

Toolb[]ks[®]

**A knowledge system and tactile resource for
movement improvisation and composition.**

by Anna-Lise Marie Hearn



Qualities

89

ADD ON CARD
THESE CARDS ARE INTENDED TO BE ADDED
TO TOOL CARDS AS AN ADDITIONAL LAYER
TO THINK ABOUT AND WORK WITH

Body Mapping

59

PAIR WITH:
MOVEMENT MOTORS
INSIDE THE BOX (PARTNERS)
QUALITIES
SPEED & RHYTHM
INSTRUMENTATION
SCULPTURES
ELEMENT / CONTRAST

Surfaces of the Body

01

PAIR WITH:
02. PUSH & PULL
ADD ON CARDS:
79. QUALITIES OF TOUCH
86. FLOOR PARTNER
87. TRANSITIONS

Spiderweb

73

PAIR WITH:
NEGATIVE SPACE
POINTS OF CONTACT
FLOOR PARTNER
SURFACES OF THE BODY (PARTNERS)
ADD ON CARDS:
87. SCULPTURES & ASYMMETRY
88. TRANSITIONS

Negative Space: Sculptures

CONSIDER CARD

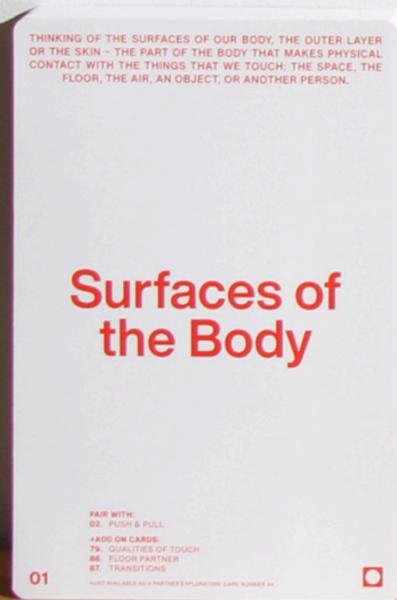
Inclusivity

Toolboks is a tactile resource and creative tool for individual artists, partnerships and group processes. It is physical, practical, and functional, and the tools can be integrated into the creative process at whichever stage and in whichever space you are working in.

Made up of 110 cards, including tools for individual, partner, and group explorations, as well as cards for further development and considerations around practice and process, it builds a shared knowledge system for movers and makers.

Intended to inform, inspire, and support creative processes, Toolboks serves as a catalyst for the creation of rich and complex movement possibilities, supports movement research and deepens ideas, challenges habits and patterns, and expands possibilities.

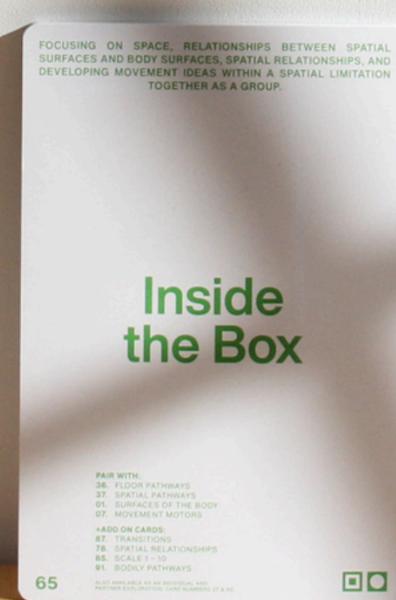
Independent Exploration



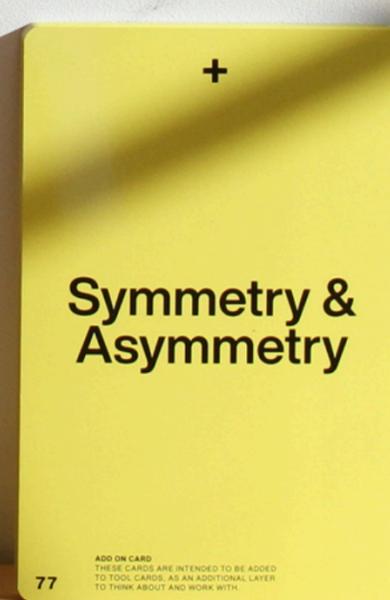
Partner Exploration



Group Exploration



+Add On Cards

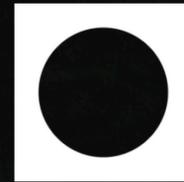


Consider Cards

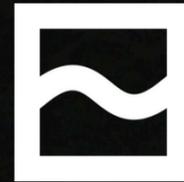


Whether it be for **independent movement research, the development of creative work, co-creation and collaboration, designing workshops or facilitating sessions for a group**, Toolboks is a dynamic framework for exploration, creation, and discovery that can be adapted to the varying and extensive needs and intentions of one's own practice.

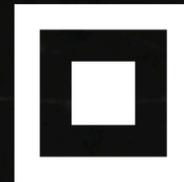
The language of Toolboks holds structure and spaciousness in balance – offering just enough guidance for support and clarity while leaving room for personal choice, individual context, and possibility. The intention is to offer suggestions, and not to direct the outcome.



