

Research Article

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

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The article explores the role of the somatic arts in challenging the culture of separateness between humans and nature typical of Anthropocentrism. My aim is to enhance the debate on how to grow liveable futures in the face of ecological disaster. I will reflect on the possibility to re-activate our eco-consciousness through embodied practices of interconnectedness with nonhuman living beings and systems. I will discuss the cultural conditions shaping the growing field of eco-somatic practices and evaluate their political implications as acts of caring, collaboration, and critical thinking. I will foreground the importance of awakening the neurobiological memory of the body and grieving for anthropogenic ecological losses. Natasha Myers' concept of 'Planthropocene' will be mobilised as an example of how we can envision the (re-) emergence of embodied ways of 'conspiring' with other forms of life. Throughout the article, the reader will be invited to engage with some somatic interactive processes that can shift our apocalyptic perception of ecological crises.

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1. An introduction to eco-somatics

This is an article on how somatic movement practices, and somatically informed art practices more in general, can help us regain ecological futures by challenging the supremacy of mind over body and the dominance of humans over other species and living systems. I will discuss the growing ecological orientation of dance, movement, and other healing, expressive, and community practices based on somatic awareness and attention, and how this international trajectory offers new resources to change the ways we perceive and value our more-than-human connections. The article is based on the interactive lecture and the eco-somatic workshop presented by the author at the '(Re-) gaining Ecological Futures - Ecosomatics' programme at Floating University Berlin in June 2022.¹

I will propose an approach to ecological consciousness that interweaves the ways in which we perceive our environment with the ways in which we perceive our bodies within our environment. In this sense, ecological consciousness is not an abstract function of the mind looking from a distance at the world we are destroying, but an incarnated process of encountering what French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty called 'the flesh of the world' (Merleau-Ponty, 1966). This is a painful process because to feel the wounds of trees, oceans, the soil, nonhuman animals, the air, ... we need to accept the grief we have caused to our own species by severing the ancient bond of solidarity with the earth. Let us follow the suggestion by activist scholars like David Abram (2010, 2017, 2018) and Wayne Mellinger (2022) to approach the ecological crisis as a crisis of perception. We are part of the earth, not separate from it. Trapped in a sort of collective myopia, we tend to focus our attention on human lives and events and on the isolated 'things' that surround us. To change our worldview, we need to change the way we perceive the world. And to change our perceptions, we need to change the way we think about the world. So where do we start? Critical embodied practices

can offer us the gateways needed for experiencing the continuum between human and natural worlds by reinhabiting our bodies as ecologies nested within larger (and smaller) more-than-human ecologies.

In the last two decades, the somatic arts have become an important reference point for articulating the possibility of working towards liveable futures. They have done so by enabling the circulation and interpenetration of knowledges that for a long time had been indifferent to each other: on the one hand, the sensory experience of body and place, and, on the other, ecological and political thinking. It is quite remarkable to see how the work of somatic artists, and particularly of dancers, is helping philosophers, anthropologists, and natural scientists to co-create a field for observing, criticising, and rearticulating the embodied connections with other-than-human phenomena. Some of these processes were documented and critically analysed in two recent collections: the book on eco-somatic thinking edited by Marie Bardet, Joanne Clavel, and Isabelle Ginot and published in 2019 for the French-speaking world;² and the special issue on somatics and eco-consciousness of the *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices* edited by Thomas Kampe, Jamie Mchugh, and Katja Munker in 2021.³ Eco-somatics emerges from the meeting of two relational paradigms. As discussed by existential philosopher and Feldenkrais practitioner Thomas Hanna in the 1970s and the 1980s, somatics is a term derived from the Greek word *soma* to reengage the human body as an integrated physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual phenomenon observed 'from the first-person viewpoint of [one's] own proprioceptive senses' (Hanna, 1986, p. 4). Ecology, a term derived from the Greek word *oikos*, meaning household, habitat, or dwelling place, is the study of how organisms interact with one another and with their environments (Bottoms et al., 2012). Eco-somatic practices displace abstract cognition and modern technology from the centre of the world to foreground the role of other forces like gravity and other species like plants in shaping our perception and well-being. With eco-somatics, attention shifts from the body and the environment as separate entities to embodied ecological connections as a perceptual continuum. Quoting from the introduction to the special issue on somatics and eco-consciousness I have just mentioned, 'The soma exists in relationship to all life, not as a separate unit of being, yet is culturally shaped and politically rendered' (Kampe et. al, 2021, p. 4). With eco-somatics, we start to consider how the actual, in-the-flesh sensory experience of the artist is shaped by cultural and political forces. Moving in this direction, the question that could unravel the potential of this promising field is the following: how do the practice and study of the somatic arts help us articulate new ways of conspiring with the more-than-human which defy the global system of extractivism, consumption, and exploitation that is devastating the planet?

