How does artistic research change us? This question was the theme and the starting point for the 1st colloquium on artistic research in performing arts that took place in Helsinki at the Theatre Academy in November 2009. As mentioned in the call for presentations artistic research, art-based research, practice-based research, practice-led research, performance as research are just some of the terms and approaches that have been developed to describe knowledge production originating from artistic concerns. The term artistic research is often associated mainly with research undertaken in fine art academies and within visual art. At the Theatre Academy this term was adopted as an umbrella concept when the Performing Arts Research Centre TUTKE was founded in 2007. The debate on research in the arts had been going on lively for decades, here at the Theatre Academy as well. For instance the first publication in the series Acta Scenica, Knowledge is a Matter of Doing, was composed of the proceedings of the Symposium Theatre and Dance artists Doing Research in Practice at the Theatre Academy in October 1994. The need for a recurring forum dedicated to artistic research especially in performing arts was evident to us all.

This colloquium, CARPA 1, was the first in a series of biannual colloquia, aimed at addressing the problems and possibilities of artistic research, particularly those involving the performing arts. With regard to the scope of contemporary practices the term ‘performing arts’ is understood in a broad sense and encompasses a variety of different creative practices. The purpose of these colloquia is to contribute to the development of research practices in the field of the performing arts and to foster their social, pedagogical and ecological connections. In the call for presentations the colloquium
aimed to take account of the special features of various artistic research practices: research can realise itself in its own concrete set up; cooperative action and collective reflection can function as a means of producing knowledge; the definition of the role and place of the observers or participants in a situation can be an essential part of the research arrangements, etc. The colloquium can also serve as the site of the research itself.

These proceedings are organized in the order of the program of the colloquium. To our delight a majority of the presenters have chosen to participate with their papers or presentations in this publication. The contributions are published as they have been sent to us, with the exception of small changes in typography and layout for the sake of a fluent reading experience. The content of the presentations has not been edited. In some cases end notes have been changed into footnotes for purposes of clarity. However, the style of indicating references, sources or bibliography has been maintained in the form the contributors have used them. The variety of contributions exemplifies a broad range of approaches in artistic research from formal theoretical papers to informal talks, from performance demonstrations to workshop reports. Even more diversity was our aim. Unfortunately video or audio clips could not be included in this form of pdf- publication. They can be referred to through links.

Biographical data of the presenters are included in the book of abstracts. Our prominent key note speakers professor Baz Kershaw, professor Henk Borgdorff and director Ylva Gislén are presented separately. The programme and the abstracts 2009 can be found on the CARPA website www.teak.fi/CARPA under ‘history’ (please copy the link on your browser). Thank you to all of you who chose to participate and thank you for your patience in waiting for these proceedings to appear. Many thanks also to the organising committee of the first colloquium, professors Esa Kirkkopelto and Eeva Anttila, research associates and doctoral students Annemari Untamala, Tuija Kokkonen and Tero Nauha, research co-ordinators Annika Fredriksson and Susann Vainisalo as well as all doctoral students and staff of Theatre Academy who helped to make the event run smoothly and provided a good start for future colloquia.

So how does artistic research change us? In many ways, it seems. Welcome to take part of the diverse answers presented on the following pages

Annette Arlander
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**How does Artistic Research Change us? Annette Arlander**

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Das ist eben die große Frage:
Wo steht die Kunst?
Welchen Ort hat sie?
Heidegger

The difference between art and artistic research

Asking how artistic research differs from art is a corollary of a broader question: How does the domain of art differ from the domain of science? Or where does art stand in relation to science, or to politics and morality, to the economy or to everyday life?

How art relates to science may seem obvious at first glance. Just as there is an obvious difference between playing sports and studying them in sport sciences, or between politics and political science, the distinction between art practice and artistic research would seem as clear as day. Yet drawing boundaries like these is not always easy. Consider the domain of the courts as compared to the legal sciences, or that of religion in comparison to theology. And the recent financial crisis has made us painfully aware that the distinction between the economy and economics is highly relative.

The attempt to distinguish what belongs to art practice from what belongs to artistic research is reminiscent of what in the philosophy of science is known as the demarcation problem. It involves delimiting what can be considered part of science from what cannot, or distinguishing what qualifies as science from mere pseudoscience. Karl Popper’s influential views on this question are well known; he argued that openness to falsification was the quality that distinguished science from pseudoscience.
Demarcating our subject matter would amount to formulating one or more principles that distinguish art from pseudo-art—or rather, that distinguish art from non-art. Arthur C. Danto is one writer who has expressed views on this. One of his insights is worth highlighting in our context: no essentialist definition is possible of what art is. The distinction between art and non-art is a construed one, and it depends on what is recognized as such in the “art world” (the totality of artists, art criticism, art theory, and art industry) at a particular point in time.\(^1\)

Such constructivism, which we also encounter in post-Popperian philosophy and sociology of science in thinkers like Paul Feyerabend, Pierre Bourdieu, and Bruno Latour, radically qualifies the problem of demarcation. And this should be a lesson to us as we examine the difference between art and artistic research.

We are interested here not so much in the difference between art and non-art as we are in demarcating the domain of art practice from the domain of science or research, or the domain of morality, or that of daily life. Here, too, demarcations, dichotomies, definitions, and identities are problematic—an insight also celebrated in post-structuralism. The issue of the essence of art has been supplanted by that of the dynamics of the art world, where different life domains may meet and interpenetrate one another. Attempts to address this question may be labeled as “boundary work”.\(^2\) In trying to fathom something of the dynamics of the art world, one cannot assume a stable concept of art; the presumed boundaries of that world are the subject of constant debate.

Artistic research also qualifies as such boundary work—and in two different directions. Artistic research is an activity undertaken in the borderland between the art world and the academic world. The topics, the questions, as well as the results of such research are judged, and have meaning, both in the art world and in academia. And in this respect artistic research appears to differ from more traditional academic research, whose relevance and validity is determined primarily within the community of peers, within the walls of academia, within the world of the universities.


At least that was the image many people had of academic research until recently. That image is now substantially altered. The international debate on the relevance and valorization of academic research, the advent of transdisciplinary research programs, and the recognition of non-traditional forms of knowledge production (such as Mode 2\(^3\)) have all shown that the context of justification of academic research lies in both academia and society. The quality of the research is determined by an extended peer group in which stakeholders from the context of application also have a voice. I say “also” because the basis on which research is judged, as well as the final word over that judgment, still resides in the academic community of peers.

**Intermezzo 1: On peer review**

The peer review system may be regarded as a sign of the independence and maturity of the domain of science. Within that domain, the forum of peers is the first to decide what is relevant and what the quality standards will be. Mutual peer assessment of quality and validity is also required in the case of newer forms of knowledge production, preferably in an open and blind assessment process in accepted academic channels.

So how, then, is the relevance and the quality of art and artistic research assessed? When asked which people judge the quality of artistic research, the head of a prestigious postgraduate art institute in the Netherlands recently replied “artists and experts.” By “experts” he meant curators, critics, theoreticians...

It is true that what art is is not determined by artists alone, but is “defined” in the “art world” (to follow Danto and Howard Becker), in the “field of cultural production” (to follow Pierre Bourdieu), in the “network of actors” (to follow Bruno Latour). Yet the question remains: who are the experts? Who are the peers? Wouldn’t it attest to the maturity of artistic research if the dominant influence of curators and other “secondary” actors were to come to an end? Or, more cautiously perhaps, shouldn’t the artist-researchers themselves accede to the forum of peers that determines what has relevance and quality? Fortunately, we now see the phenomenon of the artist-

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\(^3\) Gibbons, Michael et al., *The New Production of Knowledge – The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*, London 1994
curator popping up here and there. Emphasizing the importance of the artist-researcher as part of the community of peers would greatly benefit the emerging field of artistic research.

The idea of art as an autonomous sphere (and the story of its eighteenth-century emancipation)

The following tale may be told of the relationship between art and the domains of science and morality. Once upon a time, in Greek antiquity, thinkers like Plato emphasized the unity of beauty, truth, and goodness. But over the course of history, the life spheres of art, science, and morality grew apart, until, in the eighteenth century, they became not only institutionally, but also theoretically, autonomous. This differentiation between aesthetics, epistemology, and ethics—which Kant provided with an impressive foundation in his *Critiques*—still persists today, although “the unity of reason in the diversity of its voices”⁴ was also emphasized from Kant onwards.

The birth of the autonomous spheres of Art and Aesthetics (duly capitalized) in the eighteenth century was signaled by two publications: Charles Batteux’s *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe (The Fine Arts Reduced to a Single Principle)* from 1748 and Alexander G. Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* from 1750. Batteux’s work raised three issues. First, the system of fine arts constitutes an autonomous sphere (for Batteux, it comprised painting, sculpture, music, poetry, and dance). Second, these arts converge on a single principle. Third, that principle is the subject matter of philosophical aesthetics. Here ends our little history of Art’s emancipation in the eighteenth century.

That history has especially made itself felt since Paul O. Kristeller published his two-part article “The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics” in the *Journal of the History of Ideas* in 1951 and 1952. This study, which traces the history of the system of arts from Greek antiquity to the twentieth century, is still broadly authoritative in art history circles today. It often also figures as an implicit assumption in the broader discourse on art. Kristeller’s system of arts, by the way,

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consists of painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry, with dance relegated to the second rank (with engraving, gardening, theater, opera, and prose).  

Very recently (in the spring of 2009), a remarkable article by James I. Porter appeared in the *British Journal of Aesthetics* entitled “Is Art Modern? Kristeller’s ‘Modern System of the Arts’ Reconsidered.” It presents a radical challenge to Kristeller’s “system.” Porter claims first of all that “the system of the arts” is a historical construction—and more likely an invention of Kristeller than an accurate description from the historical sources. He then argues that the bond between the presumed autonomous spheres of the arts and of philosophical aesthetics was not as tight as Kristeller claims, and that aesthetic formalism was a twentieth-century aberration. Finally, he attempts to show that the arts are always, and have always been, linked in one way or another to intellectual or moral content. Interestingly, he supports this with evidence from the likes of Clement Greenberg, who, in his well known appeal for materialistic objectivity, flatness, and physical quality, refers to the eighteenth century, claiming that the arts concealed their “mediality” at that time by focusing on literature—that is, on intellectual and moral content and meaning.

**Intermezzo 2: The end of art (or how art connects to other life domains)**

In the discourse on art, the issue of “the end of art” crops up from time to time, for instance in the work of Danto. In the transition from Greenbergian modernist abstraction to postmodernist art that began in the mid-1960s, Danto saw a rupture that signaled the end of the immanent developmental history of art. Post-historical art had become conceptual; assessing it was based not primarily on sensory perception, but on intellectual consideration (whereby Danto assumes that the two are fundamentally separate). This brought the history of the narrative, pictorial tradition to an end.

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7 Ibid, pp 4-6.

8 Danto 1986, pp. 81-117.
Danto varies a theme that has accompanied the “project of the modern” since Georg W.F. Hegel. But the distance to Hegel has grown rather wide. Here is Hegel’s voice in his *Lectures on Aesthetics* in the 1820s:

… Art no longer affords that satisfaction of spiritual needs which earlier ages and nations sought in it, and found in it alone....

… Art is and remains for us, on the side of its highest vocation, something past.

For us, art counts no longer as the highest mode in which truth fashions an existence for itself.

Those “spiritual needs,” “highest vocation,” and “truth” have certainly slipped away from us in the course of history. Or at least, few people would venture to utter such grand terms today. But Hegel’s “end of art” does not mean that art is not to develop further. Here is Hegel again:

We may well hope that art will always rise higher and come to perfection, but the form of art has ceased to be the supreme need of the spirit.

Here, “the end of art” is the end of art’s ability to give appropriate expression to the Absolute Spirit. It is a farewell to transcendence, to a glorification of art which had been so celebrated by early-Romantic philosophizing intellectuals but a short time previously.

But perhaps it is better to speak of a “naturalization” or “humanization” of transcendence. Here is Hegel once more:

Art ... makes Humanus its new holy of holies: i.e., the depths and heights of the human heart as such, mankind in its joys and sorrows, its strivings, deeds, and fates.

After the end of art, art concerns itself with “Humanus.” A bond with our concrete human life now steps into the stead of art’s bond with the absolute, the infinite. The

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10 Ibid., p. I: 11
11 Ibid., p. I: 103
12 Ibid., p. I: 103
13 Ibid., p. I: 607
end of art means a reconfirmation of art’s bond with who we are and where we stand—a reassertion of the connectedness of art to our intellectual and moral life. Today we can endorse this, without referring to Hegel.

