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# Experiential Walks for Urban Design

Revealing, Representing, and Activating  
the Sensory Environment

 Springer

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# Chapter 7

## Walking Together: Towards a Common Movement



Ekaterina Shamova

**Abstract** This article is part of an on-going research that focuses on artistic projects that engage their participants in a collective walk. Proceeding from a hypothesis that a relation might be formed which would characterize a collective presence in a given situation that the author calls a common movement, an attempt is made to understand the ways of its development. This relation would be first anchored in an individual immediate experience in a multitude of its aspects (sensory, bodily, kinaesthetic, imaginary) as a manner of being in the world, in the surrounding space and with the others. There would then be a passage from an individual experience to something that is shared by a group of people walking together and that could potentially attest to the establishment of the common. The idea of the common would also embrace the initial demands and intentions on the part of the commissioners and the artists' protocols. The interweaving of these elements and their foundation in the immediate lived experience in a given situation might help to characterize the complex relation that emerges as a common movement.

**Keywords** Experience • Common • Walk

Referring to the title of the present article, I suggest zooming in on a process that underlies a certain number of projects that propose their participants an experience on a certain time span, under a protocol that embraces bodily and sensory dimensions, the relation to the environment, to the places and ambiances walked through, and to the others. In this chapter, I will speak about the projects of some artists (mostly choreographers or dancers), such as Mathias Poisson and Alain Michard, Robin Decourcy, Myriam Lefkowitz, the group La Folie Kilomètre, who work on these issues in their projects.

Table 7.1 briefly outlines the practices of these artists. Basically, the experiences they propose take a form of a walk, and most often this walk is collective. This is the

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first part of the title—walking together. It brings us to a series of questions. How is a group formed? How do we walk and experience the surrounding world together?

The part which is not mentioned in this title but is implied, concerns the experience of each individual participant making part of a collective walk. What kind of bodily, sensory, imaginary experience does a participant undergo? The individual experience and the formation of a group could be articulated with the question of movement. In my hypothesis, there would be an opening of an individual's experience to something shared with the others which I would call a 'common movement'. A common movement that would characterize the experience that underlies the collective presence in a given situation, in the immediacy of the relations formed with the space, with the others, and with the experiences proposed. It would rely on the multitude of features of an individual experience (sensory, proprioceptive, bodily, imaginary) and on the ways it ties in with the experience of the others. This notion would be linked to the idea of the common which would embrace a political perspective that is constituted through the different dimensions of the project (the demand of the commissioners, the concept and the protocol of the artists) and relies on its experiential implications (the lived experience and the presence together). I will try to approach this notion as well and the possible ways of its progressive formation.

I will analyze several projects based on the materials collected (interviews with the different parties to the project), as well as with the theoretical background anchored in movement analysis, contemporary dance, anthropology, sociology and philosophy, which make part of my on-going research. Namely, I will address three projects which took place in France. They are 'Promenades Blanches' [White walks] by Mathias Poisson and Alain Michard and 'Attention à la marche!' [Attention to walking!], a collaboration of several artists produced by the Bordeaux-based *Bruit du Frigo* and the *Bureau des Guides* from Marseille. The third project, 'Toile d'écoute' [Hearing net] by Myriam Lefkowitz, will help to understand the modalities of a one-to-one interaction and the experience that emerges between two people walking together [26–31].

The reasons of interest for this research lie in the observation of the recent attention, both on theoretical and practical scales, to the questions of walking, the issues of bodily and sensory experience, the relation to the surrounding space. In this respect, to name some of the references in the field, the works of Julie Perrin, a French researcher in dance, can be mentioned. She has written on such projects as 'Promenades Blanches' (on the question of the relation between experience and its graphic representation) [15], or on the project 'Walk, Hands, Eyes: a City' by Myriam Lefkowitz and the elements that underlie its experience [16]. She has also reflected on the aesthetic implications of walking in contemporary dance [17]. Other researchers, such as Elise Olmédo or Mathilde Christmann, have also studied the projects of Mathias Poisson, the latter focusing on his scores [23], and the former on sensible maps [25]. Alix de Morant, art and theatre historian, has studied extensively the contemporary choreographic practices in situ, including some projects of choreographic walks [3, 4]. Marie Bardet, another French researcher in dance, has studied the qualities of walking in the domain of contemporary dance [1].

**Table 7.1** Represented artists and their respective practices

Artist(s)	Short bio
Alain Michard	Alain Michard is a choreographer. Taking contemporary dance as a starting point, he works with different media (cinema, music, photography, text). His themes of predilection are voyage and walking, a research of a community, art history and the living memory. Many of his productions take place in public space and are based on the perception and the imaginary of cities and landscapes. He has collaborated with such artists as Nicolas Floc'h, Jocelyn Cottencin, Stalker, and choreographers Mustafa Kaplan, Loïc Touzé. He has also participated in the productions of Odile Duboc, Marco Berrettini, Boris Charmatz, Xavier Marchand (theatre) and Judith Cahen (cinema). One of the vectors of his work is the active engagement in the education of young dancers, but also of non-professionals, students or artists. <i>Source</i> <a href="http://www.alainmichard.org/BIO">http://www.alainmichard.org/BIO</a> [26]
Mathias Poisson	Mathias Poisson is a visual artist, performer and dancer. Initially graduated as a graphic designer, he pursues choreography studies. He works first as a set designer and then as a dancer. He collaborates with such choreographers as Anne Collod, Catherine Contour, Pierre Droulers, Emmanuelle Huynh, Xavier Marchand, la Revue Éclair (Corine Miret and Stéphane Olry), Manolie Soysouvanh and David Wampach. Since 2001, he has been developing the practice of urban walks where he draws on different artistic techniques (drawing, sensible maps, text, plastic arts, dance) both in order to represent the experience of the urban space and to invent it. <i>Source</i> <a href="http://poissom.free.fr/?browse=Mathias%20Poisson">http://poissom.free.fr/?browse=Mathias%20Poisson</a> [37]
Robin Decourcy	Robin Decourcy is an artist, choreographer and performer. His first solo performances were influenced by the themes of habitat and voyage, as regarded to a physical and biological being as the first vehicle. Many of his projects take the form of shared experiences with the public and question the norms of social organisation by transforming certain uses of professional techniques, health, economy or spectacle. His work covers a wide range of body techniques, such as contact improvisation, instant composition and continuous composition which he also integrated to create the concept of Trek Dance. Inspired by the Fluxus movement, Butoh dance, walking artists and the history of nomadism, it is a participatory practice that engages through various body states into a dialogue with the landscape settings, natural or urban. <i>Source</i> <a href="http://www.documentsdartistes.org/artistes/decourcy/repro2-9.html">http://www.documentsdartistes.org/artistes/decourcy/repro2-9.html</a> [29] <a href="http://trekdanse.blogspot.com/p/blog-page_201.html">http://trekdanse.blogspot.com/p/blog-page_201.html</a> [38]
Myriam Lefkowitz	Myriam Lefkowitz is a choreographer. Since 2010, she's been particularly interested in the questions of attention and perception. She starts a project that engages a participant and a performer in an immersive manner through vision, touch, walking, and liminary states in-between dreaming and idle state. It is in the continuity of this research that she initiates the project 'Walk, Hands, Eyes: a City'. <i>Sources</i> <a href="http://www.lslaboratoires.org/artiste/myriam-lefkowitz-0">http://www.lslaboratoires.org/artiste/myriam-lefkowitz-0</a> [33] <a href="https://www.lafermedubuisson.com/presentation/centre-d-art/residences-centre-dart/myriam-lefkowitz">https://www.lafermedubuisson.com/presentation/centre-d-art/residences-centre-dart/myriam-lefkowitz</a> [31]
La Folie Kilomètre	La Folie Kilomètre is an art collective formed and based in Marseille since 2011. Its members come from the horizons as different as live performance, plastic arts or urban design. Their productions often take form of performances, expeditions, walks or workshops, blending disciplines and their frontiers. Rooted in an immersive study of the site and a dialogue, their artistic creations propose a writing of the landscape and engage the public to experiment a situation, thus developing a collective imaginary. The collective is interested in the questions of displacement (on foot, in a car, etc.). <i>Source</i> <a href="http://lafoliekilometre.org/accueil/infos/qui-sommes-nous/">http://lafoliekilometre.org/accueil/infos/qui-sommes-nous/</a> [32]

