'

Kevin - The first play I ever directed was Kaspar by Peter Handke, the voices offstage telling what to do, a similar.

Phil - Let's look for it - what would our version be. It's quite punk.

Jill - (to me) It's a play.

Phil - We can keep building on the choreography...maybe more floor work ;)

Kevin - It seems we construct stuff and make in the afternoon.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON: MAKING STUFF!

My workshop - Yes And.

The Critic Says. You start an improvisation and when you meet an internal critic in your head you tell us what they have said.

The Gun exercise. An imagination/acting exercise exploring imagining detail of a real gun and it's story.

The Letter. Walk into room - see a Letter (it's blank) - take time to let the words happen to you. 'Read' it. Leave.

Jill - (devising from the Letter game - tables, two write up a scenario on paper, and one plays the Letter game. Then show audience)

Second time add a question to the paper.

Third - think of the question first.

It's all about refining the timing, it can be any timing.

Phil - (takes on to a next stage, refining from what just happened).

Less is more - you can do one of 3 things, have a question, write a question or nothing. You could all end up doing the same thing.

Belinda - You can only do one? You might all do the same thing?

Phil - Yes do what you feel. It might go on a bit. Let's have a bit of music to 'lift the spirit in the room'.

Halve the performance space...3 bits paper to write on, 3 letters. Jill is a very good stage manager ;)

Jill - Shall we come in one at a time, it's all about the space in between

Phil - As precise as you can, the chairs are awkward and heavy, use that. Do nothing.

(Improvise this then Phil adds yesterdays choreography as 'best you can remember')

Phil - (from what sees) Can you make it even smaller, barely perceptible, a weird musicality and flow, not ever still, a macabre poetry to it? No stillness, continually moving from one place to the next.

And now that there's a twinkle in your eye, as opposed to being led to the gas chambers?

Now you can either be writing, still, choreography, question.

And when you sense someone is reading letter everyone else is still. And when it's finished you continue. And the same if someone is writing a question. Still.

(Jill writes 'What a way to go')

Phil - What was this like?

Me - The very less done the better.

Phil - Jenny Holzer (?) 'much was decided before you were born, even your family can betray you, an elite is inevitable' Truisms. What do you want to know? What were the questions before lunch?

Paul Davies question - the cult of youth, cull them.
The others...?

(they remember them, adapt them...)

What is your wisdom worth?

What is an artist to do?

What is the space between now and then?

Does experience count?

(They write them down)

What do you want to know?

Is everything interesting?

When do you know you have to stop?

When do you know it's time to stop?

Is less more?

Does anyone remember? (torn up for being sentimental)

What can we offer?

What risk?

What I know now is less than I ever knew?

What are we to do?

(They write them down)

Phil - I asked you all to twinkle, if you don't and you get all gas chamber, you get a buzzer. Again but with two tables.

(They go again, Belinda, Kevin and Jill - with the French chanson - 16.19)

Phil - Landscape for the questions is better.

Me - I think the twinkle helps. The edgier questions are good - maybe sleep on them - and then what's the difficult thing this isn't doing?

AFTER TEA BREAK : MORE PETER HANDKE

(Reading Peter Handke 'Self accusation')

For 15 minutes they write their own version from perspective of this project.

(we read them back)

Jill - There is a point when you start to regret things.

Phil - Anybody can start now and pick up at any point.

Jill - Can we make it a cacophony?

Phil - And play with volume so we lap over. So all five at the same time. Not just five of us going.

(Idea that they might play with these)

What else provokes?

Jill - e.g. What's happened to Chapter, to the University system etc etc

Kevin - (reads from Handke 'Offending the Audience')

Phil - Self Accusation is 'I', Offending the Audience has 'You' - maybe ours is 'We'

Me - My mentor Chris Thorpe says 'what's the most difficult thing this isn't saying?'

Kevin - Theatre in Wales is...mediocre... scintillating... boring...shit...wonderful...!!!

WEDS MORNING : MORE QUESTIONS

Jill -This question that is coming out of you Kevin - what is an ageing artist to do? Our future not our past

Kevin - I found an article by [Yoshi Oida](#) in a book from Cardiff Library. Short thing I read to Sarah this morning, it talks about Zeami, ancient 12th century text, he talks about acting at different ages.

Phil - Noh is interesting because it kept it's going on the basis that your second flower didn't open until you were (?) 74

Jill - We're not old actually

Kevin - You apply for something and then the job is to dismantle what you applied for. I was at the time thinking about what am I actually going to do for work?

Jill - I'm for structure. That we talk for 3 minutes on this question

Phil - And are we going to do exercises?

Phil - I enjoyed B's lying on the floor and coming to standing. So we're going to talk about what the ageing artist is to do.

A series of exercises

Kevin - And at one point read the Yoshi thing

Phil - We could read that on Friday. But I don't want all the ice cream at once.

Me - I talk about how Improbable do check-in's and pull out open space ideas and questions on to the wall - to hold on to ideas as we go

Phil - What is gas lighting

Me - (I talk about my play and the film gas lighting) It's the end of Taming of the Shrew - he makes her say that the sun is the moon and insists until she acquiesces.

Phil - We get gaslit as old people - I think it's done all the time. I was in a meeting with ***** and they said 'what are you going to do with the Dinosaurs at the end of the table'

Jill - There's all this thing about ageing thing and women and invisibility

Kevin - When I left lolo there was a director who blanked me in Chapter, who shall remain nameless, because I wasn't important any more.

One of the first people that inspired me was Baz Kershaw at college, everywhere I worked there were people that were a bit older than me. And I just wanted to learn from them. In terms of theatre and performance you learnt stuff from people, not books, really practical tips. There's a notion in trad theatre of the older actor passing on craft to younger actors. At times one was arrogant as well, but I always sought out really interesting stuff. And I was lucky in London to see LIFT etc

Phil - To go back - how we behave as young people towards old people. At 15 I (worked as a carer) and I had the privilege of wiping their arses. I didn't realise this would come so fast. 62 is so young. I think there are a lot of Draculas around - Draculas is a good myth. V isolated, alone, semi-dark.

Jill - World becomes smaller

Phil - You might get a visitor

Jill - You know - it's alright. It's kind of a natural process. Like the end of the breath.

Kevin - I was writing copy for NTW for the lab and found a Yoko Ono quote - (searches)

Kevin - Kathryn Hunter played an ageing Juliet in ...

Me - ... a version Tom made at Bristol?

Kevin - Yes.

Phil - She is a force of nature. Wonderful.

Kevin - Yoko Ono - 'People think their world will get smaller when they get older. My experience is quite the opposite - your senses become more active and you start to blossom.'

Jill - Years ago I did this event called Raw Visions. I brought together all sorts of experts really in marketing fundraising etc and artists as well. I think they each gave a talk in the morning and you could book in a half hour session and what was wonderful. Lois Keenhan was one (?) and a younger person adopted them there and still works with them now. It comes from the young person wanting to know.