Naturalization of transcendence: a metaphysics of art—after its fall

Our current situation lies in the wake of the linguistic and pragmatic turns in theory. The constitutive roles of language and action have superseded “reason” and “reality,” which, in traditional epistemology and metaphysics, were the foundations on which the edifice of our knowledge rested. We find ourselves in the wake of the farewell to the **grands récits** (Lyotard)—in the wake of postmodernism, understood as a poignant, melancholic farewell to modernism, or as a cheerful inauguration of Nietzschean perspectivism. We have discarded our naive belief in meta-narratives, and have grown more modest about our potential to get a grip on physical and social reality. We are now in a time that follows the clean-up work done by deconstructivism and ordinary language philosophy. The remnants of the once stable framework of meaning, knowledge, and reality that buttressed the edifice of art, science, and morality have now been permanently abandoned on the junk heap of history.

What we now need is a metaphysics of art, after its fall. Also after Hegel’s time, naturalization of transcendence means both taking leave of overly high pretensions (which still linger today in the minds of many) as well as preserving the awareness that art has the power, or gives us the power, to critically transcend the reality in which we find ourselves and which we are. That is metaphysics as it is possible after its fall. There is a sense in which the task is to overcome metaphysics and a sense in which the task is to continue metaphysical discussion.\(^{14}\)

Cognizant of the bond between art and our intellectual and moral life, artistic research seeks to achieve a reflective articulation of that critical transcendence. It thereby concerns and affects our relationship to the world and to ourselves. That is what I have elsewhere called the “realism” of artistic research.

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In all this, we should keep two things in mind. First, we experience more than we can say. That does not just apply to art, of course, but to our whole relationship to the world and to other people. Art has no exclusive rights here, but this pre-reflective immediacy particularly manifests itself in creative processes, in works of art, and in artistic experiences. The early-Romantic echo in this wording is no accident. Of course we can no longer fall back on an uncritical understanding of art, and of course art has become reflexive. But here, too, there is a sense in which we are now beyond the vaulting claims of early Romanticism, and a sense in which we are still the heirs of this now naturalized realm of thought. The reflexivity of art—its quality of both questioning itself and giving food for thought, and of thus also showing a “conceptual” dimension—must not be construed in opposition to the, in a philosophical sense, non-conceptual content that lies enclosed in it. In artistic research, we are concerned directly with that pre-reflective, non-conceptual content, as enacted in creative processes and embodied in works of art. In this way, art invites us to critically transcend what is. Artistic research is the acceptance of that invitation.

But at the same time we should bear in mind that we might be wrong in our critical transcendences. That is the fallibilism of artistic research. After all, it offers a fundamentally open perspective on what is or could be. That is the contingency of artistic research—a contingency that derives directly from the fact that the content of art cannot entirely be captured in any epistemological project whatsoever.

Metaphysics of art—after its fall, after the end of art, after postmodernism—means an understanding of art as a critical reflective practice, encompassing non-conceptual content, which sets our aesthetic, intellectual and moral life into motion. It also means an understanding of artistic research as the practice of that fundamentally unfinished critical reflection.
Ludivine Allegue: From Matter to Breath - making images within an encounter between visual and vocal art

This communication approached the artistic and personal transformation that involved my recent collaboration with vocal artist Yvon Bonenfant through an analysis of different aspects of our creative processes, as well as the transmission of this experience during a cross-disciplinary workshop with undergraduate students, held at the University of Winchester (UK).

Art and research projects were all realized in collaboration with vocal artist Yvon Bonenfant (Canada - UK). They were funded and/or supported by: the University of Winchester, the British Academy, the Institut d'Esthétique des Arts et Technologies (UMR 8153: CNRS/ PARIS 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Art de Limoges-Aubusson (Ministère de la Culture, France), the University of Glamorgan.

Between 2007 and 2008 I realized three works with Yvon Bonenfant (B(earth), intimacies and Beacons). These three works investigate the dialogue between visual and vocal textures and how they can embody each other.

The first one, B(earth), was partly created during a two months residency at the National School of Arts at Aubusson-France (French Ministere de la Culture). Following the residency we held a workshop based on our artistic and research process at the University of Winchester. Both the studio processes and the workshop were documented.

The presentation focused on two pieces, B(earth) and Beacons:

A) I first went through B(earth)'s particular creative process, especially during the residency. To do so in this text, I will refer to an article that I co-wrote with Yvon Bonenfant: ‘Textures and Translations: B(earth)in between Extended Voice and Visual Arts’ analyzes B(earth)'s whole creative process from both the vocal and the visual artist's point of view (Allegue, Bonenfant: 2008)

B) the second part of the communication explained how we structured our workshop at Winchester, how the students received those processes and what they changed for them.
C) finally I said a few words about the video art *Beacons* and how I approached it in relation to B(earth) and painting in general, and I integrally screened it.

**B(earth)**

**B(earth): painting - voice - video.**

http://gallery.me.com/l_allegue - 100004&bgcolor=black&view=grid

Acrylic painting on partially unweaved canvas measuring 400 x 150 cm (made up of two panels of 200 x 150 cm each) and light; spooling sound recording 21 minutes long; two 4:3 digital video screened simultaneously and mirroring the painting.

*B(earth)* emerged from an art research project inquiring the question of texture in both image and voice. It was to be a video only but my practice background in fine arts led me to suggest that we should start investigating those correspondences between painting and voice first, because of the nature of painting that *is* texture. We agreed to split the project in two: first stage would be a painting-voice work, the second stage of the project would introduce the video element. I started making a four meters painted-fragmented image in residence at Aubusson and soon Yvon joined me to start working on the vocal composition. Although he found out an existing object when he arrived, that image was far from being completed and we worked in a permanent dialogue between painting and voice, one practice-vocabulary feeding into the other. Yvon completed the final edit of his 21 minutes multi-track voice composition at the University of Winchester's studios, away from our residency.

That first stage turned to be the base we needed to shoot the video one year later, during the first exhibition of the painting-voice installation in Paris. Yvon had considered 'amending' his initial composition but felt he had nothing to add *vocally* speaking: he was in front of an object made of wood, canvas, painting and his recorded voice. It felt very much like a finished object for him (Bonenfant 2008: 249) and from my point of view it was also more interesting to explore the spatialization of the object than creating a distinct image. So we filmed the painting to create a mirror that would play with movement and space. Regarding movement, we used both fixed and moving cameras and filmed each other within the installation's space to introduce human body presence in the work. We explored space playing with scales and different distances between the bodies and the painting. I then completed the shooting during the preview of the installation integrating the video component at the ATRiuM of Cardiff, filming details of the projection on the moving curtain, especially video and fabric textures. I completed the final 21min edit in Paris.
The subject of B(earth), and the human experience that it contains, is that of the encounter:
between visuality and voice
between two artists
between two human beings
between two worlds

The studio process

B(earth)'s creative process is fully analyzed in the following article:

Vocal composition is a time-based media. Its narrative takes place between a beginning and an end in successive - sometimes simultaneous - sequences. This is not the case for the painted image, the perception of which is not sequential. Rather than a segment of time, painting is like a circle. It embodies an instant as the intersection point of different temporalities. That's the reason why it was particularly interesting to develop our reflection from gesture within the studio. Because the act of painting is sequential as that of vocal composition and both involve a physical relationship (with no technology in between) to non-form: emptiness or blankness in painting, silence in vocal creation.

Immediately the voice restored me to crucial notions in painting that proceed from the chinese tradition: the incarnation of breath and the body as the place of encounter between the sensitive world (the world that can be touched) and the ethereal (the spiritual). In this tradition, like in martial arts, it is the position of the body that *makes* the gesture (not force). If the individual looses his/her centre, s/he looses strength: the body is the hyphen, the vector of breath.

To observe how the body's parts could inflect voice's textures opened new perspectives for experimentation in my painting. Was non-form (which for me is what precedes form, an abstract multi-sensorial vision) a kind of internal gesture for Yvon? Did he manifest this inner gesture in that of his visible body? During his process of composition indeed, the position of Yvon's body inflects the nuance, the tactile quality of sound. These nuances resembled texture for me. I therefore began working with the presence of body, which consisted of involving my body in a more sensitive way through position and putting more or less weight on the painting
gesture, on the brush: the hand’s movement, the body pace, could appear on canvas. Technically speaking, the imprint of this process was materialized on the canvas by the use of water in colour, this fluidity in colour makes visible the body presence. This allows the transformation process of matter to appear: duration (in the deleuzian sense: meaning the segment of unfinished time that, here, leads from non-form to form) is materialized.

What relates to body is also directly linked to the question of the frame: for me either the frame of the painted image or that of the moving image, it is what contains meaning. The relationship between body, matter and imprint is so central because painting appeals to both touch and tactility: to skin, a receptacle of existence that the process of artistic creation, the artistic gesture, transgresses. As skin contains and manifests the human being, the delimitation that involves a brush stroke, a surface and a frame contains the created image and also manifests what precedes it: blankness, silence.

Two artists, two practices

From a corporeal point of view, the incarnation of breath through voice generates a physical vibration that is as real for the generator as for the receptor of the sound. If skin appears to me as a container that visually manifests the experience of Being, voice belongs to what is contained. It fills the inner infinity and reveals internal spaces through non-material vibrations. For me this relates to volume, a quality that painting, being bidimensional, does not involve. "Painting shows me my skin and embodies my vision. Receiving voice echoed my body's pace: blood, heart, breath." (Allegue 2008: 244)

This contrast between the two practices underlined a dimension of painting that I was aware of theoretically but I had not seen it yet as it is beyond the limits of words: the physicality of painting that puts you in front of your own finishness and therefore in front of your temporality as a human being.

Yvon says about the painting:

Once we were in the exposition space, surrounded by these glowing, radiant stones and the resonant cavern of the gallery, with the sound and light content of the installation all around me, I had to engage with whole other notions of the work. It was around me, it was temporal, it was a construction; it was a sort of architecture of time. Or perhaps, an architecture of object-space-time. (Bonenfant 2008: 249)

Although the digital image is composed, like the painted image, the making process includes a
significant difference: digital image is recorded whereas painted image is fabricated: from the stretcher to the painted canvas. Just as it is fabricated it can be damaged or destroyed and it can't be replicated: like our body. When in the video we see bodies transgressing frames, disappearing, re-appearing, multiplying themselves they figure the same temporality of being as the painted construction.

This responds to the sense of B(earth) that envisages the encounter as a return to our original silence and temporality, which manifest themselves through and because of otherness. B(earth) is pronounced birth but we chose this orthography to suggest the notion of being as much as that of death through a reference to the transformation of Being that goes necessarily through matter, through body.

The workshop

Yvon and I started exploring the pedagogic applications of our work during a workshop with undergraduate students of the cross-disciplinary devising module at the University of Winchester. How would the act of painting generate corporeal languages on stage?

None of the students was a painter or a visual artist, so I gave them simple tasks. First it was important to get them to be aware of the different kinds of texture so I asked them to touch the paper that they had brought with them to prepare them for tactility exercises with painting. I asked them to put it against their skin, to crumple it, to perforate it, to tear it. Then I asked them play with the paint and apply it with their fingers, using only one colour, before begin experimenting with brushes, and finally integrating more colours. I suggested them to do so incorporating the tactile qualities of paper, its intrinsic qualities and those that they had created through their actions. They then engaged with an exploration of the interaction between body and painting, the interaction between their body gesture and what is painted.

Then I asked them to work in pairs, one vocalizing against the other so s/he could not only hear the voice but also feel the vibration that it generates in the whole body and translate it into colour and textures. In so doing they began experimenting with hearing sound and reacting via painted gesture

Later, Yvon began working with them in corporeal composition. A very interesting example of the exercises he gave them was when he suggested to them that their pieces of paper could be
their silence and that they had to envisage this silence just as paper, as a transformable material and not as a space to be filled.

Suddenly they started listening to their silences. According to Yvon's observations, their movement was not as much about what is visible as it used to be but about what is felt.

When it came to talk about what had determined that change in them most of them emphasized that it came out of the materiality of their painting. They had an object that was materializing something from them that they normally can't see when they perform: it was a fragile reflect of themselves and at the same time an-Other that could not be played again and again. It was there and they could loose it forever.

**Beacons**

Like *B(earth)*, *Beacons* was a creation. But it emerged from a very personal idea of Yvon. *Beacons* is an allegory of a decisive instant of his life. Even though he essentially directed the performative process and had to rely on me for the images, he had a clear idea of the visual atmosphere he wanted on the video and I composed the images to create within the video frame that particular atmosphere he was seeking and to re-create the one he had created on stage. He composed a 15 minutes multi-track vocal piece that emerged from the performative process and the raw footage and I edited the images on that sound-base. The most creative part of that work started for me with the video editing: with the visual writing of Yvon's story.

*Beacons* is about loss, absence, about death. *Beacons* was closer to painting for me as it returns to a circular construction that this time develops as a spiral form, which centre is *absence*.

