

Choreographic residency  
Uferstudios, Berlin

**BOURSE FOCUNA**

Contemporary dance

**Artist-in-residence 2020**

Tania Soubry

from 3<sup>rd</sup> August to  
14<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**Jury**

Ainhoa Achutegui

Mathis Junet

Annick Schadeck

Joëlle Trauffler



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# BIOGRAPHY



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## Tania Soubry

Professional Dance and Performance Education

- 2011-2013 Masters in Performance Making, at Goldsmiths University of London, working with Theatre Maker Anna Furse, composer Greame Miller, Performance makers Mischa Twitchin, Andrea Cusumano, Franko B, Steve Paxton, Marie-Gabirelle Rotie, Julia Bardsley, Nick Parkin, Gerladine Pilgrim, Chitra Sundaram, Maja Mitic and scenographer Sally Jacobs, among others.
- 2008-2009 MA Contemporary Dance Performance, at The Place, London Contemporary Dance School, consisting of my adaptation and performance of "I'll crane for you", choreographed by Deborah Hay, which I learned at the solo adaptation project in Findhorn, Scotland.
- 2007-2008 EDge, Postgraduate Dance Company, at The Place. Working with Rachel Krische, Rosemary Butcher, Rosemary Lee, Phillip Van Huffel, Gabriela Tropier and Jonathan Lunn, with Lauren Potter as artistic and rehearsal director.
- 2004 2 weeks placement with the Trisha Brown Company, New York.
- 2002-2005 LABAN, (London), BA in Theatre Dance (first class honour), dancing for Kirsty Simpson and Athina Vahla
- 2000-2002 SEAD, Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance, (Austria)

# BIOGRAPHY

Interested in energy, vibrations and interconnection, I am working with text, dance, music and performance art. My practice resides within a poetic theatre of consciousness, especially through the body (states, movement, relations) and the voice (spoken word, lyrics, sound). A trans-disciplinary encompassing, stretching and relating, following tensions, curiosities and desires; all that resides within and without. Inner reaches of outer space.

I deal with our contemporary situation, asking questions about the challenges we face, and using fictive imagination so as to deal with the present and create possibilities.

I create work: *Brave (K)new R/Wave research project + creation* (2019/20), *soul-scapes* (2018) in collaboration with Catherien Elsen, *beat'n'shine* (May 2013-May 2014) in collaboration with Nuno Brito within a one year Boost program through Trois C-L, consisting of 8 residencies within Europe, *soulsongdances* (2013), *Two people coming together* (2009), *I'll crane for you* (2008), a Deborah Hay solo adaptation, *Back to the roots with Jimmy* (2008), *it (instead of twenty-one-words)* (2006), *Wholly* (2003).

I participated in the choreographic research and composition program Prototype II, "Vocal presence in choreographic scores", Royaumont, France, 2014-2015, and was part of the Artists' Support Program at the Conway Hall in London, 2014 – 2016. In 2002 I was a dance web participant at Impulstanz, Vienna.

I danced for the following companies: Vedanza, Zephyr in Zanussi, Small Room Dance, Kimatica Studio, the postgraduate company EDge, working with Rachel Krische, Rosemary Butcher, Rosemary Lee, Phillip Van Huffel, Gabriela Tropier and Jonathan Lunn.

I **worked with** choreographers and (dance) artists: Laura Wilson, Tino Seghal, Filip Markiewicz, Simonetta Alessandri, Vangelis Legakis, Fernanda Munoz-Newsome, Aloun Marchal, Annick Pütz, Gianfranco Celestino, Christina Jensen, Anaïs Bouts and Meredith Nadler. I was **involved in** collaborations and within the collectives Explorer, the Conway Collective and currently Exit Map (London).

I **performed in** "Circadanse" at the Luxembourg Pavillon in Shanghai in 2010 and at the Paradiso Lussemburgo Pavillon by Filip Markiewicz at the Venice Biennale 2015.