Kevin - Picking up on the thing on Sunday (#CreativeConversation) ...

Phil - I don't know. I don't know. (repeats) Great three words.

Me - Was there a sense young people there that wanted to learn from older people?

Kevin - Yes one of the biggest things was there was a feeling of excitement. There were a number of cynics, most of them left.

Jill - Maybe we should do a Peter Brook thing and only allow 22 year olds in.

Kevin - We have an event on Friday we say to Simon, and we want only younger people in.

Phil - We could ask what do you want to know and they could ask us?

Kevin - If at lunch that's a good idea

Jill - But they don't know who the fuck we are - why should they know what to ask us?

Kevin - There are a bunch in their mid-thirties...

(I call out that there is a lot of what shall we do on Friday)

Phil - Lists are good

Jill - I did a workshop with Goat Island from Chicago. You had to introduce yourself and I made a list of 50 things that I was - including one lie

2 MINUTES: WHAT IS AN AGING ARTIST TO DO?

Kevin - I want to make more work, I want to make more work myself as a performer. With other people. With other people leading and instigating and to be an interpretive artist. I want to work with performers of different ages. I want to do some writing and do some teaching in the sense of - I don't want to say masterclasses - but occasional rather than a long stint. Set up a loose association of people, work with some of the people from lolo, who are also looking for work and things to do and I want to work with different people and do workshops. And I want to get some money for me.

Belinda - I would obviously continue to keep my body moving so it doesn't fall apart. I hope to understand better the way my body works. I would love to carry on performing as long as I get the opportunities. I love to work with different people. Different age groups. Been invited to work with younger people. Which is nice. Older as well. I prefer mixed age groups. I toy with the idea of making my own work again. There may be one more in there. I don't really have the space to do

that with my commitments, how to organise my time is difficult. Things you're obligated to do. I feel I'm in a transitional time and I want to go in to a new phase of my profession.

Jill - I left the uni two years ago and I decided to leave space and to empty and I've been enjoying that extremely, doing what I want to do, not have to. I want to insist I get 1000k a week - I won't leave home for less than that - and if you do that you get it. I love teaching, I want to work more than anything with my daughter Meg who's a musician. I want to not compromise, I'd rather take the dog for a walk. It's all about pleasure. I have enough in the bank and I want to understand about connection most of all. But I really enjoy it's like solitude - like the Einstein quote - 'I live in that solitude which is painful in youth, but delicious in the years of maturity.'
I want to make work but do it in a relaxed way.

Phil - Left the Sherman three years ago and decided to embark on something completely different and did a Masters in creative writing. I broke my rule of only doing that for 3 years. I didn't mean to. What I want to do - and it's sort of happening - is to continue to put myself in interesting situations to do what I do in unimagined ways.

Immensely interesting to continue to interrogate my practice. I know loads who do the same workshop for 20 years. I want to use words more, write more it's an interesting portal. It's so expensive to make theatre - imagine just a blank page. I've done all that setting up finding money etc I've fucking done all that.

ONE MINUTE

Kevin - I would like to work with text and with Beckett text and I would am very interested in developing my voice and doing more singing and um and I'm also interested in waiting for the right things to happen, Jill said in particular - I had six months of not doing anything- emptying after lol but now Beckett is calling but now might be the time to do that sort of stuff. And there's not a lot of it around in Wales at the moment. His novels. The plays also. Malone Dies and Malloy. Intrigues.

Jill - have you joined a choir? They need men?

Kevin - No I feel embarrassed about my voice. Great teachers at Welsh College. I don't want to do pop songs.

Jill - Mike Pearson always used to say contact your heroes, you never know.

Belinda - It's a good point. People can just say no

Kevin - Who would you like to work with?

Jill - My daughter. Clear as a bell. She has to be paid. £750 Phil m in London.

Phil - You speak from immense privilege to say you don't have to worry for the money

Jill - I never had that, I have that gene

Kevin - My parents worked bloody hard and passed it on to me, I want to do the same for my sons.

Belinda - But you learn to live on so little. I'm used to having nothing - if I have anything I feel rich.

Jill - My daughter is running to catch up.

Kevin - Because now with social media, we know more about what people are doing 'my career' etc, really competitive etc. We didn't have to deal with that. Just a few people.

ONE MINUTE CONT'D

Belinda - I've been lucky to work through out my career with not just dancers but with actors film-makers I've always done that. I like to do that. More of outside of my expertise. I love to draw and love to paint and I 'do' a lot . Somehow I want to find a way to include that somehow. Well, I do it. But I do for a hobby - that interests me - and the whole aspect of physicality and how that comes together. What do you do with it all? Do you need to do anything else - is it enough to just experience it - whether somebody else knows about it - I'm not sure that it is. I want to continue and travel

And I love to tour as long as I don't have to organise it.

I've been involved with moving things, objects and how you move it, with little tiny things. Which is

Jill - In the last 10 years my focus has been quietness and stillness and the power of that especially present for women, present and undeniable. I've seen incredible transformations when I've done that work. There isn't a piece of work I have to make any more. I don't have it. Painting. The stillness of the visual image - taking the time to be with a piece of artwork.

Phil - Yes what I think is that I should really take advantage of all that I have, resources of time, practise, spirit. I really want to write more. Learn Tai Chi, Qui Gong etc. Oh my god. Teaching is wonderful. But the idea of making another productions fills me with (plum jam). It's the act of doing it. The feeling you have done it, what is it dopamine? Who are your heroes. Most of mine are dead but it's still a great question. For some reason thinking about David Bowie.

Kevin - Contacting heroes or heroines is interesting. A number of people I'd like to work with. Simon McBurney - Phelim McDermott. Not so much Told by an Idiot. Lecoq time people. In another life I might have gone there. I did other things. The approach of a number of people who came out of that school.

Phil - Does he make interesting work any more, Simon?

Kevin - Yes Master and Margarita.

Me - And The Encounter.

Kevin - I like working with people that spent time with Complicite, the idea that rehearsals are absolute chaos. He operates like that. Taking lots of risks. He's a similar age to us lot. One's peers.

Jill - If you want to work with someone you have to make it happen. You might have to find the money - but once it happens you're on a track. Propose to National Theatre Wales.

Kevin - Get Simon down to work with people

Jill - Or you. We have to be more selfish. I feel I've constantly been facilitating for other people. That's going to chance. I want to really encourage that. Get McBurney to direct you in a Beckett.

Belinda - That's what I did. I invited people to work with me. I have a strange relationship with my profession - I don't like watching it. I love doing it. I've stopped going to things because I've stopped not liking it.

Phil - How far afield?

Belinda - Yes I have seen things, far away

Phil - You won't maybe find it in Wales, you might find it across a muddy field somewhere else

Belinda - I'd rather be on my allotment - I maybe am a hypocritical artist

Phil - Do we become intolerant

Jill - I hated [Pina Bausch](#) recently

Me - What new work have you seen in last 5 - 10 years that surprised and pleased you?