The surge of such research seems to coincide with the interest on the part of institutions of different horizons (cultural, municipal, territorial) to associate walking practices with different objectives (revealing the city or the territory, drawing attention to the specificities of some places and their social and geographic contexts, drawing out new approaches to the city planning from an artistic perspective). Just to mention some recent examples, we can name such projects as ‘Academie de la marche’ launched in 2017–2018 by the Magasin des Horizons of Grenoble, the project ‘Les Marches’ in the framework of the *biennale* ‘Panoramas’ in Bordeaux, the Suburban walks and since recently, the ‘Sentier des Terres Communes’ [Common Land Trail] of the Bruit du Frigo in Bordeaux [39], or the initiatives of the Bureau des Guides on the territory of the Marseille region in the framework of the GR2013 track [30]. Table 7.2 retraces the main features of these projects. These processes are nourished by the interest of artists or choreographers towards these issues in their respective practices.

For the purposes of this chapter, I will try to approach two aspects of experiential walks: experience and its interpretation. The question of experience will be regarded as an individual’s immediate being in the world and the ways in which one structures the space by one’s movements, one’s body, one’s sensations, one’s imagination, one’s memory. In my approach, this experience would correspond to the idea of spatiality that reflects the immediate situation of a sensing subject in a certain time and space. I will then try to move on from this individual immediate experience to a one that is developed in a group of people walking together.

In the chapters that will follow I will present the projects and their contexts. I will further do some analyses of the individual experience of some participants of the named projects, opening up an idea of an experience that is potentially shared. I will then focus on the intentions of the commissioners and those of the artists suggesting that the ways of conceiving a project presuppose a certain idea of the common. Through these insights, I will try to understand the processes of the emergence of a common movement that would embrace, among other aspects, an individual experience and the ways that the individual and the collective experiences might co-exist.

## 7.1 Three Projects: A General Description

This chapter will be devoted to outlining the respective contexts of the aforementioned projects.

The project ‘Promenades Blanches’ was initially conceived by the artists and choreographers Mathias Poisson and Alain Michard in 2006 in Bordeaux while working with visually challenged people. Since then, they developed a concept that uses plastic goggles that blur the vision and engages the participants on a silent walk in a city. The project which I participated in was held in Nantes in the framework of the festival ‘Primavera: Jours de Danse’ [Primavera: Dance Days] organized by the National Choreographic Centre of Nantes on the 12th and the 13th

**Table 7.2** Some projects of walks

Project	Description
Académie de la marche [The Walks Academy], 2018	The Walks Academy was a large-scale project organised by the Magasin des Horizons Art centre (Grenoble) taking walking as the overall theme. By introducing the dimension of walking in a variety of its meanings (as an issue of migration and displacement, as an artistic practice, a social phenomenon, a sport, etc.), the aim was to cover the widest spectrum of questions through a diversity of events (screenings, exhibitions, walks, etc.) and create a cohesion between the artists, the community partner institutions, the audience and the territory of Grenoble. <i>Source</i> <a href="http://www.magasin-cnac.org/exposition/5a0edf429b94911657d9066f">http://www.magasin-cnac.org/exposition/5a0edf429b94911657d9066f</a> [34]
Les Panoramas [Panoramas], 2018 Les Marches [Walks]	Les Panoramas is a biennial organised since 2010 in the Parc des Côteaux as part of the Grand Projet des Villes [Big Urban Project of the Cities] of Bassens, Lormont, Cenon et Floirac, on the right bank of the Garonne river (Bordeaux). The 2018 edition was centered on several walks proposed by artists, as part of the program, which spread across the aforementioned territory and also reached the Nouvelle Aquitaine region. The biennial draws on the issues of the urban development and renovation of a controversial zone of the Garonne right bank (Rive Droite) and aims at changing the image of this territory to attract new audiences through a series of artistic events. <i>Source</i> <a href="http://panoramas.surlarivedroite.fr/">http://panoramas.surlarivedroite.fr/</a> [36]
Randonnées Périurbaines et le Sentier des Terres Communes [The Suburban walks and Common Land Trail]	The Bruit du Frigo association based in Bordeaux has been developing the concept of suburban walks which are exploratory walks of the urban peripheries. The overall initiative was launched by Yvan Detraz, the artistic director, who identified the places and zones of the urban and suburban territory that represent its diversity and potential for discovery (deserted places, allotments, urban voids, factory sites, highlanes, etc.). The project then consisted in ‘creating a continuity of public places in the suburbs’ [5] by means of displacement and walking. The Bruit du Frigo conceived and produced 11 Suburban Shelters which serve as reference points to connect the metropolitan area of Bordeaux. The Suburban walks are two-day walks that inaugurated each of these artworks. They are also organised in order to permit to connect the fragmented and dissociated landscapes of the territory. ‘Sentier des Terres Communes’ [Common Land Trail] is a new concept developed by the association which covers 300 km through 15 loops, each proposing a one-day walk through different suburban landscapes of the Bordeaux territory. <i>Sources</i> <a href="https://xn%2D%2Drandonnespriurbaines%2Dh2bd.fr/">https://xn%2D%2Drandonnespriurbaines%2Dh2bd.fr/</a> [39]
GR2013	The GR2013 track is a series of itineraries that was conceived in 2013 on the occasion of the Marseille Provence Cultural Capital of Europe. It’s a sustainable project that invites to explore 365 km of itineraries that connect 38 municipalities around Marseille. The project was initiated by the Bureau des Guides with walking artists and hikers and now also unites other actors that develop a poetic approach to the territory and the different ways of inhabiting it. <i>Source</i> <a href="http://www.gr2013.fr">www.gr2013.fr</a> [30]

of May 2017. It was double-fold: the first walk took place on Friday evening, and the second one on Saturday morning, with around thirty people participating in each walk. The project began with the announcement of the protocol enumerating the rules of the walk and pointing out the crucial elements. The walk was to be made in silence. The participants split in pairs, one of the persons received the blurred goggles. The other person guided the first one. In the middle of the walk the participants exchanged their roles. Both walks finished in the studio of the National Choreographic Centre.

