

# Digital Bodies + Virtual Spaces

A two day symposium exploring performance and digital world building

January 29<sup>th</sup>/ 30<sup>th</sup> 2026

Anselm Studio 1

Canterbury Christ Church University



**Canterbury  
Christ Church  
University**

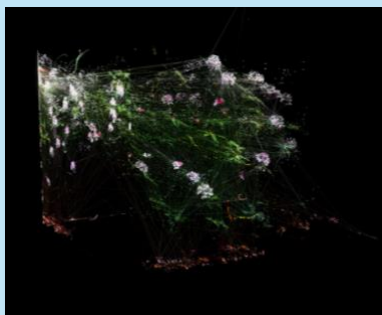
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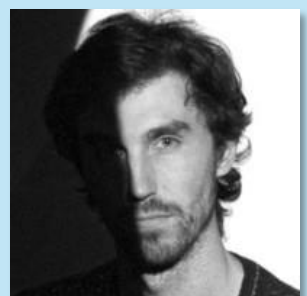
## Contributing Artists

**Dan Tapper (aka @visualcodepoetry)**

Dan Tapper is an artist and creative technologist interested in the intersection between information and experience. His current projects include building sonic VR environments and using machine learning to create new forms of divination. Dan's talk explores his methods of working with



process-based practice and experimental media. Drawing from Dadaism, Fluxus, sound art, and experimental film, **Chimeric Space** dives into how these art forms—often associated with low/no technology—are being recontextualised in the digital age for cutting-edge multimedia works. The talk will also



provide attendees with a practical toolset for incorporating these recontextualised methodologies into their own creative practice.

### **Clémence Debaig**

Clémence Debaig is a dance artist, maker and creative technologist. Her work explores notions of control, empathy, and intimacy, questioning



how technologically mediated interactions influence human behaviours. She is the Artistic Director of Unwired Dance Theatre, creating immersive, playable experiences across virtual, remote, and real-world spaces. Blending



choreography with cutting-edge tech - from wearables to XR - the company explores empathy, connection, and

embodiment. With meaningful participation at its core, Unwired invites audiences into thought-provoking worlds where dance and technology work together in the most unexpected ways.

### **Hannah Whittaker**

Hannah Whittaker is a performance maker, creating interactive installations, one on one encounters and digital performances. The form of her work may fluctuate from high-tech



digital installations to very basic one to one encounters, but her focus is always on creating an experience for an audience member. She concentrates on interactivity to facilitate dialogues that explore topics around the human condition.

She seeks to produce work that directly engages people both physically and emotionally, striving to give them an experience that will impact lives post-performance. Many of her past performances have



resembled a kind of therapy, asking audience members to engage in personal discussion and disclosure.

## Nancy Hirst



With a passion for arts and social change, Nancy Hirst founded Icon Theatre in 2002 to develop quality, accessible and participatory theatre projects and productions. Having trained at the National Theatre Studio, she previously worked as a freelance director on a range of large-scale, community and education projects at Opera North, the Royal Opera House, Yvonne Arnaud, Soho, BAC, Arcola and Young Vic Theatres. Her productions



have won Fringe First, Music and Drama Education and Amnesty International Freedom of Expression awards. She is passionate about the transformative personal and social impact of co-created work, and the thrill of large-scale work made by professionals and community together.

## Dr Helen Eastman



Helen Eastman is a director and writer. She trained at LAMDA after graduating with the Passmore Edwards Prize from Oxford University, and has a doctorate from KCL. She is the artistic director of Creation Theatre, a visiting lecturer at Westminster University and an artistic associate of the APGRD at Oxford University. Extensive directing credits include work for ETO, the National Theatre Studio, Soho Theatre, Oxford Playhouse, Symphony Space New York, RADA, Delphi International Festival, Cork Opera House, Birmingham Rep and Glasgow Citz. She has written plays for many venues including the Sheffield Crucible, Oxford Playhouse, Greenwich Theatre, Soho Theatre; most

recently her political cabaret about climate finance has been performed at the UN and on the floor of the Toronto Stock Exchange.

**Creation Theatre** celebrates its 30th birthday in 2026, producing mainly site-specific work in Oxford; infamous seasons of work have taken place at a BMW factory, Blackwells bookshop, the Westgate shopping centre, an abandoned Staples superstore and many heritage buildings. In lockdown Creation made a body of digital work, creating the "Auditorium" Digital Platform with Innovate UK Sustainable Innovation Funding and going on to win OnComm's "Best Platform" award for "Alice: A Virtual Themepark" a co-production with Big Telly Theatre and Charisma Entertainment. They made 13 digital shows in lockdown, playing to audiences world-wide.