Jill - [Toneelgroep](#) doing their own tragedies

Phil - Yes

Belinda - the Japanese King Lear

Phil - [Thomas Ostermeier](#) - his King Lear was extraordinary. In German, no idea what was going on. Guess what they'd been working together for 10 years? That's why

Kevin - I saw a Dutch group for young people, a play set in a swimming pool, that screaming at the pool all that shivering.

ASKING EACH OTHER QUESTIONS

Jill - Can we ask each of our colleagues a question - a bit of structure here - to compose a question for each other. That we would like to ask of each other.

Phil - I do want to see a list though - it's an interesting question - of performances that really inspired you?

Jill - to Kevin - What would most frighten you?

Kevin - If my children died. And if my two boys were in desperate straights, if something awful happened. And if Sarah died. If you are in a couple, likely one of you would go before the other. The actor in me thinks there's something interesting in dealing with grief but no, that scares me.

Jill - to Belinda - Who do you most hate?

Belinda - Ooh. (pause) Hate? I don't really hate anybody Jill. I don't hate anybody. Alright. There was a time when *****, but I've got passed that now. That wasn't hate. It was resent. I don't do hate. I'm trying to think.

Don't put that down.

There's nobody I feel I want to do harm to.

Jill - to Phil - What make me most vulnerable

Phil - One's children. Without doubt. Both my parents are alive now. That is the thing. There is a saying you are only as happy as your unhappiest child. My state of happiness - as you get older your state of empathy increases. I'm 12000 miles from my parents. My boys are 28 and 25.

Belinda - I have grandchildren. It's so wonderful. It's just the best relationship. I would die for them. Two live seven doors away. Very hands on. I had them for the first 3 or 4 years of their life, by choice, they couldn't afford childcare. My daughter would have had to pay to go to work. It's privilege. The eldest is slowly moving away. Growing up.

Phil - I look forward to it.

Belinda - All the things you have a second chance for - you drop everything just to be there

Phil - I've never really suffered. Yet. In relation to my kids it makes me feel fragile. I feel profoundly responsible for them. It's their lives. One broke up with a girlfriend, I felt deeply upset by it. What happens oscillates very quickly. I wish I could be psychopathic in a way and cut myself off from it.

Jill - I'm a different human because

Kevin - Me and Sarah wanted kids and couldn't. That's like a double life - I've got kids and I haven't got kids.

Jill - We are at the age where our children are grown up. We can't protect them.

Kevin - When they turn round and say you weren't there for me. Me and my first wife tried to do a 'good divorce' - but they were very young. One gift was I spent lots of time on my own with them.

Jill - Children is a big big thing

Phil - I naively thought once they grew up I'd 'unbond' but it gets worse

K's questions.

Kevin - to Belinda - What are your favourite artists or painters?

Belinda - I don't know much about. It's not something that I've studied. I'm a bit like that. I don't know much about history or other people. I've concentrated on doing myself to be perfectly honest. I'm not really very educated in that way. I've been very physical orientated.

Kevin - Can you describe a picture?

Belinda - I've drawn my feet a lot. My hands. I paint what I see. Where I am. Not from imagination.

What I love it it just appears on the page and I don't feel I do it. I go into an other place. And then it just appears. I don't feel responsible for it. I'll spend any time - an hour, two, three. Mostly on holiday. When I have time.

Kevin - What's the hardest thing?

Belinda - There isn't a hard thing. Just finding space. I don't think I have good technique. I've toyed with idea of going to art college. I do very tiny painting. I lick the brush. Very tiny.

Kevin - Do your grandchildren look at them

Belinda - No. I don't hide them but I do it for me. I love painting with them

Kevin - to Phil - My question is I was wondering. You come from Australia a long time ago. How does the Australian landscape, or how does Australia affect you, have a place in you life?

Phil - Good question, quite complicated. When I write fiction. What I'm manifesting is the Australian landscape, vast fierce landscape. Strange celebration or memory. When I go back to I'm reminded of the deep and profound nothingness and boredom. My sister reminds me that when I was 8 years old I said I've got to get out of here. I was educated as a Catholic, this thing about eternity. I remember trying to imagine this going on forever and it frightened the shit out of it. When I get the train back to (?) - for my sons it's an insight. I went to a boarding school when I was 17, we see each other - boring fuckers god they're nice. Their lives are miniscule. So it's quite complex. Would I live there again? No no no never! I could go in a camper van etc. I've hitchhiked across it. It's a vast empty dustbowl of sin and loneliness, Draculas in cowboy hats. Tim Winton (?) writes about it very well. Visceral. I sometimes go through paranoias. I have no British Passport only have one stamp that says I've indefinite leave to stay. I sometime tease myself - if I lost that passport - then it would become interesting.

Kevin - to Jill - Do you play musical instruments?

Jill - No

Kevin - Then what about Fern's question - what is the song you are singing?

Jill - Exploration into stillness. Trying to learn. What is stillness. It's dynamic. Some of the pieces I've made the stillness is so eloquent, I want to do it better. The power of quietude. I made performance called the Axe, response to the Mexican/US border femicide. I became quite shocked and moved and read everything about what's going on there. I wanted to make a piece. I got pregnant with it. It took three years. You can't show that brutality. You have to transform it. The most difficult piece I've ever made. I did it in the end. A structure, repeated actions, always 12 young women in different countries, all over Colombia, Peru. I had some women as young as 14, really being able to look at the audience without shame, fear and judgement. That stillness (they take their knickers off). I wanted to scare the shit out of every man in the room. So quiet. Since then I've been really exploring that. What it's about for young women.

Kevin - A completely different question - what's the voice - the song you sing - with your dog?

Jill - He's two, Calan. My second dog, another collie. Kai was laid back. Calan's fucking mad. He sleeps by my bed. The second I get up he's onto my bed. I can talk to him very quietly. I go to dog dancing classes with him. There's a lot of learning going on.

Kevin - It's a real shame he's not here.

Jill - It's another energy in the room.

Kevin - It's really interesting when there's an animal in the room when you're performing. I've been thinking a lot as there are a lot of animals in stories in children's theatre. With the whole environmental thing, people used to have animals living with them. There was a storytelling course about communicating with animals. It sounded really interesting.

Keith Johnstone talked a lot about status. Playing status. If with an animal you get your status too low...

Jill - Yes.

Phil - Keith Johnstone talks a lot about status

Kevin - I was working with John Muirhead who was part of Keith Johnstone's Theatre Machine Group. Impro had just come out. Theatre Machine's shows were all improvised. It was really interesting to get the exercises from people who had made it up.

P's questions.

Phil - If I gave you all £100,000 for three months what would you do? Has to be spent in 3 months.