But before addressing this key question, I think it is important to take a step backward. It is important to expose the powerful role played by apocalyptic narratives in the ways we come to care for the possibility of eco-futures. So, be ready to absorb a sense of frustration and disempowerment for the terrible wounds that humans are inflicting on the natural world. To regain ecological futures, we need first to regain access to the capacity of the human body to have a felt sense of these wounds. To clarify and vivify this delicate passage, I will invite the readers to engage in a guided experience of sensing and moving. I will start from ecological wounds and then take you down the path of deep breath and skeletal awareness.

2. The Dangers of Apocalyptic Thinking

In a recent speech on 'The State of the Planet', António Guterres, the secretary-general of the United Nations, claimed that 'Humanity is waging war on nature'.⁴ We live in the age of ecological disasters. Humanity is facing the end of the world as we know it. For Guterres, the worst disasters show the direct or indirect influence of humans on the environment. Shutting down whole countries for months during the long Coronavirus emergence has not made things better: The pandemic has generated more than 8 million tonnes of extra plastic waste globally (Laville, 2021). Just to give an example, Amazon's plastic packaging

waste increased by nearly a fifth between 2020 and 2021 to surpass 300 million kilograms – with this amount of plastic, we could circle the world 800 times (Elton, 2022).

I will now list some of the terrible wounds inflicted by humans on the natural world in recent years. After you read this list out loud, I invite you to close your eyes and notice how your body reacts. Before you read the list, I invite you to warm up your proprioceptive senses. If you are sitting, as I imagine you are, start by noticing the workings of your sitting bones. Where are they? Now I invite you to shift weight across your feet, pushing just a bit forward and then backward. Keep both feet under the knees. The feet are just a bit closer to the seat than the knees. In this way, you can create a nice movement dynamic between feet, knees, and pelvis. And while you do so, allow your pelvis to fold in and out, doing little rotations, like a wheel. Just know that you are not stuck on your chair and that your movement always continues involuntarily. While you are reading this list of anthropogenic ecological disasters out loud, I ask you to attend to how your breath changes, how the feeling of your chest changes. Notice any contraction in your muscles and in your bones. Don't think about doing this. Just notice while you hear my voice. Observe where the centre of your attention moves: towards your head? Your belly? Your feet? Try to stay with your body while your mind is trying to take over.

First somatic interactive process: sensing apocalyptic news

Deserts spreading

Wetlands lost

Biosphere shrinking

Oceans overfished and choked with plastic

Dying coral reefs

One million species at risk of extinction

Floods, hurricanes, and powerful storms scarring the globe

Devastating oil spills in sensitive areas of the oceans

Air pollution killing nine million people a year

Deadly wildfires consuming millions of acres of land.

Failing dams flooding entire towns

Half the world living with severe water scarcity

In 2020, Cyclone Amphan hit the Sundarbans region between India and Bangladesh, displacing 5 million people

Last year, the Amazonian rainforest lost an area nearly seven times bigger than greater London and thirteen times the size of New York City

Over the past 30 years, the oldest and thickest ice in the Arctic Sea has declined by 95%.⁵



An image of the audience of the public lecture given by the author at Floating University Berlin in June 2022. The audience is engaging with the somatic interactive process of listening to a list of anthropogenic ecological disasters. Photo by Lorène Blanche Goesele.

These are the kinds of apocalyptic news on the future of the planet we are faced with every day. How did you feel about it? How did your body feel about it? I invite you to write some notes on what you have noticed through your internal sense of the body. I invite you to use a simple language and to simply describe what happened (or didn't happen) without judgement.