I **danced and/or choreographed** for the **films/(music) videos**: *Lovebinge* (2020) fiction/documentary film by Simona Ze (London), *No more secrets* (2018), music video by Lunar and the Deception (London), *Trust* (2018) music video for Maria Di-Tommaso (London), *Stream* (2017), artist video for Queen ofW the Wild, *Mnemonic* (2016), artist video by Ingrid Munk Plum, *The Rage and the Grace* (2005), creation into a film of my choreography filmed by Warren Chapman, music by Greg Hall, performed by Anais Bouts and myself, London. *Dance in the Woods* (2001), a student collaboration in a dance film by Thierry De Mey, in Salzburg.

<http://www.taniasoubry.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/taniasoubry/>

<https://soundcloud.com/tasou/brave-knew-rwave>

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

## COLLABORATORS

**Michael Picknett** is a London based composer, technician and performer specialising in music for dance, stage and film, throughout the UK and beyond. He works closely with directors and choreographers throughout the creative process to create scores that grow as the project evolves. Michael is interested in tactility and presence in performance, and this is reflected in his sound design – often using sounds on the edge of perception, or creating moving sound through multi-speaker set-ups. As a composer, his interest is in exploring the acoustic worlds of the artists he works with, weaving texture and noise through pitch and harmony. He trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama gaining both a masters and a doctorate in music composition. In 2016 he was made Artist in Residence at TripSpace in London, UK. <https://michaelpicknett.com>

**Alexandra Baybutt** works since 2004 professionally as a movement artist, movement educator, and researcher. Her work as a dramaturg draws from a diverse range of experiences doing these things in the UK and Europe, North America and Asia. Her work has been supported, amongst others, by Greenwich Dance, Theatre Delicatessen, Bellyflop, The Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund, ERASMUS+ and the British Council. She holds a PhD (Middlesex University, UK) using interdisciplinary and mixed methods perspectives to analyse the politics of festival curation in the former Yugoslav space. Alexandra is also teacher of the Laban/ Bartenieff Movement System. [alexandrabaybutt.co.uk](http://alexandrabaybutt.co.uk)



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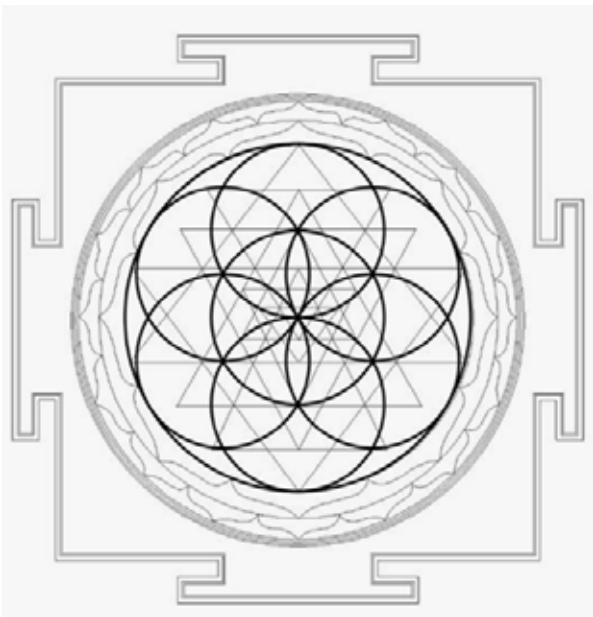
# RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

Brave (K)new R/Wave originated in 2018 and since 2019 is a research and creation project which expresses itself in different formats. It investigates the empowering essence of raving as well as reflecting upon current political and social situations, and the potential to unite around or through dance and dance music, through the vital empowering energy of movement, jouissance and collective joy. "Raving like a big heart beating together in poly voices. Physically raving on verbal raving."

