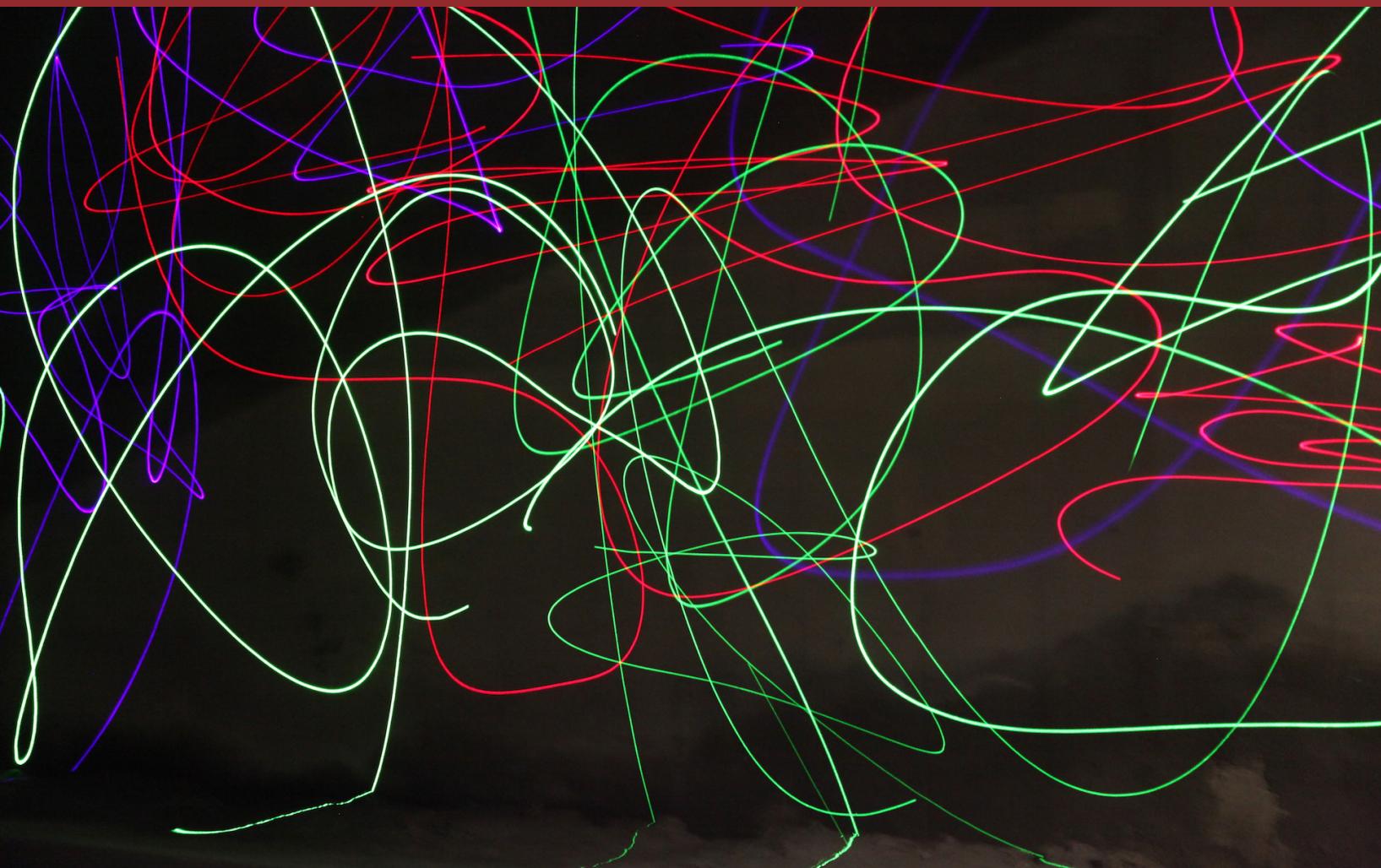


University for the Creative Arts  
Research Project Portfolios

# dotdot dash

By Birgitta Hosea



# Project Details

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|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Name of Researcher:             | Professor Birgitta Hosea   |
| Name of Output:                 | <i>dotdot dash</i>   |
| UCARO link/s:                   | <a href="https://research.uca.ac.uk/5096">https://research.uca.ac.uk/5096</a>  |
| Output Type:                    | I – Performance; participatory performance artwork created for Night Walking North Kent Festival   |
| Year and mode of dissemination: | 2018, Performance for Night Walking North Kent festival, chalk tunnel near Ebbsfleet Station, Gravesend<br><br>2018, Performance for London National Park City festival, Regent’s Canal, King’s Cross, London<br><br>2019, Performance for the Opening of <i>In the Dark</i> exhibition, Cello Factory, Waterloo, London |
| Key Words:                      | live animation, performance drawing, participatory, choral singing, communal, light painting   |
| Funding:                        | Commissioned by Inspirallondon with funding from Arts Council of England and Kent County Council: £900   |

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# Synopsis

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*dotdot dash* was commissioned by InspiralLondon as one of a series of site-specific artworks for the ACE-funded Night Walking North Kent festival. InspiralLondon, a collaborative artists' project led by Charlie Fox of Counterproductions, is based on a 300-mile walking trail around London in the shape of a spiral divided into 36 sections along which the group make regular walks and perform art works. Determining a route by chance through drawing a spiral across the city creates an unpredictable path that ends in Gravesend.