We can think of information on ecological disasters as a call to action. However, apocalyptic thinking is dangerous. It is dangerous because it reinforces the paradigm of nature as something separate from us upon which we are acting. Going back to Guterres and his speech as secretary general of the United Nations, apocalyptic thinking assumes that humans act without considering the negative consequences of their actions and that, consequently, 'Nature always strikes back ... with growing force and fury' (Guterres, 2020, n.pag.). But weren't we connected with nature before having to face the consequences of our actions against nature? Aren't we part of nature? And is the agentic force of nature limited to revenge against us?

It is hard to change our modes of perceiving the world, as it is hard to change the ways we think and act upon the world. Can we just expect, following Guterres' line of thinking, that, since 'Human activities are at the root of our descent toward chaos... human action can help to solve it.' (Guterres, 2020, n.pag.)? There is not just an individual psychological resistance to change. Our ecological connections have been impoverished by centuries of sensory deprivation and cultural alienation from the livingness of the earth. Thinking and feeling with David Abram, ecological crises can be traced back to a fundamental lack of perceptiveness towards nonhuman living beings and systems. Borrowing Abram's words, the challenge of our time involves 'turning our animal senses to the sensible terrain' to become 'a creature of earth' (Abram 2010, p. 3). Where do we start? Let us begin by recognizing the "horrific wounds" that fill "the sensorial world of our carnal experience" (Abram, 2018, n.pag.). Yet if the pain from these wounds is 'unbearable', as Abram claims, how do we avoid retreating '*from the body's world to avoid the sensuous terrain with its*

droughts and its floods and its flaring wildfires' (Abram 2018, n. pag., original emphasis)? How do we find an alternative to *'taking refuge in ever more mediated and virtual spaces'* (Abram 2018, n. pag., original emphasis)?

3. Awakening the Memory of the Body

The somatic arts can help us find a way out of apocalyptic futures by offering a balanced approach to repairing the damage we have caused to the connective tissues of life. We need to restore the reciprocity between body and mind and between body and earth. Where do we start? Regardless of how complex the problems are, I suggest we always start from our direct sensory experience of the body. But there is more to this. My experience as a dance artist and as a scholar of perception has led me to think that, in the somatic experience of sensing, we are not only reconnecting with our interiority and our place in the world *in this present moment*. Somatic sensing is a gateway to reconnect with our genetic, biological inheritance as members of a family, of a tribe, of a nation. Not only that, the sensing of what happens here and now is grounded in millions of years of evolution of the human species to which we all belong. Indeed, following recent scientific discovery, I should say that *human sensing is grounded in millions of years of co-evolution* with other species of life and living systems. If we want to promote the emergence of life-affirming modes of relating with each other and with the more-than-human, we need to awaken the memory of the body. By recognising what we have forgotten, we can create an opportunity to sense new possibilities for the future which are not totally defined by the capitalist and colonialist systems of extractivism, consumption, and exploitation in which we live.

Second somatic interactive process: grounding

The sensory reappropriation of our evolutionary right to be part of nature can start right here, right now. I would like to ask you to join in a second sensory experiment. This time I ask you to stand up in front of your chair. To awaken the memory of the body, we need first to reconnect with breath and with the ground. We start with bringing our attention to the flow of breath moving in and moving out. Now notice how the ground is supporting your body weight in the face of gravity. Weight moves into the ground and off the ground, like a wave, like breathing. Now focus on your feet and your legs. When breathing in, feel the pressure of your body weight being poured into the ground. Then release that pressure by breathing out at that point of contact between the feet and the ground. Now play with shifting weight from one foot and one leg to the other foot and the other leg. One leg supports your body, one at a time. The other leg observes what is going on.



An image from the workshop “EcoKinetics: Embodying Reciprocity with Plants” conducted by the author at Floating University Berlin during the “(Re-) engaging Ecological Futures” programme in June 2022. Photo by Lorène Blanche Goesele.

Third somatic interactive process: becoming a witness

‘To stay here is to become a witness: of my heart, of my breath, of this earth, of this tree. To stay here is to be witnessed: by the layers of broken branches, pieces of bark, bits of leaves of different kinds and colors, pebbles, worms and insects, moisture, and dried matter.’ (Rufo, 2022, n.pag.)⁶

Now we are ready to connect internal sensations with the perception of the world around us at a more conscious level. Look around you as you keep shifting weight from one leg to the other, very gently. Let the vibrations of light touch your eyes. The eyes are soft. They are not trying to grasp what you see. You are allowing what’s there to address your senses. Look at all the plants and trees around you (if there are any, otherwise, look at the other human and nonhuman elements composing the outside space). Feel their presence with your body, in your body. To awaken the bodily memories of being a creature of the earth, we need to become witnesses of the sensuous presence of the nonhuman life that embeds us and that makes our survival possible. You can close your eyes again for a moment as you breathe this planty life in.