In earlier processes, an immersive performance space invited the audience to relate to music I wrote and sung, reflecting on our current social and environmental situations, as well as on values and the notions of love, health, embodiment, interconnection, community,

relations, togetherness and belonging. Audiences were at the heart of the story and were invited to reflect and respond as they wished, through for example listening, dancing, sitting or lying. Due to Covid 19 this version was not possible.

In this residency I focused on the sound, text and especially the choreographic investigation of a body constantly resourcing itself in cyclicity. I was looking at the booming dancing body and how the energy shifts within the body. Through extended rave dancing I was researching the notion of recycling and regeneration within movement. I was interested in the rhythms of the dancing body, the weight shifts, the groove and hence the body being the rhythm section within this ceremony.



Sri Yantra within the flower of life

# RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

Using the analogy of the 'rhythm section' from bands or electronic music tracks plays with making sound an explicitly kinaesthetic and visual phenomenon. In addition to and within an extended rave practice, I was looking at the notion of devotion within dance, such as through turning and whirling around one's axis and within spatial pathways through space. I worked with the image of the three of us being one organism using the image of the flower of life as a heart, pulsing and flowing.

I also made this work as a homage to the house/garage song "Gabriel" by Roy Davis Jr and Peven Everett which came out in 1996 in Chicago and became an international hit, but still has strong soul and R&B, as well as spiritual roots. It has been accompanying me since I am fourteen and became my rave/clubbing anthem.

I was working most of the residency alone with regular two to three dramaturgical sessions per week with Alexandra Baybutt and weekly check-ins with her and musical assistant Michael Picknett. In the last two weeks we had 22 hours to translate these ideas into a trio, consisting of Alexandra Baybutt, Annick Schadeck and myself, to give the minimum sense of a crowd and collectivity as well as working with the number three and triangles, inspired by the mandala Sri Yantra.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of September we had a sharing at 20.30. We performed what we had been working on within our trio and Michael our sound assistant was running the sound through the speakers while we were also performing text and songs live. We were allowed a maximum of 20 people and a maximum of 45 minutes in the studio. We had to keep 4 meter distance from the audience and the audience had to respect 1.5 meter distance between them.

We placed chairs on both sides of the studio in a semi circle. We invited the audience to sit on either side. Near the end of the showing, after a duo, we invited them into the space to move freely between the speakers and the voices. We encouraged them to walk where they would like while wearing a mask, respecting 1.5 meter distance between each other and not crossing each other too much.

This choreography, which is still a work-in-process, is part of a bigger work around Brave (K)new R/Wave, a collection of adaptable works responding to different environments and curated settings, as well gatherings, events and workshops. It is a project in collaboration with dramaturge Alexandra Baybutt and musical assistant Michael Picknett.

*"The experience of rave may offer a temporary escape route from the strictures of bourgeois Puritanism, [...] of rationalist modernity. But when we get back from the party, have we just left all those structures as intact as they were before?"*  
Jeremy Gilbert

*"It's up to authors to spark the imagination of their readers and to help them envision alternatives to how we live."*  
Ursula Le Guin

*"Pleasure evokes change; it invites us to move, to open and to grow.  
To really transform our society, we will need to make justice one of the most pleasurable experiences we can have.  
We must make just and liberated futures irresistible."*  
adrienne maree brown

## ARRIVAL



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We were kindly received at Uferstudios, shown the building and given keys to the studio. They acquired a Motu soundcard with more than 5 outputs specifically for our project. The technicians Milan and Rob set everything up and with the help of Michael via Whatsapp we connected everything and got it running. The whole team at Uferstudios were lovely, always willing to help and support us and the project, and were great company to have interesting conversations with outside of studio times.

The welcoming by Ann Muller, the head of art at the embassy of Luxembourg in Berlin, was also very warm. We went for a drink, and on another day she joined us and a group of friends including Luxembourgish artists she knows as well for dinner, on the 14th of September she invited me to a lunch with the minister of culture Sam Tonson and other Luxembourgish artists in Berlin at the embassy, the same day in the evening she came to our sharing and by the end of my stay in Berlin she invited me to a dinner at her home with Luxembourgish

artist Eric Schumacher. She also let us know a few times to ask her if we need something.

