



## **SCRIOBH 7 - CONFINEMENT DOSSIER - 2020**

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*"The artist always precedes the psychoanalyst" J. Lacan*

In times of confinement and restriction of social interaction, we invited several artists from a diversity of fields to tell us about their experiences during the confinement measures at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. We put to them the following questions:

**Q1 -** *What is your experience, as an artist, of the impossibility to carry out cultural and artistic events 'in the flesh'? What is different when the audience / spectator is 'virtual'?*

**Q2 -** *In your particular form of art, what are the effects of the exclusion of the body in the encounter with the body of the other, i.e. what is different / new?  
Can you relate this to the notion of 'presence' (can you -as an artist- do without physical presence?)*

We aim at learning from them, since we believe that their experiences and know-how can contribute to our thinking about subjectivity and about the analytic encounter.

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## **S U Z A N N E W A L S H**

**Suzanne Walsh** is an artist and writer, who works mainly in the mediums of performance, writing, and audio. She is interested in the non-human world, human/animal relationships as well as testing what is considered 'real' or of value in current society.

To know more about Suzanne's current and past work, please visit:

[www.suzannewalsh.ie](http://www.suzannewalsh.ie)

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## Q1

As a performer, some work is impossible to translate exactly, without the human connection. Moving things to an 'online experience, for example, ignores the fact that you are working with a whole new medium, with its own world, limitations, framing.

However, my work has often included uses of technology, and has drawn at times on the internet, so I could probably envision possible routes to take.

Recently I took part in an online streaming gig, in the end I had a technological failure, which was to do with being on my own without technical support. But the spirit of the event (I showed a video instead), moved me, and I did feel the presence of the other performers connected around the country streaming into my bedroom.



However if there is a general expectation at this time by funding bodies for artists to move online, it is not appropriate for everyone, and there are certainly many reservations around this suggestion.

## Q2

As a writer I am used to my (published) work being completely disembodied in a way that pleases me, it can be read anywhere, it continues without me and yet exists as a trace of me. I like how it spreads out in the world. As a performer I think there is a power to presence, a sort of charge that is important. Performing/reading texts can add another layer of meaning.

Use of voice is very important to me - inflection, pauses, looks, the suggested embodiment of others, channelling, and also kinds of trickery with expectations, for example, using a particular mode of delivery such as a lecture to subvert that authority.

I think other artists do without this presence in one way, for example sculpture, and yet, there is always the awareness of the human body in relation to what they make, always the audience or spectator, so maybe there is never any true escape of our presence.

[Cont.]

A few years ago there was lots of engagement in the artworld with the philosophical ideas of 'speculative realism' as a way to think outside human perception, but ultimately art is very human, and I'm saying that as someone who is most interested in the nonhuman world. But it is very interesting to think about.



*Listen, Hissen, Hessin!* at IMMA – Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. Photography by Louis Haugh.

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