*dotdot dash* sets out to investigate whether it is possible to make site-specific, live animation and how that can be created through participation. Following discussions with the InspiralLondon group about privilege and who is able to walk freely in the dark at night, *dotdot dash* was developed into a collective action to reclaim the night through light and noise to combat the vulnerability that women, LGBT people and

members of other minority groups feel about walking in the city at night.

During the live performance each participant is given two laser pens and invited to follow Hosea's instructions on what marks to make and colours to use. The work is conceived as a concert of visual music and Hosea bases the orchestration upon a chance-based graphic score, encouraging the audience to sing along. Although other artists have used light painting as the basis for photography, *dotdot dash* is not set up for documentation, but is about the embodied experience of taking an active role in the communal creation of a live animation of lights, with choral singing.

This portfolio of supporting information describes the aims contexts, methods and insights of the research and presents a visual record of the work in its original and further iterations.

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# Night Walking North Kent

April 19-22 Gravesham, Kings Cross & Medway

Four nightdays of walking art events: a selection of entertaining public walks, artistic workshops and talks - on NightWalking, the Rosherville Pleasure Gardens and the Marshes by Night

Inspirallondon Festival 2018  
inspirallondon.com

Gravesend Library 26 March-30 April Exhibition nightwalking and mapping the Inspirall Trail

Reclaim the night terrain together

This unique festival of nocturnal walking, offers four nightdays of curated walking art events: starting from Kings Cross the night trail leads us on toward Gravesend....

**19 April 6.45-10.45pm** *The Place* -Launch of Inspirall Map and Night Walking Festival

**Friday 20 April 6.45-9.15pm** Gravesham Arts, 19 Royal Pier Road, DA12 2BD Sarah Sparkes curates and hosts unique *GHost Hostings 19: Of Ghosts and Spirites Walking by Nyght* with Scott Wood (Fortean Society), Giles Abbott (story teller) and Breathing Space Collective.

**20 April 9.30-11.30pm** *HiLight Walk* to Northfleet from Gravesham Arts (by LV21) Join the *HiLight Rosherville* walk to Northfleet, illuminated by Mollett and Morris's new magic lantern encounters with the Rosherville Pleasure Gardens. Then reclaim the night together with – *dotdotdash* – Birgitta Hosea's collaborative light action. Note there are return trains from Ebbsfleet International to Central London.

**Saturday 21 April 4.30-6.30pm** *On the Marshes* Talk at LV21

Talks introducing our Long Hoo Night Walk, with nature writer and conservationist Carol Donaldson. Carol's book, *On the Marshes* follows a journey across the North Kent Marshlands meeting people who have chosen to live in unconventional ways. While sound artist Grant Smith will introduce us to ways of experiencing soundscapes remotely.

**Saturday 21 April 6.45pm** to late *The Long Hoo Night Walk* from LV21/GAC

This 26 kilometre+ walk into the night takes place in another zone, a nocturnal marathon. This nightwalk is a 21st Century version of Charles Dickens's trek to Gad's Hill; exploring the unique diversity of the marshes, we prepare ourselves by discussing birds of the night, *Great Expectations* and all things orniphilosophical with Inspirall's unique ornithological expert J D Swann. The walk has 2 parts: the first finishing at Higham Station at 10.30pm.

Plus from 11am-4pm on Saturday artist films, workshops and installations at GAC & LV21

**Sunday 22 April 2-6pm** *Inspirall 36* to Hartley meet at Entrance Ferry Pier

Join us at the start of segment 36 of the Metropolitan Trail - leaving Gravesend, we walk southwards along Inspirall Trail back toward London, detouring to Fairby Grange in Hartley.

Inspirallondon at over 300 miles this new artist designed trail explores & exposes the unique connections that crisscross the metropole. Connections & dissonances that range across an extraordinary diversity of people, places and ideas. Festival info: <https://inspirallondon.com>  
Tickets on Eventbrite visit <https://inspirallondon.com/night-walking-north-kent-tickets/events>

METROPOLITAN  
TRAILS



Supported using public funding by  
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ENGLAND**



