

Satelliser Conversations Episode 3: Charles Koroneho, Nicole Zizzi and Janine Harrington.

On spiralling

Introduction music

[00:00:07]

Janine Harrington:

Welcome to Satelliser conversations; an audio series that seeds encounters and conversations between people coming at topics from different perspectives and orientations, many of whom have never met before.

The conversations are based on the lockdown online discursive rehearsal process of Satelliser: a dance for the gallery; a durational performance in which artists cooperate to maintain conversations whilst dancing over the course of a day as co-workers.

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These conversations reflect intimacies across distances that many of us have experienced through the whole of the project.

I'm Janine Harrington, a UK- based artist and leader of the Satelliser project across live shows, the podcast series, and an online publication: satellising.com.

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You can find more information about me by following @inside.eye on Instagram or at www.janineharrington.com.

Satelliser conversations are recorded and edited by Rohanne Udall at Siobhan Davies Studios with music composed by Jamie Forth and graphics created by John Philip Sage. The Satelliser Project is produced by Zarina Rossheart and I.

[00:01:28]

Music

In this episode *On Spiralling*, I was interested in a conversation with other artist-practitioners about space and navigation as they relate to thinking and ways of knowing.

My own choreographic work has developed through scores and structures which were based first on axes, then grids, circles, and spirals.

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In all of these structures there was a positioning of the audience or visitor as a co-agent in relation to the dance or performance that would unfold.

My artistic journey has paralleled my understanding of my neurodivergence, and is in some ways a space to explore that. As I have developed ideas about cognition and dramaturgy in my own work, I have also been interested in how other makers understand their processes of handling information, social contexts and the kinds of framing they find for their work in communities of knowledge gathering...and what different disciplines or ways of naming fields of study can offer to each other.

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The spiral is the underlying imprint of the Satelliser project, with the sense that there is always a way to enter, to offer, to gather, to move away, and return. For *On Spiralling* I invited Nicole Zizzi; speaking from Boston USA, and Charles Koroneho; speaking from Auckland New Zealand, to join me to think together with, and inevitably through spiralling.

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Nicole's research is grounded in her physics and architecture backgrounds and experience of neurodiversity. Charles' work explores the collision between Māori cosmology, New Zealand society and global cultures through performance, workshop and collaboration. In our spiralling conversation we touch on architecture, cities, maps, being a visitor, language, land, observation, orientation, colonisation, neurodiversity, negotiation, wave-particle duality, and more.

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Music

Janine Harrington:

So hello, everyone. My name's Janine Harrington and I am an artist speaking from London. I am here with Nicole Zizzi and Charles Koroneho and we, this evening, this evening in London and other time zones that we're going to learn more about shortly, are going to be in a conversation which I have suggested we might call *On Spiralling*.

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The spiral, for me, is a form of great interest in my practice. And with each of you in different contexts over the last couple of years, I have felt a kind of different, but maybe -- like an interesting kind of connection in talking through forms.

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And so we're going to move through a conversation which I expect to absolutely be spiralling in where it might go and what it might touch on. So, maybe, before I say too much more about that, and how the spiral is showing up in my work, it would be really nice if we each introduce ourselves. So I'm going to pass to Charles, first of all. Hi.

[00:05:19]

Charles Koroneho:

Hello. [speaks in Māori] Tēnā koutou. He mihi aroha kia koutou, kua tae mai nei i tenei ra i tautoko te karangaranga maha i tenei ao. I just want to extend my greetings to you, Janine, and to Nicole. And I'm really happy to be here to participate in this conversation about, I'm sure, many things.

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I'm joining this conversation from a city called Tāmaki Makaurau, which is Auckland, and Aotearoa, New Zealand. My family are from the north of the north island. We're from a harbour called Hokianga nui a Kupe, which is a place named after a very famed Polynesian navigator. If you were there, you can look to one side and there's a mountain range there.

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It's called Manawakaiaia. And it's kind of like a backbone of the tuarā, the spine. Below there is a mountain which is our family and our group's mountain. It's called Whakatere. And below that is the gathering place, one of the gathering places we call marae. That particular place is called Tuhirangi and it's a small village called Waima.

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So that's a kind of an ancestral, one of the ancestral, places of my family's place. Through this little mountain range is a river called Waima and that flows into that harbour of Hokianga. My parents are both from this area, which is the area -- the different mountains, they call it a house. So it's Te Wharetapu a Rahiri, the sacred house of Rahiri.

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And underneath this house are all of our family ancestors and things like that. We arrived in Aotearoa from our collective canoe which is called Ngā Tokimatawhaorua. And my father's name was Charles as well, and my mother's name's Penelope.

[00:07:51]

My name is Charles Koroneho Ko ahau tenei. I've lived and grown up in Auckland, in Tāmaki Makaurau, for most of my life. And I've been practising as an artist since I was a teenager. So that's a little bit about me.

Janine:

Thank you, Charles. It's so amazing to hear such rich visual language around landscape and place.

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And, as you were speaking, I was really looking at my space differently and feeling into that. I'm in a tower block and across from me is another tower block that I think of as the twin. And I'm also above and below many lives that are being led at the same time.

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And whilst I don't have the connections to land and place that are in any way the same as yours, there's something about how you speak about place and lineage and arrival that just changed how I'm seeing the landscape I'm in, which was such a wonderful experience at the very beginning of this conversation, which maybe is something we're going to pick up on, actually, we'll see.

[00:09:10]

But let's have Nicole introduce herself and say hi. Where are you speaking from, Nicole? And how are you doing?

Nicole Zizzi:

Good. Thank you for having me. I am coming at you from Boston, Massachusetts, in the States. And speaking of place and landscape, I just finished my masters in architecture degree and I really enjoyed thinking about the urban landscape and how we move through that.

