

The child and I

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The artistic practice-led research project 'The Child and I' involved one-to-one artistic collaborations between myself and two children, aged 10 and 14 respectively. I initially set out to develop an approach that would focus on the clarity and integrity of the child's ideas. However, I quickly found that I had inadvertently set up a provocative situation; the constellation of adult and child in a relationship that was neither parental, care giving, therapeutic or educational in nature seemed problematic, and forced me to (re)locate my interest in the child. What did I want from her?



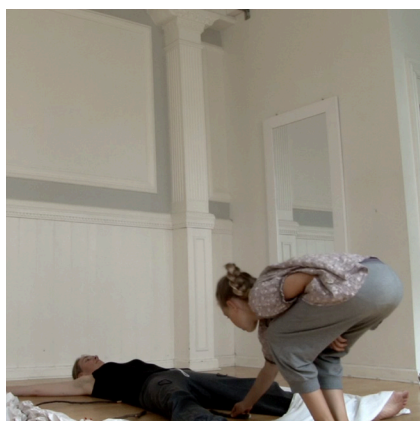
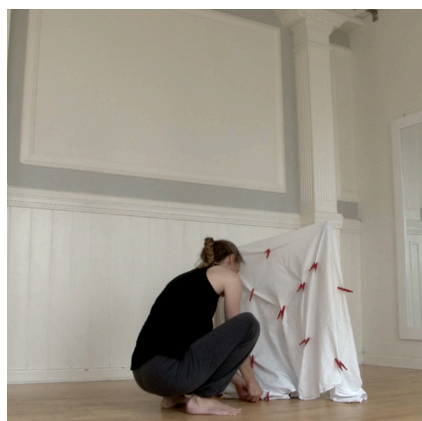


Tempting as it was to tap into the potential of the child as Other, and make use of the powerful ambiguities proposed by placing a supposedly unknowing, innocent and sometimes unpredictable performer in a staged space, my default position as an adult required me to provide circumstances to protect and support the child in her creative and personal development.



A gentle and supportive approach was a prerequisite for the child to engage in and contribute to the situation, and through our collaborations we – the child and I – found a practice that operates between these two areas, using tasks of object handling and mimicry to produce daily art works.







Contributor: **Laura Navndrup Black** is head of the Dance Partnership education at The Danish National School of Performing Arts. The presented video stills are excerpts of a research project undertaken during MRes studies in Performance and Creative Research at University of Roehampton.