

CV

Melanie Thompson m.a

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Higher Education

Dartington College of Arts, Totnes, Devon Diploma in Drama and Dance.

Rolle College – Exmouth, Devon Certificate in Education (Drama Major) Distinction.

M.A. in 'Fine Art in Context' University of the West of England, Bristol

2007 Started PhD at U.W.E Bristol (the act of negotiation – personal arts practice)

2026

January – February

Taught 7 dance classes exploring creating material for choreography

May

1 day dance workshop exploring dance and nature.

August – September

Collaboration with Film maker Boris Thompson Roylance from Dead beat films in Tokyo. 1 week residency in gallery and 1 week as part of international festival of performance art.

September – October

3 week residency at the Shoemakers Museum Street Somerset

Collaborating with Helen Ottaway, composer, on a corridor installation and a series of performances.

2025

March – April

Sanctuary Exhibition

Commissioned site specific installation entitled Dreams have no Titles at Heart of the Tribe Gallery.

July

A Sideways Leap

A creative workshop in the Somerset countryside exploring mindful movement and embodied awareness. A collaborative experience led by Charlotte Bolton (yoga) and Melanie Thompson (bodywork), blending breath, movement and creative expression.

August

Walking Through the Senses

Join Melanie Thompson and Safiya Juma for a two-hour sensory walk through ancient landscape. Participants will pause at six locations to respond using movement, drawing, writing, and sound—mapping experience through multiple senses.

September

Giving Sanctuary

Two site-specific installations—one outdoors in the public realm, the other within a gallery setting. Created for Somerset Art Weeks, this work explores ideas of refuge, visibility, and holding space in uncertain times.

2024

May to June – 6 movement workshops – Somerset.

August 30th – 1st – Performance response created for celebration of Brian Catling and film showing. Candid ARTS gallery London.

September 21st – choreographed work for Somerset Arts Weeks – Zig Zag Building – Old as the Hills.

October – November – 6 movement workshops – Somerset.

2023

5th January to 3rd February – Trip to St Cristobal Chiapas, Mexico.

Created site specific performance **Inexterior** in public garden with Rebecca Camilleri.

February – Teaching – Mountview Theatre School, London day workshop – Performance Writing.

17th march to April 2nd – Hatch – Video Installation, Somerset.

April onwards – Teaching Contemporary Dance workshops, Glastonbury, Somerset.

September 22nd – 24th three performances of a site specific performance in the Zigzag building in Glastonbury called ‘Nothing is what it seems to be’. The team included Grace Surnam performance artist and Jo Hyde composer.

October 27th – November 12th – part of a group exhibition called Death and Microwaves – created a photomontage installation for Hatch, Somerset.

October to November – teaching 6 classes of exploring dance composition.

2022

February – teaching performance writing workshop for M.A site specific performance students at Mountview Theatre School London.

March – employed by heart of the tribe gallery as their creative advisor.

March-December – Initiated and curated 9 monthly Art Talks by artists who cross boundaries with their art forms.

May – co- organised the first in a series of live events, continuing through the year under the title of South West Creatives – Socials

July to August – presenting 4 box installations in Summer Group Exhibition at Heart of the Tribe gallery.

24th Sept to 9th October – LOSS – interactive installation, Heart of the Tribe Gallery Somerset.

22nd October-November 6th – Hatch – site specific installation, Somerset.

28th October to 30th October – Exhibition of Sheersburgh Girls, Dartington, Devon.

2021

February – Taught day's virtual workshop for M.A site -specific students at Mountview Theatre School London.

Created 20 live streamed performances over 23 days called Empathetic Shoes for Heart of the Tribe gallery.

March – Women's International Day performance event live streamed from Heart of the Tribe gallery garden.

April – May – Solo exhibition – Where Do We Go From Here ? at Heart of the Tribe gallery Glastonbury Somerset.

June – Talk on Creativity

July – Creativity workshop – one day in Somerset

November – Creativity workshop – one day in Somerset

2020

January – taught Performance Writing workshop at Mountview Theatre School London.

March to May – [Viral Texts](#), an ongoing installation in Somerset, UK.

September – Taught Day's Workshop at Heart of the Tribe Gallery in Installation practice.