Jill - I'd make a festival and bring all my favourite performers from around the world. At Chapter. It's so hard to do festivals.

Phil - What would be different?

Jill - I would be very selfish about who I invited. The point is to eat and work together. Women I really love and respect. I'd be able to pay everybody properly.

Belinda - I would like to travel. All the places I haven't been. The way would be priority. I'd like to go in a van. My own transport. Not very luxurious.

Jill - £25k would do that

Belinda - Have to have a toilet. Can cook in it. Through Europe, get on boats.

Phil - It's a good travel budget. What record would you make?

Belinda - I'd paint and take pictures. I like writing but nobody's allowed to read it.

Phil - A really nice fountain pen. One of life's pleasures.

Belinda - I've got one. Oh and I've have a stove and a burner.

Phil - I like it. I've have the transfer made to you.

Kevin - I'd set up a temporary school for artists. The participants would be paid to be there. There'd be a number of teachers paid to be there. Probably rural. Most money would go on the teachers. Small participants. Maybe 12?

Phil - You are familiar with my diversity policy?

Kevin - There'd be an application process. They'd have to bring something. So if someone came with a lot of string. They may get in and another with string wouldn't. They'd have to interest.

Phil - What marks this school out from other ideas?

Kevin - The originality is you don't normally get paid to do this. A lot of the artists, I use term in the wider sense, don't have the money. It might be the students are also the teachers.

Phil - Are you making this up as you go along?

Kevin - There's a tradition of rural arts school.

Jill - [Odin Teatret](#)

Kevin - There is one stipulation. Alex would start off the documentation but then be able to keep passing it on to someone else. As often as she wanted.

MAKING LISTS

Phil - I think we're getting a lot of interesting lists. For young people who know bugger all about us. Lists of things we're frightened of. etc.

Jill - There's something I keep thinking about. Is showing off. You know what I've done in 40 years?

Belinda - It's not showing off. It's what you've done.

Phil - I'm not talking about process, I've made so many shows.

Jill - It's about the things you don't say - that's why I like lists. Eg. I have made 24 shows but I don't to hear about those shows. 10 salient facts.

Phil - Number of shows I've made

Kevin - Failed to make

Phil - Number of people I've paid

Kevin - People who didn't like working with me

Phil - Money I got for shit work, money I got for good work

Kevin - Letters of complaint. Number of

Phil - Number of people who walked out.

Kevin - Volcano had an Icelandic designer, who displayed letters of complaint (at their 25th Birth day celebrations)

Kevin - Number of vans. Times it broke down.

Phil - Least number of people in the audience

Jill - The numbers

Kevin - Thing at the Albert Hall - Jan Fabre - The Power of Theatrical Madness. 8 performers running back and forth to the audience. One could also be walking

Jill - But we're thinking about making a show.

Kevin - Number of my ideas that were in the show, number that got rejected.

Jill - I think this is fantastic emergent from this morning. Why don't we prepare lots of bits of paper?

(They start organising paper and cardboard. And size of writing. And pens)

Jill - Kantor - Dead Class - I keep thinking about.

Jill - Meyerhold said you are paid to do the work other people want you to do, you pay to do the work you want to do.

Kevin - Yoshi Oida. (*Kevin reads from The Actor Training Reader - about Zeami 12th Century*)

Leonard Cohen when he was in his 80's he was so lovely, light on his feet.

AFTER LUNCH

Questions

Phil - How many times have you...in a performance?

Dropped things

Corpsed

Cried

Jill - Am I redundant?

Phil - Listen, do you think it might be nice to get a collection of words so we can generate random questions? The shoe cleaner to write with was a dismal failure.

THEY MAKE AN IMPROVISATION

(An experiment - with the random sentence makers - quite hard because complete random selection

I suggest they do it like 'word at a time' improv, so they choose the next single word as they go, have a bit more control.

I read them and they generate each word, pace is good. We get rid of words that don't work for whatever reason - like 'insipid'.

I say - what about words that feel slightly edgy and 'hot spot' about how you feel about expectations as an ageing artist. They add them in. This goes on for some time then they improvise)

'I can remember when there were rabbits in this room

I remember Mrs Paunches cat

Her cheesecake

I remember when she died

I didn't know her

I remember Pip Simmons doing Woyzeck

I remember when a children's theatre company were on the front page of the Chapter brochure

I remember sitting in a room here with Vasily Vasilyevich, a Russian director.

I have shown my work in *(they list and overlap - long list Thailand, Slovenia, Wales, Australia, Sydney, Rhode Island, Penarth, Washington DC, Warsaw, Krakow, Bologna, Birmingham, Vienna, Gratz, Munich, Moscow, Barry, Newport, Barry Island, Calcutta etc etc)*

Do you think anyone gives a fuck? Does anyone know where these places are?’

(Kevin plays a record, vinyl and at same time a Tom Waits.

They improvise again with the cards. And the movement.

And then they go to the Handke inspired texts. Improvising.

Phil - improvises his view of work he see's these days as part of this -

They continue including their own versions of this including -) ‘absolute shit, asinine, expensive, baloney, boring, never the less they sell nice chocolates, waste of time, they employ children, they snigger, they ignore the good ones, Kevin just a reminder you have your ear wax treatment at 3 o clock, Belinda you have a dental appointment, No they sent me a text they cancelled it, Can you buy wine for the evening, don't forget your laxatives.’

(They improvise memories of someone, real or imagined I don't know.)

Phil - It's great it's really abstract and then it goes really boring and we're talking about cooking onions.

Jill - What I quite like is ‘they’. I quite liked yesterday - it was quite edgy and nice - we were talking about *** and we got pissed off.

(They go back to read from the Handke again; ‘Offending the Audience’)

Jill - I was wondering if instead of the self interrogation ‘I’, we use ‘you’.

(We talk about [Tim Crouch](#))

AFTER TEA BREAK

(Writing ‘you’ as ‘I’)

(We try them out and discuss what works - and then speed write for 2 minutes - and look for good lines)

New improv - One to read and the others look out - me as outside eye.

(We talk about staring at the audience. I point out the ‘live art stare’. We talk about not wanting to be smug to the audience. Fine line.

We try that they are thinking. Stillness works. Tiny gestures work, but very few. Not looking at an audience member is good - so we're not saying ‘audience you are a twat’.

It's amazing.

Jill - let's try with one text each.

Doing so little is a lot because the audience member has space to think.

I talk about Keith Johnstone's mantra exercise. Where you say a spare text - and you learn that - and in your head try and keep a nursery rhyme in your head.)

THURSDAY

WHAT MAKES PERFORMERS WATCHABLE?

We do a warm up from Kevin of walking in clay. [Peta Lily](#).

Jill does a cat and mouse game and we talk about listening physically. And how compelling to see people just using all of their senses. And a game between performers.

I lead Keith Johnstone's mantras game (say a nursery rhyme on a loop in head and then add in a simple 'meaningful' text.) We talk about not acting.