To express absence as the centre of the narrative, it was necessary to establish presence so presence is the starting point of the spiral: the starting point of *Beacons*.

To express the loss of temporality, I erased the frame by making an abstract, non-narrative, image with no beginning and no end. It appears as a unlimited dark space where intermittent light is non-form and movement.
The manifestation of body and the encounter with body take place through the absence of body. Or the body's presence can be signified by means of ethereal movement, this is a movement that is free from form and made visible by the intermittent light. This way image addresses memory, it addresses our mental representation of an absent body.

To view an excerpt click here [or copy the link to a browser]:

http://gallery.me.com/l_allegue - 100111&bgcolor=black&view=grid

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Kai Lehikoinen: Identities Performed and Transformed: Dialogical Choreography as Artistic Research – Intertextuality of Self-Narratives

‘Who is it that can tell me who I am?’

King Lear

Introduction

As Valerie Preston-Dunlop states, choreographers generate movement material and refine it in terms of the dancer’s body and his co-ordination, actions of his body, the spatial forms of his movement, the dynamics, rhythm and timing of it, and the relationships between the various parts of his person and between one performer and another.¹

Choreographers select which movements to include in the work and which to abandon. In addition, they consider the relationships between “performer, movement, sound and space”.² However, the creative process of choreography includes far more than just working on the strands of the dance medium and their nexus.

A choreographer reflects upon artistic ideas and makes choices regarding their treatment: how the ideas are materialised and organised in space and time. In addition, s/he may consider how the dancer performs the dance and how the audience perceives it. S/he may take into account codes, conventions and norms that are relevant to the particular dance culture, genre or style. Further, s/he may acknowledge broader cultural, historical and social contexts that bear importance to her/him, to the subject matter of the work, or to the audience.³ S/he may also reflect upon how the embodied ideas are experienced in the dancing body.⁴ These considerations often entwine in a choreographic practice.⁵

Meanwhile, I wish to propose that choreography as an artistic practice is a dialogical process that can provide opportunities for informal learning and personal transformation. In this paper, I will reflect upon a

¹ Preston-Dunlop 2002, 70.
² Preston-Dunlop 2002, 41.
⁵ Thanks to Anne Makkonen for pointing this out.
year-long artistic research project in order to analyse the transformative potential of dialogical choreography. After mapping out the concept of dialogue from a social constructionist position, I move on to describe my recent choreography Quotations and Printed Images (2009) and map out intertexts in and around the piece. This allows me to challenge the notion of choreographer as the single source, or the monological authority, of the work. By looking at the relationship between the choreographer and the piece, I introduce a concept of dialogical choreography and argue that both the choreographer and the work are polyvocal constructions that extend way beyond their imagined boundaries. Finally, I discuss the powerful potential for learning and transformation that is embedded in dialogical choreography.

**On Dialogue**

It is often mistakenly believed that the word ‘dialogue’ refers to a conversation between two persons only. The mistake is made with the prefix, which is not ‘di’ as in two but ‘dia’, which in Greek means ‘through’, ‘between’ or ‘across’. The word ‘logos’ (Gr.) means ‘word’ and ‘legein’ (Gr.) means ‘to speak’.\(^6\)

As the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin argues, meaning making is embedded in language.\(^7\) Yet, as Kenneth Gergen points out,

> language is not a picture of the real. We may use the term ‘experience’ to make ourselves intelligible, but this does not make the term true or accurate with respect to what there is.\(^8\)

We enter a dialogic relationship as we articulate our experiences and express our views. In Bakhtin’s words,

> [t]he speaker in not the biblical Adam, dealing only with virgin and still unnamed objects, giving them names for the first time … [instead] the subject of his speech itself inevitably becomes the arena where his opinions meet those of his partners … or other viewpoints, world views, trends, theories and so forth.\(^9\)

That is, our utterances are socially constructed in a sense that they are always made possible through others’ voices that we may or may not be consciously aware of.

For Bakhtin, an utterance refers not only to the object that it speaks about, but also to others’ articulations

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\(^7\) Bakhtin 1986.
\(^8\) Gergen 1999, 226.
\(^9\) Bakhtin 1986, 93-94.
about it.\textsuperscript{10} Words are always dialogic for they embody “a dialogue between different meanings and applications”.\textsuperscript{11} Bakhtin’s dialogism suggests that any final position to speak the “truth” is beyond our reach “since every position within language is a space of dialogic forces rather than monologic truth”.\textsuperscript{12}

Drawing from Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva introduces the concept of ‘intertextuality’. For her, relationships between texts exist because the writer is a reader of texts … before s/he is a creator of texts, and therefore the work of art is inevitably shot through with references, quotations and influences of every kind.\textsuperscript{13}

In the act of reading the reader, or in performing arts the audience, enters a dialogic relationship that underpins all meaning making. Interpretations emerge “due to the cross-fertilisation of the packaged textual material … by all the texts which the reader brings to it”.\textsuperscript{14} For this to make sense in relation to choreography ‘the packaged textual material’ needs to be understood in the broadest sense as any signifying system, for example the dancing body.

Argentine post-Marxist political theorist Ernesto Laclau perceives society “as a vast argumentative texture through which people construct their reality”.\textsuperscript{15} Drawing from Bakhtin, Kristeva and Laclau, it can be argued that we construct narratives with the help of culturally available texts to make sense about our experiences. We ‘read’ ourselves, our experiences, other people, and worldly events as text for the reason that the subject is “composed of discourses, is a signifying system, a text, understood in a dynamic sense”.\textsuperscript{16}

As Michael Worton and Judith Still argue, the subject “is itself an effect produced in social context” and all its accounts are, in the broadest sense, textual fabrication.\textsuperscript{17} Finally, intertexts that penetrate the dialogical relationship between the choreographer and the work do not boil down to a single, unified or intentional “truth” about the work. Nor do such texts provide a fixed or “true” account on the choreographer’s identity. Rather, intertextuality in dialogic choreography suggests that, as choreographers, we can construct ourselves in many ways. The (inter-)textual relationships position us in different discursive positions from which we can experience and interpret our work in multiple ways.\textsuperscript{18} To illuminate intertextuality in

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{11} Allen 2000, 211.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Worton & Still 1990, 1.
\textsuperscript{14} Worton & Still 1990, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{15} Laclau as quoted in Wetherell 2001, 389.
\textsuperscript{16} Worton & Still 1990, 16.
\textsuperscript{17} Worton & Still 1990, 17.
\textsuperscript{18} See Gergen 1999, 226.
dialogical choreography, I will now discuss my recent choreography.

**Setting the Scene: Introducing the Project**

Satu Tuittila, is a 44-year old female dance artist from Southwest Finland. With a twenty-year professional career as a dancer, choreographer and dance pedagogue, she is currently enjoying a three-year artist grant from the Dance Council of Finland.

In January 2008, Satu invited me to choreograph a dance for her, which was to be performed in an evening of three solos in April 2009. She had also invited choreographers Maija Hoisko and Arja Raatikainen to take part in the project. The concepts of ‘aging’, ‘joy’ and ‘farewell’ were to constitute the overarching theme for the evening. Needless to say, Satu herself would contribute as an overarching theme for the evening as a performer of the solos.

During the 1980s and 1990s I was a choreographer in Southwest Finland, the region that I come from. Eventually, I gave up my artistic ambitions and focused on research, teaching and administrative work due to the lack of dance infrastructure and funding in that region. Meanwhile, my interest in and understanding of choreography had only grown during my ten-year “exile”. After some hesitation, I decided to embark on Satu’s project. Besides the three choreographers and the dancer, the production team included Niina Airaksinen (graphic design, photography and video), Antti Helminen (light design), Ulla Lehtoranta (dressmaking) and Mikko Väärälä (sound design).

We named the project Triangle as it was set to provide three angles of approach to choreography (see Figure 1). The project took place from March 2008 to May 2009. I worked with Satu over two intensive rehearsal periods in June and August 2008 at the residency of the Saaren Kartano in Mynämäki, Southwest Finland. We continued to work on the piece in Turku later in the autumn and in the spring of 2009.

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**Figure 1. Triangle –project, flyer**

Photo and graphic design: Niina Airaksinen

Courtesy of the photographer
The duration of my piece, Quotations and Printed Images, is 22 minutes and it consists of 8 sections. The premiere took place on April 24th 2009 at the Tehdas Teatteri, an intimate studio scene in a 19th Century industrial building in Turku, Finland. We had 7 performances including the premiere and two sneak previews. The Dance Centre of Western Finland co-produced the project. Currently, the three pieces are available for touring.

**Poietic Intertexts**

Semiotics identifies three levels of meaning-making processes: poietic, trace and aesthesis. While trace refers to the materiality of the work, the discernable “facts” of the work, aesthesis refers to the semiotic processes between the audience and the work. Poietic is the realm of intentions during the making process.\(^{19}\) Next, I move on to examine some key signifiers, or texts, that can be found operating on the poietic level.

My personal notes reveal some words and ideas that I had written down prior to and during the first production meeting, which took place on January 9th 2009 at Satu’s home in Raisio:

- approach
- graveyard,
- grave
- green lawn
- life passes by: observing life
- kicksledge
- feeling of pulse: am I alive?
- Iiro Viinanen was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis
- death
- burial
- decaying body
- breath: breathing into a bag;
  collecting breaths into a bag
- farewell to knee joints
- MacArthur Park
- microphone
- split personality
- farewell to one of the many selves
- farewell to the self
- the birth of the self as intertextual subject

As my notes show, intertextual links began to surface in relation to the given themes of ‘aging’ and ‘farewell’. Most of these intertexts can be seen to link to ideas on death and disease. In my private narrative, they link to my father’s death some years back and also to the deaths of my two friends: dance pedagogue Ritva Saastamoinen and dancer Janne Väänänen. The last two were also Satu’s friends.

\(^{19}\) Preston-Dunlop 2002.
'Joy' that was the third word in the theme given, remains seemingly absent in the above group of intertexts. Yet, one can interlink 'joy' with the notion of 'kicksledge' as one can imagine the fun of such winter sport. Moreover, 'joy' can be, and has been, linked to themes of death as the American poet Emily Dickinson’s poem Joy in Death shows:

If tolling bell I ask the cause.
'A soul has gone to God,'
I'm answered in a lonesome tone;
Is heaven then so sad?

That bells should joyful ring to tell
A soul had gone to heaven,
Would seem to me the proper way
A good news should be given.20

Besides aging, death and joyful farewells to one’s lived past, my notes about “farewell to the self”, “split personality”, “farewell to one of the many selves” and “the birth of the self as an intertextual subject” show that I was curious about the human subject as I started on Quotations and Printed Images. The notes can be linked to the social constructionist notion of the self, which undermines the highly individual and self-contained liberal humanist view of the self as “the free, unconstrained author of meaning and action, the origin of history”.21

My personal notes show that I extended my background research on identity through the Internet. I had scribbled down Kenneth Gergen’s concepts ‘pastiche personality’ and the ‘relational self’ that help to understand the social constructionist notion of the self in the post-modern condition.22 As Wikipedia explains,

The pastiche personality abandons all aspirations toward a true or "essential" identity, instead viewing social interactions as opportunities to play out, and hence become, the roles they play ... [t]he relational self is a perspective by which persons abandon all sense of exclusive self, and view all sense of identity in terms of social engagement with others.23

21 Belsey 1985, 8.
22 Gergen 2000; Gergen 2009.
Gergen’s notion of the self as situational, relational, multiple and transformable turned out to inform Quotations and Printed Images throughout the work. King Lear’s desperate cry “Who is it that can tell me who I am?” echoes in Satu’s actions as she dances through her multiple identities and roles from the past to present and eventually into the future.24

The programme leaflet of the performance provides an informative intertext for the audiences. In the leaflet, the notion of self in relation to the work, and also in relation to the choreographer is elaborated upon as follows:

How is identity constructed as a flow of fragmented narratives? How do cultural texts participate in the production of identity and the performing of the self through quotations that have been detached from numerous contexts? How is identity carried out as embodied action and as performance? How does an identity, which is performed, make visible its complexity, history and unease quality?

In the work, the theme of aging is crystallized as a remembering of a life’s journey. Quotations and “printed images” can be recognised in Tuittila’s narratives and her body memory. These traces, combined in multiple ways, are embodied in her speech, body and movements, which carry out her identity. The traces in the work call forth additional images, texts and movement experiences from other contexts.

In the work, I examine a narrative map that reveals life as a path. The turning points in one’s lived history are condensed into momentary glimpses and stereotypes, which reveal that turning points are more complex than we can remember.

I am curious about items that we collect, books for example, their usage and our ways to talk about them. How does all that construct identity and participate in our performances of the self? Do book covers and the structures of the novel encourage us to demand clear boundaries, narrative and coherent style from our lives? “And what if I don’t do it?”