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So that could be an interesting parallel to think about. But I am a postmodern contemporary dancer and choreographer. I'm the artistic director and cofounder of a dance company here in Boston called Evolve Dynamicz. I have my bachelor's in physics and my master's in architecture. I just applied to my PhD, so we'll see if I get in.

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But that's my dream, because I love school. And right now, I am a researcher at the Center for Design within the College of Arts, Media and Design at Northeastern University. And I am doing some research looking at how dance and embodiment can be used as a tool to create, or to foster, data curiosity and eventually, data literacy.

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And that's a really fun project. I really enjoy using dance in all aspects of my life. I had to write things down so I remember. I'm also neurodiverse. I just wanted to add that in there. And I think that's everything.

Janine:

Thank you. There's so many moments where I felt like -- could almost jump in on your introduction to pick up on space and architecture and physics and embodiment.

[00:11:17]

So I'll just say a tiny bit about my background, also, because I'm aware that we -- so, maybe, also to offer context to how I know each of you, or maybe the ways in which we've encountered each other. So, Charles, you and I met three years ago -- two and a half years ago -- in Vienna, in the context of research project and workshop.

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And I remember we had some really wonderful conversations and meetings of sensitivity and almost, I don't know, very like, moving, for me, a very moving, almost like, meeting of souls or hearts or something -- very different information, but very enlivening kinds of conversation.

[00:12:15]

I'm finding it quite hard to be as articulate as I want to be with -- because it's coming from a place of feeling. And I've not seen your face on screen at all, actually, so I haven't seen you in a few years. So it's really exciting to be in conversation with you this evening, or this morning, where you are. And Nicole and I met recently through a -- not really a scheme, but we were kind of matchmade together, weren't we?

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To talk to each other around experiences of neurodivergence and of making. And I think as we've spoken in our sessions recently, what has been so interesting is to feel differently, but similarly to Charles, a sense that this person might have quite different life experience.

[00:13:19]

But I think there's a curiosity for ways of knowing and a sensitivity to -- for structures and layers and ways of knowing, which I also feel in my practice. So that's why I've asked you both to be here with me, in this conversation. And then I'll just say something about my background for anyone who's listening who doesn't know me. So I'm working out of London, UK.

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My practice is within dance and performance-making. But more and more it involves what I think of as creating, I'd say, visual cultures. So I'm increasingly concerned with space design, costume design, and fabrication. Bringing a kind of -- it feels like a full rhythmic and spatial creation into being, rather than only being concerned with the material which is the moving body and its relations.

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And my background is also in psychology; I'd say cognitive psychology. So I'm very interested in processes of attention and of learning, and how we experience those differently depending on the spaces we're in, the contexts we're in, and how those processes inform my thinking about what might be going on for audiences and visitors.

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So, for me, that manifests often in thinking about what I think of as a spatial rhythm. So it can be kind of illusion or camouflage, processes of camouflage or synchronicity, symbiosis, auditorily -- aurally?

[00:15:28]

Aurally -- with an "au" -- around processes of mishearing is also very interesting and what's happening cognitively. And most recently, and the frame that we're talking in in at the moment, is around a project of mine that I initiated, which is called *Satelliser*, *Satelliser: a dance for the gallery*. And that would bring me to mention the spiral.

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So Satelliser is a performance situation for gallery spaces whereby the dancers, the performers -- who we call co-workers, because we're co-working, we're engaged in kinds of labour -- are moving and speaking. And we have a spatial orientation which is -- I'm doing this gesture with my hand -- which is of -- we're spiralling, actually.

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And we're also changing our orientation within the spiral according to where the visitors are in the room. So it's very subtle at first, but when there are many bodies in the space doing that, it's like an amplified spatial relation. And I know this one of the reasons I was curious to speak more with Charles because we spoke -- I don't know if you remember.

[00:16:57]

Maybe it would be interesting to hear your memory of a conversation we had in Vienna where, I think, we were talking about space and relationality. And I mentioned the spiral and you were talking about the spiral in -- was it ceremony?

Charles:

Yeah. It's so interesting to hear you relate some of the aspects of your work, especially in your approach to the design of space, because that to me is very, very interesting, very stimulating.

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And although maybe it's not necessary for us to, or for myself, to try to recall the nuances of our conversations, as you know, the quality of conversations like even we're having now are perhaps best experienced and sometimes remembered as something quite different, quite interesting. One thing I do remember about our conversation is the particular pathways towards experience and knowledge.

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And that in some of the communities I've worked with, and in my own community, there are preferred ways that, perhaps, maybe a person, individual, or a community would engage with a person who was seeking a relationship to knowledge. And so one of the ones -- the spiral is one of the preferred possibilities.

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So a kind of elliptical pathways which is quite fascinating in relation to your project that the spiral and the elliptical pathways are very, very interesting pathways for observation. In the communion, and I remember from our conversation, I was thinking about how to share, because, in many ways, we are journeying through as artists, also as dedicated research people, as we have a fascination for ideas to be able to share insights into how people might be observing and gathering and collating information.

[00:19:20]

So, as I remember, and this is still important for me now, is that let's say in my own case of the aspirations that I have held for most of my artistic career is to be able to merge some of my own creative pathways with ones of my community. So one of the things I found out from my community in a really gentle way is that the direct pathway is not so useful.

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Mainly because it doesn't give people enough time to see you, or to see how you're approaching. So, in a way, the arrival is quite a difficult thing to negotiate. So I started to think about that because a direct pathway, sometimes -- you can't really appreciate how someone is arriving to something. And it's visual, yes.

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But it's also about the possibility of negotiation, because it's hard to negotiate if someone is coming directly at you. So that, sometimes, people -- they don't have the time to sometimes respond, sometimes make a decision of how they'd like to relate.

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So what I found out, and with some suggestion, is that maybe a spiral pathway or an elliptical pathway -- and that may not be necessarily a spatial thing; it's also about how you approach your arrival. Say, as a person who has aspiration to gather something, so as a gatherer, the kind of internalised dialogue you may have with space and, say, the landscape that you're wandering, we have the same, it's called hikoi te whenua.