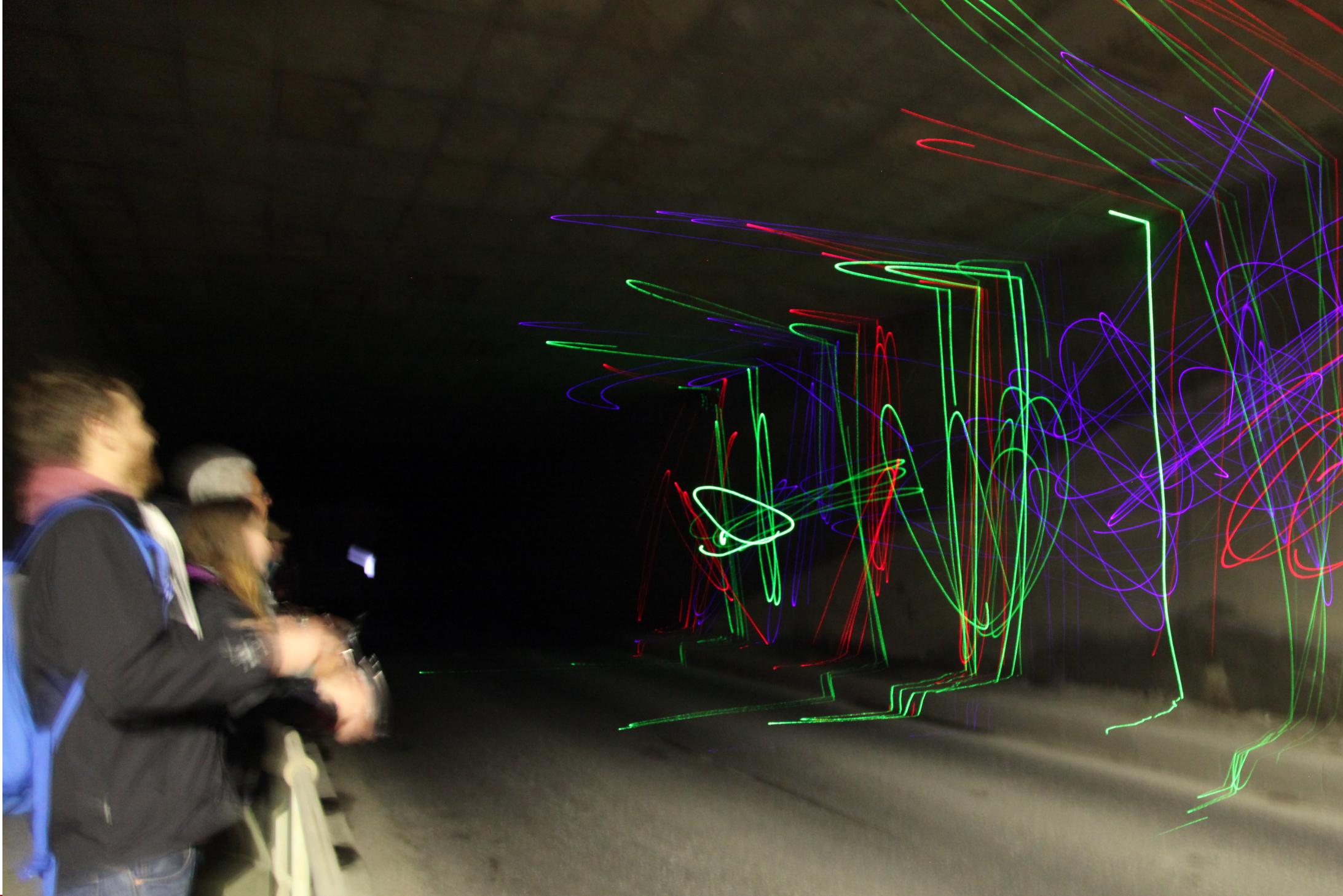
Site 1: Night Walking North Kent  
festival organised by  
Inspirallondon