In this work, we are about to say farewell to the “individual” that has definite boundaries. The dance rejoices the “multiple self/-joy” that is born from references, quotations, narratives, images, stereotypes and influences over and over again as it extends in time and space outside itself.25

**From Poietic Intertexts to Intertexts in the Trace**

The programme text refers to our relationship with books. Our history, mythology, science, hopes, fears, imaginary plots and everyday remarks have been written down for thousands of years and

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24 Shakespeare 1993, Act I, Scene IV. Segment C.  
placed between millions and millions of covers. In Quotations and Printed Images, a semi-circular installation of books appears on downstage right. The Section 1 opens up with Satu collecting books. She sits down and cross-reads excerpts from A.A. Milne’s (1926) Winnie the Pooh, Simone de Beauvoir’s (1949) Le Deuxième Sexe, and Mika Waltari’s (1945) The Egyptian. The interlacing of the text fragments suggests new meanings for the dancer’s presence on stage, and also for the three books. Is she an interested scholar that navigates between books to learn something new? Or is she a petit-bourgeois housewife with escapist reading habits? Perhaps she is neither. Perhaps she is both and even more. Her black and white dress is made of layered pages from an encyclopaedia, a travel book and a detective story. The “book-dress” can be taken to suggest that fragments from what we read stick to us and dress us up as we perform in privacy or in public.

The opening section can be seen to undermine the traditional notion of books as independent or self-contained entities that are required to be read linearly from the beginning to the end. Further, the section can be seen to introduce a dialogical subject as a dynamic site for textual traces from innumerable sources to intermingle.

In the finale, Satu picks up a book and opens it. As she shows the contents of the book to the audience, all the pages fall out. She wrenches herself loose from the book. Determined resistance can be read from her movements as the dance continues. As she recovers from the dance, she picks up the empty book cover, shows them to the audience and finally, drowns them in the bowl of water. She holds her breath and presses the book cover under the water until her lungs are about to burst. She gasps in air and splashes of water fly over her as she pulls her hands out of the water (see Figure 1). Her upper body hovers over the water bowl as she retreats with minimal chugs. Her upper body, focus and arms keep floating to multiple directions as lights fade. This section can be read to suggest a shift from struggle to determined emancipation: the birth of a multidimensional subject, a dynamic social construction that refuses to be framed with a single cover.

Figure 1. Quotations and Printed Images
Dancer: Satu Tuittila,
Photo: Niina Airaksinen.
Courtesy of the photographer

26 Flinkenstein 2005.
As for more explicit intertexts, Quotations and Printed Images includes music from three sources: Shigeru Umebayashi’s Yumeji’s Theme is from Wong Kar-wai’s (2000) film In the Mood for Love, Alberto Iglesias’ Alicia Vive appears in Pedro Almodovar’s film Hable con ella (2002), and David Bowie’s 5:15 The Angels Have Gone is from his album Heathen (2002). The use of Iglesias’ music is particularly significant for it made Satu and me spend an evening watching Almodovar’s films. A dialogue emerged between some of his films and our working process. From the dialogue, I borrowed a tough and arrogant quality of the ambitious reporter (Victoria Abril) in Almodovar’s Kika (1993). I placed the reporter’s quality in Satu’s embodiment in Section 5 where she responds to Simone de Beauvoire’s text with a quote from Eeyore, the donkey in Winnie the Pooh. Another reference to Almodovar’s film appears in Section 6 where Satu cools herself with water. The short scene embodies a quality and gestures from Kika’s lesbian maid, Juana (Rossy de Palma).

**Resisting Presumptions: a Self-reflective Narrative**

As Satu and I negotiated a deal about Quotations and Printed Images, she made a wish that I would use a conceptual approach. Such an approach would provide a nice contrast to the more abstract modernist works of Raatikainen and Hoisko, she presumed. Her request made me wikipedia ‘conceptual art’ to confirm my understanding of the concept. I had never thought that in my work “the concepts(s) or idea(s) involved … take precedence over traditional aesthetic and material concerns”. 27 Neither did I believe that in my work “the execution is a perfunctory affair”. 28 Satu’s request made me reflect upon my background, my interests and even my purpose in life.

Next, I will map out parts of my dance background. In doing so, my point is to illuminate some discursive intertexts that operate in me and through me. As the self-narrative proceeds, a dialogue is set up between identified intertexts and the work.

I have known Satu since the time of out A-levels as we went to the same school. We trained in ballet, modern dance and jazz after school at the Turku Dance Association. Our first artistic collaboration was a post-modern crossover of tango and punk that was performed at a school party in 1981.


I went on to study Dance Pedagogy at the University College of Dance in Stockholm, Sweden in 1985. Satu followed me a year after. We were trained in the American Humphrey-Limón modern dance tradition with Jeanne Yasko, Cunningham technique with Fia Fredricson and Karen Levy, the Swedish fridans –tradition that has its roots in the Central European Ausdruckstanz movement with Gun Roman, and the Release-based work from the Vindhäxor Dance Group with Cilla Roos. In jazz, we were trained in the American Dunham technique with the legendary Vanoye Aikens and in the Mattox–jazz dance technique with Jane Darling. In addition, we studied some ballet, folk dances, historical dances and tap.

Initially, my background in choreography was embedded in modernist tradition. Besides my training in Sweden, which had a strong emphasis on task-based movement improvisation and music, I studied Humphrey–based modern dance composition with Ruth Currier in New York on three extended periods in the late 1980s. Modernist views on universal laws and basic structural forms can be found in Humphrey’s approach to choreography and dance training.29 While there is more to choreography than Humphrey covers in The Art of Making Dances, her book and her movement philosophy can be regarded as seminal intertexts for Quotations and Printed Images.

A close reading of Sections 3 and 7 show Satu falling and recovering from the fall, the two key principles of human movement, according to Humphrey.30 In the words of the New York Times dance critic Jennifer Dunning, it could be suggested that these principles constituted for Humphrey an expression of the fundamental tension and precarious balance between failure and triumph that we struggle to maintain throughout our lives.31

The notion of struggle on ‘the arch between two deaths’ links Humphrey’s movement philosophy to Friedrich Nietzsche’s (1924) book Birth of Tragedy, which she read in the early 1930s.32 The book describes the two opposite drives, Apollonian and Dionysian, that operate in the self: the former strives toward balance, order, security and repose; the latter craves action, excitement, extremes and risks.33 In Quotations and Printed Images, Nietzsche’s theory can be identified as an intertext in Section 3 where Satu’s movements shift from tranquillity to torrents of anger and resistance. Humphrey’s movement philosophy can be found resonating in Satu’s progression as she runs with

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28 Humphrey 1958; Cohen 1972; Stodelle 1990.
29 Cohen 1972; Stodelle 1990.
31 Cohen 1972; Stodelle 1990.
32 Cohen 1972; Stodelle 1990.
falling steps and sweeps her upper body in circles as she struggles to maintain her balance.

In Section 8, Satu’s dance cuts short as she drops on the floor holding her left foot. A slow, fragmented section on the floor leads to a repose with Satu’s head resting on a book. Here, a not so obvious intertext can be recognised in relation to Satu’s personal background. Her knees have been operated on several times and she now suffers from arthrosis. Satu’s empty eyes and silent body can be read to suggest apathy, depression, exhaustion and helplessness.

From Modernism to Postmodernism

Rehearsals started with a one-week residency at the Saaren Kartano in Mietoinen, Southwest Finland. We investigated the personal source materials that I had asked Satu to bring with her. I wanted to use old letters, postcards, diaries, music and favourite books as stimuli that would help her construct atmospheres, images, movement themes, narratives and sensations that relate to her past. Some material was constructed as spoken narratives that emerged from dialogues between Satu and me. Other material was embodied in movements, postures, gestures, and facial expressions or in uses of focus, vocal sounds or breathing. Often our dialogues included both spoken and danced comments and responses.

The devising methodology, the juxtaposition of materials, the treatment of subject matter and the inconsistent use of the dance medium with stylistic breaks included brought post-modern intertexts to my choreographic practice. The approach used in Quotations and Printed Images derives from my studies at the University of Surrey where I did an M.A. in 1995-96. Artistically, the department offered a blend of modernist and postmodernist approaches to choreography with Rosemary Butcher and Dr. Carol Brown.

My research on identity and the self in Quotations and Printed Images is linked to post-structuralist and postmodernist theories that were absorbed by me during my time in the U.K. At the time, the Department of Dance Studies at Surrey was very much informed by theories of Literary Criticism and Feminism. I studied Dance Analysis and Critical Theories with Professor Janet Adshead-Lansdale, a pioneer in Dance Analysis and the innovator of Intertextual Dance Analysis whose work is embedded in post-structuralist theories.

Conclusions
By examining how different texts, discourses and voices operate in a dialogue between the work and myself as a choreographer, I have shown that choreography emerges in a dialogical process. Further, both the choreography and the choreographer can be understood as polyvocal constructions that extend way beyond their explicit boundaries to a maze of alternate voices.

As we tune to the different voices, or texts, that operate in a dialogical choreography and acknowledge their discursive underpinnings, we can become more conscious about the world views, beliefs, myths, morals and politics as well as the artistic genres, the styles, the conventions, the clichés, the tropes and the idioms that are embodied in our artistic and interpretative practices. Such heightened awareness, I argue, makes a genuine transformation (on a personal level and in groups) possible. Furthermore, it enables us to see more choices and, thus, empowers our capacity to make informed choices in relation to our art and, more generally, in our lives.

References


Electronic sources


Cecilia Lagerström, Pia Muchin & collaborating artists: Transformation of identity

A Performance-lecture by Cecilia Lagerström and Helena Kågemark, Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg

In the presentation Cecilia’s speech and Helena’s acting were connected, creating a dialogue between a reflection on the situation of artistic research and the actual exploration of the individual actor.

Cecilia:
1. Artistic research as a room for reflection – or what is the need?

Theatre history bears witness of many examples of artists who have created studios and workrooms that have been independent of the ordinary theatres and where they have been able to examine, experiment and go into depth on certain topics. Creating a studio is to make an annex, that is, a space alongside the usual one. The studio as a symbol is characterised by outsider-ship as well as participation. It is separate from, but also in contact with, regular activities. It is borne of a need to both stand on the side, in order to reflect and examine, and to develop a deeper dialogue with one’s own field. This need is, more often than not, connected with the theatre’s expensive collective forms of production. Ticket sales together with thinking in terms of repertoires steer the pace of work, and productions being staged at the same time is common. Under such circumstances, it is very difficult to engage in longer periods of contemplation and laboratory work. However, the vision of having a studio can also be linked with a wish to change. This is indicated by the conviction that a considerable number of artists during the 1900s have had of the theatre as a tool to transform the human being and her way of life. Examples of such aspirations are Jacques Copeau’s travelling theatre experiment in the French countryside at the beginning of the 1900s, Isadora Duncan’s artistic and ideological renewal of the art of dancing or Jerzy Grotowski’s intensive acting laboratory.

The last two decades have involved great changes for theatre institutions in Sweden. There has been a decrease in permanent ensembles, and activities have been rationalised. There seems to be less space now than ever before for experiments, extensive explorative projects and critical debate. Even an internationally acclaimed theatre like Suzanne Osten’s Unga Klara at the Stockholm City Theatre is no longer secure. It is to be shut down in its present form for economic and political reasons - after 34 years of success. It is also important to note that Peter Oskarsson’s artistic research activities in the town of Gävle in Sweden are but a memory, just as long-term laboratory theatres such as Odin Teatret in Denmark and Institutet för Scenkonst in Sweden seem to be discussed less and less in the theatre world of today.

Where is there space for reflection and debate in today’s theatre, asks actor and doctoral student Ulf Friberg in an article from 2008 in the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter. He points out the lack of critical discussion in today’s theatres, where actors have to live with a sense of fear, since their prime concern is to keep their jobs. “The chance of a permanent job will not come back – but the
democratic dialogue must be reconquered.”

Has the rapidly expanding field of artistic research maybe taken over a task that was previously sustained by the theatre? Are the best possibilities for carrying out activities of an investigative nature, and, to quote a student, “where one is still allowed to fail”, to be found in the university world?

