

**CHROMATICS  
WITH  
PRZEMEK  
KAMIŃSKI**


# **IKO MAGAZIN #10**

**[k] KAMPNAGEL**

**Dear Reader,**

How are you doing?

I've spent the last couple of months roaming around the Valley, together with my dear friend Julia Plawgo. It's been a wonderful time, full of extraordinary events and astonishing encounters. We've been resting and dancing a lot and we've visited imaginary places.

A large yellow circle is positioned on the left side of the page. A black line drawing of a hand, with fingers slightly curled, reaches out from the right side towards the yellow circle. The line is thick and expressive, suggesting a sketch or a calligraphic style.

Launching this Magazine, I recall a quote by Tim Ingold, who wrote that “the landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them”.

I invite you to wander around this short publication, to manoeuvre, to find your own trajectory within texts and images contributed by Katarzyna Słoboda, Claire Lefèvre, Aleksandr Prowaliński, Mateusz Szymanówka and myself.

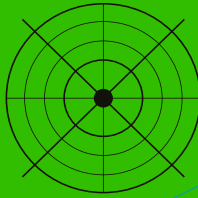
Hope you enjoy and see you soon, in the Valley!

**Przemek**



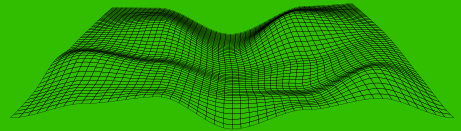
### Part 1

In which they receive a map from the Wild Oak and find out about the Valley's geographic position.



### Part 2

In which they observe the Valley from a distance and realise it looks like a giant fold of soft fabric, shiny silk perhaps.



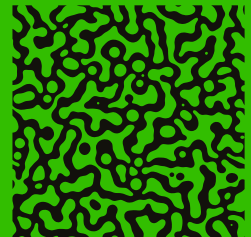
### Part 3

In which they maneuver through rhizomes, twist their sneakers and grow in two directions simultaneously. They begin to store nutrients in their fingertips.



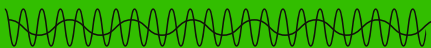
### Part 4

In which they end up in damp mud, have a hard time walking and need to step vertically.



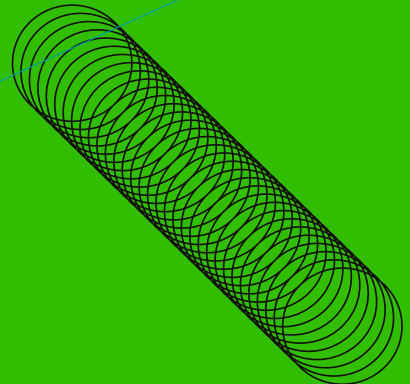
### Part 5

In which they cross to the other side and, in that very moment, time starts to twitch in triplets, and each second lasts five counts.



### Part 6

In which they find a path, made of naturally occurring volcanic glass rocks, that leads to the Gate.



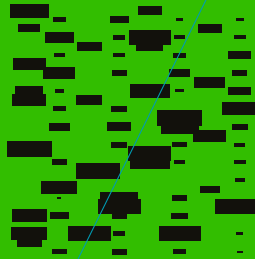
### Part 7

In which they confuse the Gate with the Altar and stand amused, right in front of it.



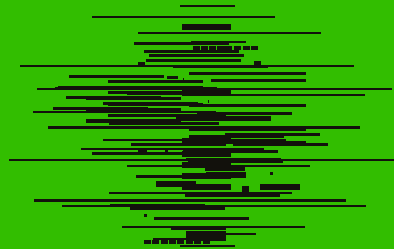
### Part 8

In which they find a book titled "We Might Have Lived In The Future" and start reading it through movement.



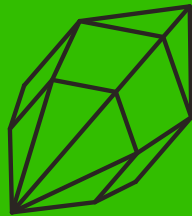
### Part 9

In which they dance with a buzzard in a hollow, just below the sea level.