We were the first four weeks in studio 12, which is the bigger one, and the last two weeks in studio 9, which was the cosier one. The studios were well equipped and a pleasure to work in.

Uferstudios is an amazing place, with a lot happening, such as the festival Tanz Nacht which was on during our stay and we got to see some work. Of course it was quieter than usual due to Covid19. I have to say that I am happy the residency went ahead during this pandemic and we could continue working, respecting safety measures and regulations.

## THE 6 WEEK RESIDENCY

As mentioned earlier, I was working most of the residency alone and on various levels.

I would start at 9am with my morning practice/training, then work on the movement and choreographic inquiry and in the evening do recordings and editing, as well as planning the next day. I also took time to reflect and write, to film, watch and take decisions. And I had time to dream, to visualize, to try out and experiment. I had regular two to three dramaturgical sessions per week with Alexandra Baybutt and weekly check-ins via zoom with her and musical assistant Michael Picknett, who also came to join us for week six and the sharing.

I was investigating cyclicity, regeneration and recycling within movement as well as the notion of a booming body: pulsing, bouncing, grooving, jumping, spinning, turning, flowing and streaming. I was digging a lot of spiralling and figure 8 movements as well as multiple waves within all the planes and multiple body parts. The emphases were on the head and tail connection, elasticity, tensegrity and roundness. I worked with the image of the pelvis as a vessel, a

bowl and a hammock. Within the flow qualities we were researching the different qualities of the arterial and venal blood flow.

Guiding questions within the project, dancing, relating and performing were:

*What movements want to come out?*

*How do ones desires spatialize themselves?*

*What chakra am I moving from or into?*

*Where does the energy move in space? Down, forward, backwards, sideways and/or upwards?*

*How and where does the energy shift in the body?*

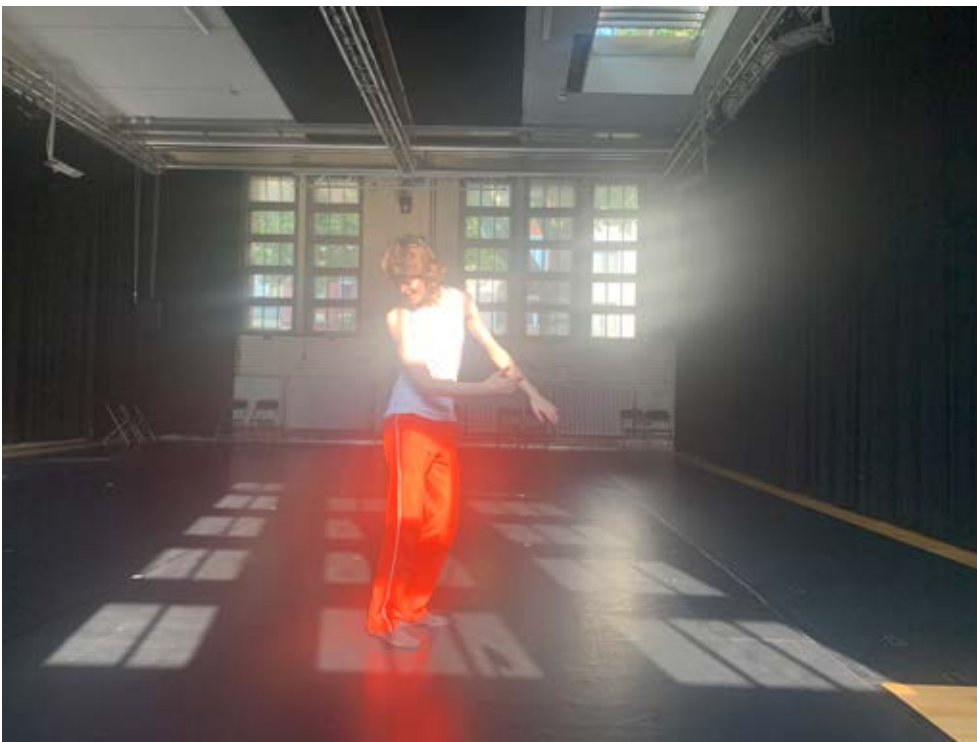
*What is the rhythm of the respected weight shifts and how do I feel the shifts?*