2019

April / May – preparing and presenting 2 week residency of **Wildedges**. Consisting of 2 large installations one in a barn and one in a orchard. Plus an open day of live music, talks and walks.

May – Presented **Remembering and Forgetting** (2 solo shows and a film) at major Theatre Festival in Copenhagen, Denmark.

September – workshop in Performance Writing at Aarhus University Denmark.

October / November – Exhibition of **changing** text placards in small garden, Glastonbury.

2018

February – Organising a weekend Seminar in Aarhus about collaborative practice in the UK and Denmark with the Scenet .DK

June – Presenting- Bodies of Water – (talks and films on site specific practice and interdisciplinary work with Helen Ottaway) at the Heritage Gallery Wells, Somerset.

August – Visiting Croatia as a consultant and teacher for a Danish / Swedish / Croatian collaboration project. Teaching site specific workshop.

September – Presenting solo talk – Bodies of Water at Stream 2018 at Dartington, Totnes, Devon.

September / October – playing Forgetting and Remembering in Aarhus for a week.

October – Presented Bodies of Water at The Silk Mill, Frome.

2017

February to November – observed and documented and led workshops in reflexive research practice over 6 visits and made 3 short films about the work of the PAA project.

February to August – Created Forgetting and Remembering(2 solo shows, one I performed in one I directed) which premiered in August in Aarhus Denmark as part of the European City of Culture 2017.

Created Wildedges, an art research project, based in a walled orchard in Somerset in collaboration with the Alfred Gillett Trust.

2016

January – Directed and workshopped large site – specific collaborative project ‘Shaking hands with Ghosts 2’ at Teater Refleksion over 4 day, culminating in a 30 mins travelling performance.

Continued directing solo performance and working on own solo performance over a week.

February – Invited to attend workshop with Agnes Limbos from France, exploring object work.

2015

February/September – Teaching interdisciplinary practice at Den Danske Scenekunstscole Odsherred Teaterskole.

February – Taught 3 day Performance Writing workshop at Teater Refleksion in Aarhus Denmark.

February/March – Facilitating creative process for solo performance at Teater Refleksion.

February – Started work on my new solo performance, residency at Mols. [‘Secret Hotel’](#).

March – 3 day residency at Teater Refleksion for my solo performance.

May – 1 week visit to Athens . Taught P.W workshop as part of a mini residency at Kinitiras studio.

2014

Studying cello.

Invited to Denmark, Mols to give paper on my site-specific practice at a 3 day conference '[Landscape Dialogues](#)' exploring Landscape /Sustainability / Collaboration.

Teaching weekly improvisation workshops in Somerset.

Setting up workshops and auditions for Falmouth University in Denmark.

Created [WAITING FOR THE FLOOD](#) a short film in collaboration with Deadbeat Films. See review.

Collaborated with Kim Van Coels on '[sitting, running, lying, standing](#)' a time lapse short film in Zigzag building Somerset.

2013

Taught Writing & Control workshop weekend at the Arnolfini Bristol with Jerome Fletcher as part of (Writing &)

April/May – Invited to The Teatro ARKA (H.C.E.) Intermedial Cultural Association in Cagliari (Sardinia, Italy), part of the XXVI Anniversary of annual InterActions Project Festival to present solo performance.

2012

Created 2nd film of series Scaping the Land – January 2012

Created 3rd film of series Scaping the Land – April 2012

Research projects Falmouth University College – January to July

Teaching Pilot BTEC performance course – January to July

Teaching Body Language / how to teach a workshop /mentoring /public speaking workshops for the Student Ambassador programme at U.F.C.

Film intervention – Glastonbury Abbey June 30th – July 1st

Charles Hazlewood 'Orchestra in the Field' 3 day music Festival

Site -specific Film and Performance Residency – September 2012 at the Rural Life Museum Glastonbury Somerset

2010-2011

'Shaking hands with ghosts' – a 3 part installation /performance project celebrating the history and demise of Dartington college. Culminating in the curation of 10 artists creating site-specific works in the Dartington estate and a final event as part of Dartington campus festival in June 2010.

Commissioned by the B-side festival to create a series of sites specific works in Portland Dorset 17th– 26th.

