

## ***(Un)touched(2016)***

**A collaborative artwork by choreographer Angela Woodhouse and Visual Artist Nathaniel Rackowe and dancers Stine Nilsen and Martina Conti.**

Following the very successful premiere of *(Un)touched* part 1 at One Canada Square, Canary Wharf as part of Nathaniel Rackowe's solo exhibition 'Luminous City' this year the collaborators are now embarking on the making of the second accompanying work.

*I enjoyed how human the piece was, how intimate and honest. I was drawn into the 'morphing'- the blurring between two bodies as one, ..they almost slotted into one another - aspects of duality, sameness and separateness.*

Audience response premiere Canary Wharf February 2016



*Un(touched)* is a diptych that explores intimacy and separation as simultaneous events. The audience are invited to inhabit two separate but related sculptures incorporating glass, fluorescent tubes and steel mesh. Our question is how can division allow for intimate encounters? We are interested in the seductive process that draws an audience into a situation for which there may be a psychological or moral dimension.

The project encompasses two distinct but related works. Each explores simultaneous experiences (and contradictions) of intimacy and distance. Both implicate the audience in the experience in differing ways. For the first work Nathaniel has created a corridor-like structure that allows for multiple viewing points from outside, within, and through. The glass becomes either transparent or reflective depending on the sequencing of fluorescent lights attached to the steelwork shifting the accent abruptly from a conversation with another to the isolation with ones' own reflection. Performers and viewers together become part of a visual schema. There is a sense of voyeurism and distanced views, which become checked in the gaze of others seeing you or you viewing others being viewed. The sense of dialogue is replicated and layered. The dancers can only relate to each other through the glass and this division remains a constant. We are made acutely aware of this division as the dancers become progressively bolder in their physical tasks. paradoxically the surface that divides allows for greater risk in their increasingly intimate relationship. Despite this drive to achieve intimacy it can never be realised.

The second work presents a glass platform onto which the viewers are invited to walk. Submerged beneath are the two same performers, whose presence is revealed depending on the shifting light, and viewed by the audience from above. This displacement re-articulates the relationship between the performers and audience. The work takes inspiration from South Korean artist Do Ho Suh's piece 'Floor' (1997) where the visitor is invited to walk on a glass surface under which there are many small figures. This act on the work highlights a dialectic between abused power and the power of human collective action. We re-imagine this dialogue as a live event where the vulnerability of the skin's surface elevates the body, and where a sense of precariousness is derived from the situation in which all those present find themselves. The reality of separation suggests a touch that has no consequences, and yet the act of touch or walking over the surface of a body triggers affecting notions of power, control, and moral (un)certainly. The re-orientation of the vertical plane in the first work to the horizontal plane in the second is intended to provoke and calls to attention to the viewer the ethics implicit in this new positioning that in turn desires a physical response.

Angela Woodhouse and Nathaniel Rackowe 2015

***(Un)touched* is financially supported by Arts Council England, Middlesex University, and Canary Wharf PLC 'Sculpture at Work' program.**

[www.rackowe.com](http://www.rackowe.com)

[www.angelawoodhouse.co.uk](http://www.angelawoodhouse.co.uk)



## Technical Information

*(Un)touched* can be shown in public lobbies, gallery, studio or theatre 'black box' settings ideally with seating retracted.

We will need:

A clean and warm space at least 80 square meters Or two smaller spaces of 50 square meters.

Access to electricity supply

A separate changing and rest area

The assistance of two technical staff for install

A one day clear get- in with culminating in up to two performances with a full run of performances on the second day.

We would ideally run the residency for a minimum of 2 days. The art works can also be viewed as stand- alone sculptures and can be on exhibit for a longer period.

Running time 55 mins in total (2 pieces with a short interval).

Performances: each cycle can be performed 3 times in the day/evening. Audience capacity 70 per cycle. Total capacity per day/evening 210 audience members.