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It really means walking the territory; walking the land. That's also can be an internal experience as well, internally. And it's really fascinating that you've said this about the work itself and how people can oscillate or shift their perspectives within a pathway. That's really interesting because that's also somehow how I was encouraged, when I was a younger man, to understand what I could.

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My internal dialogue -- what I could be doing as I was attempting to walk the land. So the best example that was given to me was to say, "hikoi te whenua ki te koru". And "te koru" was our name for the spiral.

Janine:

We were all nodding along so vigorously there.

[00:22:22]

Of course, our audience can't see the resonance of maybe the recognition or the interest. Nicole, did you want to add something there? I saw you particularly...

Nicole:

I don't know if I want to add anything. I just -- everything you said, Charles, I resonated with. And I might not use the same language to describe what you're describing, but I felt it.

[00:22:52]

I understood what you were saying. And I think that's pretty cool. There's a mutual understanding here; Janine brought us together.

Charles:

Thank you.

Janine:

It's something about the sense that I have that the spatial, the organisation, how it is tethered intimately to ways of thinking and approach.

[00:23:23]

Not only that we might enact, but that we might also take when we're -- I was going to say not in movement, but of course, that doesn't exist; we're always in movement. I was thinking too, picking up on some things that you said, Charles, about how a spiral has worked and supported my thinking in the sense -- and it's similar, actually, to you, in gathering, which is actually offering some relief from a certain expectation that one should already know and you should just be able to go for it and put your thinking or your movement or your desire or your question or your money or whatever it is, you should just be able to put it out there, right?

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And in a transactional way, maybe, get something back. And it has this back and forth which feels maybe not binary, but it has a rhythm that is less -- not necessarily less interesting to me, but it's one that feels has less possibility of the generative. Whereas, when you talked about spiralling the land, I really had the sense of the possibility that you would cover maybe some of the same ground always from a different orientation because that's what you can do within a spiral.

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And so the sense of how that might relate to our thinking, and how we might approach thinking, feels to me very intimate. So, anecdote: I spent six months living in Venice in 2013. And Venice is a city that people love and don't necessarily know very well.

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You have an impression of it; sensorily, it's very strong. A lot of images. And when the tourists, when many people are first there, I think the strategy to deal with what I experienced as a kind of brain- or intestine-like structure of Venice within the hard bounds of the edges, really like the skull or like a skeleton, which is the water, which is the stone, people take the same pathways; to go from here to here, you take the same route because, you'll get lost otherwise.

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So you keep laying down the same routes in order to understand, maybe, where you're going. And that works to a point, but really to cover distance and navigate Venice is you need to be working with curves. And you need to detach from a way of, I think, thinking that has cardinality. Maybe it's useful to know north, south, east, and west, but when you're in it, my experience was a bit like being in a kind of video game, where you can't really see it from above -- the whole structure -- you're just in the coding of it; you're in the maze.

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And you don't quite know what's going to happen in front of you until you're there, because it's so dense. And through the months of living there and discovering different kind of spiralling, curving routes

that I could take to take me to different places, I started to find a lot of support in thinking about how I think.

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So it wasn't that it was new, I just started to understand that there's a kind of architecture or a kind of organisation that I'm experiencing physically through navigating the city that's making sense of how my brain works in terms of sometimes strange connections or surprising things turning up because I might not be thinking about what the person in conversation with me thinks I'm thinking about.

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So I wondered if that is something that any of you can relate to because it struck me as -- yeah. We talked a bit about architecture earlier and how space relates to thinking is -- it feels very intimate to me.

Nicole:

Yeah. There's so much there that I want to touch upon, but I don't think my brain can organise my thoughts enough to do that.

[00:28:14]

But the words iterative and generative came up for me while I was listening to you and it -- those are words that I would use in my design process or my design research process. And I would say that in those -- also my choreographic process -- in those creative practices and, I guess, more formalised practices of research as well, I never know where I'm going: I just am going.

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And I like to make sure I'm never a step ahead of myself, where I'm not telling myself, "This is where I want to end up." Because I think that I can miss a lot of opportunities along the way.

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It reminds me of when I am setting choreography on dancers, and I do a lot of spatial patterning, just because I started choreographing when I was studying physics, and my mentor at the time really encouraged me to use -- to draw on -- my physics knowledge to help my creative practice. But I will often show my dancers what I call floor plans. It's my architecture brain.

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And I'll say that, "You're going from this point to that point", or whatever's going on, and they'll ask for -- they want definitive answers to questions like, "How am I getting from here to there?" or "How long do you want me to take to get from here to there?" And in some cases, I do have answers for that depending on what I've decided to be iterating on and thinking about.

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But, a lot of times, I don't like answering those questions for my dancers because I want them to figure out their own way of relating to the piece and to the other dancers who are learning the same choreography in theory, but each dancer who does the same movement can feel it completely different. And I like to be able to play with that subtleness in relationality in space through my choreography.

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I think I'll leave it at there for now.

Charles:

Thank you, Nicole. That's really fascinating for me because there's something of there that I find as a correlation between what Janine was talking about and what you're talking about. And I think if I was to apply it to, perhaps, a form of experiential learning that I might have accumulated over the years of maybe -- if I can put it into two things, like travel, because often my aspirations of travel has never been for a vacation or holiday; it's always been with work.

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And so work is associated to the relocation of my ability to understand where I'm at. So in a way it's kind of a location of how I may adapt to not being in a place, but more about how I'm observing a space -- a place, yeah. So one of the things that are really interesting about that is being a -- over the years, being a constant traveller.

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I have an uneasy relationship by the way that I approach being in places. So one of them is that the paradox or the kind of thing like that, so from a cultural perspective, I was kind of led through this thing that it's really good when you are away, it's -- you are practising to be a visitor.