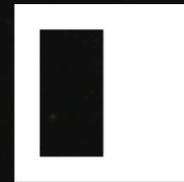
Body → What



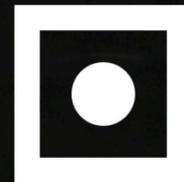
Quality → How



Space → Where



Time → When



Intention → Why

EXERCISING GROUP COMPOSITION IN SPACE, RELATING AND RESPONDING TO ONE ANOTHER, AND MAKING CLEAR AND CONSCIOUS CHOICES IN RELATION TO THE GROUP AND THE OCCURRING SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS. THIS TOOL WORKS WELL WHEN ADDED TO AN ONGOING MOVEMENT EXPLORATION OR PAIRED WITH ANOTHER TOOL WITH THE INTENTION OF BRINGING IT INTO A GROUP COMPOSITION.

Active Observation

PAIR WITH:

- 07. MOVEMENT MOTORS
- 51. GUIDING & IMPULSE
- 05. SHIFTING THE WEIGHT OF THE BODY
- 09. SKIN, BONES, MUSCLES
- 17. ROOM MAPPING

+ADD ON CARDS:

- 83. FOCUS
- 78. SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS
- 88. COMPLEMENT / CONTRAST
- 77. SYMMETRY & ASYMMETRY
- 80. RHYTHMS & PHRASING



75



Spatial Relationships

ADD ON CARD

THESE CARDS ARE INTENDED TO BE ADDED TO TOOL CARDS, AS AN ADDITIONAL LAYER TO THINK ABOUT AND WORK WITH.

78

CONSIDER CARD

On Touch

CONSIDER CARDS

THESE CARDS ARE INTENDED TO INITIATE THINKING, DISCUSSION, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS.

100

1 BUILDING THE FLOCK

- Together, the group forms a diamond formation, all standing in a neutral position. The diamond has four points, with one person standing at each point. Everyone is facing the same direction. This could be 4 people in each diamond (flock), or, if working with a larger group in one flock, the others fill the diamond between the four points.

2 THE LEADER OF THE FLOCK

- The person in the front of the diamond, the front being the direction the group is facing, is the leader of the flock. When the leader of the flock rotates, and the group changes direction, the leader changes.

3 STARTING WITH A WALK

- The leader of the flock slowly starts to walk in the space. The flock follows, stepping at the same time, shifting their weight at the same time, and maintaining the same distance to the leader as initially set.
- Keep the walk going, changing directions every now and again and therefore changing leader, until you feel that the flock is connected and moving as one.

When you feel ready, the leader of the flock could start to introduce

Changes of speed / changes of level / adding simple movements / changing the leader more frequently / adding more details to your movement / different qualities of movement / and moving backwards.

- **Leader of the flock:** Keep your flock with you at all times and communicate your movement clearly in your own body so they can follow. The clearer you are, the clearer your flock will be. You can always come back to a walk if you start to feel the group disconnecting.

→ TAKE IT FURTHER

→ FROM DIAMOND TO CLUMP

- Moving out of the diamond shape, the group can form a clump or huddle. The leader is always the one in the front of the group, according to the direction you are facing.
- You can choose to decide on these leaders before you start, with one person at each "side" as a designated leader, or you could allow the group to autonomously find the leader as the direction shifts. The spatial relationships of the group may also change.

How do you communicate a change in leader? / What happens when it is not clear who the leader is? / What happens in the transition between leaders? / How can you be clearer with your movements? / How do you communicate a shift in direction? / How do you communicate a shift in weight? / What if you introduce a change in speed, level, direction or quality? / How do you keep your flock with you?

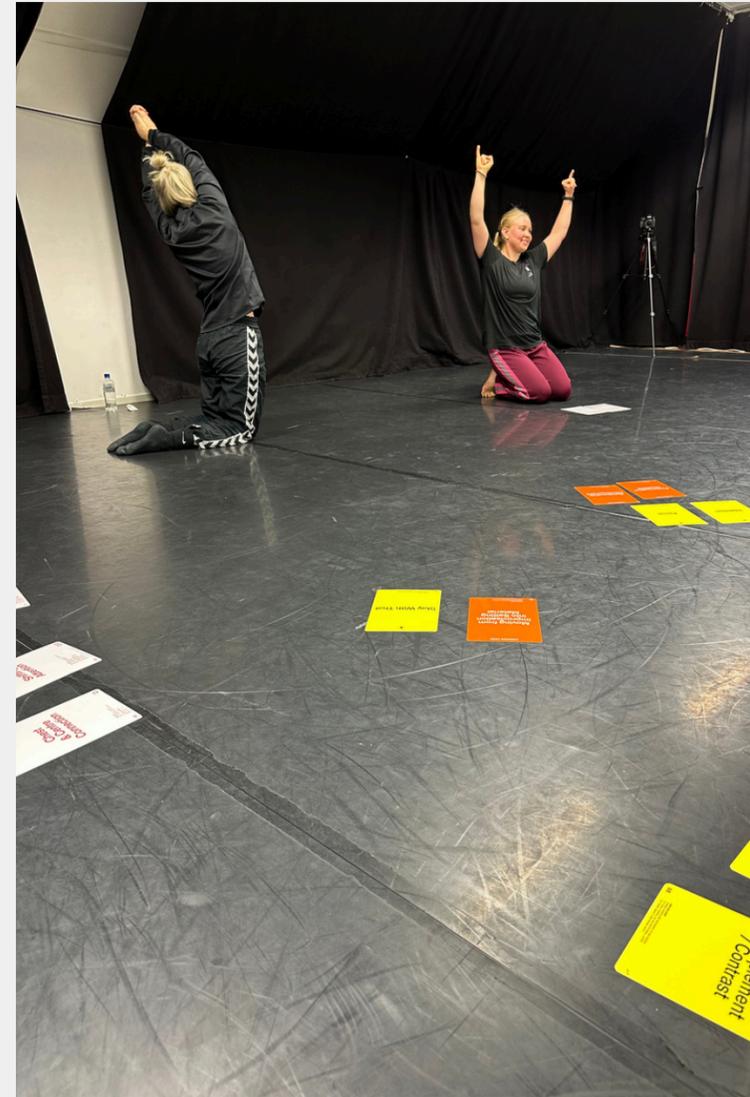
How can a system and freedom coexist?