*Helena:*

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*Ok, det vill säga  det handlar om flera olika saker, egentligen är det samma sak. Först är det en inne på arbetsgolvet här i rummet att inte vara så uppmärksam, eller ja medveten om, hela tiden bry mig engagera mig vad det e jag gör, hur jag ser ut. Ok det handlar om att jag inte har någon där så jag kan inte släppa helt jag har bara den här förbannade jävla kameran som inte hjälper tvärtom men det måste gå att komma förbi på något sätt*
att inte jag hamnar liksom lått i ytterligheter antingen är man förbannad
arg det måste hela tiden någon slags anspänning som jag försöker
antingen det eller så är det någonting mjukt och fint och vänligt däremellan
det måste finnas mängder med dynamiker och sånt som inte är så tydligt
för det
jag känner det att det finns saker här inne åh nu gör jag det igen samma
saker
det är så otroligt begränsat
jag tror att det här handlar om också det som är
utanför arbetserummet att att
att jag har gått med på saker Accepterat. Och Det är inte att jag har gått
med på saker som är som är dåliga eller sånt man inte ska utan det är
tvärtom jag har gått med på allt sånt som som är det som accepteras
det som är det man ska göra o genom att gå med på det, genom att följa den
vägen som är så att säga påvisad den som er bjuds oss då så har jag
svikit mig själv. Jag har gått med på att vara ja menar liksom snäll och
vänlig och fin och göra Inte protestera och sen Inuti är det krig det är
liksom ett krig som pågår här
för jag vill inte gör det här jag vill göra något helt annat och jag vill inte göra
jag vet inte vad jag vill Jag har inte ord på det och om man inte har ord då
räknas det inte
men jag
ok jag vet vad jag inte vill
jag vill inte göra saker som folk kan sitta och ( klapp ) fint
vad duktiga du var eller vad bra du var eller vad fint det var eller ja hellre
det att folk bara går
nej inte det heller
jo vad fan gå gå
jag vet inte
det här det reduceras till något om det bara blir det här vad bra fint att du
kan gå på din lina... ja jättefint
Ok, nog
Cecilia:
2. The struggle for identity and a sense of belonging

On the basis of my experiences of doctoral education in the field of artistic research, it is apparent that the problem of identity is a serious issue. At the arts institutes, doctoral students and individual researchers have tended to be solitary islands on a meandering river, since it takes time for a new area to take shape and gain a footing. As soon as the performing artist starts out on his or her long-desired mission as a doctoral student, a sense of alienation is experienced; this arises from a situation where, suddenly, one is neither an artist nor a researcher. The doctoral student leaves her artistic reality and enters the university world, without being an ordinary student or a teacher. Other people in her surroundings, in the theatre as well as in the university, generally have a limited understanding of what it is she is doing.

The doctoral student is surrounded by a sense of loneliness that is made worse by the fact that she is doing a project on her own, in contrast to the majority of performers who normally work in a collective context. Equipped with a computer and being required to attend doctoral courses, the doctoral student starts a new existence, and often has difficulty trying to fit in practical work in the studio. The academic assignment can create difficulties that stand in the way for both the doctoral student and the supervisor to get into the artistic practice itself. How can we better link together the research dialogue with the artistic questions that come up directly on the working floor?

Doctoral students are so far in the minority in the world of arts institutes, and their position in the organisation is not a clear and visible one. There is also a great amount of uncertainty about what it is they are trained for. Are they to become researchers or more qualified artists, and for which labour market? Furthermore, there is still a striking lack of role models.

The attitudes towards art and research that are in circulation today in the arts world, as well as in the world of higher education, naturally influence the conditions for artistic research and the notions people have of the latter. It is not unusual that higher arts education institutes offer their doctoral students a working space with a writing desk and a computer, but a space in a practice room or studio is not something that is self-evident. It is obviously the traditional academic researcher that serves as a model here. On the other hand, it is also very common that artists regard the role of the researcher through old-fashioned eyes, as though the latter were a scientist from olden times trying to discover objective truths.
It is apparent that the doctoral student, and in many ways even the artistic researcher, enter into a position of “difference” in their new task. The problem of identity and the aspects of uncertainty go hand in hand with the difficulties that arise when two worlds meet. This is partly connected with the teething problems that occur when a new field is in the process of development. However, there are even other sides to the coin. The discrepancy between art and research creates a collision that is worth taking a closer look at. This involves a difference that can be experienced as annoying and frustrating but it may also be an important part of this new field’s strength and potential.

*Helena:*

*Cecilia:*
3. The relationship between the artwork and the research result: What is art – what is research?

In my work developing artistic research in the field of the theatre, I have put emphasis partly on the fusion of art and research and partly on an artistic approach being the primary research perspective. In spite of my own emphasis on the artistic perspective, the difference between creating art and producing research has made itself felt over and over again in my own practice. In many cases, the research effort has diminished and disappeared more and more as the date for the opening night has got closer, since one of the demands of this process has been to present a final performance to an audience. There has not only been a certain amount of stress involved regarding the production, but there has also been the task of solving a number of artistic problems. These have definitely overshadowed and have generally differed from the research questions that were of interest at the time. The track of research that I have wanted to follow in these cases has not been able to assert itself in relation to the theatre’s capacity to produce an artistic result for an opening night; in other words, that “the show must go on” at any cost. In other projects, on the other hand, I have experienced that research themes have been in the way when producing a performance and that in the end I had to put my research questions to one side for a while in order to be able to rehearse at all.

Recently, a doctoral student stated that she could not follow her usual artistic impulses when involved in her doctoral project, since there was a constant shifting taking place between her usual artistic intentions and her research questions. For example, she lacked the strong motive to tell a certain story to an audience, since choosing to do this did not develop out of a need she usually had, but out of completely different questions. A kind of double vision appears. In this way, the performances of a doctoral project become ‘university products’ and not usual performances. This situation can be experienced not only as problematic and unfamiliar, but also as evident and advantageous provided that one makes a distinction between research and one’s usual artistic practice.

In projects that are characterised by a strong discrepancy between the research questions and the artistic process, part of the problems can be surmounted with the help of clever timing. It’s quite simply a matter of putting one’s focus on the right thing at the right time. Another important component is the collective context of the performing arts, which is a very common aspect of this field. The participation of the collective in the research inquiry must be made clear. Is the research
one person’s task or the entire ensembles’ task? How are the questions of responsibility, the wording of the project and the documentation of the participators’ experiences to be distributed among those taking part? This collective situation results in a multitude of experiences where the research result is very rarely unanimous. “There isn’t just one researcher speaking but a number of different voices. In addition to this, they don’t always speak the same language, and they may contradict each other. This polyphony of sometimes contradictory voices is, in my opinion, one of the most interesting characteristics of performing arts research.”

Of course, there are also examples of art and research going hand in hand. In my own research, I have experienced this particularly in the project where a ‘research performance’ was created, or in a project that was about developing methods. I am aware of the fact that there are many artistic researchers that do not experience the dilemma of there being a difference between the research aim and the artistic process. There does not appear to be a rift between art and research there, since the research theme is the same as the artistic theme.

Ingemar Lindh, who is founder of the Swedish laboratory theatre group Institutet för Scenkonst, made a distinction between “to search” and “to research” in the field of the theatre. All artists are, hopefully, occupied with work of an investigative nature when creating a performance, Lindh claimed. Research is about separating results that are of more general interest, beyond the artistic production. It is a matter of organising and systematising the experience. The difference between art and research becomes apparent when one examines what their aims are: is the aim to create an artistic work for an audience or to extract new knowledge in a transparent way. One of the exciting challenges of artistic research is that it bids us to cross different fields and different types of processes. When research is no longer only based on scientific understanding, but just as much on aesthetic considerations, something new can emerge. This can, in turn, lead to new artistic genres as well as to new ways of conducting research.

*Helena:*
Jag vill vara där det händer, när det blir till. Att göra en studie inifrån ett konstnärligt arbete.

Jag försöker att få syn på det som finns nära mig själv och det som pågår i mig när jag gör mitt arbete. När jag är på golvet i en närvarande situation. Jag är här för att reda ut vad jag egentligen sysslar med.


Cecilia:

4. Interests collide
There exists a goal-oriented way of thinking in the university world and in the world of higher education. Research is required to generate progress and profit both within the educational sector and within the community. The field of arts, however, often has an in-built scepticism to anything that is goal- and success-oriented. Art often wants to question regulations and decrees imposed by the state. At the same time, however, arts institutes are struggling with the reality of producing results, in their struggle for resources and a good reputation. In this incompatible situation, there is an interesting friction, but also a serious risk.

When the relationship between a field of research and certain political ambitions becomes too close and too blurred, problems can arise. An example of this is the discipline called Gender Studies, which is often confused with equality as an area of politics. In an article, Kerstin Alnebratt, the new director of the Gender Secretariat in Gothenburg, Sweden, says that “if a field of research is connected with an area of politics in this way, this can be problematic, not only because it strikes a discordant note with the idea that research is free and independent, but also because it creates expectations of results being immediately turned into practical equality work”. It is possible to discern a similar risk in the somewhat paradoxical task that arts institutes are having to face: on the one hand, having to create conditions in accordance with directives from the state and on the other hand having to produce free, innovative research that is in close dialogue with the field of art. There is a present risk of research being guided far too much by goal-oriented needs, with a general ambition to raise the quality of undergraduate education, develop new forms for evaluation or make one’s own traditions visible.

An international visual artist I know was once working on an application for an artistic research project to the Swedish Research Council. In one of the columns of this extensive application, you had to comment on ethical aspects of research and agree to follow ethical rules for science. My friend strongly reacted against this and stated that it was impossible for her to fill in this column since her task as an artist is to question the ethics of society. This makes one wonder who’s scrutinising who? What happens in the collision that takes place between the state and the individual, an institute of education and an artist, and the research community and the field of art?

*Helena:*
Cecilia:

5. A transition into No Man’s Land

The problem of identity and uncertainty that is constantly present for the artistic researcher, does not essentially depend on a double task or on a fear of contact between two differing fields. The artistic researcher neither belongs to her own field of art nor to a field of science, but to the
discourse of artistic research. This is not necessarily the same as the discourse of the arts. Hopefully, it consists of a community of artistic researchers, artists and researchers from a wide range of different disciplines. Artistic research has the capacity to create new and, thus far, unexplored connections between different fields of knowledge and forms of expression. The problem of identity arises when the context for artistic research is too undeveloped and vague. However, not constructing gateposts, fences and fixed positions in this new field at too rapid a pace also has its points. Esa Kirkkopelto, from this Theatre Academy, writes in his article “New Start: Artistic Research at the Finnish Theatre Academy” in *Nordic Theatre Studies* from 2008: “The role of the artistic researcher must not be given, nor should it be a matter of identity let alone image; instead, it follows when one sets oneself in a position between art and the unknown and starts asking questions. This paradoxical and difficult state is now attracting many people.”

In that an artist undertakes a research project, she is creating new relations to her art and practice. A distance to familiar concepts is created whereby one’s artistry may be brought to a head. The artistic researcher enters a kind of no man’s land. This is a space without any settlements or landmarks, and which no one, as yet, has laid claim to. This space is situated outside the established boundaries, which means having a certain sense of freedom, but also having to take risks. This no man’s land offers artists the possibility to leave familiar tracks and directions and find new orientations.

But this also involves the art institute. The new programmes and research-activities are also changing the identity and self-image of the academy. One important consequence of our Doctorate and Master-programmes is that artists are entering the academy from so many different traditions, genres and situations: from devising theatre, psychological realistic theatre, performance art, circus, from group theatres and institutions. Students are entering with long experiences from their fields, asking questions to their practice and to the theatre. The institutional structure and working methods at the Academy are often being challenged. This creates a new climate and opens set values and traditional identities, in both directions.

Photos and paintings by Nils Ramhøj
Photo no 3 by Marie Lestin

Cecilia’s text is being published in a similar version in a publication on Artistic Research by Nordic Summer University 2010
Geert Kestens: Reality is as hypothetical as fiction

In 2008 I watched the play ‘Taking care of baby’\(^1\), written by the British playwright Dennis Kelly. It was performed (under the title ‘Kinderheil’\(^2\)) by the Flemish theatre group De Queeste. In this play the Leeman-Keatley syndrome is introduced by a psychiatrist, dr Millard. It was his part I adapted and re-enacted in the interview.\(^3\)

Now when I watched this play, I first took faith in the existence of this Leeman-Keatley syndrome. I believed it made sense. And I wasn't the only one in the audience who did. This probably was due to the fact that Kelly explicitly presents his play 'Taking care of baby' as a verbatim play by means of the following motto, that is repeatedly projected during the play.

*The following has been taken word for word from interviews and correspondence. Nothing has been added and everything is in the subjects’ own words, though some editing has taken place. Names have not been changed*\(^4\).

In verbatim theatre, which is a hype nowadays in the British theatre scene, another set of rules is in force than in the classical theatre.

A verbatim play is based on interviews, taken by the playwright, a journalist or an historian. It seems that all the playwright does is transcribing the interviews and editing them. This editing includes cutting, abridging, re-ordering but it is meant to be literal, truthful, and veracious.

Now obviously, this verbatim theatre is a new branch of the old documentary theatre tree, first planted by Erwin Piscator. Verbatim plays are often used to reconstruct trials, or spectacular and controversial events that have triggered a social debate. By using interviews a playwright can pick up unheard voices, new witnesses. At the same time these oral sources function as authentifying signs. The broken grammar of found, recorded speech (with its hesitations, lapsuses and idiolects) has a quality of expression and a logic of consciousness that cannot be equalled by invented speech.