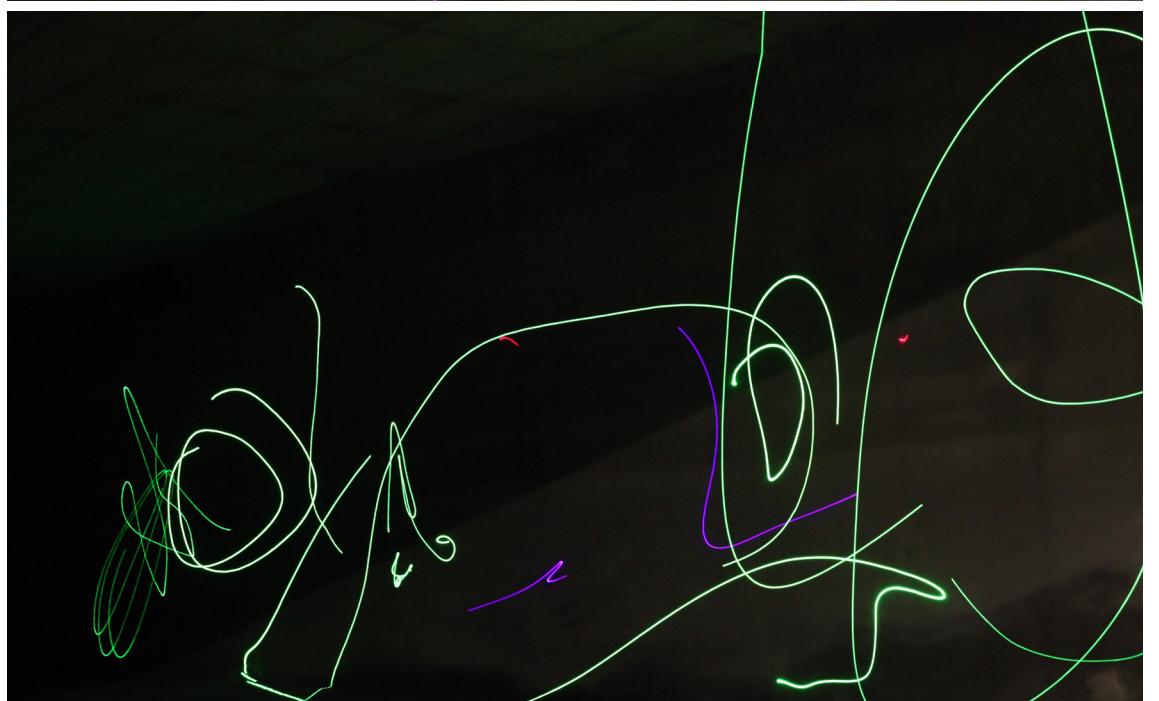
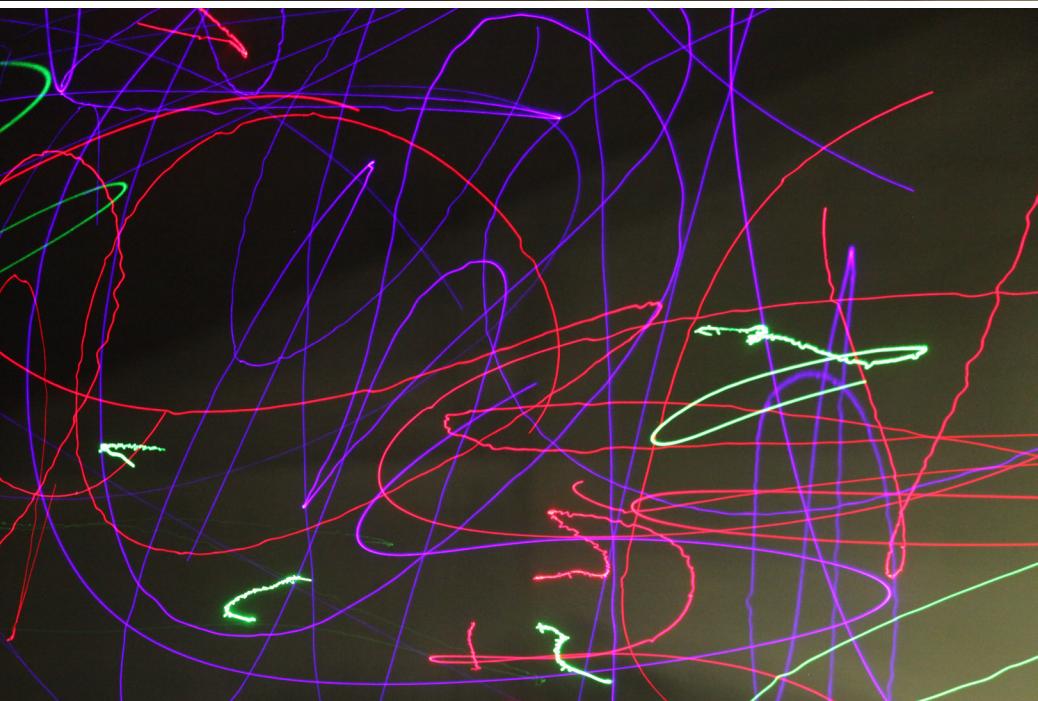
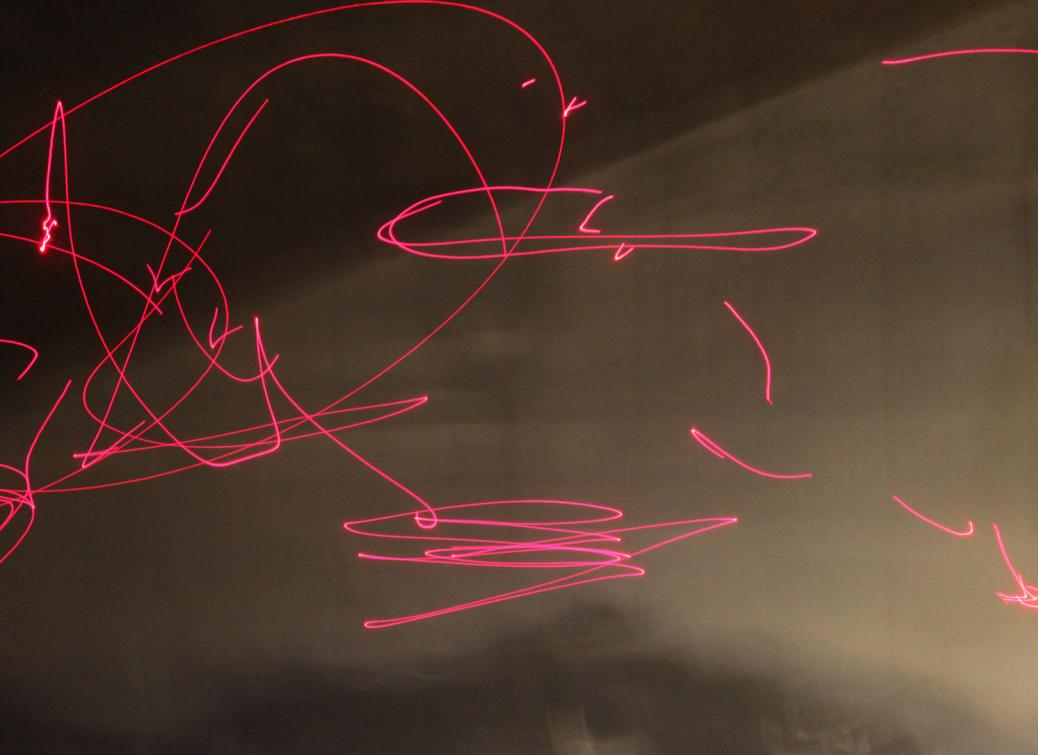
*Site 1: Tunnels through chalk pits near Ebbsfleet International Station, Night Walking North Kent festival*