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So being a visitor is quite a different kind of process. In our culture, a visitor is a bird and that's our name for it. Manu is a bird. Manuhiri is a visitor. So a bird has a certain type of approach to places, so it's encouraged if you want to be able to be in other places, you have to first learn how to be a good visitor, so that's interesting.

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The other thing which I found quite hard sometimes is that when you're in a new place, you have this thing like, if you're having trouble locating yourself, you have to kind of stand in the place where you're at. And that, for me, is another form of contradiction because it's a form of occupation. So you could occupy the place that you're at.

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And that's a kind of contradiction for me because to be a good visitor and to occupy, they're like cultural and kind of political forms of resistance. So I would say that maybe as an artist, it might be preferable for me to have a feeling of what a softer approach would be, maybe, to inhabit. But because I don't know the place and it doesn't know me, I have almost an impossible task to inhabit a new place.

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So the beginning of that process would be to occupy. And occupation for me is a very, very historically, culturally, politically -- a very difficult thing to do. So, as an artist, it's almost that antithesis of being sensitive to occupy space and that means to that. What does that mean? Armies do that. Conquerors do that as well. People who want to establish power occupy.

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So part of engaging with that proposal that you're talking about, Janine, is a way to soften the idea of what that might mean. So a form of occupying space is to get a map of the city, to follow the pathways of how that city was actually conquered or occupied by design/town planning -- all these types of things.

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All the things that are written over that city and over other people's ideas of the city or other histories and things like that. So it's quite complicated. And I think, from my perspective, when I was hearing what you're sharing, Janine, I think that the first thing that I do to resist that is that I don't want to have a map. And I don't like doing that.

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I regret it sometimes because years later I forget where I've been in the city and I wish I had made a little thing. But, at the time, I prefer -- and in a way it's quite strange -- I trust in the fact that my relationship to that place or that city is being grown step by step, moment by moment, and even the seconds and the days go by. And probably it's more than a mental map.

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It's something about -- there's a new landscape walking inside of me while I'm walking inside of it. And these abilities to shift some of the harder pathways of negotiation, especially of cities, is a really good thing. So I found it very useful because it's also helps calm down my feelings of having more impact in a place.

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Having less impact is quite a good thing because it means then that you can see, hear, and even taste other things that you might not if you are following a plan. So when you were talking about, Nicole, I really understand that as a very, very important and kind of advantage to have because it means there's a more open plain of possibility.

[00:37:20]

Nicole:

Yeah. That's so interesting hearing everyone's relationship to space, essentially, is that I think that maybe, at least here in the States, the general population doesn't consider how their bodies relate to space. And I think that's -- I can't imagine not considering my body in that way, but it works for some people.

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And, I would say, even less so is there people who are conscious of their relationship to space and thinking through how we can affect that relationship. But I've met very few people who think about these things, so this is really exciting. And I also just wanted to touch upon the plan of the city as a map.

[00:38:22]

It's really interesting because it wasn't until the 19th century, and don't quote me on this, I could be off, but I think it's around the end of the 19th century when hot air balloons were invented that we first started seeing bird's eye views of the city. So cities existed before then, and people existed before then, and people existed in cities before then, and they navigated in cities before then.

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So it's just interesting how technology has affected this way of thinking. And obviously, especially with things in VR and AR that are going on right now, technology affects our relationship with space. So many thoughts are going in my head.

[00:39:25]

Janine:

I think we've got orientation in the room. And the difference from the being within and what both Charles and I spoke about, which is a kind of unfolding, building your own sense of the place as you go with, rather than the kind of above and then trying to get in it to be in the map from above whilst being in.

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We've got mentioning of technology and that history. We've got whiteness and settler colonisations in the room. And control our -- what I felt in my body as like rooting in or sort of fixity bedding down.

[00:40:25]

I think we have indigenous ways of knowing and their erasure in what Nicole is talking about; little bit about how people in the States, maybe in general, and I would say not even in the States, I would say in many, many places we may be -- it's not even a statement. It's a question around what is our embodied relation to the spaces we move through and the histories of our embodied relations in places.

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Especially when those are histories of taking and imprinting, and imprinting sameness, sameness, sameness, sameness, and destroying ways of knowing that, or compromising ways of knowing, which are so much more holistic.

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There's much more to say, but I'm trying to bring to words images that I've been feeling. I'm feeling a lot in images, actually, in this conversation, which was the other thing I wanted to say, which was how amazing it is to have Charles speak about the visitor as bird. And that, for me, what Charles did when he spoke, was an equation around what it is -- no, it's an equation, right?

[00:41:57]

Which is another way to say metaphor. It's just the way I think of it is equations. I think, and Nicole knows this, I think in a sense of equations: things have space and they have weight and there's a dynamic relation. And the bird, the image of the bird, because it's in time, because the bird is moving,

because the bird disappears so there's unknown activity, which is also part of the equation of being the visitor. There's also play.

[00:42:26]

I wanted to just draw attention to the richness of imagery and equational thinking in helping us, all of us, to find, perhaps, different ways to think about very modern concerns like how to travel with humility and dignity and respect and conscientiousness and I think you said ethically, perhaps, maybe, yeah.

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So those are just some of the things that I'm hearing in this conversation so far.

Nicole:

I want to say that my research group, we submitted a paper to a conference this summer in human computer interaction space, and we got rejected in a nice way.

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But basically, the people in the computer space were like, "You need to define what embodiment is for us." And I was just like how do you not know what embodiment is? And I guess if you've never been embodied before, you might need a definition of it. Or if you're used to working with computers, and you sometimes use that word to describe a computer. I don't know.

[00:43:54]

But I also wanted to add another thing on imagery and maps. And I learned this just last semester, when I finished my last semester at grad school, that mapmaking started in colonial Egypt. And it only started because the colonists wanted to make sure that everyone was staying on their correct parcel of farming land, because that was how the colonists made money.

