

Review of: "Somatic Arts and Liveable Futures: (Re-) Embodying Ecological Connections"

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This is an inspiring article that benefits from a direct address to the reader through a set of explorations the reader can engage with whilst or after they read the essay. Overall, the premise of the essay is clear, and indeed the idea that a response to the environmental crisis needs to include a re-awakening of the sensorium and new forms of relations between humans, as well as between human and non-human others, is one that is gaining traction amongst artists, educators, philosophers, and scientists. The way the argument and the explorations progress could have been charted a bit more clearly. At the beginning, we are asked to pause to consider apocalyptic thinking, and at the end, we are invited to engage with childhood memories. The trajectory between these different feeling-thinking states is not clear. Why does the essay/explorations conclude with an invocation of childhood memories, and what can we gain from engaging with them? Another area that could do with a bit more clarification is the author's understanding of different attitudes towards the environmental crisis. On the one hand, the author rightly criticises apocalyptic thinking on the grounds that it often assumes humans as being separate from the environment. Later in the article, the author seems to espouse connecting with grief in response to the destruction that has been caused. What is the difference between these two positions? And in what way can individuals or societies come to terms with the destruction that has already been inflicted and the very alarming changes to climate and habitats?

Another area that could be clearer is what kind of prior knowledge and disposition the author assumes of the reader. The essay comes from a workshop presentation, and this gives it a tone of immediacy that draws the reader in. It is not clear, however, who the reader is assumed to be. If it is someone with an interest/knowledge in somatics, then some of the ideas could have been explored further and with reference to the recent bibliography the author cites but does not delve into (I am thinking here of Elise Nuding's critique of eco-somatics published in the special issue cited by the author). If, on the other hand, this essay is positioned as an introduction to eco-somatics, then a clearer differentiation between somatic pedagogy and being in nature would be useful. The article concludes with an invitation to city dwellers to spend time in green spaces. How is spending time in nature different from eco-somatics? Or how or why may eco-somatics deepen one's relationship to natural environments? Isn't spending time in nature not 'enough'?

Finally, the invitation to spend time in green spaces makes a lot of sense, but it could also be argued that it assumes a set of privileges that are premised on class, race, and ability. As the author suggests in the end, the ways in which we are/have bodies and the ways in which we are/occupy space are deeply political. Depending on who or what the reader of the essay is assumed to be, it would have been good to hear a bit more about the intersections between ecosomatics and



power.