

# On Scores

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Scores<sup>1</sup> are often verbal instructions or propositions to frame an activity.

Scores are graphics to be translated in space and time.

Scores have been used in many different fields throughout various disciplines.

Scores can be a plan, question, inspiration, (state of) play, structure, framework, libretto, (set of) tools, game (rules), substructure... Some scores are used to generate movement, some to suggest or define an approach to the act of performing.

Scores change our (daily) awareness. They bring other matters than the social contract and symbolical cultural order to the foreground of our attention.

Scores are practiced not rehearsed. With a score you hand over the authorship to the practitioner.

Performing a score often comes with a certain playfulness and lightness in the execution. (We like that, we are inspired by what is happening beyond our own expectation and preconception.)

Scores often imply a challenge — impossibility therefore a certain failure. The complex process of translating something into another medium (often language into a kind of action / situation) is embraced with the curiosity that this failure can create an unexpected outcome. Impossibilities can lead to something one would never have imagined.

A score can play with the nonsensical and impossible to execute, like *'take six steps into the light without taking a step'*.<sup>2</sup>

A score becomes a partner and contacts us with a notion that nothing is wrong and nothing can go wrong. We surprise the score and the score surprises us. We don't need to please the one who has been writing the score.<sup>3</sup>

A score is a vehicle to get to know more about the interrelation between oneself and the world.

Scores can be musical scores, visual art, poetic texts, performance instructions, or proposals for some kind of action or procedure.

Scores have been important to combine improvisation and fixed movement.

Scores connect imaginations, awareness, and activities.

Scores can help to propel out of the studio *into the world*, to trust and engage in the exploration of movement — to not get stuck in habits, to connect dancing to non-dancers, to find playfulness and precision within the individual dancing.

Scores create a being-with: be-with the other(s), the objects, and the environment.

A score: a text, a drawing asks of the reader a practical collaboration.

# The Magical Poetry of Everyday

During 4th IDOCDE Symposium, as part of the REFLEX Track, we shared the following scores of *"The Magical Poetry of Everyday"*.<sup>5</sup> Here we would like to repeat our call, in and around these online spaces, for you to enjoy in your life. Be ready to be stimulated.

## DANCE PIECE X

Think of all your movements in life as dance movements. Breathe, watch, listen, touch, and move between the earth and the sky.

— Yoko Ono, *Acorns publication*, July 2013

## POSITIVE THINKING

Think about your favourite dance teacher and make a list of all the positive things about his/her teaching, his/her personality... Check in with yourself and put a little + on the items that also is true for yourself.

Defne Erdur, *Towards Documentation*, Summer 2016

## TOUCH POEM

Paint your fingertips with color or a substance (lipstick, chalk, ink, food). Write a postcard with the lines of your fingerprints.

— Sabina Holzer, Summer 2016

## SOCIAL PROJECT

Find a way to end war. Make it work.

— Jackson Mac Low, 1963

## DANCE PIECE

Swim in your dreams as far as you can until you find an island.

Tell us results.

— Yoko Ono

## CONFESSIONS ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Write few sentences on something that...

... you would never want to do again.

... bores you.

... made you cry.

... you will never forget.

... inspires you.

— Defne Erdur, *Towards Documentation*, Summer 2016

## TOUCH POEM FOR A GROUP OF PEOPLE

Touch each other.

— Yoko Ono, winter 1963

## RE-VISIT EXPERIENCE

Take 3-5 photos in a session/class. Revisit the images the next day. Write a paragraph under each image. Make sure you do not use any verb that repeats itself.

— Defne Erdur, *Towards Documentation*, Summer 2016

## WISH PIECE

Create a score to brighten up your day. Share it with someone. Act it out together.

— Sabina Holzer, Summer 2016

Wishing to go on with reading, feeling and imagining...  
Other lines, other thoughts, other scores, other lines....  
We suggest to click, click, click on...<sup>6</sup>

## NOTES

1. Scores as a methodical approach became very prominent in the 1960s. There were two major figures engaging deeply with scores in their artistic work: the Bay Area choreographer Anna Halprin and the musician and composer John Cage. John Cage also participated with Halprin's Dancer's Workshop and they both inspired and influenced each other. Halprin used physical tasks and their explorations to generate movements. This was a new approach to create dances not being guided by shapes, but by one's own kinesthetic sense. Working with people of different fields, Halprin had a deep interest in movement as such and the sensations, memories, and emotions that were triggered by them. It was a famous shift of paradigm in dance: suddenly every movement could be regarded as dance. Choreographers like Trisha Brown, Simone Forti, and Yvonne Rainer; the visual artist Robert Morris; the musicians Terry Riley and La Monte Young all participated in these workshop engaging in more improvisatory activities using props, obstacles, sound and speech to generate movement.  
Many of these and others like visual artist Yoko Ono and conceptual artist George Brecht also started to create work in New York around the 60s, which can be seen as responses to John Cage and Anna Halprin. These new works consisted of short, instruction-like texts proposing one or more actions – frequently referred to under the rubric of *event*, *score* or *word pieces*. These pieces came out of an expanded sense of *music* and *choreography*. George Brecht initially wrote short, enigmatic texts he called *event scores*. He wrote them as performance instructions and began mailing them to friends.  
These texts can be read (have been read) under a number of titles: music scores, visual art, poetic texts, performance instructions, or proposals for some kind of action or procedure. Mostly they are tools for something else: scripts for a performance or projects or music pieces, which are the *real art*. And sometimes these works shift away from realizable directions – towards an activity that takes place internally which happens while reading, imagining, or observing what is happening (in the mind). In their direct invitation to enact and perform response, these *event scores* could seem almost absurd literalizations of the 1960s' critical claims for reading – as an *activity of production*. At the same time the concrete, operational dimension of such scores engage a potential acting on materials. (Kotz, Liz [2011]. *Post-Cagean Aesthetics and the Event Score*. In: Robinson, Julia, editor, *October Files, John Cage*. MIT Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, pp.101–140.)
2. Deborah Hay [ausdance.org.au/articles/details/whats-the-score-using-scores-in-dance-improvisation](http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/whats-the-score-using-scores-in-dance-improvisation) [14.04.2017]
3. For a reflection on the freedom of the one performing a score see a teaching example of Malcolm Manning: [idocde.net/idocs/93](http://idocde.net/idocs/93)
4. Score for the performance: *Create a dance to heal the ghosts. Find an appropriate space for it*. Underscore for movement: *Catch the impulses before they become intentions*. (Injection. Sabina Holzer, Spring 2016.)
5. For the call and all the scores that were shared during the 4th IDOCDE Symposium you can visit: [idocde.net/idocs/1562](http://idocde.net/idocs/1562)
6. For more scores as doors to poetic documentation see Anouk Llaurens' contribution *Warming up the Attention*. For some playful explorations with scores within the idocde teachers community see IDOCDE TALKS: [idocde.net/folders/19](http://idocde.net/folders/19)