### Part 10

In which they close their eyes and listen in order to decode a sound of unknown origin. They realise it is a sound of water and they are not far from its source.

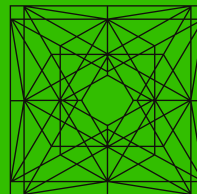


### Part 11

In which they pick a small stone up off the ground, take a few steps back and throw it into the river. They feel embraced by a childhood memory.

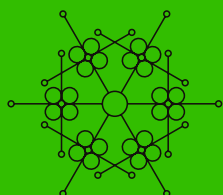
### Part 12

In which they have to jump across six stepping stones in order to reach the gate. On the other side, the landscape is greener. Even the river is green.



### Part 13

In which they have to provide a password in order to enter the gate. It consists of a sequence of twelve movements that they perform without much thinking as if the movements would naturally leak out of their bodies.



### Part 14

In which they rest by the river and encounter a celestial dust cloud. Their eyes start to fill with specks of a rejuvenating substance.

# MELTING INTO THE LANDSCAPE

## SOME THOUGHTS ON PRZEMEK KAMIŃSKI'S CHROMATIC CHOREOGRAPHIES

KATARZYNA SŁOBODA

"Because the sunset, like survival, exists only on the verge of its own disappearing.  
To be gorgeous, you must first be seen, but to be seen allows you to be hunted."

Ocean Vuong, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

When I think of the colour green, I become aware of movement: light rippling, and the stirring of stalks and leaves, invisible to the eye. Rather than invite us to eat, the vivid brightness of green prompts us to feel things and smell them. Green is the colour of plant blood; it stands for vitality which declines in sync with the waning of warmth and sunlight. Landscape is not deprived of colour: it is green, then yellow, and then brown, before fading slowly to grey.

Landscape offers a way of conceptualizing nature and imbuing it with aesthetic qualities – and the underlying assumption here is that we are part of the landscape. The embodied eye pauses for a moment, taking the scenery in, taking a mental still and filtering the impression through its sensual apparatus. This is what eco-poets have taught me. Landscape distorts the boundaries between place and space. It wants to remain unchanged in our memory – but we know it is subject to constant change. It may have something in common with spacing, which I conceive of, after Jean-Luc Nancy, as "a movement extending space into time (or the reverse); indeed, a movement spreading the point (or moment) at which space and time come into contact." <sup>1</sup>

Set in green, and set within a landscape, choreography dissolves, softens, loses its outlines. At the same time, it sharpens the senses which arm the body. The body is where choreography draws maps of pleasure which reconfigure with each new experience. Choreography steps outside the circumference of the rational and the tabulated, heading towards imagination; towards that which has yet to be thought, but is already being sensed. And yet, I am not seeking to pit opposites against each other. The territories choreography enters are no less real; they exist, they are alive. Green stands for the pulsing of the earth and the oceans; it is a concoction of light / sun and water / sky. Entering a landscape of green enables us to abandon the familiar and become part of a process that is vitality – in other words, change. As Tim Ingold has observed, "to regain the currents of life, and of sensory awareness, we need to join in the movements that give rise to things rather than casting our attention back upon their

objective and objectified forms. We need, in a word, to undo the operation of inversion, abandoning the fixities of genes, images, recordings and landscapes for the generative movements, respectively, of life, light, sound and weather.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus dissolved, choreography follows a trajectory of desire and longing, both of which always relate to human and non-human bodies, objects, weather phenomena and other processes which take a physical form, if only briefly. According to Lauren Berlant, “desire describes a state of attachment to something or someone, and the cloud of possibility that is generated by the gap between an object’s specificity and the needs and promises projected onto it. This gap produces a number of further convolutions.”<sup>3</sup> Berlant goes on to add that “a relation of desire creates a *space in* which its trajectories and complexities are repeatedly experienced and represented; and as its movement creates tracks that we can follow on *the body* and in *the world*, it creates an urge for mapping.”<sup>4</sup> Placed in a landscape, the urge for mapping is fulfilled through the sensual actions of an attentive subject who cultivates an ongoing, shifting and pulsing relationship with their surroundings.