What makes performers watchable. The bodies alert. Kevin talks about a Simon Russell Beale Richard 11 and it was stripped back and that was very dynamic.

I talk about Tim Crouch's An Oak Tree - the premise of the 2nd actor not knowing what they're going to say (being fed text for first time on an earpiece).

Debate about what actors need to know - an intention? Or nothing?

Jill - In Silence of the Lambs - Anthony Hopkins just wore a boiler suit that was too small.

Me - story of Stanislavsky saying the acting got better when the actors forget their props

Kevin - What do dancers think B?

Belinda - I make it physically very demanding so you don't have the luxury of enjoying it and you just do it. It was like that when I did the Handke piece, I didn't think about what I was saying it was just the doing it that made it profound. You have in exactly the same problems in dance. What makes it compelling to watch. It's obvious. When it's not good.

Phil - Do you remember Karen Findlay.

Jill - She danced for fucking two hours.

Phil - I just do it fast.

Jill - There's a task to do.

Phil - Emily, what's her name, I used to go on the stage so hungover on a matinee and just say the fucking the words.

Kevin - But the actors have to know what their doing. e.g. I want to get out of the room.

Jill - I see so much crap theatre, and I want to know what it is. I think there are principles before the form. What are they?

Kevin - We've started identifying some things. Say I was directing Beckett and I will have done some preparation but we will find out together and the desire will be to make it thrilling and exciting but you always have to face the fact that you can fail. We'll discover from Beckett how to bring it to life.

Me - Beckett's interesting because you can't do anything the Estate won't let you. But if you just work with what's there it somehow tells you what to do.

Kevin - Eh Joe, Micheal Gambon walks on and just listens to the text and walks off and it's just brilliant. He was doing lots and he was doing very little. A great actor. They filmed his face and that was part of it. Live feed.

THEY TRY TO BE INTERESTING!

Jill - We should do some work

Phil - Why don't we set a task - we've been talking about doing tasks.

Jill - If we have tables, cardboard, 4 chairs, we have to put the cardboard in alphabetical order according to the third letter.

Me - And that task is the work?

Jill - And it will be shit. Alex will tell us if it's interesting.

Me - Tell me when it's started.

They start

Me - It's not particularly interesting in itself. Maybe because there's no sense of the audience.

Jill - Ok we'll make up a game that Alex doesn't know about. And do it again.

They go again

We talk about how it's interesting when they have a task to do, two things to do, something else, a game underneath.

Jill - Once the audience know what you're going to do it's over

Kevin - So you have to shift things

Jill - Always break what's expected. That's why stillness works because you're sort of waiting.

Kevin - Be interested not interesting.

Me - But if you're only interested in yourself it's boring. So the interest has to be elsewhere - that's why those shows with kids on microphones loving the sound of their own voice are so boring.

Kevin - Keith Johnstone said don't be clever be boring. As in be obvious.

Phil - Keith again. Somebody sitting at a keyboard. Someone has just been born and they ask the other what are they going to do in their life and the partner answers with what they did in *their* life. 'You will travel to 45 countries'. You don't need to keyboard actually.

Jill - Can I set it up?

They try that two pairs, trying to give space and not talk over each other. So Phil asks Jill about what 'his' life will be and Jill replies from her life.

BACK TO THE QUESTION AGAIN.

MAKING MISTAKES

Jill - So what is the ageing artist to do?

Kevin - Is it continue and then stop? Maybe that's it. I was listening to Songs for Drella, Lou Reed and John Cale. The chorus is 'it's just work and you have to keep working'. If you've only written 5 songs and you're a songwriter then write 10.

Jill - It's a very simple answer. Carry on. Can we return to the questions and return to them in the light of the work.

Kevin - It could be carry on it could be give up.

Kevin - You could answer there is no such thing ageing artist. We're all ageing. There are many ways of answering this.

Jill - (reading q's) What is the space between now and then, that question.

Kevin - For me personally all these questions have lots of answers simultaneously. Yes it's a life-time and it's also just yesterday. All that stuff about time. I still feel like a beginner. Beginners mind every time. Putting yourself in risks, is it important, yes it bloody well is. What sort of risks can an ageing artist that a younger one can't. Just going to a workshop where you don't know anyone. It's good for artists and human beings to put themselves in a situation that's uncomfortable.

Jill - What does / can an ageing artist offer?

Kevin - If people approach and want to spend time with me, great, we'll talk and do. We might spend an hour or day or three weeks. Peter Brook thing someone asked how do you become a director. Call yourself a director, persuade others to do so, and put on a play. You can waffle on....

Jill - I want to get off waffling, I think we are

Phil - Time. Experience.

Jill - As a long time artist. What are the gems of difference you can offer?

Phil - Fuck that's poetic

Kevin - I can't offer you secrets it doesn't really work like that. I genuinely think it's making it up as you go along.

Phil - That clarifies the endless uncertainty. The whole thing

Jill - What does?

Phil - For the younger artist, it's going to stay uncertain

Kevin - Robert Graves - the juxtaposition - the confusion of your understanding and the understanding of your confusion.

Jill - I think we can go closer to the edge without falling. We start to understand how to do that.

Phil - We have less terror of that

Kevin - Or more

Phil - Unknown is the universal condition. My mother's gaslighted reality for decades because she wants things to be certain.

Kevin - If making a work of art is a journey of some sorts, we're fellow travellers with the younger travellers.

Jill - The ageing artist can offer their mistakes.

Phil - Miss takes

Kevin - And that mistakes are all part of it. It's good to make mistakes.

Phil - I had a miss take. More interesting. Your whole attitude to the word mistake. Your whole baggage.

Jill - In Magdalena there is a cohort of experience now, of mistakes, we've made so many festivals.

Kevin - Can we offer more questions?

Me - When you were younger if someone had told you about the mistakes you were going to make and therefore helped to stop you making them, would that have been helpful?

Jill - In festivals you have to have good food.

Phil - What about doing too much?

Kevin - Can the older artist offer about taking care of yourself?

Phil - It's attitude - not care less - it's carefree. It's fine that there is uncertainty and unknowingness. Life is going to throw shit at you.

Jill - Your bullshit detector, stuff that doesn't work, that is indulgent.

Phil - Desperate to be liked, is dishonest

Belinda - You can get very strange reactions if you tell people you're a dancer

Kevin - Same with children's theatre.

Phil - Engineers of the Imagination. Is this leading somewhere J? A bit of chaos.

Jill - There was a teacher in the Primary School in Llan(?) and she'd only been in one place in her whole life. And actually there was a great depth of knowledge.

Kevin - It's how not where you travel. We've all recognised the importance of encountering other people when we travel. I was always surprised at company's that didn't bother to go to festivals and see other people's work. There was one company who didn't want to be contaminated and distracted by other peoples work. There was that.