An image from the workshop “Ecokinetics: Embodying Reciprocity with Plants” conducted by the author at Floating University Berlin during the “(Re-) engaging Ecological Futures” programme. Photo by Lorène Blanche Goesele (2022).

Fourth somatic interactive process: childhood memories

We will conclude the experiential section of this article with an imaginative task I have borrowed from Maya Ward (2022), a creative writer who lives in Melbourne (Australia) and teaches courses on how to “write wildness”⁷. Stay with the embodied ecological connections that have emerged so far for each of you. Keep standing. You can face in any direction you want. You can close your eyes or allow the vibrations of light to touch your retina. I ask you to imagine a place of your childhood where you could go to play in nature and with nature. Can you remember the sensations of those playful moments as a child? Imagine with your senses. Let these memories flow in your body.

‘These little feet running around. These little hands picking figs from the tree. These little children playing at throwing figs at the cars. Little hands touching bark. Little feet running without plans. Summertime. School holidays. An urban child meets his peasants’ roots. My ancestors worked this land and walked these fields for generations. Their sweat still lives here. The light of the sky turns brighter. The texture of the soil gets richer. My fellow wheat, the yellow spark of of your leaves begin to speak in this empty space.’⁸

What places did you travel to? What sensations and images did you bring back to this present moment? I invite you to write down some notes. Try to stay close to the direct sensory encounter with these memories you have experienced. Now I invite you to tell your story of body, place, and playfulness from the perspective of the natural elements you have been playing with. What would water, the sea, the soil, the tree, the island, the mountain, the rocks ... say about you being there, about the encounter with that child?

5. Embodied Ways of Conspiring with the More-than-Human

Now we are back to the key question of this article: In a world threatened by ecological catastrophe, how can eco-somatic practices help us find a sense of belonging and support the development of collaborative forms of research, expression, and activism? How can we balance the individual awareness of our sensory interconnectedness with more-than-human life with a critical understanding of the cultural-political and socio-economic conditions underpinning our uses and abuses of nature? I want to approach these important questions by drawing on the vision for regaining eco-futures proposed by Natasha Myers, a cultural anthropologist with a background in biology and dance. Myers claims that we can and should build liveable futures by ‘conspiring’ with plants. For Myers, this means searching for ways of knowing and living in a close and collaborative relationship with them (Myers, 2015, 2018, 2020).

Myers (2020, n.pag.) argues that we have been blinded by both the paradigm of human exceptionalism and colonial common sense to see plants as ‘extractable resources we can bend to our will’. On the other hand, as organisms that have evolved ‘in a responsive relation with other plants, animals, insects, microbes, and fungi’, plants might have a deeper awareness of and care for their surrounding world than we will ever have (Myers, 2020, n.pag.). Myers invites us to approach the co-creation of livable worlds by ‘staging solidarities with the plants’ (Myers, 2020, n.pag.; see also Myers, 2018). As an alternative to the Anthropocene, which sets forth an epoch of linear progress led by the Anthropos as a singular agent, Myers envisions the emergence of the ‘Planthroposcene’, an assemblage of ‘scenes or epistemes’, both ancient and modern, in which plants and people figure out how to breathe together as a collective formation—the ‘Planthropos’ (Myers, 2020, n.pag.; see also Myers, 2018).

What role could the somatic arts play in finding ways for conspiring with plants (and with other-than-human creatures and systems more in general), then? To support the aspirations of ecological futures, we need to inquire into and analyse our anthropomorphic tendency to relate to plants by making them more like us. Otherwise, argues Myers, we will keep reinforcing the boundary between humans and nonhumans. It is more productive to try to understand how we can let go of the drive to assert the superiority of human cognitive capacities and impose human needs and values as the measure of everything (Myers, 2015). The somatic arts can help us move in this direction by reclaiming the human propensity for engagement with every aspect of the perceptual world as sensible and sentient. The somatic arts can provide us with fresh perspectives and practical frameworks for learning how to engage with plants as a measure of human knowledge and experience, that is, to feel more like them. Myers sees this as a process of ‘vegetalizing’ the senses (Myers 2018, 2020). This process requires getting ‘entangled’ both kinesthetically and affectively in the behaviours, rhythms, and temporalities of plants to deepen our perceptiveness and sensibility towards them and to recognise and honour them as intimate companions of movement and becoming.