*Site 1: Approaching the site, Night Walking North Kent festival*



*Site 1: Participatory performance,  
near Ebbsfleet International Station,  
Night Walking North Kent festival*



Site 1: Colour and shape variations during performance

# Context

*dotdot dash* was created in the context of Hosea's participation, since its inception in 2015, in InspiralLondon, a psycho-geographically informed artists' collective.

The work was informed by Hosea's research for her co-authored book *Performance Drawing: New Practices Since 1945* (Foá, Grisewood, Hosea, McCall, Bloomsbury, 2020). This included an investigation of the graphic scores of John Cage, the participatory projects of FLUXUS, the collaborative practices of Cornelius Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra and a reconceptualisation of the lightning sketch, light painting and expanded cinema as drawing. She also drew upon her previous research into synaesthesia and visual music in animation, for instance in the work of Kandinsky, Oskar Fischinger, Len Lye, Mary Ellen Bute and the Whitney Brothers.

While working on the fifth chapter of the book, that focuses on drawing with light, Hosea realised that all the projects she was writing about were mediated through the use of a lens-based device or computer before being projected. Thus although other artists have used light painting as the basis for photography (eg PiKAPiKA, and Picasso with Gjon Mili), *dotdot dash* is not set up as a pre-filmic event for the purposes of producing a final output in the form of photographic documentation, but is about taking part in a live, embodied, participatory experience.

Hosea wanted to create a direct method for drawing with light that would not rely upon an intermediate technology, and this led to experiments with hand-held laser pointers. The results resemble the scratched-on film in the abstract animation of Len Lye.

## Key Texts:

Cook, M. (2012) 'Animating Perception: British Cartoons from Music Hall to Cinema, 1880 - 1928' (Birkbeck, University Of London)

EXPORT, VALIE (2011) 'Expanded Cinema: Expanded Reality', in *Expanded Cinema: Art, Performance, Film*, edited by A.L. Rees, Duncan White, Steven Ball and David Curtis (London: Tate Publishing)

Hamlyn, N. (2003) 'Frameless Film', in *The Undercut Reader: Critical Writings on Artists' Film and Video*, edited by Nina Danino and Michael Mazière (London: Wallflower Press)

Hébert, Pierre (2005) 'Cinema, Animation and the Other Arts: An Unanswered Question', in *The Sharpest Point: Animation at the End of Cinema*, edited by Chris Gehman and Steve Reinke (Toronto: YYZ Books)

Hosea, B. (2010) 'Drawing Animation' in *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 5 (3): 353–67

Phelan, P. (1996) 'The Ontology of Performance: Representation Without Reproduction', in *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London & New York: Routledge)

Smith, V. (2015) 'The Animator's Body in Expanded Cinema' in *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 10 (3): 222–237.

Takahashi, T. (2005) 'Meticulously, Recklessly Worked Upon: Direct Animation, the Auratic and the Index', in *The Sharpest Point: Animation at the End of Cinema*, edited by Chris Gehman and Steve Reinke (Toronto: YYZ Books)

# Research Methods and Process

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|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Dialogue:                | Hosea engaged in dialogue on InspiralLondon walks, events and group discussions, with fellow artists, who assisted the early laser pointer tests on location.  |
| Practical investigation: | The creation of a chance-based score made by walking.  |
| Teaching:                | The instructions that are given to participants during performances are from an interpretation of the score (that Hosea made by walking) and are derived from her experimental drawing workshops (held in China, USA and UK) in which Hosea has mapped Rudolph Laban's movement principles on to different forms of mark making. |
| Acquiring new skills:    | The artist attended a workshop in Georgian polyphonic singing by Frank Kane to develop the vocal component of the performance.   |

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Join us on a new walking experience for the metropole

Inspirallondon CIC

You can start at any point along the trail; either going clockwise or anticlockwise, from centre or to the end.