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3 See Addendum 1: interview part one. This interview was set up by the author (in a free adaptation of parts of the Dennis Kelly-text) in cooperation with a ROB-journalist and recorded as a newsreel in the ROB-tv studio, Ambachtenlaan 25, 3001 Heverlee, Belgium. During the CARPA conference this fictitious newsreel was projected as an illustration of the lecture. In addendum 1 the transcription of the first part of this newsreel can be read.
Now sometimes these verbatim playwrights manage to create a thrilling story out of this documentary material, thereby creating an illusion that the audience is eager to share. In a tribunal play for example it happened that, as the judge on the scene ordered the actors 'All rise', the audience rose with them; or when the judge found an unsympathetic suspect guilty, the audience afterwards said 'well done' instead of 'well played'. Clearly, the veracity of the actors and what they say on scene sometimes causes the audience to get so emotionally involved that they mix up reality and illusion, verity and representation.

Now Denis Kelly clearly doesn't want all this to happen. In the course of his play 'Taking care of baby' he uses several alienation techniques we know from Bertolt Brecht. The projection of the 'Verbatim motto' (cf. supra) is one of them. Actually Kelly changes this motto a number of times. And each time it gets less and less understandable or even readable. Possibly in this sense.  

The word has been following from taken word for correspondence and interviews. Everything has been added in nothing and is words the own subjects' though some place has taken editing. Changed names have been not.

The effect of alienation also strikes us when we hear a voice-over interviewing the characters while they are on scene. To our surprise we hear one character telling the same event twice, but in utterly different versions. Kelly wants to prove that memory is fallible, biased by the recalled experience on the one hand and the actual context of remembering and the process of forgetting on the other hand. Every memory is a dialogue between the present and the past. But if there is no such thing as a truthful memory, how could a verbatim play, based on interviews, ever realise its ambition to be true and veracious?

Kelly, just as Brecht and Piscator, wants us to be critical of what we see; looking at a documentary play is not like opening your window and looking at reality. The view you get of reality is biased by the window and by the house in which you are standing. Life cannot be represented as it is. Documentary makers may pretend ‘Yes, we can’ but in fact, ‘No, they cannot’. Life requires an extremely open dramaturgy. As soon as one applies a narrative structure (and is it possible not to?) our view on reality is affected.

The newsreel I presented to you is such a narrative genre and of course this genre affects the message and has its own presuppositions; we expect the interviewed person to be an expert, we expect that his hypothesis is evidence-based, that no lies are told and so on. However, in this specific newsreel none of this turned out to be true: I am not a psychiatrist, scientifically speaking the Leeman-Keatley syndrome is nonsense, the Americans didn't bomb Irani but Iraqi people, Miss McAuliff cannot possibly have two different first names, the Regional Overseas Broadcast is a set up and polar bears are such good swimmers that even global warming cannot make them drown. But still I might have gotten away with all this, because the medium newsreel invites spectators and readers to suspend their disbelief and accept the representation as truthful. Just as the medium ‘verbatim theatre’ does.

In the end Kelly makes clear that his so-called verbatim play 'Taking care of baby' wasn't a verbatim play at all. It may have been a parody of verbatim as a genre, a genre that doesn't generate any truth.

Nothing of the following has been taken from interviews and correspondence. Word for word has been added and everything is in the playwright's own words, though the director and the actors may have edited some. Everything has been invented.6

It is unclear at the end of Kelly's play whether Donna McAuliff has indeed murdered her two children, the children may as well have died a natural death.

But no worries, in fact Kelly's invented play may have contributed as much to the social debate as a documentary play. The audience may feel betrayed because what they saw wasn't veracious at all, but they have to admit that it was verisimilar. This story could indeed have happened. The truth is dead, but imagination isn't.

The second part of the interview, that you can read in the addendum7, is in fact a parody of a newsreel. Kelly leads the psychiatrist to the conclusion that reality is as hypothetical as fiction; we can make assumptions and hypotheses of reality but in fact they are as fictitious as a good story. All of us believe some and disbelieve others. The world is a stage.

7 See Addendum 2 for the transcription of the second part of this interview in the ROB-tv studio.
Bibliography


Reality is as hypothetical as fiction - Addendum one

**Journalist:**
Welcome again to ROB television, the Regional Overseas Broadcast.  
As we heard in the news the British citizen, Donna McAuliff, living in Brussels and working there for the European committee is suspected of having murdered her two children.  
Now, in order to have a better understanding of this case, we have invited doctor Kestens to the studio.  
Doctor Kestens is a psychiatrist, he says that Donna McAuliff might suffer from the Leeman-Keatley syndrome.

Dr. Kestens, what exactly is the Leeman-Keatley syndrome?

**Dr. Kestens**
Doctors Leeman and Keatley carried out a series of experiments in the 1930’s for the American military. And they found out that what we really can’t stand is being lied to.  
If someone tells you he is going to torture you (by applying electrical current to the soles of your feet), and he actually does send an electrical current to the soles of your feet, this is of course very painful but in the long run it’s less stressful than when this same person first tells you he's going to torture you but then comes in with a great big ice cream for you to eat and doesn't torture you at all. We want to know what to expect, we cannot stand being lied to.

**Journalist**
OK, but why would a young mother suffer from the Leeman-Keatley syndrome?

**Dr Kestens**
Young mothers develop a great empathy, just in order to care for their child. But this empathy isn’t only focused on the child, they develop this empathy for everyone and everything: for polar bears drowning in the arctic because of global warming, for the Irani people being bombed by the American army for children in third world countries starving to death.

**Journalist**
In these children they see their own child.

**Dr Kestens**
They do indeed, now politicians all over the world say they’re going to protect these children, but actually they don’t. And some young mothers just can't cope with this lie, They don’t want their child to grow up in this terrible world

**Journalist**
And they become aggressive?

**Dr. Kestens**
They suddenly find themselves being cruel to their child, although it is the thing that they love most in the world and this of course is the most tragical aspect of the Leeman-Keatley syndrome.
**Journalist**
What exactly do these mothers do to their babies?

**Dr Kestens**
Well as to Doreen McAuliff, we think that she fed her second child a diet of salt and carbolic. The baby died in the cradle.

**Journalist**
Well, certainly this might shed new light on the case of Ann McAuliff and other mothers who treat their child cruelly.

**Reality is as hypothetical as fiction - Addendum two**

**Journalist**
Now, Dr Kestens, the rumour goes that there is no body of peer-reviewed research to underpin Leeman-Keatley Syndrome. It is (I quote) ‘a theory without science.’

**Dr Kestens**
Who says that?

**Journalist**
It is -quote- “a fictitious and fabricated illness that exists only in the mind of its inventor.” A quote by the health secretary. Is he right?

**Dr. Kestens**
Look, I didn’t come here to be attacked. I thought I was going to get a chance to get my point across.

**Journalist**
I’m just asking questions. Trying to get at the truth.

**Dr. Kestens**
This is the truth, but of course it all depends on how you bias it, there’s more than one truth, it’s all subjective, there’s the truth and there’s what people think is the truth.

**Journalist**
Dr Kestens, does the Leeman-Keatley Syndrom exist, or do you just believe it exists?

**Dr Kestens**
I don’t know, I want you to imagine that it does exist, if we accept the Leeman-Keatley syndrome we can treat these mothers as human beings, suffering from a disease, and not as monsters. But I’m not saying that the Leeman-Keatley Syndrom does exist, well I am saying that it exists -because it does, but in this hypothetical world you might believe that it does not.

**Journalist**
Thank you, dr Kestens for this interview.
I will start with a confession. The day before yesterday it seemed quite absurd to me to come all the way from Belgium for a ten-minute lecture. It felt rather like a ‘chat & go’. A day later, as I tried to order ‘poronfile, karpalokastiketta’, I realised that it was quite obvious to do something absurd as a chat & go, coming from an absurd country. For most foreigners, Belgium is the capital of Brussels.

In October of this year I had the opportunity to lead a Research Project of the Lemmensinstituut in Leuven in which I was already active as a Research dramaturge. Our research topic is ‘how can we use oral history to make theatre?’ with a focus on exploring alternative narrative strategies. Since then, every time we meet, one of my colleagues asks me: “OK, but next time, could you give us an idea of a specific research topic and method?” My answer was always: “OK, sure. But now I have to prepare for this Helsinki talk.” No need to tell you that in fact the project was one big blur to me. Our small country didn’t allow me to look at it from enough distance. The ‘what?’ and the ‘how?’ were more obscur than clair to me. (I hope our new prime minister will do better.) Thanks to the Finnish pilots on strike, we went over Stockholm instead of flying directly to Helsinki. The bird’s-eye view from the plane. Add to that the Verfremdungseffekt of leaving Stockholm at noon and, an hour later, arriving in Helsinki in what seemed night. I saw the light, relatively speaking. Travelling to the most northern point I have ever been, finally gave me a better view on the research project.

You can’t look for alternative narrative strategies if you don’t know what you’re looking an alternative for. It’s so obvious: look at the most obvious. The Life Story Interview:

“…is the story a person chooses to tell about the life he or she has lived, told as completely and honestly as possible, what the person remembers of it and what he or she wants others to know of it, usually as a result of a guided interview by another. The resulting life story is the narrative essence of what has happened to the person. It can cover the time from birth to the present of before and beyond. It includes the important events, experiences, and feelings of a lifetime.
There is very little difference between a life story and a life history” (Atkinson 125).

It may vary in scope according to different interview traditions, but in all cases it is more than merely a chronicle. The Life Story or Life History is a personal narrative, the result of an attempt to order experience, to structure it spatially and temporally. “The temporal ordering of a plot is most familiar and responds to the characteristic Western listener’s preoccupation with time marching...
forward, as in the question, ‘And then what happened?’” (Kohler Riessman 698) Life as a plot with major and minor characters, driven by an urge, involved in major and minor events taking place in a setting and having a direction towards an end? This doesn’t sound much different from the “restorative three-act form” of the classical Hollywood film (Dancyger & Rush 17-39). A purposeful chain of events, one following from the other. “Personal narratives are, at core, meaning-making units of discourse.” (Kohler Riessman 705).

It is this “meaning-making” potential that the Flemish theatre company De Queeste - one of the three companies involved in our research project – aims at in its site-specific performances in the province of Limburg, where it is based. These small scale performances called Buurtpatrouilles and Grenspatrouilles - Neighbourhood Patrols and Border Patrols - intend to portray a community, mostly in connection to local heritage, for instance at a former coal-mine. Or in a tiny village due to disappear as there is no place for it in an ecological project restoring the ‘natural’ bed of the river Maas, whereas Voulwammes, the village across, on the Dutch side of the river, can stay. (In other words: conflict is suggested.)

The Patrols are made by a standard method. The inhabitants and other relevant persons are interviewed. Then the actors – drama students of the Toneelacademie Maastricht in their final year – get about 4 weeks of time to ‘transform’ these life story video interviews into a performance that should be intellectually ‘accessible’ to members of the portrayed community, often people with little or no experience as a theatregoer. In general the audience is a mix of community members and their relatives or friends, sometimes local politicians etc. as well as experienced theatregoers. These performances are quite didactic, played in an emphatic, realistic style. The setting illustrates the theme: a communal building on the former mining site of Waterschei in the performance Kamp Waterschei, the river Maas just 30 meters from the tent the audience sits in in Herbricht/Voulwammes.

Often the characters correspond with identifiable members of the community. The Patrols function like a trip to Helsinki. The distance enables a better view: the inhabitants see their lives. Moreover, they know that their lives are seen by others. Needless to say that there is a therapeutic effect. They see their identities confirmed, as individuals and as a community. They have been ‘given a voice’. Except for a few disappointed people, the response by members of the community in question was positive at least. People showed their gratitude. Although community members are often sceptical at the beginning, De Queeste generally gains their confidence as the project progresses.
No matter how special the experience of realizing that the people portrayed are sitting next to you, no matter how good the intentions of the theatre company making this portrait, there is always something that disturbs me. It is a mode of acting that demands of the actor that he tells a story as if it were his own. It’s not the lie that disturbs me here – all theatre is artificial. Disturbing is the authority of the actor: these lives are not ‘telling’, but are ‘told’. They are explained in the act of performing them, they seem ‘given’. All events and characters have been scrutinized for their importance and given their place in a purposeful, hierarchically structured entity. They have been ordered as a plot, even though it is not a complete three-act structure. As a spectator, I don’t get a chance to attribute meaning to this collection of experiences called ‘life’, since they have already been brought in a mainly causal relation to each other.

