

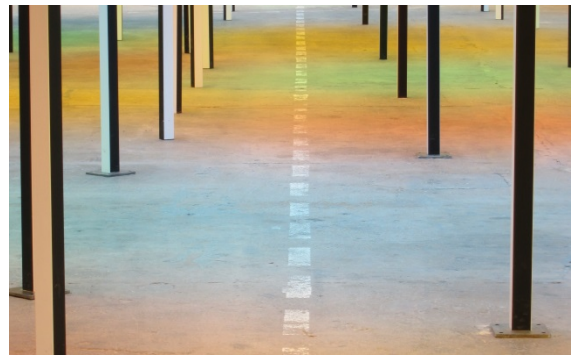
## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF *SPECIES OF SPACES* TWO-WEEK RESIDENCY IN MARSEILLE REPORT

For two weeks in July 2014, I was invited to research a new choreographic work - *Species of Spaces* - which I initiated. The piece involves Eleven Farrer House's four dance artists. *Species of Spaces* is a choreographic project which has been gestating in my head for a long time: Being able to develop it at the Ballet National de Marseille stood as a true achievement in my personal artistic development.

### About *Species of Spaces*

*Species of Spaces* is an innovative dance project which stands as a catalogue of many choreographic situations.

Unfixed dance performance, *Species of Spaces* does not refer to one single dance piece but rather to a collection of countless variations, bespoke performances, all adjustable in duration and layout, flexible enough to be tailored and adapted to many performance contexts.



As a response to a fully malleable modern environment, *Species of Spaces* can be considered, from that point of view, as a perfectly customisable performance product.

### About Eleven Farrer House

Eleven Farrer House was created by four independent dance artists : Gaelin Little, Tara Silverthorn, Lucille Teppa and Cat Westwood.

Projects carried out by Eleven Farrer House sit primarily within the field of dance and movement. Initiation and authorship shift from piece to piece, facilitating an interchangeable structure for its constituent members and collaborators. Individual creativity is supported and nourished through collective exchanges; providing the ground for actualisation of bespoke works and investigation of practice.

In 2013 Eleven Farrer House developed *Disappearance at Sea*, a site-specific performance which took place in and around the iconic Happisburgh Lighthouse (England), thanks to the support of the Norfolk County Council and the Rebecca Skelton Fund. The project piloted *Lighting Shores*, a series of unique site-specific lighthouse performances imagined by Gaelin Little.

### About the Ballet National de Marseille - France

The Ballet National de Marseille is an internationally acclaimed dance company, founded in 1972 and based in Marseille, France's second largest city. The company shares its building with the École Nationale Supérieure de Danse de Marseille (Marseille's National Conservatoire of Dance). For two weeks I benefitted from one of

the nine dance studios of the Conservatoire to research a new choreographic project which I initiated - *Species of Spaces* - working together with the three other members of Eleven Farrer House.

## Residency Outcomes

Our time at the Ballet National de Marseille was a fantastic opportunity for the research and development of *Species of Spaces*. Indeed, it allowed me to work thoroughly, approaching the project on many different levels.

Firstly, the research focused on the content of the piece. *Species of Spaces*, as a choreographic project, is articulated around four themes : Container and contained | From abstract to narrative | Framing the void | Physical language. The movement material itself and content of the piece also respond to those four themes.

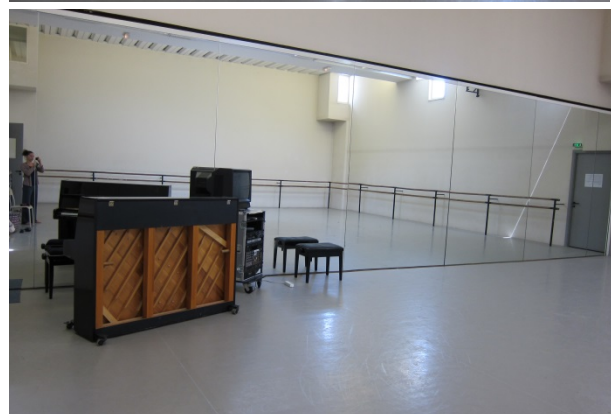
For the two weeks of research I particularly focused on the idea of physical language and individuality. I almost wanted the work to *grow from the duel between the isolated individual and the shared awareness of the group*<sup>1</sup>, just like some of Louise Bourgeois's *Personages* sculptures.

Progressively, throughout the two weeks, three distinct situations seemed to emerge from the material we were working on. We finally ended up developing those three different situations which have now reached quite an advanced state.

In addition to working on the content of the piece, I was also able to anticipate and think about how to promote the piece in the future. That is one of the reasons why, throughout the two weeks of residency, I kept on documenting the process mostly through videos, pictures and notes.

The last day of the residency was dedicated to the filming of each situation. I wanted to be able to use those videos - which, once edited, were posted on Eleven Farrer House's website as work-in-progress - as marketing material to present the work. It was important for me that, though those situations remained incomplete, they could be visible and could show where we are at in the process of creating *Species of Spaces*. They also provide a concrete and realistic example of what I am interested in working with, movement wise and choreographically.

Those videos can be seen on Eleven Farrer House [website](#).



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<sup>1</sup> Louise Bourgeois

Thirdly, as the days passed, while working and rehearsing I was also able to project the piece in a performance context. Reflecting on how *Species of Spaces* could be presented in such a context, I realised that, due to the nature of the work, perhaps different performance formats could be considered. For instance: either selecting beforehand which situations would be performed and in which order; or presenting *Species of Spaces* within a 'double bill' format where the first part of the performance would consist in a succession of a certain number of situations performed in an order A, while for the second part of the double bill the audience would have the opportunity to 're-compose' the piece and to decide on a new order B in which they would like to see the same situations being performed again.

### **Future development of Species of Spaces**

Following on that experience, *Species of Spaces* is now ready to embark on a second phase of development and hopefully to grow into a final choreographic outcome. I would like to refine the work-in-progress that we have developed during the residency so that it can reach its final state. I would also want to create some more situations, so that eventually an online catalogue could be created. I hope to continue to explore and develop further this choreographic project. In order to do so, I am willing to look for further artistic residency opportunities in the near future.

I am delighted to have been supported by the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund, right at the beginning of the process. This award could appear as a strong asset to any of my future applications.

### **Conclusion**



Being invited to research *Species of Spaces* at the Ballet National de Marseille was of great importance not only for myself but also for the three other members of Eleven Farrer House. It stood as both a fantastic opportunity for *Species of Spaces* to progress and a great step forward in the artistic development of Eleven Farrer House.

Indeed, *Species of Spaces* contributes to the enriching and the widening of Eleven Farrer House's choreographic practice and experience, while allowing each of its members to progress on their personal artistic path. The working time at the Ballet National de Marseille greatly benefited both *Species of Spaces's* and Eleven Farrer House's long-term goals, the former as a choreographic project and the latter as a group of emerging artists.

Overall these two weeks of work at the Ballet National de Marseille turned out to be a major experience which enhanced my personal, professional and artistic development, while strengthening Eleven Farrer House as a creative group of early career dance artists. That is the reason why I am genuinely grateful for the scholarship the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund awarded me.