Morphology Artist Exchange Lab

27 July – 27th August 2016

Department of Dance and Drama

University of Visual and Performing Arts

Colombo

Dr Saumya Liyanage (UVPA) and Dr Rachel Sweeney (Liverpool Hope University) propose a one month exchange laboratory for professional and emerging theatre artists, based at the University of Visual and Performing Arts.

The purpose of this exchange is to foster creative dialogue within contemporary performance practice, based around an exploration of physical and vocal structures, improvisatory tools and the transformation from physical training into creative improvisation with text, imagination, movement and voice.

The focus of this lab will be to explore, through embodied ensemble work, both eastern and western physical training practices that integrate voice and movement. The aim is to locate a fertile shared training ground and to experiment with different styles and performance techniques that might produce a dialectics of bodily training for stage.

Much of the research supporting this artist laboratory will be informed by Sweeney’s performance experience in both Butoh and Bodyweather, both of which practices regard the role of imagery as key in performance training, as also the ability to morph from one material state to another.

Through the linking of movement to breath, breath to sound and sound to text, various modes of expression will be explored both individually and collectively. The aim of this laboratory is to promote the exchange of performance disciplines, techniques and training attitudes through exploring professional stage craft, where certain cultural traditions surrounding performance will be exposed and interrogated, questioning ideas of heritage, language and identity.

Outputs from this initial project will include a lecture presentation, a work in progress and a joint publication. It is also planned to build a digital presence that operates as a performance archive and can be accessed and utilised as a research tool by students from across both UK and Sri Lanka institutions.