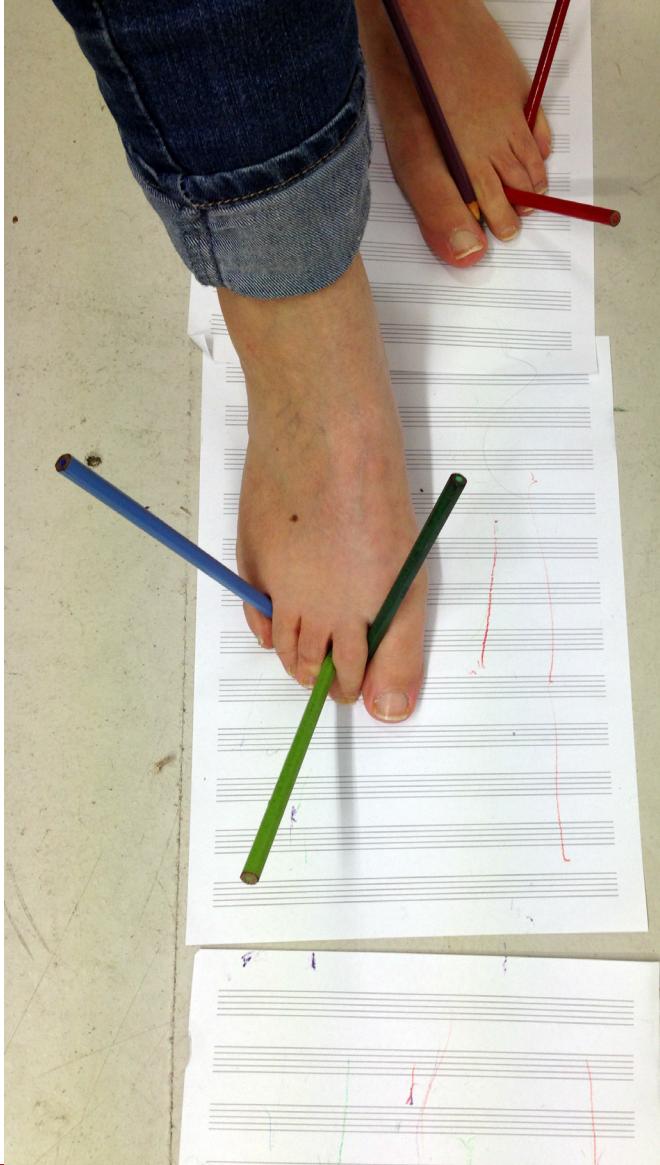
Each section is approximately 7 to 10 miles long and all easily accessible by public transport (stations on map).

Or visit: [inspirallondon.com](http://inspirallondon.com) for updated online map of the spiral pathway & follow all the trail development.



Inspirallondon CIC 2015  
Published: 2018  
UK Design Registered 6027313 - Inspirallondon a Metropolitan Trail for London  
From original drawing of Charlie Fox (Map Design: Paul-Hervé Lavessière MT)

*Inspirallondon Metropolitan  
Walking Trail*



*Chance-based score  
made by walking*



*Experimental drawing workshops  
run at Sichuan Institute of Fine  
Arts, 2016; PNCA, Portland,  
USA, 2017; UCA, 2018; Beihang  
University, Beijing, 2018*

# Aims, Questions and Insights

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## Research aims:

To create an animation spontaneously with participants in a live situation

To draw directly with light without a mediating technology

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## Research questions:

How can the feeling of vulnerability on city streets at night be combatted?

Can an animation be created live in a site-specific location?

Can this be done communally through the active participation of audience members?

What kind of equipment and techniques could be used that are easily portable and mobile, without need of a fixed electricity supply?

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## Research insights and contribution:

This participatory, site-specific art work uses communal, collective action to draw attention to vulnerability at night in the city

It employs a novel method of performance drawing with light using equipment that is portable and untethered

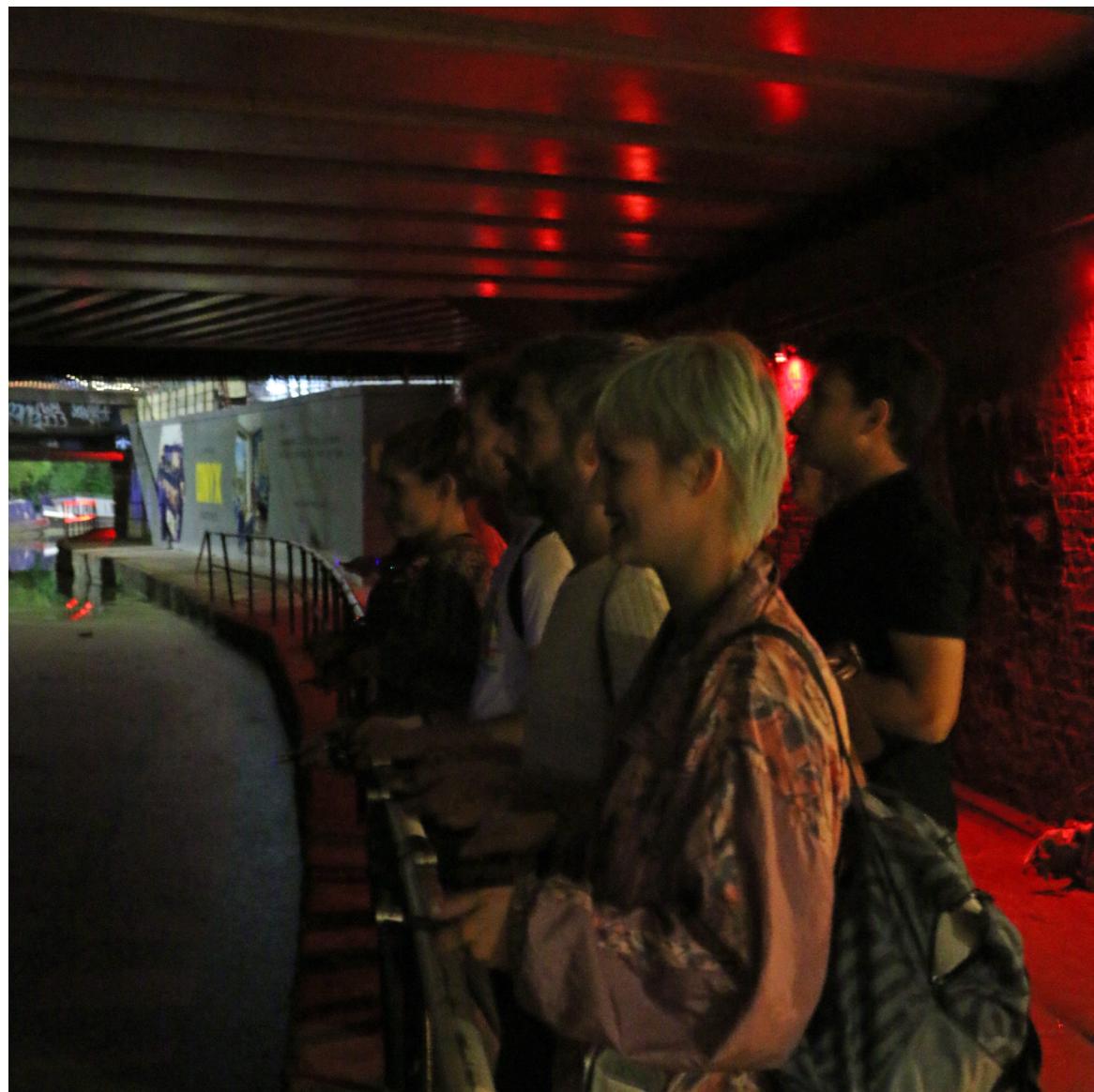
It draws upon traditions of experimental animation, but is not recorded and is rather a live performance of light and sound conducted by the animator

