

DAN SHIPSIDES (with Echo Echo Dance) - Vertical. Nature. Base.

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PLATFORM - notes from blog - after the construction phase:

We have completed the first 8 days of being at the cove. The first two or three days were entirely taken up with carry materials and equipment in, setting up camp and building the platform. Monday, tue wed involved a lot of carrying.

This was hard but had a sense of epic about it. Fitzcarraldo-esque. Many, many trips back and forth along the headland coast path, wood, timber, plywood, dibond, tools food, water etc etc. carry by carry it all needed to be moved.

It opened up questions about was the building of the platform worth it?? Why did I want to do it? – why were people supporting my efforts to do it? Would it be art? Or just a bloody dance “stage”.

These anxieties nagged away at me as the platform was slowly (it seemed) constructed. Always takes longer than you plan – each evening I would think I’ll be finished by noon the next day. By the end of Thursday, after working 7am – 9pm days it was completed – and WOW!!! anxieties gone – it was fantastic – beautiful. Art and not art – referential (70’s minimalism) and a little bit Pop but completely contextual (Landart) and functional. There’s also a futurist (well at least the metallic machined sheen) and sci-fi essence to it (Dr. Who, 2001). If it had been a stage it would have failed. For me it had to have another presence, existence with complex layers of possibilities, functions and registers. For now we are calling it the Platform – but I want to find a better title for it as a piece of art.

One aspect which I love and is key for me is that the materials and form are so incongruous for this natural location. It goes against all the logical thinking of locational and environmental empathy – but at on a visual, physical and emotional level it has complete empathy with the location – it absorbs and reflects the space – it hums in the location – sings loudly at time and deeply at other – but seems to hum with the vibrations of it's surroundings. I don't feel it dominates or territorializes the space – it gives a presence and sort of focus but the frame it offers is not like that of the traditional studio or venue stage – the frame includes the horizon and beyond. For the dancers it provides a focus but I feel in absolute relationship with what is around – I must ask them about how they feel it operates for them...