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Our ability to connect — with ourselves, others, and the planet — is regarded as essential for creating a sustainable world,<sup>1</sup> leading organizations,<sup>2</sup> and improving our well-being.<sup>3</sup> Yet we seldom reflect on the nature of connection itself. What if we are already connected and are simply missing the ability to notice it? Inspired by Martin Buber's notion of "I and Thou",<sup>4</sup> this photographic research uses contact improvisation to explore the nature of connection as one's ability to embrace another "I" while being in genuine contact with one's own "I."

Contact improvisation is a contemporary dance form in which dancers improvise around a shared point of contact. Because the next move is never known in advance, the dancer can only mindfully experience the dance as it emerges, listening inwardly and acting outwardly at the same time. In this way, the dancers participate in shared co-creation while simultaneously dancing their own dances, unfolding an embodied experience of relationality. The project is an invitation to explore this experience as the photographs form crystallized points of contact with the dance itself.

The project may also be seen as a mirror of my own relationship with connection. I long to be part of something and yet to dance my own dance. In 2017, I spent the winter on Arambol Beach in Goa, India, where hundreds of contact dancers gather for festivals, workshops, and jams every year. I was one of them — with a camera.

The method I used was to approach a dancer whose dance made me curious. I then invited them to choose someone they wanted to dance with. A few times, a dancer did not show up, but eventually someone else passed by, or we explored a solo. Occasionally, we ended up being a group. In this way, curiosity, co-creation, and chance were built into the project from the beginning. Usually, we all started to dance together. At some point, I began to take pictures while continuing to move, mainly at a distance but still in connection. In this way, we did 25 photo sessions with more than 50 dancers who came from five continents, were aged from their early 20s to 60, and had various levels of experience. In each case, a dynamic and improvised dance emerged in which none of us knew what the next move would be or from what angle the following picture would be taken.