The work has contributed to Hosea's development of 'para-animation': a form of conceptual practice that investigates the dematerialisation of animation

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*Site 2: Tunnel, Regent's Canal,  
King's Cross, InspiralLondon event  
for London National Park City  
Festival*



*Site 2: Participants, Regent's Canal, King's Cross, Inspirallondon event for London National Park City Festival*

Cello Factory  
33-34 Cornwall Road  
London SE1 8TJ

17th 18th 19th January 2019 2-6pm daily

An experimental show by The London Group  
the Computer Arts Society and the Lumen Prize.

# IN THE DARK

Private View : Thursday 17th 6-8pm with performances  
Creative coding workshops : Friday 18th 2-4pm  
Artist Talks : 18th 4-6pm  
Music Night : 18th 6-8pm

The LONDON GROUP  
visual arts since 1913

Artlyst

CAS50



TOUCH SCREEN

The London Group  
Computer Arts Society  
Lumen Prize

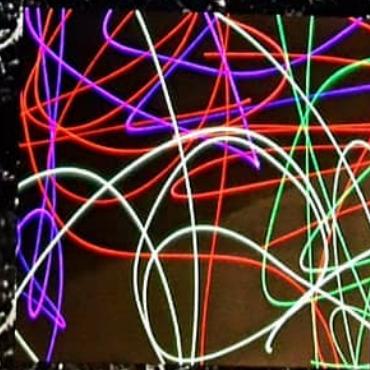


**Birgitta Hosea**

**dotdot dash**

A participatory live animation  
made by the audience through  
communal light drawing and  
improvised sound, conducted  
by Birgitta Hosea.