[00:44:32]

And so it's just -- it's interesting that the imagery and the bird's eye view of the city when put into a human brain, has created the opposite of what a bird is in space.

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And maybe it's that we don't understand what embodying a bird is. And not "we", I mean humanity as a whole. I think we probably understand that or can try to understand that. But, yeah. I'm rambling now. I'll stop.

Janine:

No. And I think Charles wants to speak, but when you were speaking, I was just thinking, yeah, there's no money in spirals.

[00:45:26]

Spirals are hard to control because it's all about shifting orientation and if you're spiralling, whether it's a smaller spiral or a larger spiral, you -- Charles will have more information for this. But in the work, in Satelliser, the way that I feel it, feels related to a humility with what anyone knows.

[00:45:59]

And that there are multiple access points with a spiral. And it's not about moving horizontally into another knowledge field based on having stacked up a load of qualifications, maybe, or followed one line. It feels like following interest, following -- which relates a bit to how we're talking about cities.

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I think curiosity is there. I think playfulness is there. I think responsiveness to whatever the environment is and being able to change orientation, change speed, change direction because you're not locked into a kind of -- I'm thinking of cars on a highway now. There's one track and then it's like DANGER if you fall off the track or you have to -- there's just braking. There's braking. There's swerving.

[00:46:58]

There isn't the space for really moving according to your curiosity. You're on a track and that's what we agreed to. That's the script and that's the score. Whereas the spiral orientation in the gallery context of Satelliser, as we perform this dance phrase, supports a way of thinking and a way of paying attention to who's in the room, who's coming and going.

[00:47:27]

And exactly as Charles said, giving time to allow thinking to emerge and be changed by who is there. And also who is seeing us and how we're seeing. It feels to me also as an orbiting. And I think one of the interests for me in that, and we've touched on it already, is also kind of pedagogical in a way.

[00:47:57]

If I was to offer an imprint for how I would like to learn things, or how I would like to support others to learn it would be somehow with more of a spiral and less axes and grids.

Charles:

I find that very fascinating. And just to return to back to the opening idea I was sharing about recalling our conversation that my personal experience of engaging in the spiral in my life's journey.

[00:48:39]

That's quite a specific thing. So, in a way, a spiral allows us to have associations to that kind of individual journey. And then a spiral allows that -- in my context, the spiral journey is a way to be observed by the things that are outside your journey.

[00:49:07]

So one of the things about the journey towards knowledge is that if I was to identify that a piece of knowledge that I was journeying towards, it might be a song or it might be a piece of poetry that sits within a certain community or that individual, that may be my perceived destination. What the spiral does, it doesn't place your emphasis on the destination; it's on the pathway.

[00:49:40]

And that means then that perhaps the -- because this is where desire comes in. Because it's about what you desire to be able to fulfil, and you might not actually fulfil that, but the thing I would think is that when you -- and it's something about learning. And it's interesting you talk about pedagogy. It's that that learning environment. Because it's so aspirationally orientated.

[00:50:09]

It's about acquisition and it's about kind of like coming to terms with the way you learn or the way you observe. On that spiral pathway that knowledge, or, in my case, say that person becomes the focus of how do you get there. But what I've learned is that the spiral gives everyone a chance to see how you journey.

[00:50:36]

They're looking at you, how you walk, how you sleep, how you wander, how you deal with the encounters that you do on your journey. And that's an indication of you are earning, in a way, a kind of respect for observation of these possibilities. Anyway. What I wanted to say, it's not about me or my journey. What the spiral could represent in its different forms, yeah?

[00:51:05]

So I just wanted to bring out this other thing which is in the community we talk about, which is a possible observation of what happens when that gets the reciprocity process of spiralling. So that the reciprocity process which is firstly premise on the idea of inclusion and so that the same pathway could be traversed by many.

[00:51:36]

So that's interesting. So, in reciprocity and inclusion, that could be talking about what's driving our desire. And desire can also, too, be about when engaging in embodiment, it also means all of the different types of things that we desire as well. So, not only about intellectual knowledge, but it could be about sensuality and all of these types of things.

[00:52:06]

So one of the things, then, in the beginning of shifting your relationship to the spiral, is that your experience becomes somewhat like the conduit. The journey becomes the conduit. Your body, your embodiment becomes the conduit of the desire that you're working towards. And that means then that this initial initialising of a very, very lateral, very kind of landscape-orientated experience can then be a conduit and community that's a conduit that's between the earth and the sky.

[00:52:43]

So it's not vertical, it is the spiral in relation to vortex-orientated things. So the vortex can be -- well, there's many forms of it, you know like tornadoes and stuff, but if we were to just think about how to address direct pathways. Before I was saying that somehow, sometimes, direct pathways are a little bit impolite, because you don't give people a chance to think.

[00:53:14]

And it's a bit like your car analogy; you get these corridors of things. Well, in a conduit spiral, where you have a wide starting point and you move towards a focus point, or you have a focus point and you move

to a wide point, this is the idea of a wide spiral that spirals up towards a focus point. Or you have one that's the opposite where it spirals down towards a focus point.

[00:53:47]

And that's where you get an appreciation of different pathways, direct pathways, but they take a tangential or a spiral or an elliptical thing. And that's shifting that lateral perception towards something of a conduit-orientated thing between connecting between atmospheres, qualities, volumes, and that then can be -- you can start to have a relationship.

[00:54:22]

Say like, if your spiral is your relationship to creativity or sharing a collaboration, you can then start to have a relationship with things like the sublime, because it's connected to desire.

Nicole:

Yeah. I want to bring in a little bit of the mathematical perspective if that's cool. And this is all -- all of this is connected to what both of you had said.