If narrating is giving a form to experience, in other words, turning experience into an image, something perceivable, then it must be possible to change images by altering the narrative forms, by finding alternative ways to structure experience (ours or that of others). When do we get an image of someone’s life? When we get a chronological account of the most important events that, causally linked, made someone into who he or she is? Or when contingent events of for example three non-consecutive years are presented to us in full detail? Both will give us an idea of the life of a particular individual, but also a model of a life story.

Inspiration for alternative narrative structures can be found in the field of narratology as well as in that of historiography. In 1926 is Hans Ulrich Gumbrechts attempt at writing a synchronic, simultaneous instead of a diachronic, sequential history. His book demonstrates that another concept of history implies another form of historiography. By the way, In 1926 also implies another form of academic discourse: it is not the familiar format, with a beginning, a middle and an end, a coherent argumentation leading up to an essential utterance about the subject matter. The book consists mainly of alphabetically ordered ‘clusters’, that is, particular but not essential elements simultaneously existing in the year 1926, like Assembly Lines, Jazz, Mountaineering, etc. that tell us something about the spirit of 1926. In the short User’s Manual to the book Gumbrecht explains that his aim is “To make at least some readers forget, during the reading process, that they are not living in 1926. In other words: to conjure some of the worlds of 1926, to re-present them, in the sense of making them present again” (Gumbrecht x).
Rather than a historical plot, his book “suggests the existence of a ‘web’ or ‘field’ of [...] realities that strongly shaped the behaviour and interactions of 1926” (ibidem).

If Gumbrecht can “think history” differently, then it must be possible to think the performance of life and community histories different as well, to find other ways to make lives present in theatre. Presenting the elements of a life without causally connecting them gives other opportunities to the spectator. He can experience the complexity of life before it is rationally understood. He can make his own connections. At the same time, thanks to the montage principle this implies, attention is drawn to life history or community history as a construction: these lives are told, given a form and meaning by a group of people who have their own motives to do so.

How would a second version of a Neighbourhood Patrol change the spectators who it is about? Maybe they as well as we would discover various possible identities, multiple possible connections. As a very naive tribute to our host, I’d say: first construct an Indo-European, then a Finno-Ugrian version starting from the same oral material. Would the difference in syntax change our view on the subject matter?

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Claire Swyzen (°1973), philologist, dramaturge and researcher. In charge of the artistic research project ‘From verity to veracity: An artistic research into the transformation of an oral source into a theatre project’ of the Drama department of the Lemmensinstituut, University College for Sciences and Arts, Association K.U.Leuven. Contact: claire.swyzen@lemmens.wenk.be
Tiina Jalkanen: Girl Trilogy -experiences on girls´ relations to gender, embodiment and pedagogy

Girlhood

I didn´t want to think too much about what kind of girl I am now or … I am aware that I am a girl but don´t underline it … I can wear thi s (pink) beret if I want or run wild if I want and that doesn´t make me less or more girl or more boyish because this does not define me or what I want from my girlhood. (Young dancer 8)

I see her standing in a steady posture on the floor. But also relax. Her both hands are wrapped on the pelvis line. Her head is upwards, the eyes are curious. Her expression in the posture is asking and waiting. She seems to like her pink beret on the head and carries it well. The softness and the little roundness of her body tell me about her adolescence age. What kind of posture does she have? A critical feminine posture?

The Girl over there - I noticed her now - how does she look like? How is she being? One hand is laid in rests on the shoulder and the other is twisted in the waist. Her legs are in a broad standing position. Her posture attitude seems to be waiting and excited. I get a feeling that her posture is very sensuous and at the same time she is defending herself. State of becoming, becoming a young women, a person. She is getting to the point of autonomy subject. Her eyes are looking straight. She looks also funny and vulnerable little girl with her over big black shoes and a short pastel dress. Youngsters do have big feet in adolescent age and so does this charismatic young lady.

Context

The purpose of my research is to investigate experiences on young girls´ relations to gender, embodiment and pedagogy in the context of Girl Trilogy. Vantaa Dance Institute (1000 students) is a dance art school, where students can take dance courses both in advanced and general frames. The institute has also advanced groups looking for dance profession.

My research is about how the young female dancers experienced girlhood and embodiment in the process of the Girl Trilogy and what kind of gender knowledge does get from adolescent girls´ experiences. In pedagogical knowledge I´m looking for dialogical and critical pedagogical information and knowledge.
**Interviews**

I have interviewed nine (9/13) girls who have been involved in all three dance productions. One by one - interviews were made by an open method and they were tape and video recorded. At the interviewing time most of the students were about 17 years of age. We made Trilogy in the years of 2001 – 2006 and the interviews were made 2007. At time performing Trilogy the interviewed students were 10 – 16 years old.

"Although we were all girls it [the performance project] didn’t ride on that femininity, it was primarily about dynamics”. (Young dancer 9)

When I see this young woman running, I feel energy, moving energy. She uses her weight freely, and she is not disturbed by the noise of legs. In my opinion she looks personal and individual with her pink short cut hair and black whole suit. And her voice has own tone touch. She is performing a performance but all so every other girl is performative with their beings and styles.

**Questions and methodology**

The core of my research is to create deeper understanding of girlhood as a phenomenon and “as a space of becoming an adult female” My questions are how do bodily level (embodiment) and reflective speech levels intertwine in girlhood? How do experiences on prereflective body level and reflective speech level relate to each other? By using phenomenological and hermeneutical approach I will describe experiences coming up from interviews and give them hermeneutical meanings (Husserl 2006, Rouhiainen 2003). Consciousness, when phenomenologically analyzed, as Husserl, as well as other influential phenomenologists, recognizes, is always found to be situated and contextualized – dependent on a body and a world, which bestow it with existence and meaning.

In feminist approach I am using performative gender theories. Feministic philosopher Judith Butler emphasizes that gender is socially constituted and remade (Butler 2006). Butler’s approach — inspired in part by Michel Foucault — is basically to unlink the supposed links between gender and desire; according Butler identities are flexible, free-floating. This idea of identity as free-floating, as not connected to an "essence", but instead to a performance, is one of the key ideas in Butler´s theory. Seen in this way, our identities, gendered and otherwise, do not express some authentic inner "core" self but are the dramatic effect of our performances.
In my opinion the performative aspect of Butler’s theory offers an interesting connection to children’s play or youngster’s body plays and languages. Adolescent youngsters play games with roles, changing from princesses to little puppets or from heavy rockers to fashion top models. I consider that the youngsters play process of identity and subjectivity. I see it as a project of autonomy and the playing process is can be seen as a process of meaning-making. In order to get deeper understanding of the theory, I am asking, how does the socially constructed body and my pre-understanding link together? How the gender difference processes occur in my data and how can I understand girlhood through connecting my theories and data. Later I will do critical reading about Butler’s theory with the support of different theorists, in order to get a deeper understanding of the theory. I see it highly problematic to consider gender only as a social construction.

Prereflexive body

What is the specific feature of dance that empowers your personality and girlhood? (Interviewer)

Oh, I think that empowers you when you have done something ready [dance performance] … And also that you are able to move freely. Or time to time you can make improvisations and go with your moods. That I find fun and relaxing. (Young dancer 1).

In the Trilogy process we were making different body movement improvisations. We were trying to find, how Body as an object (ruumis) and Body as a subject (keho) are intertwining (Rouhiainen 2003, Parviainen 2006) in conjunction with the phenomenon of girlhood. In this text I am using body as object and body as subject in this meanings. In the Trilogy we were dancing body from inside out and outside in. In rehearsing Pink rebel performance, the young dancers were doing an improvisation drill with upper body, sensing ribs, chest and breathing. The image for sensing was a three-dimensional warm big barrel as the rib-cage. The same section was in the stage performance. In Point of Power one of the students’ group selected the theme Anorexia. Young girls were interested in writing, discussing, improvising and dancing about this challenging theme, an eating disorder. Our focus was bodily sensing, not so much in the aspect of dramatic illness. The movement material of the piece was made mostly by students and I made some series.

What was the most impressing and close section [of the dances] to you? (Interviewer)
I did like very much about Anorexia, almost I did like the movement material and the atmosphere was delicate. Although the theme was very dark, the mood of the piece
was very good. Any way, it was selected a clear idea of performance and there was a happy story also in the end. (Young dancer 3)

The challenge of dance learning is to understand and connect knowledge, bodily knowledge and bodily "silent knowledge". Difference between bodily knowledge and bodily silent knowledge is somatic that is involved to the learning process (Rouhiainen 2006). I consider the term prereflective body as being quite close to the concept of somatics. Bodily learning can be understand as embodiment beyond the body-mind dichotomy (Anttila 2008, 2003). In general, somatic practices are interested in enhancing social agency as well as individual integrity and well-being of individuals through taking a first-person perspective on bodily experiences, functions and mobility. The dialectic between socially constructed knowledge and embodied knowledge is applied towards artistic, creative purposes.

How would you describe your embodiment? (Interviewer)
It wouldn’t occur to me without that [dance piece] to practice that kind of dance, in my opinion one need’s kind of exciting technical. (Young dancer 1)

I am also interested in reading my research material with a concept of kinesthetic empathy (Parviainen 2006, 103). Kinesthetic empathy makes it possible to feel and understand other’s body movements with your own kinesthetic topographical map according to Parviainen. We don’t only see other’s movements but we can understand other’s movement by empathy of topography.

How was it a somatic movement? (Interviewer)
I felt that I could get all my internal organs involved with [dance]… In that way it was a good experience. (Young dancer 1)

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References:


Eduardo Abrantes: Time to Spare and Dare – an inquiry on the phenomenology of temporal dynamics in artistic research

I will start by quoting the first two lines of my presentation abstract.

Artistic research requires time. More than that, it requires a certain malleability of time – it requires time to waste.

Whether we speak about short intervals in the daily tasks, or reclusive three month long residencies, digitally assisted multi-tasking while commuting or watching tv, periods of indefinite delay and wait, or 25 hour days of manic production – all these different uses and experiences of time constitute a phenomenological horizon in creative research.

For an artist the question is not so much how much time does it take to do the work, but what kind of time is right for each work? And also how to steal that time away from the non-artistic pursuits in our life?

For an artist working from a phenomenological perspective – or with a phenomenological sensibility – time is both rigid and elastic. One cannot produce more of it than one already has, but one can create strategies to stretch it or compress it further. These strategies might become both theme and method for the creative pursuit. In shaping time, one shapes oneself, because time is both the fabric of action and inaction, and time also bears the fruit and the consequences of both.

If we think about the artist’s need to have time to waste – time to spare and dare – we find that we are inquiring upon the broader notion of the place of leisure in artistic research.

So I will continue now with a short pseudo-historical model of leisure.

The American sociologist Alfred Lloyd, in an article dating from 1922, describes three so-called “ages of leisure” for Man. The first, the leisure “afforded by long infancy and youth, in some sense the basis of man's superiority”\(^1\), the second, leisure “made possible by slavery domestic and

proprietary or socially institutional”

The first kind refers to leisure from Biology’s point of view, a somewhat deterministic point of view. It is true that humankind possesses an exceptionally long lifespan compared to other animal species of the same size and metabolical rhythm. And this expanded lifespan allows for a particular division of the ages of Man, according to bodily transformation and intellectual maturation. A “long infancy and youth” are therefore to be understood as being lived through in a state of leisure – of both anticipation and seclusion from adulthood’s responsibilities and pains. Simply put, children are supposed to have a lot more of free time than grownups – and their time consuming flights of imagination testify to this.

We commonly say our children tend to grow up faster, but we forget that childhood as we know it – meaning ideally a bubble-like existence of safe experimenting with the strange world and the others in it – is quite a recent historical development, a consequence of the deep sociological and economical changes preceding and immediately succeeding the Industrial Revolution. Let it be noted that the kind of leisure that amounts to childhood’s exemption from the more worldly and pragmatic chores, is considered essential as the “basis of man’s superiority”, meaning, the fertile soil of his adult achievements. So one must be a child before one becomes a man, and the child’s time is, or it used to be, mostly free.

The second kind of leisure is more radically linked to the recurring question of the necessity and division of labour. This kind of leisure assumes labour as being its opposing principle, and finds itself achieved only relying on slavery.

Well, slavery is today a dirty word, and it has become so for good reasons. But if we want to understand what kind of society holds leisure in such high esteem, indeed as an essential condition to democracy, that it considers slavery a fully justified necessity, we just have to look towards the birthplace of western culture: ancient Greece.

\[\text{2 Lloyd, "Ages of Leisure."}\]
\[\text{3 Lloyd, "Ages of Leisure."}\]
The matter is explained at length in two of Aristotle’s most prominent works: *Politics* and *Nichomachean Ethics*. There we learn that leisure is the prerogative of the citizen – the adult Greek man who is fully active and participating in society and politics. So as to sustain the basic needs, each citizen and his family are provided with slaves who take care of menial labour. And such is the root of democracy, for democracy implies enlightenment and dialogue, meaning, a lot of free time which can only be gained through a radical distinction between what Aristotle calls “bare life” or *zoos*, the basic survival animal needs we all share like need for food and shelter, and “life in human society” or *bios*, the higher activities pertaining to political, philosophical and artistic pursuits.

