

PDF Transcript

for Video Intro talk by curator Hanna Cormick

for Animate Loading by Riana Head-Toussaint

Image Description: From above, bodies sit and lay around a pole in an open-air carpark. Two people lean their backs against each other. One holds an orange soccer ball up with their feet. Yellow car spaces are marked out against the grey concrete.

Introduction for: Animate Loading by Riana Head-Toussaint.

Enforcing an external choreography onto a body—a dance practice that is so common that it is almost never even questioned—reveals its highly complicated political meanings when applied to crip bodies.

Instead of perpetuating the colonialist control of both "public" space, and of the presentation and behaviour of bodies within public space, Riana Head-Toussaint leans into the role of choreographer as inclusive space holder and as amplifier for the authenticity and individuality of a body's movement relationship with a space; a questioning of how the nature and role of choreography and choreographer can be upended / revolutionised / radicalised when access is used as an ethical framework for art-making.

What I particularly relate to in this work is how the relational nature of access is drawn into focus through the cinematographic choices.

Not only are the human dancers given space and time and agency to exist and respond to site, but the site itself is also given its rightful presence and personhood; space and time are cast as characters, with approaching dusk, changing colour of light, a cloud of bats passing overhead, all as relevant to the choreography as their human dance partners.

It reminds us that sites are not our stage or backdrop, but another dancer whose experience of physical scale, time and movement is very different to our own.