The project ‘Attention à la marche!’ took place on the 8th and 9th of July 2017. It was an opening project in the framework of the festival ‘Été métropolitain’ [Metropolitan summer] organized by the Bordeaux Métropole. The project was co-produced by the Bruit du Frigo (Bordeaux) and the Bureau des Guides (Marseille). This two-day walk punctuated by a night in a camping was accompanied by such artists as Mathias Poisson, Robin Decourcy, Laurent Petit and the art group La Folie Kilomètre. One of the highlights was the passage through the so-called Suburban Shelters [Refuges périurbains] that make part of the suburban landscape of Bordeaux. These artworks were created by artists or architects with the financial support of the Bordeaux métropole and the production and conceptualisation provided by the Bruit du Frigo. Practically, they serve as temporary accommodation in spring and summer time. From a larger territorial and artistic perspective, they make up reference points of the Bordeaux territory and help to link its parts together, through the experiential, aesthetic and discovery potential that they propose [5]. The heterogeneous nature of this two-day walking project should be mentioned. It consisted of experimentations proposed by the aforementioned artists that take on their respective practices, or on their collaborations (for example, between Robin Decourcy and Mathias Poisson), included narrative and fictional sequences, shared activities, the opening and closing ceremonies, etc. Geographically, the almost 30-km track started off on the campus of the Bordeaux Montaigne University and finished near the Dravemont tram station, having covered a large portion of the agglomeration of Bordeaux and both banks of the Garonne river.

The last project studied here, ‘Toile d’écoute’, was an experimentation proposed by the choreographer Myriam Lefkowitz in the framework of the study days ‘Promenades sonores et chorégraphiques en question’ [Questioning sound and choreographic walks] that took place at the National Dance Center in Pantin (CND Pantin, Paris region, France) on January 12–13th 2018 [35]. These study days were focused on the aesthetic implications of sound and choreographic walks in terms of situated experience, on the place of walking in relation to the notions of landscape, ambience and attention, the ways in which such projects inscribe themselves in the context, the perceptive ecology of a multimodal experience and methods of analysing it. The project ‘Toile d’écoute’ represented a part of the protocol of a larger project initiated around ten years ago, ‘Walk, Hands, Eyes: a City’. The research behind the latter led the choreographer to question the notions of relation and attention, the processes underlying the perception when walking with the other, the interaction of two bodies and ways of its formation, the place of the urban

environment in this relation, etc. [24]. Formally, our version in Pantin consisted of the exercises in the dance studio, guided by the choreographer, and the exploration of the city in duos afterwards.

Table 7.3 retraces the main features of each project mentioned here.

The three projects would differ on a number of points: the goals for soliciting the projects, the artists' protocols, the configuration of the proposed experiences. The project 'Toile d'écoute' was not a collective walk per se, but a walk in a duo. However, the sensory, imaginary, bodily experience in this project, the relation to the other and to the surroundings offers important elements that are coherent with the analysis of the experience in the projects 'Promenades Blanches' or 'Attention à la marche!'.

### **Lived experience: some elements of individual experience as premisses for a common movement.**

Having outlined the frameworks of the projects constituting the corpus of this study, and in order to understand the nature of the collective experience which would presuppose the emergence of what I refer to as 'common movement', I would like to zoom in on some examples of immediate individual experiences. Here, I follow my primary hypothesis according to which it seems important to proceed from the very core of experience, which would be first individual, to be able to draw a vision of the overall experience that might potentially be shared, and to understand the processes which underlie the emergence of something that is common.

For the purposes of my research, I have interviewed several participants of the projects on their bodily states (physical, sensory, imaginary), on their relation to the environment and its qualities, to the other and to the group. As I myself participated in these projects, it seemed to me that certain elements can be comparable. These reflections raise such questions as: What is the nature of our sensations, our bodily, physical and imaginary experience in a certain kind of a project? If it happens to one person, would it be the same for the others? And then, what would happen to a whole group?

Although resurfacing differently from one participant to another, certain elements of various natures (proprioceptive, sensory, bodily) can be identified. For example, a participant of the project 'Promenades Blanches' in Nantes describes her sensations that would point to her overall proprioceptive awareness that emerges in the process of walking: 'I was so glad to rediscover my feet: my feet were talking to me, my knees were talking to me, my thighs were talking to me, everything was in conversation with me, my hand – everything was receptive [...] I had an impression that I touched, that I touched with all of my body' ([47], unedited, author's translation). Progressively, the participant becomes aware of her own bodily state, which in turn would influence her attention and permeability towards the surrounding world—for which she uses the metaphor of touch.

That same participant, in another part of her conversation with me, concentrates on the way that she was hearing the city during the walk and how, it opened her up

**Table 7.3** Corpus study and its key elements

Project	Artists	Date and location	Commissioner and institutional framework	Protocol description	Elements of analysis (non-exhaustive)
Promenades Blanches	Mathias Poisson and Alain Michard	May 12–13th 2017, Nantes (France)	National Choreographic Centre of Nantes; in the framework of the second edition of the ‘Primavera : Dance Days’ (Primavera : Jours de dance) festival	The walk starts with the announcement of the protocol. Then the participants split in pairs where one person puts on the blurry goggles and the other guides them. In the middle of the walk (approx. 45 min.) the roles change	Individual bodily, sensory, kinaesthetic experience One-to-one relation Passage individual experience – duo – collective experience Qualities of the environment Relation to the city and its ambiances/spaces Notion of the form of the group Question of the rhythm Connection between the protocol and the lived experience
Attention à la marche!	Mathias Poisson, Robin Decourcy, La Folie Kilomètre, Laurent Petit	July 8–9th 2017, Bordeaux (France)	Produced by Bruit du Frigo (Bordeaux) and Bureau des Guides (Marseille), in the framework of the ‘Eté métropolitain’ festival	A two-day walk that proposes experiences that originate from the respective practices of the artists, as well as narrative and fictional sequences, staged situations, shared moments	Individual bodily, sensory, kinaesthetic experience Temporalities/ rhythm through various landscapes (urban/suburban/natural) Qualities of the environment Different protocols Inclusion through the protocol Different modes of address Degrees of attention/presence Collective presence
Toile d’écoute	Myriam Lefkowitz	January 13th 2018	In the framework of study days at the CND Pantin ‘Questioning sound and choreographic walks’	On the basis of the protocol of the ‘Walk, hands, eyes: a City’ project	Individual bodily, sensory, kinaesthetic experience Preparatory stage Progressive experience One-to-one relation Relation to the urban environment Notion of attention and of touch Immediate composition

to what was surrounding her: ‘I smiled a lot because I told myself – normally I don’t hear this at all. Even though I’m quite attentive. I take my time to listen. Usually, when I’m waiting in the city, I listen, I like to do it. I like to observe. Now, it was no longer in vain! Everything was allowed to me, I was allowed to listen, as if I had a permission to be fully available’ (ibid.). The hearing dimension was a prominent aspect of this walk (as our vision was obliterated by the blurry goggles).

