

The Walking Project  
Created by Jo Parkes  
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**The Walking Project (TWP)** is a multi-component, intergenerational participatory community dance project produced by Mobile Dance and FELD Theatre (Berlin). It explores *hope as an action* - something you do rather than something you have. TWP uses playful, collective movement to generate energetic shifts in the relational space between individuals to physically rehearse collective decision-making in public. The project addresses the question: How does a group of people move into action?

Originally conceived as a stage-based community performance, the pandemic prompted the team to reimagine the work as a participatory walking performance. Drawing inspiration from pandemic-era neighbourhood walks, TWP uses walking as both subject and method; a source of hopeful collective action – felt and performed.

TWP takes a complex, multilayered approach to participation. The piece was co-created with community members, and each performance is also co-created with its audience. Each audience member walks with a performer—professional or non-professional—on one of six intersecting routes guided by a sound score. These “walking companions” blur the line between performer and audience. Participants witness one another as their walks intersect and become part of the performance, which unfolds in public space and engages passersby, who are welcome to reflect on what they observe through conversations with team members. The piece co-exists with its neighbourhood and reframes everyone walking there as a potential collaborator. In addition, free sharing circles offer a space for community members to process their pandemic experiences.

The sound score interweaves biographical stories, texts, music and movement tasks which invite walkers to practice, for example, dialogical leading and following. Walkers are guided to walk spiral patterns with the group, a process which invites organic “currents” of movement which move the experience from the singular to the collective. The work is accompanied by a series of international workshops exploring these practices.