

Anna Pehrsson

On Carving Bodies, Carving Space

Between Järrestad and Gladsax in Simrishamn Municipality there is an extensive Bronze Age carving called the Dancer's Slab. Traces of feet, ships, animals are carved into stone surrounding a figure with bent legs so as to indicate movement, possibly a schaman or a warrior, called the Dancer.

The slab is a result of working hands, pressure, sharp objects and stone touching each other. It is a remnant of movements and thoughts that happened 3000 years ago.

Could it be a score for the present?

I attempt to fit my foot into one of the many chiseled feet.

Is it touching me back?

Rain

Driven by the body practices "Netting" and "Knotting", my hand, an ink Fineliner pen and my body meets the paper, now in an energetic circuit of frequencies and flows. In relation, through an imaginary three dimensional net. I am drawing "Netting", my body spreading out on the paper, permeated by the net, turning the body into a structure that the paper now inhabited. Through blurred vision, by placing my body too close to the paper to wilfully and visually control the outcome, I am sketching "Knotting", a turning point for movement meeting pressure from my hand on the paper, and its release. Through "Netting" and "Knotting" I am drawing myself into staying with the problem, in this case not allowing me to lift the pen from the paper, so as to open up form into a gap where touch negotiate the space between one step to the other.

I map out all images on the slab. They cover four pages. I try staying with the problem. I try having them touch my hand. I try dancing them in the right order. What is the right order?

A dancer is a vessel for movement, she is the connecting point of the energies that make the dance, the same dance that she disappears into.

I go back to my drawing practice. Now in Nature, tracing smoke and water.

Rain

I get lost somewhere close to Baskemölla. I walk more than 20 km that day.
I once again attempt to fit my foot into one of the carved feet of the slab.

I select four images from the slab, the foot, the horse, the ship and the dancer as forms to study though the energetic support of "Netting" and "Knotting". I revisit the images, break them down in order to create them again, through a transforming pulse that installs these bodies as floating, undulating, vibratory presences.

I attempt to carve my dance into space by rhythmical flows, loops and repetitions.
I want to install something in the room that stays after I am gone.

Rain

I imagine a shaman. A shaman of the heart chakra, for days to come. Her legs are bent because she is about to jump, and by her landing drill herself through the universe and years ahead.

After every rehearsal of Carving Bodies, Carving Space, I sketch out its score on paper. Not lifting the pen, staying with the trouble, I try to sense the energetic pathways my dance has taken in the room, drawing these rhythms as I revisit them.

After ten drawings, I carve one of the scores into a piece of Linoleum. Working hands, pressure, sharp objects and mat touching each other. The drawings are the remnants of movements and thoughts that just happened.

I decide to carve one more, but double the size.

My foot is touching the lines. I sense its creases under my sole.

In september 2021, I bring the carved-out mat to Tjörnedala where my drawings are exhibited and the piece will premiere, and call it my Dance mat.

I leave it there after my performance.