In this particular excerpt, the participant might also refer to the overall protocol of the project: being open to the surrounding world because we are proposed to do so, and entitled to, through the organised character of the walk (which would make legitimate our presence in a particular way in the city). I will speak at length about the notion of protocol later in this chapter.

The notion of hearing in this respect, could be understood in a multimodal perspective. As I lived it, the bodily and experiential implications of hearing the city were triple fold. On an individual scale, it was experienced in movement and jointly with other senses—hearing something and reaching out towards it, my bodily orientations found themselves transformed, my motricity was solicited in a different way. To enlarge the perspective, in relation with my partner, I could be fully open to the sounds that come to me and be attentive. To address the scale of the relation with the environment, the passers-by, the cars coming and going, a distant sound fading or augmenting, etc. permitted to measure the distance and the volume of the space that surrounded me, the space opening up to me in a progressive, fluid way, orienting me and making me aware of its vastness, shallowness, saturation, etc. These bodily states and sensations would render us more open and available in our experience, in an immediate way, and thus propose the potential of the common.

To take on another element of individual experience, the question of the ground and the relation to it was also evoked. It was about the quality of the surfaces, the cladding, the inclinations, and the bodily orientations and postural adjustments that emerge with them. As for my own experience, in the three of the projects it started from my very first step, though it was experienced differently. Being guided by my partner in ‘Promenades Blanches’ I felt a certain lightness, the surfaces and the weight of my steps were somehow alleviated, being led by my partner. During the two-day walk around Bordeaux, for the most part of the walk, the sensation of my own feet and their contact with the ground, were more pronounced, globally. More particularly, these sensations depended on the different temporalities and the experimentations proposed, and were heterogeneous all along the way.

For my partner in Nantes, ‘when the ground is even, it’s easier, because I feel sure; when there were stairs or we were going downhill [...] it became more difficult’ ([47]: unedited, author’s translation). A participant from Bordeaux told me about his perception when walking on the pavement: ‘In general, the most invigorating moments for me were when we were walking through the forest. The most tiring ones were when we had to walk on the pavement’ ([47]: unedited, author’s translation). Another example links the sensorimotor aspects and the affective relation to the materialities of the city, potentially through a certain feel of the ground: ‘Rather than recognizing places, I recognized things like the entries of the escalators, all those nice sensations that one would have in relation to the urban equipments’ ([47], unedited, author’s translation). This description might as well point to the ground relation (how the surface changes, our relation to our own balance, how it impacts our perception of the surrounding space) as to some other sensory aspects of experience (the particular sound that an escalator emits, the change of level, etc.). Drawing on my own experience in the project in Nantes, I remember walking an escalator with my partner and the sensation of adjusting my

balance, the slowing down of pace, minor adjustments of posture, and then the sensation of almost floating, augmented by the fact of having goggles and being led by my partner.

The relation to the ground and to the surfaces, although treated differently in these projects, might as well attest to a certain bodily and sensory predisposition that develops gradually, in relation to the other or the others, and the environment, which would open up to something that would be shared by the others.

Another example of a spatial and corporeal experience of a participant of ‘Promenades Blanches’ in Nantes gives an account of her gradual coming to terms with the manner of movement that was proposed in the framework of the project: she was first guiding, and then guided herself. She told me that this way of entering into the experience was especially important for her. This helped her to establish the relationship with her partner and to adjust her manners of moving and being. This would not have the same effect if she was first guided. This is how her relation to the space found itself evolving, together with her sensations, bodily orientations and states. For instance, when a part of the walk took place in a park, she made a parallel between the openness and the vast size of the space and her desire to open herself towards it: ‘It’s especially when we entered a park with a big green space and in silence that I became aware of the open space in front of us and how pleased I was to perceive it. I wanted to make vast movements and to breathe more freely’ ([47]: unedited, author’s translation).

These pieces of experience question the different layers that are intertwined in the immediacy of one’s bodily and sensory relation to the surrounding space and the others, thus forming a dynamic and porous entity, bearing the potential of becoming shared by the others and with the others. By making an accent on its immediacy, I would first characterize the experiences presented here in terms of individual spatiality. To lay the theoretical foundation of such manner of being to the world when a person is walking in a specific space-time, here and now, I will call on the theory of spatiality understood as unity of sensing and movement by Erwin Straus, a German neuropsychiatrist, and present some of its premisses.

### **Individual lived experience from a theoretical standpoint. Towards a shared experience.**

More specifically, this point of view is presented in the book *The sense of sensing* initially published in 1935 in German. Spatiality is understood by Straus as a unity of sensing and movement of a person, in the immediacy of their presence to the world in a particular time and space, that he calls the ‘relation of totality’ [rapport de totalité (Fr.)]. In my study, I sustain that the individual experience of the participants of the aforementioned walks would be one of spatiality, i.e. a specific presence to the world where the sentient subject is a being in becoming. The unity of sensing and movement should be seen as something that is constantly renewed, and this way of presence permits to be in communication with the world and in the world [21].

For the purpose of this article I will only stress out some aspects of this definition, which help to formulate the idea of what an individual experience in the

framework of projects of walking is. The individual dimension of the experience is particularly emphasized, and this is something that becomes clear through Straus's reflections. It is only applicable to a particular person, hence, for 'me': 'the *hic et nunc* is uniquely for me, in my world, but the two aspects are a specific delimitation of the totality of my personal relation with the world' (ibid., author's translation). My question then is: how can I analyze a collective experience, by basing myself on a comprehension of an experience that would be first individual? And then, how can I understand that the collective experience, that of a group of people who walk, would also be that of the immediate communication with the world?