*Where do I initiate the movement and what is the sequencing?*

*How does the energy transform with duration and/or repetition?*

*What is the triangular dynamics between the three of us and beyond us and what does it create?*

*How can we three juggle the energy within the room?*



© Tania Soubry



## THE 6 WEEK RESIDENCY

As I created a 24 minutes sound track in my previous research residency with a lot of text and singing, including poly-voices but only with my voice, I decided to have other people's voices in the creation of this sound track, literally and metaphorically, so as to represent a wider spectrum of people and thoughts and hence a truer expression of poly-voices. I sent questions via email to people I know and whom I thought would be interested to participate, as well as posting them on Facebook, so as to receive unexpected replies and widen the realm of people, thoughts and voices. I am aware that the people the post reached on Facebook are still within a bubble and I would need to use another method to reach a wider spectrum of society. I am also aware that the questions I sent out are big, serious and existential questions, but I welcomed people to reply in whatever way or quality they wished, as well as in the language of their choice. I invited them to send me recorded replies/answers to the questions below, in sung or spoken form. I also asked them to record using their phone or another tool and send it to me as an mp3 or other playable audio file. And I made it clear that it will not be used in its entirety, as I was editing parts into the recording of the dance track. I lastly asked them to provide for each question at least a sentence-length reply. The more the better in this case.

*What worlds would you like to create and shape?  
What alternatives to capitalism do you imagine?  
What would you find hard to let go of within capitalism?  
What are your core values that you think are important as shared values between humans to cohabit this earth together?  
What gives you joy?*

In the first week I did a lot of improvisations and scores for the project, researching the movement qualities and material, as well as trying out a lot of ideas and goes, to then take decisions by the weekend regarding what was interesting and resonating to move forward with. I was also re-recording the initial track I made for the research project to upload it to the website of "Brave new world order", the online triennial that has been set up as the triennial de la jeune creation I was going to participate in in Casino, Forum d'art Contemporain du Luxembourg, has been postponed to 2021 due to Covid19.

## THE SHARING

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of September we had a sharing of 35 minutes at 20.30. We were allowed a maximum of 20 people and a maximum of 45 minutes in the studio. We had to keep 4 meter distance from the audience and the audience had to respect 1.5 meter distance between them.

Anne Muller from the embassy, Simone Willeit, Connie and Mike from the Uferstudios office team, Catherine Lorang, a Luxembourgish artist I met at the lunch with the ministry of culture, Anne-Mareike Hesse, a Luxembourgish choreographer, Christina Ramos, a curator, Barbara Greiner, a producer, Ghisela Muller, the co-founder of Tanzfabrik, Arthur Stäldi from Laborgras, two friends who studied with us at LABAN, Martin Nachbar a teacher I had at SEAD, as well as some friends, some of whom are artists and/or choreographers.

After the sharing we were gathering with the audience outside in front of the studio with Luxembourgish white wine and Apfelschorle. I also met up in the following six days I stayed in Berlin with some of the people who came to have more proper feedback and conversations.

I decided to only share in the sharing what I set out to do in the residency and ideas and material I explored beyond the initial description with which I applied, such as the archetypes and some choreographed conversations I set out to develop further in one or more future residencies and share that material then. It was already a lot of material we had worked on and to perform, which gave us an experience of what it is, how it feels, how it goes together, what the dynamic and the dramaturgy of the journey are, how it resonates, and upon which I can take decisions to continue.



