

**Reflections and Responses**  
**Ayatori Amata Residency Falmouth July 2023:**  
**Ed Jones (saxophonist, composer ) Leeds Conservatoire**

**How can a collaboration between composer and photographer, started remotely during lockdown, be extended, building upon the original Ayatori artistic process and project aims?**

- to learn and experience new modes of working and to explore and experience working with new collaborators
- to open the collaborations to diverse disciplines and artistic approaches, including experimentation with the work with varied artistic settings, mediums and environments – e.g., traditional performance based artistic settings (venue, theatre), experimental immersive environments and gallery spaces, and purely digital media.

**Proposed collaborations in the Ayatori Amata residency:**

**AI technologies:** collaboration with Dr Mathew Yee-King; an open brief exploring how AI can interact with Ayatori in a live process, and to see what AI would bring to the project.

**Dance students:** responses to the work (Ayatori process) and exploring how this intersects with current education practices in relation to developing understandings with neuro-diversity and neurodivergence.

**Photography and Film students:** to create a documentation of the Ayatori research process; to create new work in creative response to the project, while also exploring and gathering material from varied locations and linking these to the project.

This was clearly ambitious and challenging, but at the same time organic and workable. As it stands nearly all these elements were undertaken, but with varying outcomes.

**Artistic and Project Outcomes**

**Artistic Process:** new work was created between myself and Yuriko Tagaki and facilitated through Keith Michael as an overall producer/project manager/Musician and Simon Waite whose role became Educator/Collaborator/sound/visual designer in the use of new technologies and software and how these could shape the creation :on and presentation of new work. This work had a new identity and looked and sounded fresh and exciting. Both Yuriko and I managed to explore new modes of working and upskilling within our respective disciplines.

However, the catch-and-throw flow that the remote work of Ayatori facilitated and shaped naturally was lost at times in the chaos of the schedule. The collaboration was expanded and deepened by all being in the same building, which gave the process an intensity as time and space constraints determined deadlines and outcomes, in contrast to the luxury of remote working and open deadlines! Personally, I had an opportunity to

experiment and learn new skills in using Ableton Live and external effects implemented this in performances and sharpened my editing skills (out of necessity). Working and delivering to challenging deadlines whilst retaining good levels of creativity whilst processing a whole raft of new information and skills whilst learning on the job was challenging, energizing and frustrating in equal amounts. Revisited collaborative processes with dance and movement, as well as interacting with AI. All of these were positive and enriching experiences, which continue to be processed, and have significantly informed and enriched my artistic practice.

**Planning:** there was an overall plan, where focus, deadlines and goals were set for each week, and to a large extent these were all met. To an extent, the duality of the performance deadlines ensured that work was delivered, and conversely, without these, there could have been more time and space for reflective consecrations. There was a lack of microplanning regarding the fluid use of Time and space for the various disciplines in the building. This particularly affected the composer/ musicians at times who did not have their own designated space, and as a result, at the time much of the music creation felt last minute and underdeveloped.

**Technical Issues:** Consistent technical problems during the course of the 2 weeks severely impeded the progress of the project. The support from the Technical staff at Amata was not adequate for the nature of this project. A professional mode of communication at all times was unfortunately missing with some of the tech staff. As the client we were made to feel that they were reluctant to facilitate and support the research work. For example, the lack of technical support impeded much of the day-to-day working of the first week as the set-up in the room was inadequate for our purposes. On the last day of week 2, the lack of support for Simon Waite, who was experiencing severe technical difficulties which almost led to the cancellation of the final performance.

**Dance:** The work that was achieved in the small window of the second week engaging with elements of the older already documented work of the Smoke pieces, enabled new music and dance work based on the improvisation concepts of John Stevens's Search and Reflect writings in the form of exploring the concept of "Peripheral Vision" which really shaped the work. The improvised connections between the dancers, visual images and improvised music had strong moments of communication and connectivity. It felt like there was a common authorship of the pieces and a real sense of collaboration in these pieces.

More time was needed to experiment with the recordings that we made of the dancer's movements and how this could be extended as there was a promising start with creating drum loops from the sound of their feet which was embedded within the Monet pieces. The aim of relating the creation and responses to the work to enfolding considerations of neurodiversity could have been explored more fully.

**AI Technologies:** the work achieved in the first week was promising but also unshaped and disconnected from the whole. The open-ended nature of the brief did not produce a

fully satisfactory outcome. By contrast, the work from the second week demonstrated promise and a real tangible identity in Mathews's work that responded in very much a kind of reflective shadow cast from the insides of the work. He produced a series of images that were generated from the AI responses to the work. All collaborators agreed that this work both embraced and challenged the project aesthetic.

**Film Students:** It's difficult to reach full conclusions as we have yet to see the finished documentary. From conversations, it became clear that students were inspired and energised to be within the creative environment. This experience gave them some new reflections and insight into the artistic process.

### **Creation of New Work From Field Work**

This was very productive and successful. Several new works resulted from one day's activity in Kenall Vale. Videos and photographic stills as well as sound field recordings were all used within a new body of work that had a clear identity formed from our responses to the experience of the environment. It enabled our first full engagement with pure film and video formats.

It would have been beneficial to extend this work further to the planned (but not realised) visited quarry and caves.