In order to find the keys to understanding this issue, I would like to resort to the theory of Tim Ingold, a contemporary English anthropologist, and especially to his notion of correspondence, without insisting on the link between the two theories. I came across this notion in Ingold's book *The Making. Anthropology, archaeology, art and architecture* [10]. In his vision of the world, the anthropologist sticks to the idea that the world would be a 'continuous process' [12] where one would rather speak about matters than objects, i.e. fixed entities. Life, then, would be an 'intermingling which is not formed by connected points but rather by lines that intertwine with each other. It's a question of a meshwork and not of a network' [11], author's translation). To insist on the ever-changing character of the world, Ingold makes a reference to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in what he calls 'the relation not between matter and form, but between materials and forces' [9]. He prefers then to speak simply about things in the world: 'It is about the way in which materials of all sorts, energized by cosmic forces and with variable properties, mix and meld with one another in the generation of things' (ibid.), and the ways that things appear would be a 'particular gathering together or interweaving of materials in movement' (ibid.).

Thus, in Ingold's theory, there is an insistence on the way that things communicate, which would not be 'the imposition of preconceived form on raw material substance, but the drawing out or bringing forth of potentials immanent in a world of becoming. In the phenomenal world, every material is such a becoming, one path or trajectory through a maze of trajectories' [10]. This is what he calls correspondence. Ingold underlines the fluid character of matters and the dynamic relation between things. In the projects I dwell on, a relation would be formed between a particular person and the world, and between several people in a group and the space around them. This relation would develop through movement and rely on various dimensions (kinaesthetic, proprioceptive, sensory, bodily, imaginary, spatial, temporal). The examples treated above from an individual experience's standpoint also showed the progressive opening of one's experience to the other. Would it be one of correspondence? And then, would and how would it lead to a common movement?

### **Opening up to the Other. From Individual Spatiality to an Enlarged Perspective: Case of One-to-One Interaction**

In order to embrace the two perspectives presented in this theoretical framework, I would like to address the project 'Toile d'écoute' by Myriam Lefkowitz. Certain elements of experience that underlie a one-to-one communication in this project

could potentially characterize the manner of being present to the world which would be that of spatiality as described above, and susceptible of opening up to the common.

The experience that we had during this project followed the protocol of the larger project mentioned above, with some modifications. The morning of the experimentation, on the 13th of January, we were about 20 gathered in one of the dance studios of the CND. We split up in pairs. The actual walk in the city was preceded by a time of immersion in the studio. Guided by the choreographer, we gradually entered in contact with our partner through a series of exercises that continuously helped us gaining us some confidence between each other. It was a work on one's own corporeality, on the manners of being solicited by the world, on the sensations that emerge through this experimentation, and at the same time, it was an experience with the other.

Through engaging the touch, the attention, the relation to the space and the objects in it, through moving in the space and with the others, the aim was supposed to make us aware of our own body and the body of the other through one-to-one interaction, considering the implications of the spatial configurations in this process, the relation that forms through this interaction and the environment, etc. This 'preparatory' phase lasted for a little bit more than an hour, after which Myriam gave us the instructions for the walk in the city which roughly followed her protocol developed for 'Walk, Hands, Eyes: a City'. However, the difference with the original protocol was the more limited time of the walk (about 20 min for each participant) and the fact that we were not guided by the trained guides. In fact, in the same pairs we walked out into the neighbourhood surrounding the dance center where each participant guided his or her partner from the studio, exchanging the roles in the middle of the walk. This implied to compose one's itinerary almost on the spot, being informed by the surrounding environment, its qualities, its intensities, and by the relation with one's partners.

In an interview on her project 'Walk, Hands, Eyes; a City', Myriam Lefkowitz speaks about the notion of particular attention. It arises through being with the other and would first be that to oneself and to the other, and then to the surrounding space. She insists on the fact that '[...] if the other is not there, I wouldn't have that much attention towards the environment that I traverse. I think that it's the relationship that produces this particular kind of attention' [24], author's translation). When I asked my partner in walking about the continuity of the experiences that we had, he especially stressed the gradual development of the whole. It was about a certain state of openness, of availability, that is established first towards the partner, and then has its repercussions on what emerges in the city. He 'discovered to which extent, by a progressive physical contact [...], confidence and complicity can be installed. [...] they add the density and the body (in all the meanings of this term) to the urban walk that followed this adaptive phase, this enlarged state of receptiveness' ([43], author's translation).

To go further with the implications of one-to-one interaction and to approach the hypothesis on the establishment of the common and on the emergence of a common movement, I propose to analyse the project 'Promenades Blanches' in this sense. If one-to-one relation formed in 'Toile d'écoute' is prepared by the steadily



**Fig. 7.1** ‘Promenades Blanches’ as part of the ‘Attention à la marche!’ project, July 9th 2017, photo by Bruit du Frigo

attunement to one’s partner’s presence in the studio and then a walk in the city in a duo, it would be insightful to compare it with the ways in which binary interaction develops in the project ‘Promenades Blanches’. The accent made in this project is double-fold: it is made on the collective experience as a group, but it also starts with each and everyone’s implication in the process first as a duo. The analysis of this relation in a duo might inform us on the changes in the bodily and sensory experience of a participant, through a presence with his or her partner, but also, on the progressive interweaving of this augmented presence with that of the whole group, and the surrounding world. The Fig. 7.1 represents a moment of the second day of the project ‘Attention à la marche!’ in Bordeaux where the protocol of ‘Promenades Blanches’ was integrated. The participants split in pairs walk through the suburban areas of the city, guided by their partners, but also forming a group that displaces itself as a whole.

When a participant of the walk in Nantes was talking to me about her relation with her partner, she mentioned that she was feeling confident and protected by her partner’s presence. It predisposed her to a more attentive and at the same time spontaneous experience of the environment: ‘I will be able to live my experience to the fullest. [...] I felt that she was not going to pull away, she was also living this experience fully. I liked that she was giving me the freedom and that I didn’t feel the void, I was secure. It was an exceptional feeling as [...] suddenly it was like a magnetic field where all one’s capacities of attention open up’ ([47], unedited, author’s translation). With the partner’s presence, the immediate

experience is unhampered, the participant feels fully available to welcome what emerges, in a reciprocity with what surrounds her, and potentially the others.

In the book on this project, Alain Michard underlines: ‘The walkers dance, a dance of the walkers. Simultaneously, another dance is created, the one of the duo of the guide and the guided. Together, they invent their own bodily language, through contact, in the intimacy of the body-to-body relationship, as well as through confidence and attention. One feels safe protected by the situation, by the goggles and by the reassurance of the guides’ ([19], author’s translation). Thus, several dimensions find themselves imbricated through the walk: one’s own corporeality, the relation to one’s partner and the others, which in their turn find themselves in correspondence with the surrounding space and its qualities. This is also possible with regards to the proposed protocol of the experience and its components, which I will comment on further in this chapter.