## Nina Atkinson



Nina Atkinson is the Founder and Artistic Director of Loop Dance Company, Senior Lecturer and Course Director for Dance at Canterbury Christ Church University, and a PhD candidate at Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRe).

Her practice-as-research explores improvisation, suspension, and embodied decision-making within responsive environments. Current research focuses

on intimate, audience-centred works and installations that engage sensory perception and kinaesthetic empathy, with particular interest in liminal states and the dialectical edge between body, technology, and environment. Through this work, she investigates how digital contexts can function as active partners in performance, shaping both choreographic process and audience experience.



## Josh How

Josh How is a theatre technician working at Canterbury Christ Church University and a Technical Theatre CCCU alumnus. He is working through a practice-as-research methodology and work spans lighting, sound, and digital

performance environments, with a focus on auditory promenade as a sound-led approach to audience movement and spatial interaction. His interdisciplinary research brings together performance, technical theatre, game design, drawing on influences such as *Blood on the Clocktower* to explore agency, rule-based play, and immersive performance within a live environment.



## Dr Andy Hurst



Andy Hurst is a Senior Lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University and the Course Director for the Theatre & Performance undergraduate degree. His research explores the intersection between the live performing body and technological systems and the subsequent synthesis of movement data to visual and sonic outputs. Andy's recent work has included the exploration of real-time, motion tracked Artificial Intelligence image generation for live performance. His installation *Aurora Box* featured as part of the Electric Medway 2026 Aurora Festival which allowed participants to manipulate solid light structures through motion tracked hand gestures.

## Programme

### Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January

- 1.00pm-2.30pm**     **Anselm Studio 2 (Ag09)** *Working with Gaussian Splatting in TouchDesigner*, a workshop by Dan Tapper (CCCU staff and students only)
- 3.00pm-6.00pm**     **Anselm Studio 2 (Ag09) Installation:** *Infinite Memory Machine: Sakura*
- 4.30pm – 9.30pm**     **Anselm Studio 1 (Ag08) Performance:** *Where we Meet*. Immersive Dance Theatre performances by Unwired Dance Theatre. Performances are 30 minutes long and will take place at 4.50pm, 5.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.00pm and 9.00pm. Audience members will have the opportunity to experience the performance as either an active participant or an observer.

### Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January

#### Anselm Studio 1 (Ag08)

- 9.30am**                     Arrive and Welcome
- 10.00am-10.15am**     Welcome and housekeeping
- 10.15am-10.45am**     Dr Andy Hurst – *Pandemonium in the Living Room*  
Andy explores the origins of his work in progress installation *Aurora Box* and considers the next steps...
- 10.45am-11.15am**     Hannah Whittaker - *Light on the Watch: An immersive interactive exhibition using simple technologies*.  
Hannah reflects on her recent residency at the Docking Station culminating with the exhibition *Light On the Watch*, examining the development of interactive installations that employ deliberately simple and familiar technologies in conceptually aligned ways.

#### Break

- 11.30am-12.00pm**     Dr Helen Eastman – *A Specifically Digital Space?*  
In this session, Helen will explore the relationship between place and digital space. Why might a site-specific place-based company also operate in the digital sphere? How do those strands of work (and those audiences) inform each other? What do we learn about the dramaturgy of classic works by transferring them to the digital space?
- 12.00pm-12.30pm**     Nina Atkinson – *Suspended in Response: Dancing with Digital Matter at the Dialectical Edge*

Nina reflects on her improvisational process in *Well* and the importance of working within a digitally responsive site specific environment. She explores how the interaction between body and technology informed by the underground well at Deal Castle created a liminal, suspended space, understood as a dialectical edge, through which movement, timing, and choreographic meaning emerged.

## **Lunch**

**1.30pm-2.00pm**

Dan Tapper – *Chimeric Space: Regurgitating Media*

Dan explores his methods of working with process-based practice and experimental media. Drawing from Dadaism, Fluxus, sound art, and experimental film, Chimeric Space dives into how these art forms—often associated with low/no technology—are being recontextualised in the digital age for cutting-edge multimedia works.

**2.00pm-2.30pm**

Nancy Hirst – *On the Beach/ In our Heads*

Nancy reflects on the opportunities and challenges of creating a site-specific new theatre performance using headphones, binaural recording techniques, live performers and a constantly changing coastal setting.

## **Break**

**2.45pm-3.15pm**

Josh How – *Blood on the Clocktower Live.*

Josh's MA research uses practice-as-research to investigate auditory promenade as a method for integrating sound design, game mechanics, and participatory dramaturgy in live performance.