[00:54:51]

I might need some help remembering how it's connected, but these are notes I took while you were both talking. So I don't know if you guys know of the Fibonacci series or fractals, essentially, which are spirals. I love the Fibonacci series; it's my favourite. It's one of my favourite mathematical phenomenon. And we've used the words orbiting and ellipse which are also things that happen in nature, in the solar system.

[00:55:25]

And reflexivity and relationality and reciprocity; it's all part of the Fibonacci series. It's all part of what a fractal is. If you've ever gone on one of those websites where you zoom into a fractal indefinitely and it's just the same thing over and over again, that reminds me of the lateral perception and the vertical perception you were talking about, Charles.

[00:55:59]

And I also somehow connected into these ideas of nature and spiralling is -- I was reminded of wave particle duality and quantum physics, which is, basically, that a photon, which is the smallest unit of light is both -- acts as both -- a wave and a particle at the same time.

[00:56:30]

And physicists discovered this through the double slit experiment which, basically, they set up a light source and a piece of paper or piece of wall or something that had two slits in it and another wall behind that and they were recording where -- how the light was distributed on the back wall after passing through the two slits.

[00:56:58]

So when there was no observer, the photon acts as a particle and it gives what you would consider a normal distribution of lights on, just diffuse. But then, when you add in an observer to the experiment,

the photon behaves like a wave and there is interference, constructive and deconstructive interference, so you see wave patterns on the back wall instead of a diffuse pattern.

[00:57:35]

And I've always been fascinated by this. This was the reason I went into physics and I learned that this was not what we talked about for four years in a physics degree. But I think that's all also spiralling -- related to spirals -- in that you can see different perspectives in different places of the spiral and you can see different versions of the different spiral that you're in based on where you are in the spiral.

[00:58:11]

And I think that can be taken both physically as well as our thought processes. And that's somehow connects to what you've both said if you guys want to jump in.

Janine:

Nicole, was there also something about the reflexivity or the interference or the subject-object, the visitor -- the visitor, actually, has been a theme so far in this conversation, realising now.

[00:58:45]

Was there something else there that you were picking up on that you wanted to...

Nicole:

I think that I was thinking about how in a fractal pattern, or in the Fibonacci series, you are constantly seeing the same thing; it's reflexive. It's self-referential. And I think that the three of us are talking about this as part of our creative practices.

[00:59:17]

We are not thinking in one direction. We're thinking more broadly, like a spiral. And I don't have a definitive point to make because I'm spiralling on it.

Charles:

I just wanted to ask Nicole because it's -- what's interesting for me is that your introduction of reflexivity which was with the fractal.

[00:59:51]

And I was fascinated about and -- I don't think that you need to do this -- but I'm fascinated to see how you position in that kind of possibility the -- and it's a difficult one -- the introduction of the observer within that change as the particle to a wave.

[01:00:21]

And, for me, that's interesting, because we are also talking a lot about observation, but also, we are also in a place where the efforts of our research and of our work is observable. Big question, sorry! But in that context, is it a force or is it an intervention? What is, in your context, what is the introduction of the observer?

[01:00:53]

Nicole:

Are you talking about in my creative practice or in the double slit experiment?

Charles:

Yeah, in the double slit experience. But maybe that then can be reference in a way to your own creative practice.

Nicole:

OK. Can you ask one more time so I'm thinking in that mindset?

Charles:

Maybe in the context of the double slit experiment -- the introduction of the observer.

[01:01:25]

I find that really fascinating because that's something that makes it change from a particle to a wave. I immediately was thinking, "What is that observer?" I'm not sure, so I'm just thinking is there any way you could open up that a little bit. What's an observer in relation to that experiment with the fractal?

[01:01:51]

Nicole:

Yeah. Well, in the experiment, an observer, or when the observer's not there, the experiment is happening in a vacuum. And they go to check the distribution pattern of the photons after they've put the light through the two splits -- the two slits. And then the observer's in the room for the next version while the light is passing through the double slit. And this is what basically created the whole field of quantum physics.

[01:02:22]

And quantum physics is all, all -- there is no definitive answers in quantum physics. It's all about dualities and fields and matrices. Because before quantum physics, and before this experiment, only classical physics existed, which would be like Newton's laws: an object in motion stays in motion, where you can definitely solve the system for a certain variable.

[01:02:55]

But when you get into the quantum world, you can't definitively solve for one variable. You're actually working with waves and wave equations. So you're never getting an exact answer to anything if that makes any sense.

Charles:

It makes a lot of sense because I would think that somehow, sometimes, if I am working, and working could mean doing nothing, but then also doing everything that's possible.

[01:03:35]

If I'm in that place where I'm seeking some kind of like guidance or possibility of an idea, or if I have something that I am proposing within that moment, there's always something that comes as an arrival, outside of what I'm doing. And in that way, I feel observed.

[01:04:04]

And so the role of the observer, for me, is quite a mysterious and fascinating one. And it kind of seems like, around us, many kind of possible or even kind of tendrill-orientated connectors that connect in and then detach. And in that way, I feel that some kind of momentarily form of observation through some kind of tendrill thing.

[01:04:36]

And that's getting really in a different place, because that's not something that's explainable. It's something that's not necessarily observable, but you can measure some kind of shift and change in something that might happen in your work, which, at that time, might not be explainable.

[01:04:58]

So, I mean, I just want to say thank you because, to me, in relation to what you've been talking about, it does actually open up the possibility, too, that the idea of enquiry could be a series of reframing, as opposed to the continuing of seeking answers, do you know what I mean? That's very useful.

Nicole:

Yeah. And that's what I learned in design school was that you are iteratively asking questions.

[01:05:27]

You're never looking for an answer, which is maybe why I moved from quantum to design. But I thank you too, because you've given me a new way to think through language through these ideas, because, like Janine, I think in pictures. I'm always doing translations in my brain when I'm trying to speak.