Proceeding from the analyses of the relation in a duo through these two projects, some insights can be made. There is an idea of a reciprocal exchange between two persons who walk. It seems possible to say that the one who guides gives a certain form to the movements and to the sensations of the other, which, in turn, reverberate in the guide. Such a relationship in constant renewal seems to be corroborated by a notion of ‘blindsight’ [regard aveugle (Fr.)] [20] (which M. Lefkowitz also mentions in her interview cited here) introduced by the French movement analyst and dancer Hubert Godard whose stance on the bodily movement and on the ways in which a body establishes a relation with the other and with the space have much informed my analysis of the lived experience from a kinaesthetic and sensori-motor point of view [6, 7]. According to him, there exists a mode of vision that wouldn’t try to name what one sees, but would rather open up to the world: ‘the blindsight is the one that helps to engage completely in the things of the world before giving them a fixed interpretation’ ([20], author’s translation). Godard links the blindsight to the relationship with the other, in order to welcome the other assuming one’s own corporeality: ‘[...] to let the other person enter in you. [...] I cannot but only perceive in my own body the influence of this vision of the other [...]’ (ibid., author’s translation). There would be a porosity in this openness to the world that a blindsight allows to experience in one’s connection to the other. I would argue that such kind of relation would open up to the notion of spatiality, as I defined it here, in the immediacy of the communication with the other that passes by one’s own bodily, sensory and imaginary states. Further questioning would be to understand what the implications are of this way of being as to the collective experience. How can we then characterize the emergence of what we have called a ‘common movement’?

Through the permeability between the two people a relation is established with the surrounding space and manners of being together in the environment, which, in turn, is a reciprocal relation. As the researcher in dance Julie Perrin puts it, ‘the displacement serves the sensible experimentation and the way that I’m walking tailors my perception of the environment, and vice versa’ [16], author’s translation). I would argue that the relation that is formed through movement and through other dimensions (sensory, proprioceptive, bodily, imaginary, spatial) when the two

persons communicate with each other, with the surrounding space and the world, would be that of correspondence, as in Ingold's definition. 'The hand is the interface by which the two bodies are in sync, [...] as they walk side by side, at times in unison [...] Through the mediating hand, the urban body in which we find ourselves immersed touches and traverses us in turn' [22]. It would only be possible through an immediate communication of the two people between them and with the world.

## 7.2 Establishing the Common, Towards a Common Movement

The pieces of analyses of the individual experience and its elements in the projects that constitute my corpus study have pointed to a certain perspective that would presuppose, in the ways of one's presence to the world, the gradual installment of something that could potentially be shared by and with the others. Further, in the framework of a collective presence in a space-time of a particular project, something that I called a common movement, might be formed. It is now important to see the formal perspective of these projects that includes the demands of the commissioners and the protocols and intentions of the artists. In my hypothesis, we can identify an intention of the common in these which would complement the emergence of a common movement as part of the immediate individual and collective experience. In order to lay the theoretical framework of this reasoning, I will first introduce some prerequisites as to the idea of the common.

### 7.2.1 *Towards a Definition of the Common*

I will propose two (non-exhaustive) perspectives: the one that considers the notion of the common and the landscape from a sensitive perspective, and another that addresses the common from a socio-political point of view.

One of the 2018 editions of the journal 'Carnets de paysage' was entitled 'Paysages en commun' [Common landscapes]. According to Jean-Marc Besse, the French philosopher, this edition aims at responding several questions, namely: in 'which way the landscape can be considered as being part of what is called 'the commons'?' and also, 'in which way does the landscape fall within a political interrogation on the construction of what is called 'the common'?' [2], author's translation). Some points seem to be coherent with my reasoning, as, for example, referring to the landscape as the commons by the experience that it proposes:

The landscape corresponds to an ensemble of sensory contacts (visual, olfactory, acoustic, tactile) that we have with the surrounding world. And the quality of these contacts [...] plays a decisive role in what we can call a 'good life' for the humans. The sensitive

experience of landscapes is part of the commons, in a strict sense of this term: it's non-exclusive (everyone can have access to it), but it's rival, and so the question of the politics of the sensitive arises. It means the reflection on the organisation of sensory conditions of an individual and collective existence of humanity (luminosities, sonorities, etc. are part of the questions that planners have to deal with). (ibid., author's translation)

The question of the common touches on the nature of the experience with the surrounding space, and potentially with the others, and in this it would join my reflection on the question of individual spatiality and the ways in which the immediate individual experience could become part of something that would be shared collectively. Another point is raised—that of creating the specific conditions for the experience. That might come in line with my hypothesis on the demand of the commissioners and the artistic protocols that might influence the construction of the common.

The definition of the common, in a politico-sociological sense, states that it would 'be fundamentally a work of the common by an effort of thinking and of action essential [...] to constructing an inappropriable reality that is accessible to everyone, according to democratically established modalities' [13], author's translation). To continue, 'when the 'common' starts to designate the desire of the individuals to get together in order to develop, in an autonomous manner, their life project and activities, this common never stops being experimented' [14], author's translation). The author insists on the common that would be an open entity governed collectively through the ways that are always adjusted, in continuous development. This ever-changing dimension of the common might be potentially explored in the projects that are dealt with here.

In joining the two aforementioned perspectives, the basis can be laid down as to the exploration of the common in the presented projects, and to approaching the possibility of the emergence of a common movement. It would have to deal with the intention of the common, as I hypothesized it, in the ways of putting people together (on the part of the commissioners) in order to propose them something (protocols developed by artists). It would be the immediate experience, both individual and collective, through a multitude of its dimensions (kinaesthetic, bodily, sensory), with the surrounding space and the others.

## **7.2.2 *Commissioners' Perspectives***

As I suggested, in the initial construction and choices for the project there would already be elements that tailor the eventual experience of the participants. These choices might potentially contribute to the establishment of the common.

The project 'Promenades Blanches' in Nantes was held as part of the festival 'Primavera: Jours de Danse' organized by the National Choreographic Centre in Nantes. This edition was primarily open to the city and proposed the public the exploration of the city by movement. With this, the organizers of the festival wanted to show the openness of the centre and its connection with the city, to attract

those who wouldn't go to a dance performance, but rather do something in the city ([46], unedited, author's translation). In her conversation with me, Erika Hess, the co-director of the choreographic centre, underlined that the notion of sharing [partage (Fr.)] is at the core of the activities of the centre, that also goes in line with the politics of its new director, Ambra Senatore (ibid.). The commissioners envisaged a number of choreographic interventions in the city, 'Promenades Blanches' being one of them. They wished to create the conditions for the inhabitants of the district around the centre, as well as the city, for a hazardous encounter with an artistic intervention in one's street, making it part of their everyday life (ibid.). And for this, there was also an intention of proposing something that could be shared by a group of people.