6. Where Do We Go from Here?

I want to reiterate the basic proposition this article began with: if we want to reach out towards more liveable futures, we need to start by engaging our failure to grieve individually and collectively for the pain caused by anthropogenic ecological disasters. In an article published in *The Guardian*, journalist Jo Confino (2014) reflects on our unresponsiveness to the fact that half of the nonhuman creatures across land, rivers, and the seas have been decimated in the past 40 years (source: WWF and the Zoological Society of London). He asks: ‘Why aren’t we on the floor doubled up in pain at our capacity for industrial-scale genocide of the world’s species?’ (Confino, 2014) I concur with Confino when he contends that more scientific data or superficial behavioural change initiatives will not be enough to reappropriate the process of ecological grieving and create the narratives needed to transition into a more sustainable political-economic system. People need to be engaged at a deeper level psychologically,

emotionally, and spiritually. How can the somatic arts help us repair the more-than-human connective tissues of life (and death) torn by the global exploitative histories of colonialism, capitalism, and consumerist culture?

In this article, I have suggested that, as earth-body practices, the somatic arts can offer the pathways needed to start making space for sensations, words, and modes of responsiveness and relationality that can nurture a deeper engagement with ecological crises. This involves shifting the focus from cognitive-linguistic processes and objectives to the tactile, kinaesthetic, and affective aspects of the human-nonhuman-more-than-human encounter. Let us begin by quietly observing and attending to the sensuous presence of the surrounding world and noticing through breath, through touch, through movement, and the other proprioceptive senses what happens within us as a response to what we are constantly receiving from the world. Let us challenge the comfort zone of our urban body: a clean, safe, and detached body. We can lie and roll on the soil, the grass, or in the piles of leaves fallen from trees, dry or wet. We can come into deep contact with the bark of the trees, soft or rough. We can touch the gelid water of the river with our bare hands and feet. All these things are simply a given for people living a rural life. However, it is important for the people of the city to be out in nature every day, to step over the line of abstract thinking and meet the earth halfway with an open attitude of playfulness and investigation. Be it with a warm sun and a clear sky or on a cloudy, windy, rainy, or freezing day, it is important that we address the carnal presence of what, in our culture, is simply reduced to the absence of human qualities. Let us also embrace the possibility of naming the internal adventure of our senses as it unfolds, without the urge to judge or explain. We might surprisingly feel addressed by the moving presences and the bodily voices of what we have always considered to be non-sentient or nothing else than inert matter.

I want to conclude this article with a practical task for the reader. I invite you to engage with the healing power of 'wandering in movement' (for more extended guidance on the somatic experience of wandering in movement, see Rufo, 2023). I believe this can be a useful starting point for re-embodiment ecological connections. This is a task that I engaged in every day for several months when I moved from the periphery of Milan to a nature reserve on the coast of Rome in June 2021 and that I try to engage in every time I travel to a new city or rural area. Consider this as an embodied form of mapping your perceptual field beyond the familiar, the well-known, the safe boundaries of your existence. Have you ever considered how your sensory perception changes when you cross the door of your home or your workplace and step into the outside world? Next time you cross that threshold, I invite you to let go of any specific destination. Let go of any set of directions you usually rely on. Give your body a chance to be a key player in this experience. Use your feet or a bicycle. There is no need to go too far from where you are. Once you are out in the public realm, before you decide where to go, wait to be moved by the impulses you receive from the living beings and systems around you. Let yourself be touched by what happens in that very moment. It can be the reflection of light blinding your eyes or the appearance of shadows on the ground. It can be the color of the sky, a hole in the street, the chatter of people, the noises from a building site, the engine of a car, the singing of birds, or the sound of your breath. Once you are out, I invite you to wander until you feel you have reached a place that calls you to meet anthropogenic ecological losses, in any form they may appear, in an intimate exchange. Find a place where you can return every day, or a few times a week, or at least every week for an extended period. Give yourself the time to get lost, to go back to where you came from, to try another way. You cannot know in advance what will move you, but you can refrain from automatically behaving the way you always do. Waiting to be moved might feel awkward, especially when you realize other people might be looking at you. I invite you to meet this awkwardness as a chance to honor the somatic intelligence of your body.