September 2010. www.b-side.org.uk See Cut Here..... Film on YouTube.

Started teaching at University College Falmouth part time in all Departments

'Shaking hands with Ghosts' finale – Falmouth University festival – June

Handbag – Lead dancer in performance created by Geraldine Pilgrim commissioned by RSC at the Arnolfini – July

Leading site-specific workshop residency in Italy for Sherman Youth Theatre students from Cardiff – August

Creating first of a series of site-specific dance events in Somerset entitled Scaping the Land – August

Teaching at Falmouth University College – piloting performance BTEC and doing research looking at Performance education in Cornwall – September – December 2011

2005-2010

Appointed Artistic Director of Tor Dance Festival – Somerset, supported by the Arts Council of Great Britain. 2005

2005 – 2006 Funded by CCEP based at Dartington College to be the lead artist in the 'Harbourside' regeneration project, to commission artwork for Beacon Quay in Torquay, Devon. Opening October 2006.

Invited to symposium at Exeter University to teach workshop on site specificity Returning to Wimbledon Art College for summer site-specific project. 2006

2005 -2006 Performance of Slippage (solo performance) at Dance Edition, British Dance Leeds, and performance of Slippage – Made in Somerset, showcase.

2006- 2008 Arts Consultant for the National Wildlife Conservation Park Opening outside Bristol in 2011.

2006 – 2008 Created 'Palace Intrusions' (see www.palaceintrusions.org.uk for archive). A collaboration with composer Helen Ottaway and Wells Palace for a year long series of 12 public art commissioned events in Wells, Somerset.

2009- 2010 Studied VTCT level 3 Massage and Anatomy.

2001 - 2004

10-day residency as part of French Arts Festival "L'ete des Arts" in Cote d'Or en Bourgogne.

4-day residency as part of the 'Wide Open' Exhibition Artspace, Cambridge.

Guest workshop leader for 5-day introduction to site-specific art practice Wimbledon Art College, London.

Commissioned to create a site specific performance as part of a tour of the city 'Tourist of the Heart' – Arhus Theatre Festival Denmark 2001.

Slumber weekend – 24-hour workshop exploring collaborative practice, Devon. April 2002

Invited to symposium organised by C.R.A.N.E – French artists networking internationally, France July

2002 (created new site specific performance work). Created one to one installation/ performance work – Blood works – for 'crossing time' international artists

Festival – Dartington November 2002

Collaboration – with 5 artists, exhibition, Dartington Gallery January – February 2003

The Party – installation with video and slides, Somerset – August 2003

Invited to International Visual Artists Festival – Montreal Canada Autumn 2003 Presented solo installation Performance “Whose journey is it anyway”

Invited to the Sortland New music week, Norway, Spring 2004 Presented solo performance, “Slippage”, taught workshops and gave lecture on Interdisciplinary practice in the arts.

2003 – 2004 Created series of 4 interactive workshops to support sound art work in booklet form for the Education Dept of Living Coasts Torquay, Devon.

2000 – 2004

Site-specific collaboration project with the Jerusalem school of visual theatre – Israel Feb. 2000 – based in Jerusalem Railway.

Scallop project – 1 year residency in small Somerset village and collaboration with artist /doctor Jane Hazlewood. Received local and Millennium funding. Final event Sept 2000 – Chillington, Somerset.

Artist in Residence in ‘Living Coasts’ Project – large public conservation/ visitor centre built in Torquay, Devon. Funding from Dartington College of Arts, R.A.L P and Paignton Zoo. 2001 – 2003.

Teaching Interdisciplinary practice using the body, site and installation at Dartington college of Arts in the theatre and music and visual schools.

1992 – 2000

Formed The Zwillinge Project with Kirsten Lavers (1992)

In July 1992 Melanie began working with Kirsten Lavers (Installation artist) on a series of site-specific Live Art works. Their collaboration was called The Zwillinge Project. Zwillinge is the German word for twins. The Zwillinge Project has made **10** episodes / performances in response to a variety of sites, ranging from a hotel in Hull (episode 6) to a week long walk around the city of Bristol examining the issue of homelessness (episode 10).