In Bordeaux the context of the project was different, but the intention of proposing a project that could be shared and that would take place in a specific territory was one of the main concerns of the commissioner's demand. It should be mentioned that a program of the rediscovery of the urban and suburban territory of Bordeaux is already in place, and makes part of the larger socio-political intentions of the Bordeaux métropole (a governing body that administers the city of Bordeaux and the adjacent municipalities). Some of these initiatives take place around the Suburban Shelters in the framework of the Suburban walks conceived and organised by the Bruit du Frigo association. But, according to Clotilde Pascaud, head of large-scale events, metropolitan amenities and Suburban shelters department, and the commissioner from the Bordeaux métropole, these artworks are more often perceived as a place where one can come and spend some time, and not as landmarks of an itinerary to discover the territory ([45], unedited, author's translation). The idea was to make this territory visible, and the question that defined the choice of an artistic dimension was: how to connect the different parts of the territory, how to create a mobility? (ibid.) With the initial call for 200 persons, there would be an attempt of establishing a relation between the people and the territory, the conditions for a collective presence, during the time of the project.

Both the commissioners and the organizers, when proposing an itinerary, wanted to give a diversified overview of the territory—'urban, suburban, natural sequences' [44]. One of the obligatory aspects was to walk on both banks of the Garonne river: the Rive Gauche, and the Rive Droite which is less known and more natural. According to Clotilde Pascaud, the goal was not to see the 'beautiful' landscapes, but to provide the participants with an 'exhaustive' overview of the territory ([45], unedited, author's translation). Such choice raises a question of the rhythm that would play on the relation with the spaces, on the temporality of experience, and on the immediate presence with the others.

### 7.2.3 Artists' Perspectives

Lets now address the artistic protocols. I previously supposed that the ways in which the project is conceived might potentially create the prerequisites of the

common. On the web-site of Alain Michard, we read the following description of the ‘Promenades Blanches’:

The city itself is the main material for the performance for which the public is invited to experiment a sensitive reading of it: long, silent and collective walks in the city through a very simple but strong device enable the participants to open a new imaginary. The walkers become a cohesive group connected to the body language. It is an intense experience, both intimate and collective [26].

The walks that are proposed by the artists engage in an individual way, at the same time aiming at a collective experience, through a sensory exploration of the city augmented by blurred goggles. Furthermore, a ‘cohesion’ of the group would be anchored in bodily experience. The choreographer uses the term ‘collective’ to designate the intention behind the project. How, then, do we slide from the individual to the common, as our hypothesis formulates it? What are the prerequisites for an emergence of a common movement in the ways of conceiving and leading the project?

Some insights into the development of the protocol might suggest this shift. Mathias Poisson told me about the evolution of the project since its beginning in 2006 and the ways in which the artists started to use choreographic figures in their walks. How, through the introduction of choreographic figures, the artists can think the ‘form of a group’ ([40], unedited, author’s translation). It would be exemplary of how a group can be represented and how an experience of a group can be thought of. It has to do with the surrounding space, its qualities and the relation to it, and with the ways of moving in this space together. So, one of the ways of forming a group might be that of giving it a form—would it be aligned or dispersed, would it be a circle, would it be a slow walk or a run, would it be a reverse walk or not. If a certain form is given to a movement of a group, will it also be something that informs a common movement? The question of the form of a group is also related to its size. M. Poisson spoke about a ‘phenomenon of a group’ that can arise with a certain number of participants: ‘Between 15 and 23 persons is the ideal number.[...] We can do farandoles in the city, we can form a line, we can move backwards, intermingle, stretch out. It creates collective forms’ (ibid., unedited, author’s translation). In my point of view, it might be a partial indication to the ways a common movement can be suggested. I argued that it is something that emerges through an individual experience, but also forms with the others through a collective presence. It would also embrace the protocol of the project and the ways that a collective presence is thought of by the artists.

The figures that we could perform together during the walk were a remarkable element for me. Slowly forming a circle in a vast park, being close to the others in silence for a period of time, or aligning in straight line, eyes blurred, in front of a vague city landscape, feeling the opening of this space through the quality of air or movement of wind on one’s skin. The individual bodily orientations and motricity, sensory experience would be unfolding in a particular way because our partner is there and we are in a group. So, there would be a double underlying of this

individual and collective experience which is also made possible through a specific protocol, the whole susceptible of giving rise to a common movement.

To continue with this idea and to draw on the underlying of the common as something in constant renewal, as it was stipulated earlier, the foundations of the protocol can be further analysed. On the one hand, the form of the movement, the experiences proposed are thought of at the stage of the preparation of the project. On the other, they are also addressed in the present, during the course of the walk. To sustain this idea, I would like to speak about the question of the rhythm which could be understood both in terms of the primary protocol and in terms of the immediate experience. There would be first the change of places, atmospheres and qualities of spaces traversed: interiors/exterior, open spaces/narrow streets, noisy environments/silent sequences, etc. In another sense, the rhythm, as M. Poisson indicated, is in giving the participants successive times in the experience that is emerging. The role of the artists is to assure the progressive stages of the experience, by finding the right balance between what the participants can do and feel and guiding them sufficiently, ‘accompanying them but not helping’ (ibid., unedited, author’s translation). In this respect, the idea of the gradual evolving of the walk might contribute to the reflection on the quality of the immediate individual experience, and on the ways that a common movement ties in with this experience. There would be something of a co-construction of experience, in the present. This idea might also be corroborated by the presence of the so-called ‘flying guide’ during the walk who ‘observes the whole group and transmits the information to the main guide who [...] is the one who will decide on the rhythm, on the figures employed and the way they should be performed. [...] This is one of the ways to make a group’ (ibid., unedited, author’s translation). I would argue that this kind of relation which is developed through the walk would potentially contribute to the emergence of a common movement.

For the project ‘Attention à la marche!’ in Bordeaux, the artists proceeded from their respective practices which envisage the inclusion of the participants in the walk and propose experiences that aim at creating something that is shared. Nevertheless, compared to the project ‘Promenades Blanches’, it was on different terms, due to the size of the itinerary, the duration of the walk, the number of the participants, the passages between different experiences. For example, as M. Poisson puts it, their goal was not to ‘make sure that our propositions should be fulfilled by everyone. It was to accept that not all the people will listen to us and will follow our propositions’ (ibid., unedited, author’s translation). Robin Decourcy, another artist for the project, told me that he was first worried by the fact that there might be a partial implication in the experiences that he proposed, but that he accepted this state of things. In his experiences, a collective aspect is taken into account, through a certain vision of the body and of a collective presence that is potentially shared, and through an idea of a gradual, progressive experience that emerges implying the bodily and sensory aspects, presence to the other, presence in a group [41].