AFTER LUNCH

THE MANIFESTO

Kevin - I just remembered one of the provocations was to write a manifesto. Paul from Volcano suggested in, in a way the Dogma film put together.

Jill - Shall we make a list

Phil - We will never refer to our past work

Jill - We will keep our bullshit detectors polished and tuned at all times.

Phil - No meeting with ever be longer than 30 mins

Belinda - That's long. 15

Phil - We will never have a Human Resources Department

Kevin - We will make our own posters

Phil - Tickets to our performances will never be more than £10

Me - What about the art?

Jill - We will attempt to discover the most difficult thing this isn't saying.

Phil - We will contact our heroes

Jill - But I can't think of any.

Belinda - Polly who was my midwife is mine

Phil - We will no longer have heroes

Jill - Ok. We will. Kevin discuss this. Something very important that I still don't articulate well. To do with seeking the form that is right for the content. E.g the Proscenium Arch is repeated too much

Phil - We will allow the content to find it's appropriate form

Kevin - I agree with that, say like the People Show used to do. Say we started with a long table. The content could emerge from the form.

Phil - I'm interpreting J's idea as form is rather larger, including the genre. I think it's revolutionary.

Phil - We will embrace the terror, the unknown, the uncertain, the surprising.

Jill - This will be so pretentious.

Phil - We will keep pulling the mat from underneath ourselves.

Kevin - We will spend as much time and money on training as making

Kevin - Something about having different voices, cultures, diversity whatever you wanna call it.

Jill - There's a lot going on for the sake of diversity

Phil - We will work with people we like

Belinda - We will not work with people we do not like

Kevin - But we will take the time to get to know and find if we like them

Phil - We will never do a Ted Talk

Kevin - We will never explain the work

Phil - That's a good one

Me - Anything you've learnt this week that wants to go in, from playing, doing?

Phil - We will embrace [Isodora Duncun](#)'s dictum which was to intensify the expression and simplify the means. Which is what Noh theatre does.

Kevin - Remembering the Dogma one, they always film things in the order they happen. Only natural sounds.

Phil - What was their attitude to actors?

Kevin - Half of the tickets should be free. Peter Brook did that.

Jill - And Glasgow Citz did that.

Kevin - We will never produce any programmes

Belinda - Why?

Belinda - We will work in heated rooms (this room is freezing)

Me (I read them out 'convincingly') I like the mat one best, the one about pulling the rug

Jill - I think the Chris Thorpe one. The most difficult thing this isn't saying.

Kevin - But it's pulling the rug isn't it

Me - This was an off the cuff thing Chris said to me by the way.

Jill - We can use this to pull up our colleagues

Phil - What about decision making processes - consensual, autocratic, democratic

Jill - I think they're all fine

Kevin - Finding the most appropriate form for the content, that will facilitate that, it will facilitate the way of working. On a serious point there is a lot of shit going round about how people behave in rehearsals out of the MeToo movement, bullying in the workplace. Codes of Practice of Directors. People shouldn't have to put up with that. Stories that are coming to light right now. Interesting as

a director is you pick up things from the actors about other directors rehearsal rooms. Most directors never actually see what goes on in other places.

Me - I talk about teaching at a Drama School and staff members being sniffy about Vicki's Code of Conduct, some male staff member's were saying 'what shall we do now' - and the answer is - don't be a dick

Kevin - You find out some quite shocking things as a freelancer in a Drama School

Me - Yes

Jill - If it's still too raw don't go there and you don't have to do anything you don't want to do. It produces surprisingly brave work. One of the things I did with first class in the first year, someone came in late, I'd be like 'Don't you ever come in my class, late, ever!' It was terrible to come in late. It's a fundamental lesson to teach.

Belinda - I used to do the complete opposite. I don't care.

Kevin - I used to shame them - you've let the whole group down. As a clown there are lots of tactics.

Jill - Try doing a Magdalena project in Colombia

Kevin - Sometimes it's alright to take the time.

Phil - Shall we lock this down, this Manifesto. One we like each.

So...THIS IS THE MANIFESTO...

Phil - We will allow the content to find it's appropriate form

Belinda - We wont work with people we don't like

Kevin - We will spend as much resources on training as making

Me - We will keep pulling the mat from underneath ourselves

Jill - We will attempt to discover the most difficult thing this isn't saying.

Kevin - *Reads the manifesto from Assitej in Beijing*

<http://www.assitej-international.org/en/2018/09/manifesto-for-theatre-for-young-audiences-practitioners/>

Jill - I think it's incredibly naive

Phil - I think we should read it out tomorrow in all earnest and we tear it to fucking pieces.

Jill - What do you feel about it K?

Kevin - Honestly. I don't know.

Me - I'm suspicious they use language like 'safe spaces' and 'stakeholders'

Belinda - I just don't hear it because of the language.

Kevin - It's done by committee.

Phil - Or a piece of software.

Belinda - I don't have that language. Some people do talk in that language.

Jill - I made a laminate of Brian Eno's oblique strategies

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oblique_Strategies

Phil - We could use them now. I think I can call them up by heart

Jill - There are 180 of them. It's good with cards. It's good for when you get stuck. It might say 'have a cup of tea' or 'turn it inside out or backwards'

Phil - The point is to try and obey the card.

Kevin - Here they are (*google*) in his writing. 'If a thing can be said it can be said simply'. That's number 11.

Jill - I think we should just hold on to that. Not go through 180 of them.

(They write down other things from the wall to add to the cards)

Jill - I would like to identify words of wisdom for emerging artists

Belinda - You want to write your own?

Phil - Read

Belinda - Move

Belinda - Breathe

Phil - Think

Jill - We were talking about being carefree not careless?

Kevin - There is Rilka's Advice to a Young Writer or Poet, with a number of things.

Jill - Shall I read the Letter to Actor D.

Me - This is from Barba?

Jill - Yes it's quite old, 20 or 30 years ago.

(She reads it)

Jill - He talks about the fear of seriousness. Eugenie Barba, he's 84 now, incredibly generous and he's still going. A great, great man.

Kevin - What rang out to me was 'Don't cheat'

Jill - I want something about risking going to the edge. Because that's where the energy lies.

Phil - What's wrong with Risk Falling but Don't. Quite succinct.

Kevin - I like that he says. 'Every performance shall be your last.' and 'The majority of people have no need of us'. So if you want to do this, as if it is the last thing you are saying. 'If being an actor can mean all this to you, then a new theatre will be born.'

ADVICE FOR YOUNG PERFORMERS

Jill - Our Advice for Young Performers

1. Read
2. Move
3. Breathe
4. Be carefree not careless
5. Polish your bullshit detector
6. Don't cheat
7. Treat every performance as your last

Kevin - 'When the joy of theatre wavers, it dies' - Philippe Gaulier.

Jill - This is a bit preachy

PREPARING FOR A PERFORMANCE

Phil - We can read it out and tear it up - Who gives a fuck?