[01:06:01]

And you have to be able to communicate through language of some sort to make work with other people in this reality. I guess that maybe that's not true. You can get things done without speaking, so I take that back. But I'm just not very good at the whole language part of describing the things I'm thinking through.

[01:06:33]

And oftentimes I run into situations of misunderstanding when I'm trying to describe these things to someone else. And I can see that I'm not getting my point across and that there is a misunderstanding, but they, the other party, can't necessarily see that and so I know that it's on my end. And I need to do some work if I want them to be able to understand me better. And I think you've really given me a good way to start doing that better.

[01:07:07]

Charles:

I just wanted to follow up on that, because I think that's a very confronting thing as well. Because there's so much value placed on the ability to articulate and to have an understanding or a command of language or languages. And I think that getting back to your idea about your proposal, and that the response was, "Can you define embodiment?"

[01:07:39]

That's a very difficult thing. However, that's also to the problematic nature of languages generally like that. To maybe give an example of that, my first language is English. My second language is my indigenous language.

[01:08:07]

And so within the possibilities of my imaginings that I am constantly going through, this process of internal and externalising the ability to move and weave and cross-translate between what I articulate and then necessarily what I understand and desire to do that.

[01:08:37]

And when I'm working with uncertain ideas that I'm trying to find the things that I can share the ideas with, and sometimes they're in one language and not in another. And then, of course, then we have embodiment, which is another series of matrices and possibilities.

[01:09:05]

So I guess the other thing would be is about -- is translation something that we should do? Or is there other ways that we can seek -- well, maybe understanding's not necessarily a good term. But it might be that the people we are working with -- their ideals, like if you try to make something understood to someone else, it might just be really there to reinforce your own understanding that you've articulated something.

[01:09:44]

Perhaps it might be better to find out later on how they interpret. So that's one of the big battles that I've had a lot of my life is the difference, like one example -- sorry, I'm raving now -- is that there's a big difference to say in my indigenous language what it means to how it sounds.

[01:10:16]

And so, somehow, the sound of the language can be a much more important kind of experience than what the collection of those sounds mean in a word or a phrase. So, in that way, I realise that the language itself has a whole other body of sensations, stimulations because of how it sounds.

[01:10:45]

So anyway, that was just something that I was thinking about then.

Janine:

I want to jump in because I had a really visceral, very beautiful, reaction to what you were both speaking about. And I was realising -- and now I'm also going to spiral in my thinking to try to articulate with myself, which I know has permission here, so that's beautiful. Thank you.

[01:11:14]

So the feeling I had was of recognising really clearly that as a person, so Asperger's person, that I think I'm so attracted to being in communion with people for whom English -- so English is my mother tongue -- so for whom English is not their first language, or who have very different, often cultural, backgrounds to my own.

[01:11:45]

Because there is, for both parties already, a huge experience of being in this kind of translation which means that there isn't an expectation of being immediately understandable, nor understood. And so there is a huge empathy for ways in which different systems of thinking -- whether it's language or space design or drawing or whatever it is -- are doing something and many things, but nothing is the one truth, or something.

[01:12:25]

And I just really felt that in my body very clearly when you were speaking, Charles. And it's actually -- it's very helpful for me in thinking about my own processing. And it gives a bit of relief, because I've been thinking recently a lot in relation to what Nicole said about being neurodivergent, and realising, in encounters often with people who experience themselves, or whatever, as neurotypical is what we're saying.

[01:12:57]

We're saying these things and I'm already like, that's too binary, but for now, temporarily allow something a bit binary. So Nicole was saying that she, in an encounter, would realise that the other person is not understanding her or that she's not understanding the other person, but that other party would not be realising the same thing. And that she, as the neurodivergent person, then has to do the work of fostering and trying to develop ways -- different ways -- of understanding.

[01:13:31]

And that, for me, is like a crux of a huge problem in how neurodivergents and neurodiversities are understood as being like a lack or a deficit. Because, in this case, the neurotypical -- and I'm doing air quotes -- person doesn't understand the amount of labour that's happening in order for the thing to go well. And actually, there's a huge amount of negotiation which I feel very physically, like even thinking about posture and that there is no stillness, there's always slight motion and adjustment.

[01:14:07]

And I've been thinking of this -- I'm in a position of leadership in the project, and how to be with my own process. How to be in translation. How to hold space with people with many different lived experiences in the room: different ages, cultural backgrounds, different languages, genders, sexualities, many, many things.

[01:14:31]

And sometimes in my life, in general, I have this feeling of like -- it's as if everyone else can sight-read music and they know how to match up, somehow, the right sounds that they're able to make with what's expected. Whereas it's like I have to learn, embody, by heart, all of the different songs or scripts for

different occasions. And then if I'm surprised, which I sometimes am, I have to recombine things in different and creative ways.

[01:15:05]

And so it's not as clear or as binary as that. But I think there is, in this conversation, something happening around greater space that can be opened where there can be -- again the language in English is very -- it's about lack, it's about wholes, it's about gaps.

[01:15:34]

But where, maybe, things don't match up and maybe they're, as I think Charles was saying, one can lean into experience or the journey and maybe have some relief from the explanation of seeking to be understood. And actually, that's where I feel most connected with my whole self as a younger self and as I age.

[01:16:06]

When I have that sense that I can lean into and work to build ways of being in the world which support more the way that I'm processing and experiencing. I'm doing less of the trying to just match up and fit in. So I've also done a massive spiral, maybe that's why we're here. Maybe it's OK.

[01:16:34]

Charles:

There's something very interesting too. Maybe I want to share a couple of things about some language from what really helps me understand that kind of negotiation between my experience of English and my experience of Te Reo Māori, my indigenous language.

[01:17:03]

And I'll just give two examples because it's quite interesting, because they allow the possibility to use the term of "to lean into something" without the pressure, possibly, of having an explanation to why that thing might be. And one of them is marama and marama can be in two different things.