<https://expandedanimation.net>



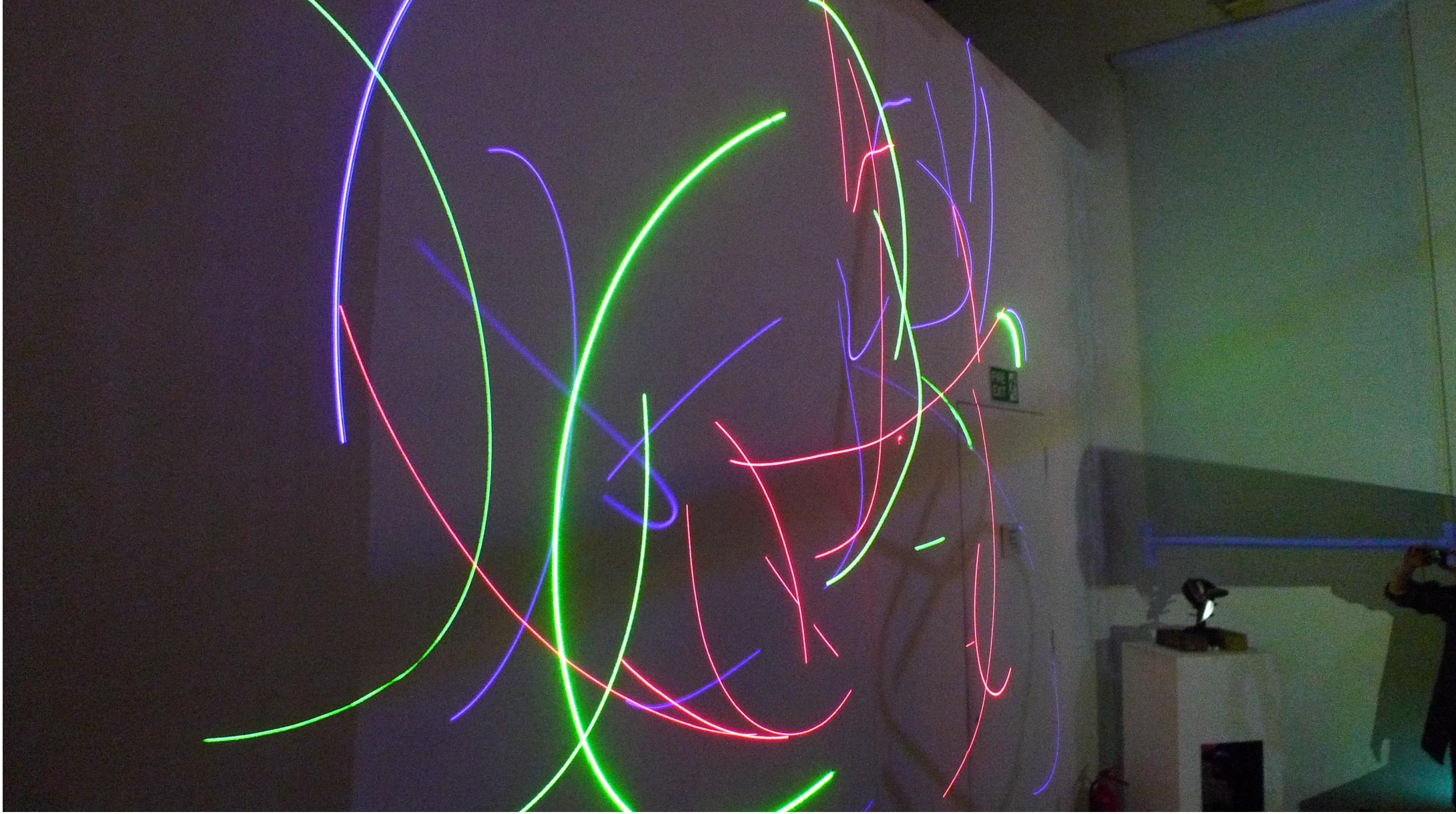
The LONDON GROUP  
visual arts since 1913

CAS50

THE LUMEN PRIZE

Artlyst

Site 3: Cello Factory, London.  
Performance for London Group/  
Computer Arts Society/Lumen  
Prize Opening, 2019



*Site 3: Cello Factory, London.  
Performance for London Group/  
Computer Arts Society/Lumen  
Prize Opening, 2019*

# Research Contribution and Recognition

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## Dissemination:

This project has been reflected on and written about by Hosea in:

### Invited talks—

2020, 'Performativity and the Line', *Gender\*\*uck* exhibition  
webinar on Zoom for National Gallery X

[https://www.artinfluxlondon.com/gender\\_uck.html](https://www.artinfluxlondon.com/gender_uck.html)

### Conference papers—

2019, 'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation',  
Society for Animation Studies 31st Annual Conference: Animation  
is a Place, Universidade Lusofona de Lisboa, Portugal

2019, 'Illuminated Drawing', Under the Radar Festival, Vienna,  
Austria

2018, 'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation',  
Expanded Animation Symposium, Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria

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## Follow-on-activities:

The project was used by Hosea as a case study that facilitated  
the development of her concept of para-animation and extended  
her thinking about drawing with light

### Book chapters—

'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation' in  
*Expanded Animation*, ed Jürgen Hagler, (Hatje Cantz: Berlin, 2019)

'Illuminating: live mark making through projected light' in  
*Performance Drawing: New Practices since 1945*, eds. Foá,  
Grisewood, Hosea and McCall (Bloomsbury, 2020)

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# Research Contribution and Recognition

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## Follow-on-activities:

### Further Exhibition—

Excerpts about the project from the two publications listed above were used as part of InspiralLondon's contribution to an exhibition about art walks, *L'Art des Sentiers*, at the Pavillon de l'Arsenal, Paris, 2020

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## Influence of research:

### Keynote—

2019, keynote lecture: 'Illuminated Drawing', CONFIA 7th International Conference on Animation and Illustration, Viana Do Castelo, Portugal

### Citations—

The project was cited in a paper by Dr Andy Buchanan, Purdue University and in the context of para-animation by Professor Rose Bond, Pacific Northwest College of Art in her keynote for the Synaesthetic Syntax symposium at Ars Electronica, 2020.

Due to restrictions on numbers allowed in gatherings during the global pandemic, InspiralLondon had to postpone plans for inclusion of this work in their walking art projects for 2020, but the project will be re-performed again in the future.

Performance drawing, the concept that underpins this work and that has been developed by Hosea and her co-authors and that culminated in their 2020 volume of the same name, has seen a notable recent upsurge in interest and activity. An example is the work of M. Lohrum, winner of the Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize 2020 (announced January 2021), an influence acknowledged by the artist on social media.

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