Episode 11 – May 1997 – Presented 3 hour slide / lecture of all episodes and overview of whole project at Leicester University and Crewe and Alsager University – entitled Conversing with Sites.

Throughout 1997 and 1998 Melanie presented the lecture within G.B, institutions visiting: University of the West of England, Nottingham Trent University, Dartington College of Arts, Cheltenham College of Arts and Cardiff Art School.

Episode 12 – February 1998 – Launched the final catalogue /documentation of the whole of the Zwillinge Project in a series of 10 limited edition books.

The Zwillinge Project received funding support from Eastern Arts, South West Arts, Hull Time Based Arts and the Arts Council Of England.

1996 invited to become a Research Associate at Dartington College of Arts for two years.

1995 – 2000 preparing major project entitled Eco-Performia in collaboration with Dr Ric Allsop of Writing Associates – meetings in Germany and Denmark.

1996 initiated ongoing collaborative project entitled 10 Studies of Human Nature.

Site- specific performance July 1997 Bristol- entitled Primary Optic practical exploration with Diana Collins, Artist/ performer.

Practical exploration 1997 – 1998 with Sam Usher in dance language conversations.

Site-specific performance, May 1998 Devon Entitled ‘Still Life’ collaboration with Sam Usher/ choreographer and dancer and Jane Hazlewood Artist and doctor and video artist Toby Harewood.

Solo performance ‘The Runway ‘ Devon in collaboration with Dr Diana Theodoras 1999

Teaching a weeks workshop in site specific / installation for ‘DreamWorks’ summer school London, August 1999.

Theatre Practice 1980 – 1990

Joined Cardiff Laboratory Theatre Company, Welsh Arts Council Funded. Toured Europe and was involved in numerous foreign performance /barbers (Odin Theatre) and residencies (Growtoski and his company), site-specific collaborations (Mike Westbrook band) and educational projects (Roy Hart Theatre).

Started relationship with Nordisk Theatre School in Aarhus, Denmark. Taught numerous courses in Theatre and Visual Art practice over a 10-year period.

Spent one year living in Denmark which culminated in creating a professional touring company from the student group Q.U., toured Great Britain, France and Germany with ‘Paint as you want and die happy’.

In 1983, formed ‘Intimate Strangers’ with Paul Roylance, a performance company committed to developing work in collaboration with a range of art practitioners. Received funding support from the Arts Council and South West Arts.

Ran 1 year’s performance project at the Arnolfini Bristol 1988.

Visited Poland in 1983 and France in 1987 on British Council Grants, teaching and performing and collaborating with Akademia Ruchu and The Roy Hart Theatre in France.

Taught two major Theatre Summer Projects at Bristol University Drama Dept. (1987+88)

Teaching regularly at Dartington College of Arts in both the Theatre and Visual Performance and Music schools since 1989.

Early Arts Related Practice

Choreographer and Assistant Director at Cockpit Theatre, London, for two major youth projects.

Toured production of ‘No Regrets’ with ‘Hesitate and Demonstrate’ (visual performance group) G. B and Holland.

Studied with Emil Wolk, Nola Rae, The People Show, Jeff Nuttall and Friends Roadshow, Oval House, London.

Visited West Coast of America for 3 months viewing new dance and performance work Participated in two ‘radical theatre’ school projects led by The Oval House, London (Hayward Gallery).

Worked with Community Inflatable Arts Group ‘Action Space’ – performances at I.C.A. and community venues.

Toured with ‘Salakta Balloon Band’ (Circus based Theatre Company), Holland Directed 2, two women shows, toured Great Britain, performances in Covent Garden Festival.

Toured with ‘Festival of Fools’ G.B and Holland.

Papers presented and published

Landscape and Performance project – Landscape and Performance conference June 1998 Dartington College of Arts

Article published summer 1999 in Germany *Wahrehmen und Gestalten* on Release movement practice within a visual art training.

The Zwillinge project – Berlin, Germany ‘Art in Context Conference’ January 2001.

‘Site Specific Performance’ article published in ‘Theatre in Social Fields’ Graz University Press Austria – Spring 2004

Presented paper on Landscape and Performance at UWE

PLACE research series of talks. February 2012