Where do we go from here? Wandering in movement teaches us that we can (re-)embody ecological connections by accepting the possibility of falling into thinking and acting without a preordained plan – in the subtle and delicate spaces between presence and absence, doing and not-doing. We don't have to know in advance the direction and the purpose of changing our lives and the

world. We don't have to name in advance where we are going if we keep listening in the spaces between our internal impulses and the sensory information we receive from the world. We need to learn how to wait to allow something more-than-human to happen. Foregrounding the eco-somatic arts as a possible gateway to (re-)embody ecological connections might lead to an important doubt: how can an intimate, slow, first-person approach to ecological and ecosocial change tailored to individuals and small groups be combined with a political approach? When we think of the political, we tend to imagine a phenomenon based on power which involves large numbers of people and a strong organizational, and often institutional, aspect. Let us avoid falling back into the culturally sanctioned dualisms between action and contemplation, body and mind, inner and outer. Let us engage the eco-somatic to reimagine the political. What happens if we attend to collaboration, shared vision, and collective care as an embodied encounter with the more-than-human world? We need to come together and practice. Only by practicing and developing awareness through practice will we have a chance to know.

About the Author

Raffaele Rufo (PhD) is a somatic dance practitioner, a mediator and facilitator of artistic and cultural processes, and an independent scholar interested in eco-embodied arts as a vehicle for individual and social transformation. For twenty years, he has worked in communities, dance studios, theatres, schools, and universities and was involved as a choreographer, facilitator, and performer in a wide range of participatory arts projects. In 2020, he was awarded a PhD in dance and performance studies by Deakin University, Melbourne. His research has been published internationally. www.raffaelerufo.com

Footnotes

¹ Programme curated by Berit Fisher at Floating University Berlin (23-25 June 2022). Part of the project 'Natureculture Pedagogies', funded by: Spartenoffene Förderung für Festivals und Reihen (zweijährig) der Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa, <https://floating-berlin.org/programmes/re-gaining-ecological-futures/rgef2022>.

² Bardet et al. (2019). Based on two five-year collective, interdisciplinary and international research projects, the book presents a range of conceptual frameworks and methodologies articulated and contaminated through a series of workshops, conferences and shared projects.

³ Kampe et al. (2021), p. 4. This edited collection on somatics and eco-consciousness includes a wide range of theoretical considerations, reflections on practice-led research, and documentation of artistic practices across different academic and artistic disciplines.

⁴ Message by António Guterres, Address at Columbia University, 2 December 2020, <https://indonesia.un.org/en/107181-message-antonio-guterres-address-columbia-university-state-planet>.

⁵ Sources: United Nations, <https://indonesia.un.org/en/107181-message-antonio-guterres-address-columbia-university-state-planet>; The Guardian, 2 December 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/dec/02/humanity-is-waging-war-on-nature-says-un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres>; Bloomberg, 28 February 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-02-28/global-south-cities-face-dire-climate-impacts-un-report>; World Meteorological Organization, State of the Climate in Asia, 26 October 2021, <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/weather-and-climate-extremes-asia-killed-thousands-displaced-millions-and-cost>; World Wildlife Fund, <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/six-ways-loss-of-arctic-ice-impacts-everyone#:~:text=We%20lose%20Arctic%20sea%20ice,in%20the%20summer%20by%202040>.

⁶ Field notes from the author's dance-led eco-somatic inquiry of sensing with trees. For an extended written and audio-visual narration of guided eco-somatic explorations, see also Rufo (2023) and the collection of short video essays on embodied encounters with trees: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8887380>.

⁷ See <https://www.mayaward.com.au/> for information on Maya Ward's approaches and activities for 'coming home to the alive world'.

⁸ Memories written by the author during the "Writing Wildness" online workshop conducted by Maya Ward (2022) in February–March 2022. See <https://www.mayaward.com.au/> for more information.

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