A central inquiry that guides the development of Toolboks is: How can a system and freedom coexist? How can a structure support rather than constrain – offering direction while leaving space for individual response, autonomy, and interpretation? This led me to consider the kinds of language that invite rather than instruct, and the facilitation approaches that cultivate trust, agency, and shared authorship. Framing became essential. So did questions. So did dialogue. I believe that the conditions we create – linguistic, physical, relational – deeply shape the creative possibilities that emerge.

I am interested in the possibilities of shared authorship, collective sensing, and expanded choreographic thinking. My work continues to explore how we can hold space for complexity, and how tools – when thoughtfully framed – can provide both support and focus, while also opening up new possibilities.



Initial workshops for dance education & professional dancers
Berlin, Germany 2021



Prototype testing in residency and workshops
KRA Stavanger, Norway 2023

Experiences from prototype phase

“The tools feel supportive and specific, whilst still proposing an open entrance point to the work.”

“They seem approachable and direct and I experienced relief in having a specific task to work with.”

“They helped my judging mind ease and I could focus on the task.”

“The exercises are clear and give freedom for interpretation - which means they may be used with various intentions over and over.”

“It helped me keep the focus and presence, and to find different entrances to movements.”

“I found a lot of freedom in the tasks on the cards, while they still guided me to specific explorations.”

“I could use the cards with an existing piece of work to enhance and develop the work further.”

“The cards have a lot of pre-knowledge, some sort of shared knowledge between the cards and I. They seemed easy to access and I felt important to them in our knowledge sharing.”

“A helpful tool in the moments where creation is stuck, or when you feel there is potential for another layer, the cards can prompt you to find a new perspective”

“The cards help to find common languages with a group or when setting material. And, of course, when teaching. As a resource for thematic coherence and combinability, with exercise examples that can be easily extended and modified.”

“The cards would make me feel less lonely in the studio and help me show up and commit on harder days.”

“This resource has the potential to be an outside eye or a peer, in research, the creation of work, and in everyday practice. The tools relieve me from "figuring out" and instead I can just pick a tool and do.”

“The cards help you question the depth of the creation, the layers, the angles, the rhythm of the piece. They remind us that there are some larger values at play.”

We completed a prototype phase which included a **residency** and **workshops** to present and test the idea to dance artists and movement-based practitioners. Here we collected feedback in online forms, audio recordings, and written notes.

Touch is physical contact between individuals and can serve as a powerful means of non-verbal communication. The use of touch can lead to the generation of intricate and complex movement ideas, establish connections, communicate meaning, and develop relationships. Working with touch requires a foundation of care, respect, communication, and consent.

Touch can have both physical and emotional effects, so it is essential to approach it with sensitivity, acknowledging that personal boundaries and comfort levels vary among individuals. When intending to work with touch, introduce it consciously into your practice and ensure that everyone involved understands and is comfortable with the type of touch, and the intentions behind the touch you're introducing. Invite a conversation around personal needs, boundaries, and preferences regarding touch before introducing it into your exploration.

How does the relationship start?

How does it develop?

Are there any key moments or shifts in the relationship?

What changes in the relationship?

Is there a moment of tension?

Is there a moment of relief?

Where does it end up?

How does it conclude?

Does it conclude?



The development of Toolboks has been an unfolding, iterative inquiry informed by many bodies, voices, and sessions. I see it not as a prescriptive tool, but as a conversation – an adaptive, responsive companion that supports autonomy and collaboration.

Unlike fixed curricula, single methods, or one-off prompts, Toolboks offers a **rich and comprehensive library of insight, shared language, and a flexible structure** that can support solo practice, partner work, and group creation or facilitation.

Through the resource itself, workshops, facilitator training, and community practice, I support independent artists, educators, companies and institutions to integrate Toolboks into studios, schools, independent and collective processes, residency spaces and organisations.

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