



Deirdre (Dee) Heddon teaches theatre studies at the University of Glasgow, and is particularly interested in aesthetic walking practices. Dee and Misha Myers conceived a performance piece called the 'Walking Library' with the help of a troupe of volunteer walking librarians walked the 375km Sideways 2012 Walking and Art Festival route, carrying 90 books.

Notes from the podcast interview by Andrew Stuck: Recorded in August 2012 on the nomadic month long cross Flanders Sideways 2012 Walking and Art Festival and published in March 2013 on <http://talkingwalking.net>

Sideways2012 walking and art festival: <http://www.tragewegen.be/nl/about>

A key influence and a spur to her research has been Wrights & Sites, a collective of artists from Exeter in Devon, some of whom were colleagues of hers when she was at the University there. There is a clear link between site specific practices and walking. <http://www.mis-guide.com/>

Dee is the author of a book on autobiography and performance, a chapter of which is focussed on autobiography and place. Writing this, she was struck by the fact that the majority of examples that included walking were by men (*Autobiography and Performance*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). This prompted a research project, collaborating with Cathy Turner (Wrights & Sites), which focused on walking art made by women artists ('Walking women: shifting the tales and scales of mobility', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 2012, 22 (2). pp. 224-236; 'Walking women: interviews with artists on the move', *Performance Research*, 2010, 15 (4). pp. 14-22).

About 10 years ago, Wrights & Sites undertook 'gender drifts'. Cathy Turner, the only woman in the group, walked with a group of women, including Dee, and in their more recent collaboration they have tried to raise the visibility of women walking artists.

In doing research around histories and discourses of walking, Dee kept encountering descriptions of books and journals that were carried by walkers, as a kind of travelling companion. This prompted the idea of a performance piece for the Sideways Festival called the Walking Library, conceived with Misha Myers (Programme Leader in Theatre at Falmouth University).

Dee & Misha, and a team of volunteer librarians (up to four on any day) walked much of the 375km route of the Sideways Festival across Belgium carrying 90 books that people suggested were 'good to take for a walk'. As the library walked across Belgium, locals donated books to the project. At the end of the Festival, the whole library was, in turn, donated to the festival organisers.

The Walking Library catalogue can be found here: <http://www.tragewegen.be/nl/myers-heddon-gb-en>

To mark her 40th birthday, Dee invited 40 of her friends to individually accompany her on a walk of their choice: <http://40walks.wordpress.com/> The shortest walk was with a 3 year old who took Dee to the Kelvingrove Art Gallery in Glasgow, the longest being along the Lea Valley in London <http://40walks.wordpress.com/2012/06/10/walking-with-jen-harvie-on-27-may-2012/>

Dee was asked to recommend two walks for listeners:

A walk through Parisian arcades <http://40walks.wordpress.com/2011/09/>

The Pembrokeshire coastal path <http://40walks.wordpress.com/2010/06/03/walking-with-mike-pearson-and-heike-roms-on-29-may-2010/>

Prompted by 40 Walks, Dee has reflected on the relationship between walking and friendship ('Turning 40: 40 turns: Walking & friendship', *Performance Research*, 2012, 17 (2). pp. 67-75).