For further details contact Gwen Van Spijk at CUE [gwen@cueperformance.com](mailto:gwen@cueperformance.com)

## Biographies

### ***Nathaniel Rackowe***

Nathaniel Rackowe is based in London, and creates exhibitions and installations in the UK and internationally that combine artificial light and structure in works that animate architectural spaces. Notable projects and solo exhibitions include: MD3, Bangkok Art and Cultural Centre (2014), *The Consequence of Light*, Bodson Gallery, Brussels (2014), *Dynamo. A century of light and movement in art 1913-2013*, Grand Palais, Paris (2013), , *Residency and public sculpture Back Cube* at Den Frie Institution, Copenhagen (2013), *Black Beacon*, Calvin Klein, New York (2011), BISCHOFF/WEISS, London (2011, 2007), Delfina Foundation, London (2010), *Galerie Almine Rech*, Paris (2008). Rackowe has a permanent public sculpture in Victoria, London.

### ***Angela Woodhouse***

Since 1997 Angela has developed a number of innovative dance performance and installation works, many in collaboration with artist Caroline Broadhead. Intrinsic to these works has been the potency of intimacy and of near or actual touch between viewers and performers. Key works include *Court* (2003-6); *Sighted* (2009) commissioned by Royal Opera House 'Deloitte Ignite' Festival and supported by The Place Theatre, and also shown at The Saatchi Gallery as part of 'Collect' in 2015; *Censored* (2010) commissioned by Woking Dance Festival in collaboration with Tate Artist Rooms - Jenny Holzer. *Between* (2011) was premiered at Trinity Laban and continues to tour, most recently at Yorkshire Sculpture Park and at Central St Martin's School of Art in collaboration with The Place Theatre, London.

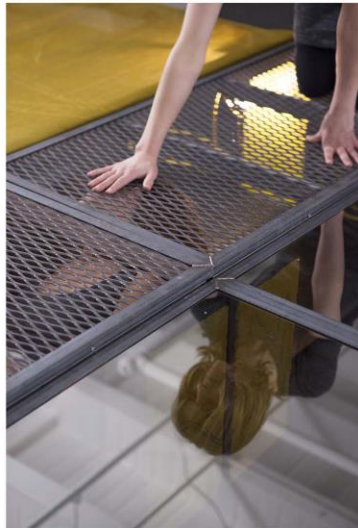
### ***Stine Nilsen (Dancer)***

Stine was born in Norway and moved to London to train at Trinity Laban. After completing her BA she worked with choreographers Angela Woodhouse, Jeremy James and Emilyn Claid before joining Candoco Dance Company in 2000. She is now Artistic Co-Director of the Company. Nilsen has worked with Angela Woodhouse on a number of projects since 2000, most recently the installation *Between* (2011-13).

### ***Martina Conti (Dancer)***

Martina Conti graduated in contemporary dance from Laban, London. She has been a dancer and collaborating artist for Angela Woodhouse since 2007. Martina is also part of Little Constellation, a network of contemporary art focused on geo-cultural micro-areas and small states of Europe. Her work has been presented at Viafarini (Milan), Space for Contemporary Art (Gibraltar), Atelierhaus Salzamt (Linz), Biennial of Young Artists of Europe (Skopje), Santarcangelo Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art Villa Croce (Genoa),

Bonington Gallery and Lakeside Gallery (Nottingham). She is a postgraduate student in performance at Central Saint Martin's / University of the Arts, London.



## Selected Audience Responses

'The dialogue of sculptural form and human form created a context where the audience - me! - could enjoy exploring the poeticism of forms disappearing and commingling. I found the mood created through the forms interacting with each other to be one of deep contemplation. My attention oscillated between the nature of two women on whom it is hard not to project some resonance of relationship: of sisters, parents, transposable interchangeable selves, and of the material properties of things: breath, metal, skin, of the gentle pressure of accumulated endurance, of glass and bright light'.

Audience response: Sharing, Inside Out Festival, London October 2014

'The concept of "touch without touch" was explicit and clear and I enjoyed it very much. I recognised two artful layers that evoked the identity and symmetry of dancers. I was especially intrigued when the dancers' bodies were generating and dissolving'.

Audience response: Sharing, Inside Out Festival, October 2014

'Just wanted to say that I thought the performances tonight were brilliant. The lighting / reflective elements worked magnificently, especially the interplay with the surroundings. I enjoyed watching everyone's reactions. You made so many people stop quite literally in their tracks'.

Audience response premiere Canary Wharf February 2016

Photo 1 Heini Schneebeli;

Photo 2&3 Clara Imbert