© Michael Nique

## CONCLUSION



© Hannah Kromminga

It was a blessing to have a key to a studio 24 hours 7 days a week for six weeks and to have time alone in the studio as well as with the dramaturge and later with the two performers/dancers Annick and Alexandra and the last week with Michael. It was in general a good set up. It was clear that I wanted to start with some time alone and some time only with the dramaturge as I wanted to deepen and clarify the work within myself and between the two of us before expanding. In retrospect I would have dedicated more time to the trio but I can do so in future residencies. I was initially intending to hold a workshop or open classes where I could meet dancers to work with, or to make a call out. This was however not possible due to Covid19. To limit the risk of organizing a lot and then having to change, cancel or adapt due to Covid19, we decided it was easier and safer to also work with Alexandra as a performer and I chose to ask Annick to join the project as I already worked with her in a previous project where we were both dancers and I have since been interested to work with her. I preferred in this situation to work with people I know. She however was only available some days within the last two weeks so we used the days she was available. The dancers/performers were very committed, dedicated and responsive, picked the material up very quickly and we did get a lot done in the time we had. They also gave everything in the sharing and I got positive feedback on

our performance. We are three quite different movers and performers and that was interesting in how we approached the movement material in our idiosyncratic ways. It was a super enriching time and plenty to reflect, process, learn, grow from and continue with.

In conclusion I want to finish by emphasizing how amazing the residency at the Uferstudios was. I was able to really work in good conditions and get a lot done. I am grateful for this experience and highly recommend the residency to future choreographer applicants.

I would like to give a big thank you to Fond culturel national du Luxembourg for making this residency happen, as well as to Uferstudios Berlin, the embassy of Luxembourg in Berlin and Ann Muller the Kulturleiterin. I also want to thank Trois C-L, Lubelski Teatr Tánca, the Green in Nunhead, London, and Folkestone dance, for residencies and support for the previous research of the project. I finally want to communicate my deep gratitude to the amazing team Alexandra Baybutt, Michael Picknett and Annick Schadeck for their participation, contribution, collaboration and dedication. And thank you to everybody who supported the project, who came to the sharing and/or contributed to making our stay in Berlin even more lovely and heartwarming.

Choreography: Tania Soubry

Dramaturgy: Alexandra Baybutt

In collaboration with dancers/performers: Alexandra Baybutt, Annique Schadeck and Tania Soubry

Text/Lyrics: Tania Soubry

Music/Sound: Michael Picknett and Tania Soubry

Trumpet: Michael Picknett

Piano: Jesse Kyle Hardin

Drums: Nuno Brito

"There was nothing but beauty in my heart" by Bvdub

Recorded voices: Anne-Gaëlle Thiriot, Jean-Luc Jossa, Annique Schadeck, Alexandra Baybutt, Michael Picknett, Michael Nique, Arion Kalentzis, Simona Zemaityte, Maria Almena and Guy Antony.

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS FOR THE PROJECT BRAVE (K)NEW R/WAVE:

Tania Soubry: How did you find my guidance?

Michael Picknett: *You were really clear about where you needed my help/input. Where I wasn't sure what you wanted, we were able to work it out pretty well. For example, when you asked me to record trumpets, that was pretty open and I wasn't sure what you wanted. I thought you probably had a particular sound in mind, and then you sent the track which gave me the right feeling for what you were wanting.*

Alexandra Baybutt: As dramaturge:

*You were fairly open and did not ask me to do anything huge. It was all manageable within the sphere we were doing/working. You were receptive to dialogue. I could support you within the different stages of your process. It was harder to see it from the outside when I was in it as a dancer. I could however still make dramaturgical suggestions such as for when the audience is walking in the space.*

*If I was not dancing in it I could have made suggestions for how the rehearsals would have been run.*

*There was a nice synergy in how we can be in dialogue with ideas.*

As dancer:

*You could have used more different methods to formulate the questions. It was useful when you were building up really slowly, methodically, thoroughly a step by step process, anchoring the material before moving on. You could have looked/watched the dancers more and give more support and feedback.*

Tania Soubry: What is your feedback regarding my leadership?