Translated by Joanna Błachnio

**Katarzyna Słoboda** is a curator, researcher, writer. At Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź she curated exhibitions such as *You come, We'll show you what we do. On dance improvisation* (2013) (with Sonia Niespiałowska-Owczarek), *Frames of Reference. Choreography in the Museum* (2016) (with Mateusz Szymanówka), *Moved Bodies. Choreographies of Modernity* (2016), *Prototypes 4: Agata Siniarska, (Land)slip* (2020) among others. Edited several publications on dance, choreography and contemporary art. She is a recipient of Grażyna Kulczyk fellowship in the field of contemporary choreography and Młoda Polska scholarship (2018). She is a member of *How to touch movement? Body Materialities, Social Choreographies and Queer Feminisms* Kem School programme development team.

<sup>1</sup> Translator’s note to the Polish edition of *Corpus* by Jean-Luc Nancy, trans. by Małgorzata Kwietniewska (Gdańsk: słowo / obraz terytoria, 2002), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Lauren Berlant, *Desire / Love* (New York: Punctum Books, 2012), p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Berlant, p. 15.

# LINOCUTS

**ALEKSANDR PROWALIŃSKI**



**Aleksandr Prowaliński** is a light and set designer, painter, graphic designer. Graduated from Minsk State University of Arts, Faculty of Painting and Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Department of Graphics. In his works and light design projects, he focuses on constructing spaces by means of colours, oscillating between monochromatic planes and stratification of light. He collaborated with a number of theatre directors and choreographers, such as: Anna Nowicka, Grzegorz Jarzyna, Przemek Kamiński, Mariusz Treliński, Marta Ziótek.



# COLOUR AS A BODILY EXPERIENCE

MATEUSZ SZYMANÓWKA IN CONVERSATION WITH PRZEMEK KAMIŃSKI

**MSZ: Your choreographic research around colour started with two performances dealing with the colour blue: *Pharmakon (it radiates)* and *Blue (ribbon dance)*. What sparked your interest in this topic?**

PK: I came across the book *Chromophobia* by Scottish artist and writer David Batchelor. He defines chromophobia as a fear of colour and shows that in the West, since Antiquity, colour has been systematically diminished and degraded. It has been regarded as something superficial and unworthy of serious consideration, alien and therefore dangerous. I was fascinated by Batchelor's ideas and arguments. I started to wonder how I could respond to them artistically and choreographically. And I used this spark as an invitation to focus on colour as a primary quality of experience, as a matter, material, something to work with through dance. I am not really sure why I chose blue in particular. Perhaps, blue chose me.

**MSZ: This research interest of yours came together with *Blue*, a movie by Derek Jarman, and *Bluets*, a book by Maggie Nelson.**

PK: When I started researching the colour blue, I soon realised that its cultural history was so rich that I could spend my whole life making performances about this one colour. This, of course, felt overwhelming. I started looking for a particular perspective, something that would narrow down the scope. Jarman and Nelson are very poetic in their style of writing and film-making, respectively. Engaging with these two

cultural texts made me aware of a very interesting relation between poetry and colour and this approach resonated with me. I realised that both poetry and colour escape normalised forms and definitions. Hence, I started to think about colour from a queer perspective. There is this one definition of queerness by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick that could possibly be a definition of colour, too. She says that queerness is "an open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning." I was interested in thinking about queerness and colour together, approaching colour anew, as something unfamiliar, to be discovered. As Nelson and Jarman did in their works, I explored my personal perspective on the topic, through dance.

**MSZ: Is this poetic quality also something that interests you in dance?**

PK: I think this is why I still work with dance as a medium. For me, dance escapes logical understanding and activates experiential registers. It forces us to focus on what it does, instead of what it says. There is something beautiful in a dancing body, and I believe that embodiment is one of the most radical strategies nowadays. Hence, I was interested in working choreographically with colour - not only as visual material, but as a bodily experience. In preparation for this interview, I revisited one of my old notebooks and found a quote from *Interaction of Colour* by Josef Albers. He says that "colour sensitivity and awareness can constitute a major weapon

against forces of insensitivity and brutalisation". I guess that in these chromatic choreographies, I am trying to reflect upon this quote through dance.