[01:17:31]

One is marama, and then mārama -- yeah? So marama is the name of the moon. And when someone wants to -- or engaging in conversation, and there's a little bit of a misunderstanding, they will say, "ko koe he mārama?" And what that means is, "Did that light reflect on you?"

[01:18:02]

And you say, "Ae, he tika he mārama." So that I understand in my way because the moon is shining on me, do you know what I mean? So that's a very beautiful way because, sometimes, it's hard to say, "Look, I can tell you don't understand" or "Do you understand?" And you can either say "yes" or "no" or "I'm confused".

[01:18:30]

But in that way, you can choose to say, "he tika he mārama"-- I'm like the moon." Which is quite lovely. That's a beautiful way to do that. And so, in many ways, maybe one of the goals of all languages is to find the types of other possibilities. And the other one I wanted to share, which is a very old term, which is called pōrangī.

[01:18:59]

And that is now become a modern type of term for someone who is suffering from mental momentary lapse or a mental condition. And that's usually around something about a neurodiversity or the things that we're talking about now.

[01:19:29]

It's shifting now because people are starting to use that term in a very different way, which is so good, because it's more becoming more aligned to the more archaic way that the term was used. And so, in a way, it's interesting because how language can be gently pried away from perhaps a more modern take on something.

[01:19:58]

So that term was used through health professionals, the medical kind of approach to it because it kind of became the term used for people who were experiencing bipolarism or schizophrenia or something like that. And that became a really derogatory term to say someone who is in a really difficult place psychologically.

[01:20:28]

Or else the beginning of dementia or they're crazy: pōrangī. People don't like that term but they prefer to use it in those old terms. So anyway, the other way to look at it is that "pō" is our name for the night. Rangi is the name of the sky, which is daylight.

[01:20:57]

So when you, in the olden days, you would describe someone who i ngā mea pōrangī kia koe, they're between the night and the day. So they're, in actual fact, a process of kind of like between darkness and light or the break of day or twilight or dawn. They're at that liminal kind of place.

[01:21:23]

So pōrangī is really a way to describe someone who is in the process of not what people would consider to be either night or day. So they're indistinct kind of places and that's how people were supported. And also, too, that was also about extended periods of grief. People were being described as being in the process of pōrangī, between the night and of the day.

[01:21:54]

In that way it's a really -- it shows that in some of the languages that there's these really important associations to natural phenomena like night and day, dawn and dusk, daybreak, the moon and stars, and there are others. But those are two examples of how a language can be softened around very, very severe societal reaction to unfamiliarities and territories.

[01:22:35]

Janine:

I'm so reminded, Charles, of hearing you speak. This is one of the things you spoke about to me before. And we talked, perhaps, about the language of diagnosis. How rich -- I don't know -- but in your language, and maybe in other indigenous languages, how rich the language is in connection, as you say, to the natural environment and process in offering softness.

[01:23:11]

It comes back to softness. And that every experience that feels, to me, considered in that language is part of the world, not to necessarily be put aside that there is a -- that it's all part of the world. And it reminds me of -- and I think this is also why I really love talking to you today, and to Nicole too, and a few years ago in Vienna.

[01:23:40]

Because the image that I had for myself and that I share with others around any thinking about the kind of medical model of diagnosis is that there's the possibility to think about those words as like a window that might shine some light on a situation, but it doesn't have to be everything. It can just be a way of illuminating. And maybe there are many windows and there are many sources of light.

[01:24:10]

And that's not maybe the best image, but I know that it was one for me that has been -- it feels resonant with the way you're speaking about language. And I'm so grateful to have this kind of conversation that moves through physics and a little bit dance and making and place and language. And sort of spiralling together and somehow ending up somewhere unexpected.

[01:24:40]

But that feeling in my body so good, so I'm going to invite if there are any last things that want to be heard in our space. And then I think we'll close for the session.

Nicole:

I think I just want to say that we talked a lot about nature and I really love nature, so I appreciated that aspect of the conversation too.

Charles:

Yeah. I just wanted to thank you both for such a great, wonderful exchange.

[01:25:13]

And I think that also too and the time that we're living in, which is quite extraordinary, and also offering us the possibility to seek different ways of sharing information and experiences. Who would have known really that we could span the globe this morning, this afternoon or evening and to be able to find our way to this particular place which I find really, really stimulating.

[01:25:47]

I feel really creatively prepared for my day and I just really want to thank you both. And there's one last thing I'd like to share which I just discovered last night, so it's quite a recent thing, which is another thing

about language. And there was a small article that I came across and just to show that the things that we would do, they're not always about the things that have been.

[01:26:20]

So there's a new term that was accepted and created within the language resurgence in Aotearoa and it's called takiwātanga. And that's a new term. And it's something that's -- it's not a transliteration of anything, and it's a new term that's been accepted within the kind of official language things and the government and within the community.

[01:26:52]

And they're using it now: takiwātanga. And that is the new term for the spectrums of autism.

Nicole:

Oooh. Cool.

Charles:

Yeah. And so it was formulated by a very respectful language researcher and its loose translation means "in their own time and space" -- that's what the literal translation means: "in their own time and space."

[01:27:21]

Yeah. So that's something that I'm just learning about so I'm really kind of endeavour to try to learn a little bit more about what means. So that's a really fascinating thing in relation to our conversation that it means that they're so many people in that motion of discovering new processes. Yes: the spiral.

Janine:

I love that. Also because we have this phrase that someone will get the thing done in their own time or their own space.

[01:27:51]

And I think that is an absolutely beautiful way to end our conversation. Thank you so much for being here.

Nicole:

Thank you, both.

Charles:

Thank you. Thank you.

Music

[01:28:15]

Janine:

The Satelliser project is realised using funds from The National Lottery through Arts Council England, Bonnie Bird Choreography Fund, and John Ellerman Foundation through CONTINUOUS Network.

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Music

END

[01:29:04]