Alexandra Baybutt: As dramaturge:

*I identified a habit of going into detail, deepening the material before moving on but which results in missed opportunity to visit other things more, to have a different work-flow in terms of what you spend time with. However it is up to you and a valid choice and it is a strong commitment to go deep into one thing.*

As dancer:

*We had little time together to fully work out the relationships to each other, space and sound, which resulted in having the movement phrases nailed, hence a technical approach, and left us with less time to give more attention to the quality, inner intention, relationship, space, sensitivity and sensations.*

Tania Soubry: How satisfied were you with the rehearsals?

Michael Picknett: *We got something together for the showings that worked pretty well. If time was no object we could have done more (more fun spatialisations perhaps), but I'm pretty pleased with where we got to with the showing.*

Tania Soubry: What could have been better?

Michael Picknett: *Maybe it would have been good to show fragments of the piece in the showing instead of trying to make a coherent run, then we could have worked on polishing less material. But on the other hand, it did let the piece have a durational feel which might have been important.*

Tania Soubry: Did you feel that you got the support needed from me?

Michael Picknett: *I sometimes take a while to get what you mean when you describe problems or ideas, but to be honest I have that with all my collaborators and I think it is just part of the process. And sometimes it is because Ableton does unexpected things, that I didn't know about. We always get there in the end though. I know you are balancing your time between making the dance and the music, so I knew you had a lot on your plate.*

Alexandra Baybutt: *Yes. And I wanted to support the work in different ways myself, such as with production assistance, supporting the piece in the different stages of development.*

*We were thinking about the embodiment of the concepts we were talking about, thinking through the ideas through what it is that you are doing. There is always more thinking that can be done for the work and I am happy to think more dramaturgically with you, through other angles and in another time frame about what next.*

Tania Soubry: Were your ideas and thoughts heard?

Michael Picknett: *Yes, I think I had space to put in my ideas. I'm always conscious of whether it is the right time to put new ideas in, and I'm always happy if my idea isn't right and so doesn't get used. Or sometimes it comes back later. That's all fine, normal part of the process. When it comes to technical info or different ways of doing things, you are usually good at picking up on my suggestions and using them.*

## DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS FOR THE PROJECT BRAVE (K)NEW R/WAVE:

Tania Soubry: For a future co-working what should we keep?

Alexandra Baybutt: *This relation functioned well. It be good to keep that sense of regular contact, so as to witness and support the slow incremental changes. We could maintain a regular meeting, if needed a zoom meeting, and show material, if via zoom show videos, via screen sharing, etc to keep it going.*

Tania Soubry: What improvements would you suggest?

Michael Picknett: *I think I would like more time in the studio with the dance. I know you like to compartmentalise it, but I feel a bit outside the process (dance) sometimes. But on the other hand, it's just that I like to see it evolve and see what the sound is supporting, and where that is coming from. But I don't need to be there to do my job. I can definitely keep working the way we have so far too if it is working better for the project/you.*

*Sometimes there is more I can do with the raw audio, that might help with your process. For example, taking out the resonant frequencies etc. Maybe there is a way we can integrate that earlier in the process. For example, if you sent me the phone recordings we received, I could have levelled them (make them all the same volume / compressed the ones that are too quiet then too loud) and cleaned up the backgrounds a bit remotely. Then they would have been easier for you to work on. I can also do similar things for your recordings as well – if you want (although I know you are always making new updated recordings).*

Alexandra Baybutt: *You could have found different answers working with other dancers earlier in the process. Working with dancers you would maybe have discovered things sooner. If you had more time you could also have stepped out more or filmed more often to have a better outside eye.*



Sri Yantra



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für zeitgenössischen Tanz

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Établissement public  
régé par la loi modifiée  
du 4 mars 1982

ISBN 978-2-919794-45-4



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