**MSZ: How did the movement research start?**

I departed from a very basic question: How to dance in blue? I started to work with the tools I had at hand, such as somatics, especially Body-Mind Centering. I reflected upon body systems that could provoke a movement of colour, and I began practicing movement that I tried to initiate from my kidneys and bladder, that I connected with blue. At the same time, I was observing how working in the studio and being always surrounded by colour, influences my body. This observation reminded me of another somatic practice that I incorporated into the process: ideokinesis. Originally, ideokinesis is based on visualisation and images by working with them through movement. It's a lot about letting the movement emerge in order to train the nervous system to produce new neuromuscular patterns. I was using colour as an image and waiting for movement to emerge. I remember, I had a feeling that movement was leaking from inside of my body, to the outside. Slowly, through daily practice, a movement language started to form itself.

**MSZ: In the movement material you also refer to the history of art.**

PK: When I was working on *Pharmakon (it radiates)*, I went to Barcelona to visit the Picasso Museum.

There, I saw a series of works from his Blue Period. Many of those paintings are painted on top of other paintings. At some point, art historians used x-ray to discover other works behind them. This idea of layering images, visible and invisible, something behind or beneath something else, has been very inspiring for the construction of the piece. On stage, I am embodying Picasso's images, activating them through a somatic perspective and recomposing them into movement sequences. This is also why, in *Pharmakon (it radiates)*, I used a hanging blue screen as a set design. I transferred this post production technique into the theatre and treated it as a condition for experiencing the work, as a gesture towards the audience that invites them to activate their imagination. A blue screen is used for image manipulation (also known as chroma keying). It allows separately filmed background footage or a static image to be inserted into the background. In *Pharmakon (it radiates)*, I am wearing a blue costume, in exactly the same shade of blue as the screen. On the one hand, the costume significantly amplifies the movement initiated from the inside through its texture and fabric, and on the other hand, it enables me to become a screen, a site of projection. I melt with the background. The title of the piece amplifies an open-ended reading of the work. The meaning of the word *Pharmakon* is unclear. It is an ancient Greek term that can mean medicine or poison, and also something that must be sacrificed.

**MSZ: *Pharmakon (it radiates)* and *Blue (ribbon dance)* are like sister works, or maybe one is more like a B-side of the other. How did they come into being?**

PK: When I was working on *Pharmakon (it radiates)*, I gathered so much movement material that there were many leftovers, things that didn't make it into the final edit. During the rehearsal process, I was invited to contribute to a queer cultural festival, Pomada, in Warsaw, to present a performance just two days after the premiere of *Pharmakon (it radiates)*. I decided to re-use these leftovers, to create something complimentary, that would reveal yet another aspect of the process. *Blue (ribbon dance)* consists of two parts. First, I move against a dense soundtrack, that consists of a voiceover reading of excerpts of texts by Nelson and Jarman. I pulled them out

and arranged them according to a bittersweet logic of their own. There is no linear narrative. From reflections on the history and theory of colour, through imaginary scenarios, to personal reflections on love, grief, and loss, these texts activate different registers. This part ends with the following words by Derek Jarman: "Blue brings night with it. It stretches, yawns and is awake." Then, this contemplative atmosphere changes. Upbeat, techno music enters the space. When creating this part of the piece, I was looking for yet another reference, and a way to prolong the somatic movement and ornament the space. I knew about the piece *Ribbon Dance* by my friend and choreographer Frederic Gies and I asked him to share with me the score of his performance. Frederic uses a pink ribbon in his work, and I chose a blue one (of course).