For example, Fig. 7.2 taken during the first day of the ‘Attention à la marche!’ project represents a part of the experimentation proposed by Robin Decourcy that was at once focused on one’s bodily experience and the relation to the others as a group,



**Fig. 7.2** ‘Attention à la marche’, July 8th 2017, photo by Bruit du Frigo

through a series of exercises (to follow a collective movement that does not discriminate between the guide and the guided, to let oneself be carried by the movements of the other, to connect to the bodies of the others in a spontaneous way):

Taking into account the number of the participants and the duration of the project in Bordeaux, the artist accepted that the experience as it is envisaged by his protocol, would not always be appropriated as envisioned, or at least, not by everyone:

It is my responsibility to propose the techniques that develop [...] by a progression of sensory layers in order for all the bodies to be immersed in it. Where the bones, the organs, the whole body, the nervous body, everything helps to become free, in order to get access to something that wouldn't be theatrical. So perhaps it was one of the difficulties of this project for me – to be able to put the whole somatic work in place. And with 200 people, it's not an easy task. ([41], unedited, author's translation)

The question that I will only outline here will imply a deeper analysis of experiences as they were presented here, and will concern the different modes of presence/attention (being open and present to the experience, but also a whole palette of other temporalities and intensities of one's spatiality: tiredness, a distraction of attention, absence, etc.) during a project of a collective walk. If we speak in terms of immediate individual experience, will and how these different modes of attention question the idea of the common and subsequently of a common movement? Another question is, how can I qualify the range of these different situations and ways in which they might limit the idea of the common movement as I proposed it here?

In the proposal of the group *La Folie Kilomètre*, the collective aspect was also one of the dominant elements. They were working on the logistics of the project as an artistic matter and ensured the preparing of the camping site, the mounting of the tents, the writing of the titles of the itinerary chapters, the distributing of the pages of the road-book, the taking in charge of the welcoming activities, etc. In the ways the artists proceed for their projects, the consideration of the participants as a whole is inherent. It is already inscribed in the protocol. As Abigaël Lordon of *La Folie Kilomètre* told me, they ‘write it. The way we will welcome people, the way we address them, the way we think the rhythm of the walk, the way we consider them. [...] There is an idea of what we share, how each one reacts to what is proposed’ ([42], unedited, author’s translation). This thinking would embrace at the same time each individual participant and their ways of being engaged in the whole, with the others. Also, they ‘propose a framework and let it live inside’ (*ibid.*, unedited, author’s translation), thus insisting on the spontaneous aspect of experience. The potential lack of presence, or attention, was also taken into account, assuring the inclusion in another way. Hence, the distribution of the pages of the road-book or the postcards, putting the tents in the camping in a chromatic circle, in order to ‘be able to address everyone, to welcome each person individually [...] which makes that even if it’s a big group, everyone will be part of it in one way or another’ (*ibid.*, unedited, author’s translation). To go back to my questioning on the different modes of attention/presence that was briefly outlined earlier, such factors as the duration of the walk, its contents, the nature of experience envisaged, should be taken into account in further analyses. In case of this particular project, one can not be attentive all the time, in terms of sensory, bodily, kineasthetic experiences. It should be mentioned that globally it was not thought of in this way neither. The project was rhythmic in this sense too—sensible experiences, but also games, fiction, performances, or moments when we just walk. That’s why the overall framework was important—to be hospitable, to be able to address everyone, in different manners. In this sense, the notion of the common movement should at length also be considered throughout these different levels of experience.

The indications on the part of the artists and the commissioners and the way they think the question of the group and of the collective experience when conceiving the project, renders it relevant to deepen the analysis of the connection between the protocol, the lived experience and the idea of an emergence of a common movement put forward.

### 7.3 Conclusion

In this article I have elaborated on the experience in a certain type of projects of walking in its individual and collective dimensions. The three projects: ‘*Toile d’écoute*’, ‘*Promenades Blanches*’ and ‘*Attention à la marche!*’, have been studied from several perspectives. I proceeded from the idea of an immediate individual experience that would also be shared, thus potentially giving rise to a common

movement. Through the analyses of several elements of such experience in terms of individual spatiality, I proceeded in developing the further idea of something that could emerge as a common movement, through one's bodily, sensory and kinaesthetic experience, relation to the surrounding space, and the others, during the time of the project.

To go back on the question of the individual spatiality in a project of walking, as it was treated in this chapter, I would eventually speak of an experience that is unfolding beyond the simple distance that is walked. It would be an enlarged experience that proposes a dynamic and ever renewing relation with the world, and with the others, in movement. As Tim Ingold writes about the ways of displacement and the experience that envelopes the walker:

[...] the traveller's movement – his orientation and pace – is continually responsive to his perceptual monitoring of the environment that is revealed along the way. He watches, listens and feels as he goes, his entire being alert to the countless cues that, at every moment, prompt the slightest adjustments to his bearing. [8]

Such a definition of the relation to the world in movement might dialogue with what Julie Perrin calls a 'sensitive expansion' [expansion sensible (Fr.)] as a way to respond to the solicitation of the world (in her article on the 'Promenades Blanches'): 'One must lose one's landmarks and geographic orientations in order to invent a new way of situating oneself. This will no longer be in geographic terms, but in terms of a sensitive expansion, with no destination' [15], author's translation). This experience would be the one that unfolds in terms of volume, through a multiplicity of sensations and through the different relations that are formed on the way: the relation to the ground, to the surrounding ambiances, to the climatic conditions, to one's partner in walking, to the other walkers and the passers-by, to the configurations of the spaces. This expansion would also be imaginary and spontaneous. As Mathias Poisson points out, 'it's a floating space.[...] It opens up to those who take their time to observe what they feel in a specific place using all of their senses. Taking one's time to let the imagination react to the sensations' [18], author's translation). This 'blurry' space that the artist evokes might correspond to the relationship with the world that is anchored in one's immediate experience and that would not try to name or to explain one's sensations, bodily orientations, the visible, the tangible. It would rather mean being present to the surrounding world in an immediate way, this only being possible when the other is there, in a dynamic and reciprocal relation with them, in a state of availability that potentially opens up to a shared experience with the others and with the world.

Moving on from this idea, I then proceeded to the definition of what can be considered as the common and which passage exists between the immediate individual experience and the common movement. This reasoning led me to a vision that embraces the initial demand for the project, its artistic elaboration and the concrete experience in a given situation. From the artists' and commissioners' standpoints, some elements were identified that would allow speaking about a certain projection onto the collective experience and onto the common, already contained in the initial intention and the manners of conceiving and leading a project. My further interest would be to deepen the reflection on this complex and

multifaceted relation and to understand how it contributes to the emergence of a common movement, of something that happens to a group of participants, being at the same time an experience of each individual participant.

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## Corpus

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44. Phone conversation with Yvan Detraz, 25 Sep 2017, unedited
45. Phone conversation with Clotilde Pascaud, 05 Apr 2018, unedited
46. Phone conversation with Erika Hess, 10 Sep 2018, unedited
47. Interviews with several participants of the projects 'Attention à la marche!' and 'Promenades Blanches', spring-summer 2017, unedited

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