Questions about Two Fold
Mary Paterson

Who’s missing?
How do you know?
What shape do they make with their absence?
 Will you start again when they get here?
Will you feel complete?
Will you feel better?
What’s your position?

Who is your opposite?
Who is your complement?
What does your reflection say back to you from the mirror?
Be honest: how long do you like to spend talking to yourself in the mirror?
And how long would you like to do it if no-one was watching? And how long would you like to do it if you could guarantee that people were watching, avidly, in silence, and theorising it later on in company as the performance of an alter ego?

What kind of moral licence could you achieve from dividing up your psyche into the other versus the self, the organised versus the active, the repressed versus the carnivalesque, the curator versus the artist?
What authority do you have when you give yourself a job title?
Is ‘collaborator’ a job title? Is ‘partner’? Is ‘scientist’? Is ‘dyad’?
Is it a compliment?

What’s your word for it?

Relatively speaking: what’s your position?
What’s your super-position?
How do you know you’re not missing any information?
How do you know you’re not drowning in misunderstanding?
What kinds of freedoms could you achieve when you know that entanglement is not to do with ignorance, but to do with randomness?

How do you know?

In this context, what is the difference between knowledge and belief? I mean, what is the difference between knowing about entanglement and believing it to be true?
What do you believe in, passionately?
What happens if I ask you to share it with me?
What happens if we make a commitment about it, like a mortgage, or a funding application, and so we write it down as a list, or an equation, or a diary entry, or a transcribed piece of pop culture, or a participatory exercise, or a universal class, or a contract, or a diagram, or a practice based PhD, or a programme printed three months in advance, or an autobiographical theatre show, or a stage direction, or a score, or a video you show when she’s not there, or an abstract, or a piece of
quantum cryptography designed to harness the uncertainty principle in order to ensure the certainty of your government’s private positions?

What’s happened, then?
How quickly does it change?
Who’s measuring?

Would you rather have perfect knowledge of your position, and maximal uncertainty of your direction of travel; or perfect knowledge of your velocity, and absolutely no idea where you are?

What is the relationship between politics and collaboration?
What’s your word for it?

Is it bitter, or sweet? Happy or sad? Collaborative or competitive? Yours or mine? Ours or theirs? Us or them, or us instead of them? Is this working for you? Is this work? Or this? Or this? Or this? Is this working?

Do you believe in expertise?
Do you need something from me?

Do you think that being a patient and enthusiastic teacher is the best kind of basis for a working partnership?
Would you prefer to be the teacher, or the student?

In what circumstances might ignorance be bliss, misunderstanding be a resource, irritation be a creative energy?
Are you Good Cop or Bad Cop?
Female or Male? Trained or Untrained?
In your comfort zone or dragged into someone else’s?

Do you think that the person you are thinking of would describe you as generous?
Do you miss this person when he or she is not there?
Have you formalised your working relationship?
Did you formalise it in advance or in retrospect?
Did formalising it make it more palatable to other people, or did it make it easier for you to work together again, or neither, or both?

What kinds of moral and artistic freedoms could you achieve when you know that entanglement is not to do with accident, but to do with precedent?
What kinds of freedoms could you achieve even if you don’t know this, but if you make it look that way, in a format that is designed to be recognised by other people?

What’s your word for it: this intimacy, this fragility, this entanglement, this uncertainty, this thing that won’t be measured, this metaphor, this sculpture, this material process?
What's your word for it: this accident, this facility, this circumstance, this happenstance, this competition between us, this irritation I feel, this appearance of your name next to mine as if we do not rub each other up the wrong way.

How long did you spend talking to yourself in the mirror this morning?
Are you aware that it is impossible to see yourself?
No, I mean really: have you stopped to think about the reciprocity of recognition?

And have you stopped to think that if recognition is reciprocal, if being seen is a collaborative act, then does this mean that you could change your identity simply by changing the people that are looking at you?

Who's measuring?
What's your position?
How would you write this down?

Is this about process or anecdote or the fragility of bodies?
Do you trust me to stay within two arms’ lengths of your skin?
Do you trust me to sculpt the space for you before you put on your outfit and get ready to be seen?

Are you certain?

Would you rather be inside the room with something strange, or would you prefer it if I said I could guarantee to keep all the strangers outside?

How will you describe this period in your life, differently, in retrospect?

How much do I irritate you?
What irritates you the most?
What have you learnt?

What shape is left by the words of the things we will never say to each other, or never say about each other, even in retrospect?
Do you draw that shape around you like a blanket, or does it scratch against your skin?

Is there a them and an ‘us’? And if so, are we an ‘us’ or are you always going to be ‘one of them’?

What if you made a point to be seen performing next to someone who looks very different to you?
What if you made a point to be seen performing next to someone who looks kind of the same, at least once a year, every year until one of you dies?
Would this mean you could embrace randomness, or would it mean that you were trying to measure it?
Would this make you an expert, or a loner, or a person projecting her shadow onto the nearest strange thing?
Do you have a word for it: this feeling; this position?

Have you realised how much you’ve changed? Have you thought about our shared vision recently? Is it revolutionary? Is it revolutionary yet? Is it an endless revolution? Have we abandoned our positions? Are we going to stay like this, forever, working on velocity?

Can you think of a less positive term than creative resistance?
Are you using your own words or is this some kind of joint strategy?
Are you a foreigner here?
Have you been listening to my ideas? Can I compliment you, for a second?
Can I instrumentalize our friendship?
Can I protect our past selves from any of this?
Are you my professional indemnity insurance? Are you taking something from me?
Are you seeing other people?

Shall we exchange a series of half silences because to do anything else would be to skin our friendship and roast it over someone else's fire?
Shall we walk through fire together?
Shall we tie our hair in knots?
Shall we think about our outfits?

Would you call it friendship, or collaboration, or solidarity?
Would you call it competition, or partnership, or professional development?
Are you certain?
Are you secure?
Are you needy?
Are you in the limelight, or in someone else’s shadow?
Are you lonely?
Are you coping?
Are you my coping mechanism?
Are you willing to carry on regardless?

Are you seeing other people?
Is the feeling mutual?

“Questions about TwoFold” was written by Mary Paterson in response to the first day and delivered at the start of the second day of TwoFold: the particularities of working in pairs, a symposium hosted by Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre and Camden People's Theatre as part of TwoFold, Haranczak/Navarre’s festival of duet performance (March 2017).