**VIDEOLINK 2: <https://vimeo.com/269658134>**

**MSZ: In your current research at K3 with dancer Julia Plawgo, you are working with the colour green. What would you like to expand in this research?**

PK: The current research is inspired by a science fiction novel by Ursula K. Le Guin *Always Coming Home*. It is a story about people living in the future, who reinvented the world after the collapse of contemporary civilization. This reading pushed my interest in choreographic world-making. In this current project, I would

like to examine how a certain world, one created on stage — with its own logic, rules and forces — can become a condition for a bodily journey of two performers. I am trying to construct an imaginary landscape.

**Mateusz Szymanówka** is a dramaturge and curator, currently working at Sophiensaele in Berlin, where he is responsible for the dance program and the curation of the festival Tanztage Berlin.

# DEAR TRAVELLERS

CLAIRE LEFÈVRE

When was the last time you took a trip?

When did you last lace up your trekking boots and set yourself on a journey?

When was the last time you did something for the first time?

In French, we have a word to describe the feeling of being an outsider: we call it 'dépaysement' (literally 'out-of-countryness'). It can mean both, the unsettling feeling of being out of place, and the sense of awe one may feel when far away from home. "When the unlikeliest of adventures seem possible."

I felt it today while I watched Przemek and Julia slowly mapping the space, one smooth step at a time, covering ground alongside the green linoleum river. It was like the smoothest hike. They kept spiralling toward one another, searching for light like sunflowers. Again and again taking in the views. Unafraid of thunder and wild beasts, they kept stroking the air with tendril-like fingers. Methodically lost, growing, meeting, expanding. According to Brown "adaptation reduces exhaustion. No-one bears the burden alone of figuring out the next move, and of muscling towards it. There is efficiency at play. Is something not working? Stop. Change. If something is working, keep doing it. Learning and innovating as you go". I thought about that a lot.

I also thought about birds of paradise and the elaborate dances they choreograph for each other. Meticulously spreading their colourful wings in convoluted shapes in an attempt to attract a suitable mate. Seduction as survival.

I also thought about Silvia Federici saying that "to call something natural in capitalist patriarchy is to give it a death sentence".

I thought about my colleague Gaia talking about the *Rite of Spring* and honoring all the women that made the artwork possible (from Diaghilev's mecene to all those who played the sacrificed virgin) and who were forgotten in the shadow of Nijinsky's 'genius'.

I thought about watching the *Lord of the Rings* with my older brother and his nerdy friends, how I hated the war and the orcs but loved seeing the hobbits frolicking in high grass.

I remembered countless hikes my mom dragged us on as disenchanted teenagers and how upset she was that we had lost all our sense of wonder.

I thought of cancelled plans, delayed flights, lost suitcases, missed trains and suspiciously abandoned backpacks, and how far away from this kind of travelling I felt here. And I thought of you, who will next visit the Valley, in person or in your dreams or through a screen.

I would love to hear about how that trip goes.

Until then, I wish you well.

xx

Claire

**Przemek Kamiński (Poland)** studied at the HZT Berlin and works as a choreographer and performer in Berlin. His works have been shown at the Art Stations Foundation in Poznań, at HAU Berlin, Kunsthalle Zurich, Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź, Nowy Teatr in Warsaw or at the Sophiensaele in Berlin. As a performer, he has worked for Juan Dominguez Rojo, Isabelle Schäd, Nicole Seiler, Jeremy Shaw and Julian Weber. Between 2018 and 2019, he received a mentorship from the PAP Mentoring Programme.

During his residency at K3, Przemek aims to begin with the colour green in order to deepen his approach to chromatic choreography – choreography that deals with colour or is produced by colour. The experience of colour shifts from being visual to physical, an experience that recalibrates our senses. Przemek approaches colour as a landscape and as an imaginary reality, searching for its potential to release connections, desire and pleasure.

For the K3 Magazine, we invited Przemek to create the 10th edition to share an insight into his research.

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## IMPRESSUM

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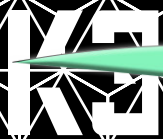
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