**3.15pm-3.45pm**

Clémence Debaig – *Where we Meet*

What if you could hear other people's inner thoughts?

Clémence discusses how Immersive dance theatre meets XR technology to spark human connection in an increasingly digital - yet divided and lonely - world.

**3.45pm**

Networking opportunity and close

## Where We Meet

*Where We Meet* is an interactive and immersive dance theatre performance where audiences can experience the inner thoughts of each character. It is an invitation to rediscover the joy of human connection, as an antidote to today's increasingly digital - yet divided and lonely - world. Step into the minds of three unique characters, and join them as they embark on individual and uplifting journeys of self-discovery. Through interactive audio headsets that give the gift of telepathy, audiences can tune into the vibrant inner monologues of whichever character they move close to. Alongside ample and varied opportunities for opt-in audience interaction, *Where We Meet* empowers audiences to forge genuine connections with other people through playful discovery throughout the performance.



## Ticket Types

### **The Immersive Explorer (Active Participant) - Capacity up to 10:**

If you're a keen explorer looking for a fully immersive experience, the active audience member ticket is for you.

Equipped with headphones and a tracker, you'll hear the inner thoughts of the characters by physically approaching them. Performers remain in the light, while you'll stay in the safety of the shadows throughout, free to move around the space without feeling exposed. You'll be given every opportunity to connect with the characters through opt-in audience interaction (in the form of gentle movement, not dance), or simply observe the performers in action.

### **The Compassionate Observer (Seated observer) - Capacity up to 20:**

If you're curious about the show, but prefer a light-touch approach to audience interaction, the seated audience member ticket is for you.

You'll remain in one of the seated areas for the duration of the performance, and receive a tablet and headphones in order to approach the characters virtually to hear their thoughts. Instead of moving around the space, you'll enjoy connecting with each character by listening and observing them from afar.

## ACCESSIBILITY INFO

The highlights:

- Captions are available for both ticket types
- T-drive headphones (with induction loop) can be provided to work with certain hearing aids

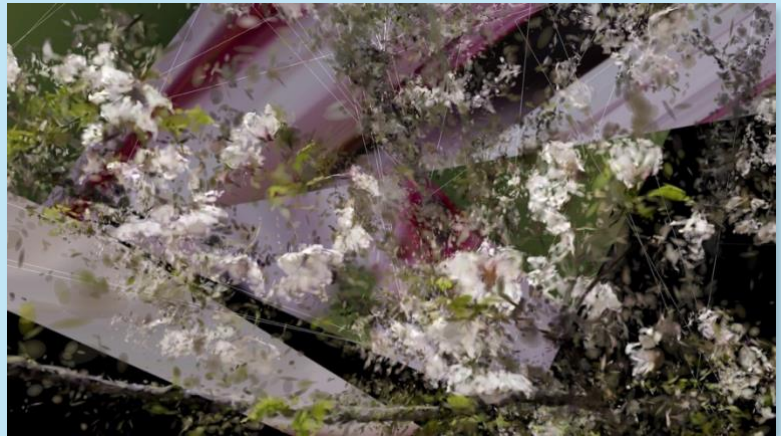
- The venue is fully wheelchair accessible and wheelchair users are welcome to take part as an immersive explorer or compassionate observer
- Patrons with access needs are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes before the show
- For any question regarding accessibility or to make yourself known before the show, please get in touch at [hello@unwireddancetheatre.com](mailto:hello@unwireddancetheatre.com)

Detailed access guide here:

<https://www.unwireddancetheatre.com/where-we-meet-accessibility-info>

## Infinite Memory Machine: Sakura

Sakura is an installation exploring the fragile beauty of nature, its ephemerality and how memory is captured, archived and catalogued. As participants move through the installation their presence moves through memory and space, reconstructing the short period of cherry trees' blooming and the myriad of memories attached to the event.



Sakura is part of a larger installation series called Infinite Memory Machine, where places and memories are captured using digital technology and reconstructed in 3D space. The outputs move from realistic depictions, to fuzzy abstracted blurs, asking us to think about how memory and experience is filtered through the everyday technologies we carry.

## Workshop (CCCU staff and students only)

### Infinite Memory Machine workshop

Learn how to create realistic 3D scans with your smartphone! In this workshop we will capture real world objects, bring them into 3D environments for processing and investigate digital worldbuilding - incorporating scans into a realtime projected work.

Required:

- Smartphone running the Scaniverse app - <https://scaniverse.com/> - *compatible with iPhone and Android*

Nice to have:

- Computer running TouchDesigner or Blender