

# Reading is Caring

## Tags

#attention

#choreography

#sensorial

#reading

"Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity"

—Simone Weil

All texts are written to be read, for a meeting to happen between the author and the reader. As readers we are expected to direct our attention towards the words we read, in order to understand them. But there are many ways one can pay attention, which probably shift our understanding of the text. We might read the text with a specific intention, or expectation, maybe with a hopeful anticipation, or a critical eye. We can be searching for that which confirms our world view, or that which challenges it. Or we read and pay attention with a strong sense of belonging, or with a weaker one. The bottom line is that we bring something to the text with the kind of attention we offer.

As good consumers we are used to get something back when, in financial terms, we invest our time – but what happens with the text if this consumerist perspective becomes the main trait of how we give attention? What if we shift the logic and focus on what we can give to the text, instead of what we can get? How can our attention become valuable for the text itself?

To arrange our attention towards the text the perspective of choreography (time, place and the body) might be helpful: We can read slow or fast, chop the text up into parts or digest it all at once. With very little time, or abundance. The body can be sitting, laying, standing, moving. We can acknowledge the specific place we read in, the sound of the space, the smell, the surfaces. The reading can take place in rooms that are common or uncommon to us, in bathrooms, parks or busses.

And how do we read? We can read out loud, perhaps sing some paragraphs, or repeat some parts. We can listen to the text's musicality, emotionality, or the sensorial aspect of words. We can add a fictional layer, pretend that the text is written to us privately, as a love letter. Or pretend that it's written a thousand years from now, historic or futuristic. We could read it as if we're reading a poem, a song, a spell or a prayer. These are just a few examples. We can be playful and experimental, or use a small, simple, shift in our attention. Be guided by the kind of attention you find relevant to give to the text.

## Score 1: Give Attention to a Text

Choose three texts from The Compost, based on spontaneous curiosity (from reading the titles).

Choose three texts that you have been wanting to read, but couldn't find the time for (be they poetry, scores, interviews, websites, sound recording, videos etc).

Choose a time frame and a place for the reading session (maybe one session for each text, or one session for all, or something other).

Decide what kind of attention you will offer and write it down to have it with you in the session.

Do your reading session/s. During the session take some notes, or save some quotes (spontaneously).

## Score 2: Give a Text

Based on your notes and/or quotes, create material of your own (a short letter, a drawing, a poem, an essay or something else).

Share it with someone.

Documentation:

Texts from The Compost:

Choreographing Empathy, by Nina Gojić, with Lana Hosni, Ana Jelušić, Marta Krešić Ivana Rončević, Martina Tomić and Zrinka Užbinec

Conviviality, persons, tools, by Ana Vujanovic

Orientation and disorientation, by Una Bauer

Texts from my "to read list":

(Home Works) A Cooking Book, Recipes for Organising with Art and Domestic Work, editors Jenny Richards and Jens Strandberg (full book)

Blackness and the Postmodern, edited by Sonya Lindfors (publication)

Practices of Relations, A Critique of Performance, by Josefin Wikström (the introduction)

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curating  
in  
context



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