Kevin - But out of context it's quite interesting, so without 'advice to young artists'

Phil - But we will be improvising tomorrow, that would be most enjoyable?

Kevin - I'm not sure about reading the 'Self Accusations' on a scrap of paper - it becomes a performance.

Jill - Kevin reads his and the rest we read the best of the 'I's and the 'You's

(They work on refining the 'Self Accusations' putting them into 'You')

Jill - I was wondering if you want to direct something with the material we've got K?

Kevin - I don't want to.

Jill - If there's some hunch there.

Kevin - Ok.

(Kevin puts his chair behind the performers)

Phil - Brian Eno!

Me - That's novel

Kevin - No I was just moving a chair

Kevin - So shall we do the first part. What was it? Ok one of you is doing it right but not the others.

Please check people don't fall asleep. Keep it subtle.

And enjoy yourself. When you get to the end go on to sequence number two that we spent a lot of time rehearsing. B's got it.

Now do the tidying up of the cardboard sequence and the going out of the door. That we did. And you have to do it by the time the record gets the end.

(this finishes)

Me - So this is the clowning version

Kevin - So it's all about your relationship to the teacher. It doesn't matter what you do. And what you don't know you don't know with commitment. Creating hierarchy by saying one is doing it well. With clowning the failure is the interesting thing. Clowns don't know but they attempt. That's why they are in every culture. The clown is the closest to human beings because they don't know what they're doing. It's all about performers having some bodily presence. And the other great thing is you are all quite vulnerable. You all coped. It's very moving.

Phil - It's the human condition, we don't know what we are doing

Kevin - I used to do this with the Welsh College, you are going to do a big dance performance for your town, rehearsed for year, get to your positions. They cotton on, they know it's a game.

It's the same with naive masks, the person is not really responsible for what comes out but the person running the session is making it safe.

Phil - I like it very funny, very human

Me - And also doing the task very seriously

Kevin - In the letter to Actor D - you were all taking it seriously, not trying to be funny

Phil - I think my favourite card now is Get Over Yourself

Kevin - You know that thing when people are running scenes and sequences, and people have only just learnt their lines there's not much as a director you can do, I would let them run their own play and wander round and look at something else.

TEA BREAK

WHAT'S THE DIFFICULT THING WE ARE NOT SAYING YET?

Jill - What's the difficult thing we're not saying yet?

Kevin - Well in the tea break we talked about the difficult thing (*death*)

And no-one gives a flying fig about what we're doing.

Phil - That's very liberating

Kevin - So throwing that on it's head, if we were young people, what would it be?

Phil - We're going to get found out. We shouldn't be doing this?

Me - What about the question what song are you singing now. Who are you making the work for? What do you want to say.

Jill - That it's all been done before.

Belinda - No ideas are new - it's about how you use them.

Jill - I'm bored. Of theatre.

Kevin - Do something else!

Belinda - Is that true J?

Jill - I love galleries, I love my dog
Maybe I know it too well. The mystery of the language has gone?

Belinda - What would excite you, what would be exciting as a prospect to do?

Jill - I've been a director for past 25 years.

Kevin - What does a director do, in your mind, as opposed to performing?

Jill - I see repeated forms. I want to see new forms.

Phil - Do you like the work of the Icelandic guy, at the Barbican. Incredible.

Jill - Maybe I don't see enough, living where I am. This is not negativity. I'm just trying to find the edge.

Kevin - If there's not an overwhelming desire - don't do it. That idea of your ideas dry up. Burnt out.

Phil - These are such binary ways of thinking about it. Maybe it's fallow germinating different things, needs to be fragile, rather than 'burnt out'. Terrible way of talking to ourselves

Kevin - Yes in winter things are going on under ground. We know that spring will follow. The whole thing of having writers block for 12 years. Somebody liked Picasso had blocks but was fertile and he kept doing. The work, the work only, kept painting.

Phil - Writers block is lack of willpower. Stop whining - write.

Kevin - There are all these judgements. Who are you to say it's good or bad, just do.

Phil - Don't stop.

Kevin - If you're the director and you get just asked to do plays you can just go and do them, or you can be one of those directors who is just called to do. Maybe we don't have to do the most amazing theatre. That thing of being interpretive takes the pressure off. There is something quite good about being a jobbing actor. If you need the money and you need the work do it. I feel like I've been really fortunate doing the things I've really wanted to do that have interested me. Now I feel at the point of actually really quite open.

Phil - You are going to fall. You don't have to be out there hustling.

Kevin - I'm eternally grateful for my father's work for his gas board pension. He got a big pension. As people did in those days. He died quite suddenly, quite young in his 70's.

Phil - There's something vulnerable about walking backwards. It's a really good thing to do. Something we're doing here reminds me of that.

Kevin - In the Kantor, they all came through a sliding door. They also went out backwards.

(They all walk around backwards)

Kevin - There's a sense you don't want to leave, quite tentative

Jill - Servile

Kevin - When Thatcher was made to resign by her cabinet, who knows how she walked out of the room? When they were ganging up on her, did she turn? I do a whole lot with actors about entrances and exits. If you come on from the wrong side, it's unexpected.

Me - Ken Campbell used to say if the actors weren't afraid we'd have no need of stagecraft.

Phil - I did a workshop where people got very vulnerable when I told them to try to walk backwards.

Kevin - Entering the room, if you're high status, or low, or a thief or...

Phil - Here's an idea. 24 hours keep a diary of the different doorways you go through, each one is different task, a whole new trip.

David Bowie walking to the microphone and by the time he got there, wow, what did he just do!

Kevin - Just jeans and a shirt and his stagecraft. 1st circle to himself, 2nd to the audience, 3rd beyond that. He was so relaxed, no dancing. 2003. You got a sense he was singing to you. And his voice.

That question you posed Jill what is presence?

This morning when we were doing those exercises. These ageing bodies, it was actually quite impressive.

Belinda - Well it's very interesting to watch older people. You just don't get the opportunity. You get it more now.

Kevin - James Joyce said the truth comes through in mistakes. 'Mistakes are the portals of discovery'.

Phil - Wonderful. I'm going to steal that.

Kevin - You learn more from your failures

Phil - The worst thing you can say to a younger artist is 'that is a failure'

Kevin - Another 'Songs for Drella' - I've got a brillo box and I say it's art.

Belinda - Mistakes are the portals of discovery.

Jill - What would a - I'm talking about Friday - what would the National Theatre of Wales young staff expect least?

Kevin plays 'If money is all that it takes' from [Songs for Drella](#)

You've got the money, I've got the time
You want your freedom, make your freedom mine
'cause I've got the style it takes
And money is all that it takes

You've got connections, I've got the art
You like attention and I like your looks
And I have the style it takes
And you know the people it takes

Why don't you sit right over there
We'll do a movie portrait
I'll turn the camera on
And I won't even be there
A portrait that moves, you look great I think

I'll put the empire state building on your wall
For 24 hours glowing on your wall
Watch the sun rise above it in your room
Wallpaper art, a great view

I've got a brillo box and I say it's art
It's the same one you can buy at any supermarket
'cause I've got the style it takes
And you've got the people it takes
This is a rock group called the velvet underground
I show movies on them, do you like their sound
'cause they have a style that grates
And I have art to make

Let's do a movie here next week
We don't have sound but you're so great
You don't have to speak

You've got the style it takes, kiss
You've got the style it takes, eat
You've got the style it takes, couch
You've got the style it takes, kiss

THANK GOD IT'S FRIDAY!

PREPARING FOR A SHARING

We talk about facts and Kevin reads a poem called 'Escape' by D H Lawrence.

*When we get out of the glass bottles of our own ego,
and when we escape like squirrels from turning in the cages of our personality
and get into the forest again,
we shall shiver with cold and fright
but things will happen to us
so that we don't know ourselves.
Cool, unlying life will rush in,
and passion will make our bodies taut with power,
we shall stamp our feet with new power
and old things will fall down,
we shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like burnt paper.*

Kevin - It also has a manifesto 'for Enchanted Life'

Jill - I'm glad we only have 5, I think shut up you pompous git

Kevin - It's from 'Unlocking the Magic of the Every Day', 2016

Me - It sounds really modern.

Kevin - I've had conversations about what happens next with Simon and Gwenfair about what happens with the documentation.

Me - I have 13,395 words here!

Kevin - We should probably reflect and talk about what happens next.

Kevin - I have a question about working in a group. Working in a true ensemble. Have we ever worked in a true ensemble, with all it's difficulties. We talk about it would be so great to have a true ensemble.

Jill - I've worked in hundreds

Phil - Most ensembles have a peak. In a moment in time and then they poison themselves.

Jill - And what about *****

D - They hated each other!

Kevin - I was thinking about this. Those moments when the group takes over and it's about the combination of people and it's their vision. Where there are no leaders, there's a group mind, group body. We were talking about advice for young people...?

Jill - You have rules, structures, water pistols to shut people up. The key is recognising when things start to die.

Me - I worked on some questions for you folks last night.

(I read them out and they go on the cardboard boxes)

My questions....

What is the bravest thought you've had all this week?

What fired your belly in the past?

What gave you permission in the past?

What was the most surprising or meaningful show or performance you made in the past?

What is unsayable?

What's left to do?

What stone is still unturned?

What has changed for you about the meaning of being an artist?

Are you done?

What do you want more of / less of?

What would you like to let go of?

What do you forgive yourself for?

On what terms do you do this now?

(They start to put these up on the wall. Over time this becomes making the whole room an installation / performance space. We are talking about Friday. The cardboard aesthetic. The blinds down. Get rid of the lights. Audience will have torches. How will they know where to go, what will they do? Where is the table. If it's too far back will the audience think there will be a performance in the middle. etc)

Jill - So the audience come in looking at the 'exhibition'. There is Kevin and the self accusations and then at a point .

Kevin - I start speaking, at some point it gets louder. At some point you go to the seats and we do the choreography.

Jill - Alex can be the audience, for now.

Phil - How many audience, 5 or 6 torches.

Kevin - Are we gallery attendants?

Jill - No I'm J. I'm not going to pretend.

Me - Do we let them in at 4.15 or do they gather in the corridor? Does it feel like a show or a sharing?

(They go again, working timings of things, with the music on the record player. There is talk about how long the speaking builds for and I say they should cue it and I'm not going to stage manage that.)

Kevin - And also we can get it wrong and if someone goes off piste that's ok

(They work on J's idea of having a list of things they have each done on A3, a history of countries they have performed in and shows made, to go on the wall, for people to read)

LUNCH

They work on the sharing and it's done

THEY ARE SORRY!

Jill - What do you forgive yourself for? What was your fault?

Kevin - Things made wrong, I made mistakes but I did the best I could, I don't go through life going it's all my fault.

Phil - How do you recognise a mistake?

Kevin - Good question?

Jill - There's a residue that stays with you?

Belinda - When it turns out not the way you expected it to.

Kevin - First of all it's knowing what the rules are of what you're doing, I've always found it hard, learning sequences, being left-handed. It's all about fear, which stops you doing things.

Jill - What are you sorry for?

Kevin - Sorry I didn't spend enough time with certain people, to pay enough attention to what was really going on. I don't spend hours agonising.

Jill - What's the shortest way of saying that

Kevin - I'm sorry I wasn't there.

Jill - It's enough

Kevin - Rather than say sorry I would say I wasn't there. Sometimes

Jill - Less. Less.

Phil - I asked Mathilde how rehearsals are going, 'it's too much I can barely breathe'

Jill - I'm sorry I said. So the exercise I think is to recall something you're sorry for and find the shortest way to say it.

Phil - I'm sorry for not.

Kevin - I'm sorry I came.

Belinda - I'm sorry I did.

Jill - I'm sorry I did.

Kevin - I'm sorry I did.

Jill - I'm sorry I stopped.

Kevin - I laughed.

Phil - I'm sorry about.

Kevin - There is a wonderful play about two people seeking their lost nephew, the two characters, they come in really low status, a whole speech, it's really fantastic. It makes the audience feel really uncomfortable.

Phil - I love I'm sorry I came.

Kevin - I'm sorry I ate your food. I'm sorry.

Jill - Once, twice, a thousand

Kevin - I'm sorry for coming to Wales and taking all the funding too many times.

Phil - He's good at self accusation.

Jill - We are capable of finding sharp edge. It's not doing it seriously or self-righteously.

Kevin - That's our secret, we're moving towards the edge, potentially quite dangerous.

Jill - I think we should a challenge for this sharing. My challenge to you Phil is not to make them laugh.

Phil - I feel really uncomfortable about that!

Jill - Belinda I challenge you to take up most of the space.

Belinda - Ok.

Kevin - Jill - I challenge to smile sweetly and gently, judiciously

Phil - I challenge Mr Lewis to do one strategic wink, like a dart.

Kevin - Do we have a challenge to Alex

Phil - Your challenge is to be invisible.

Me - What if they ask me a question?

Kevin - I don't know who said it about resistance, precariousness. It's - gentle tension.

Jill - *(does an exercise about sitting in a chair, and holding the tension of just before the bottom hits the chair, then keep that tension and sit down. Keep doing the work)*

Kevin (& P) - Lecoq's 7 Levels of Tension. Level 0 is catatonic/gravity/hungover, Level 0.5 you have to get up and you can't, 1 is California - relaxed, 2 is neutral/functional, 3 is being drawn towards things, being curious, 4 = is there a bomb in the room, 5 = there is a bomb in the room, 6 = the bomb is about to go off, 7 = the bomb has gone off.

THEN THEY DO THE SHARING....