For the Greeks, leisure is one of the main criteria distinguishing Man from Animal. Ironically, most of us if asked if our pets or the creatures we see in the zoo have a busy life we’d probably answer: not so much. An ancient Greek might have a different opinion. Let us bear in mind that the Greek word for leisure is “scholazein”, which literally means loitering from physical labour, but that possesses the exact same root as “school”. Again, today we, at least beyond our teenage years, would not define school time as leisure time, but here we find an essential point for the ancient Greek understanding of the notion of leisure.

If leisure and school – loitering and learning – come together in the Greek etymology is because both activities have one very important thing in common: both are pursued for their own sake, and not in view of an external goal.

In the Greek view, if one cuts wood one does so not because one appreciates the act itself – the swing of the axe, the sound of chopping, the warm sweat dripping down one’s back in a sensual glaze – but because one wants to keep warm during winter. This logic applies to all menial labour. But not only to menial work – and this point is quite fascinating – but also to entertainment, like dancing, playing games or taking a vacation, because in the Greek world the pleasure from entertainment is not pursued for itself but as a relaxation from work. So, conceptually, there is not much difference between entertainment and menial labour, both are activities pursued in view of some other external goal.

Leisure is something altogether different – it is time spent in something that is for its own sake, the edification of the individual. So this is indeed a productive loitering, one that encompasses not only the philosophical and political, but also the aesthetical – meaning, whenever an art form becomes more than a craft and produces art works. As a side note, this resonates with French philosopher
Gilles Deleuze definition of an artwork in his “What is Philosophy?” as being that which “stands on its own”⁴.

The third kind of leisure, the one enjoyed commonly by contemporary society, is that achieved also through a slavery of sorts – but not of the human kind – it is technology, the so-called “Iron Man”, that now provides for most of the menial chores, allowing for so much more free time. The unfortunate consequence is that free time has also become industrialized – so the Greek times seem to be over. It is increasingly difficult to distinguish labour from leisure, and even if the word on the street is that now both can change places and one can produce wealth through mostly leisurely means, sometimes one suspects it is indeed free time that stopped being free.

How exactly does this pseudo-historical introduction inform us about the place of leisure in artistic pursuits?

If we consider the Roman saying “ars gratia artis”, translated in the early 19th century as “art for art’s sake”, as parallel to leisure’s saying “time for time’s sake”, then we might be on the right track to get somewhere in our inquiry. If as Deleuze says, an artwork stands on its own, then it also lasts on its own, and it takes its own time to make, and this time is someone’s time too – a portion of an artist’s lifetime.

Saying that in artistic research one needs time to spare and dare means that one of the essentially creative tools is time as potential. Time as potential is empty time, time without schedule, that is however “bracketed” time, meaning, time with a purpose.

It seems indeed that only when you possess time, in its expanse, in its unoccupied length – pointless potential time that is nonetheless limited, only then can the creative turn be set in motion.

The key phenomenological notion underlining this observation is the notion of “interval”. The notion of “interval” in phenomenology finds itself highlighted in two important conceptual turns: the notion of distentio, belonging to Saint Augustine’s analysis of time in the 4th century; and the pair retention/protension (Wiedererinnerung, Vorerinnerung) proposed by Edmund Husserl in the early 20th century. Both allude to the fact that the human experience of time is that of the flux and

⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Qu’est-Ce Que La Philosophie ?, Critique (Paris: Ed. de Minuit, 1991).
the interval. The past is no longer, the future is not yet, and the present would be a vertiginous cursor of chaotic perceptions without the notion of interval. The somewhat stable nature of time relies on the present expanding itself to include a retained past and an expected future. Quoting Augustine in his Confessions, we live in “the present of the past, which is also the present of the present, which is also the present of the future” – time finds its consistency in human experience alone.

In artistic research, particularly in performance, the interval we are interested in can be both the time one takes to explore one’s ideas, to try out one’s methods, as the time spent in observing others, the daily routines, or the exceptional events.

These intervals of time – available to spare and dare – are both biographical and embodied, in the sense that both the ethical and the aesthetical converge in them. On one hand they are lived intervals, periods of lifetime invested in creative pursuit – and in this sense they belong to the ethical, to human action, intention and its consequences. On the other hand they stand on their own, with no consequences, no external goal, no labour produced but that of being “in labour” – now a synonym with “being in leisure” – and they are, as such, the very fabric of the artwork as performative practice.

END
Cecilia Roos: "From movement through reflection-becoming: The dancer and the creative process"

Helsingfors-09

I’m very happy to be here and even more happy to see that you are here and still have energy left for the presentation of my research project. It will take about 18 minutes.
I’ve worked as a dancer for about 30 years and my first engagement was with the choreographer MÅ in the group Pyramiderna. I just had my exam as a dance teacher from University college of Dance in Sweden when the rehearsals started. For Margaretha it was of highest priority that we reflected during the working process. She wanted us to write down our thoughts every day and these reflections were the starting points for discussions that we had continuously. That was completely new for me. In my education I had learned how to exercise my body in dance but not my thoughts on dance.

So, I remember myself in the cafe at the museum of modern art in august 1982. I’m sitting outside and it’s a warm afternoon. I have a notebook where I’m supposed to write down all my thoughts around my working process. And I don’t get anywhere, I can’t find the words and I don’t know what to reflect upon. I’ve learned the steps…and what more…I’m completely empty, my mind is blank. After a couple of hours I’ve produced a few words…a half side. The week after we had our first briefing in the group. We were 8 people around the table and there were 8 different reflections and experiences about the working process and the movement sequences. My half side had by that time increased to 3-4 but it was the discussion and not the number of pages that was important for me. I was so happy because I was able to participate, my reflections were as good as anyone else’s. The discussions showed how different we all translated and interpreted the movements. And there was not only one way of describing the process. Everyone had their own experience; everyone carried their own truths.

That experience has followed and shaped me as a dancer and rehearser and it’s clear for me today that my interest for trying to formulate the dancer’s process with a movement material started during that period 28 years ago.

The questions that constantly occupies me since then are:
“How does a dancer develop her personal methods in her practise? **And what kind** of methods and tools is she using in her artistic process?

**Can** they be conceptualized?

I just received a three-year funding from the Swedish research council for the research project 
"From movement through reflection-becoming: The dancer and the creative process”.

My research encompasses my practice based investigation in the rehearsal and performance process with a new creation in 2010 by the choreographer Ina Christel Johannessen. The project will be presented in different ways: Apart from the actual dance performance a book will be compiled to conceptualize and formulate the result of the dancer’s (my) reflections, my co-researchers experiences and the working dialogue. The project will also be documented by a short film and photographs. And hopefully bring new knowledge to more people than us involved.

My idea for this specific research started when Ina asked me if I wanted to participate as a dancer in the creation “now she knows”. It was in February 2009 and I was at that time working on how to realize the research I wanted to do. I needed a real working situation and not a situation created for my needs. I immediately saw the possibilities in her offer and asked her if I could use my process as a research project and she accepted.

I want to make clear that Ina’s choreography is not the subject for my research. My research deals with how I process and experience a movement material and will continue for at least one year after the performance period has ended. I will be very cautious with holding on to my interest because as a dancer you easily fall into describing the choreographer’s vision and needs and that is what you usually get to read when dancers are supposed to describe their processes.

This project is aiming for an approach, an understanding and a conceptualisation about the artistic process through the dancer’s perspective. This will be realized from inside the process by me but also from the outside through my co-researchers Cecilia Sjöholm, professor at Södertörns högskola at the institution for culture and communication and Anna Petronella Fredlund, lecturer in philosophy also at Södertörn. My reason (and vision and hope) for having an outside eye is that it enables me to be, and stay, in the creative moment. They’ll be together with me in the studio through the rehearsals, and during the performance period, observing the work with creating and processing the material.
Our different perspectives in that situation will not be deadlocked; they both contain an interaction between a pre-reflected and a reflected action. A widened focus. The artistic and creative process of dance will be questioned through a practical and theoretical perspective that intertwines and the realization of the research will constantly evolve from that process. Our idea is that we through this double motion, and through a continuous dialogue, will be able to formulate conceptions about embodied knowledge and creativity.

The starting point is Ina’s work and her work relies, more than any choreographer that I worked with, on the dancer’s ability to independently process the material. She creates the movement material in close relation to the dancer, mostly through improvisation that turns into a set material through the rehearsal period. That is an ultimate starting point for this research and a continuation of the discussions I had in my BA and MA-thesis “Thoughts that passes before the movements” “To read the shape of a movement” and “The inner and the outer gaze of the dancer”. There my focus was more general, I wrote about the process, not in the process (which I intend to do now). I tried to formulate the methods a dancer is using in the process and I proposed to call some of these methods the internal and the external gaze. I name them that way just to organize my thoughts. I’m not satisfied with that but being the concepts I’ve found so far I keep them but I hope to find something more suitable for my needs through my research.

As the gaze is in constant dialogue with the now and its phenomena it embodies our interpretative frame in a dynamic way as we experience new situations. What we see is filtered through our knowledge and then it takes shape. Every dancer represents an individual and unique interpretation of her lived experience. Although we share similar experiences we always interpret them on the base of our own existential situation which is constantly shifting.

The dancer’s process is active, aware and full of decisions in the moment. The skill in how to process a material, and how to use that experience, are very important and necessary conditions for her ability to take part in the process. In my example from 1982 when I was asked to reflect upon the process I didn’t understand what to do a reflection about. I had no experience and no tools, I was happy and felt satisfied that I was able to do the steps. But the choreographer wasn’t, she wanted us to go deeper and that’s why she forced us into reflection.
As a dancer I can choose between the external and the internal gaze as perspectives in the process. As a conscious choice of method. When I use my external gaze I discern shapes and directions. And by using the internal gaze I perceive through memories, emotions and of course, knowledge. The external gaze has a visible and discernible intention that comes into play when I, through my experience, process the material. The internal gaze can impulsively recognize, or react to, movement material. That is not to say that the internal gaze stops there, analysis starts immediately, which gives reasons for the intentionality of the external gaze. Gradually I become familiar with the movement material, it becomes visible. My base is: reflection, relation and dialogue. Reflection - when I meet the material, relation - grows when I process it, dialogue - comes into play when I'm able to dance it.

In principle, one could say that the emphasis is on the external gaze at the beginning of the process and it then shifts inwards to finally oscillate dynamically between internal and external perspectives. My research is planned to deal with the zone between, where these perspective meet and merge. I imagine this as a zone that is constantly shifting, aiming towards an absolute pitch for the possibilities of the situation. As a dancer I know I always navigate, more or less consciously, towards this zone. There I can make the choices which are the base for my interpretation. I give you an example:

*In her piece “movement installation” the choreographer Margaretha Åsberg staged a number of separate actions in the premises of the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm, all of them linked to a work of art. One of my tasks was to stand behind Charles Despiau’s bronze sculpture “L’Adolescence” and to adopt exactly the same posture. I studied the sculpture very carefully to be able to read what was specific in the depiction of the young girl, or, more precisely, how she was standing. Even though the external appearance seemed to be very simple to imitate I had problems. The sculpture had considerably more life than I managed to attain. Physically it was extremely laborious and I could only stand for a few minutes before my legs started to cramp. In the external manifestation of her stance there was a relaxed contemplativeness that I was unable to capture. As if she was calmly waiting for something or somebody. Study of the external form gave me no help. What was the secret? My eye discerned the outward form of the statue but that did not provide the solution. I had to enter into the form, use my internal gaze, to ascertain where the tension and the fracture point for her energy could be found. The encounter with this sculpture involved a search for a dynamic equivalence between what I could see and how I experienced seeing. Interaction of the internal and external gaze, pre-reflection and reflection, body-subject and body-object entering*
the zone in between. For me it was crystal clear when this fusion, in manifest practice and mentally, took place. Then I did not become tired, my body pulsed with life. The now was present. There was the dynamic equivalence, I in relation to something else. Not I in something else.

My need now is to go deeper in to this relation, to more consciously live the dialogue that creates the in between. I have no words for that yet but I will get there I’m sure.

Perception, or the kind of absolute presence that I will try to conceptualise in my research arise in the dialogue and encounter between the internal and external gaze when I as a subject in constant change, relate to the material. It also enables me to shorten the time between thought and action, in order for the past and the future to meet.

Then by catching the moment, I hope to move and be moved.
Thank you for your attention!
I will present the ways in which my phenomenological research has led me to darkness and discoveries. Giving in to the unpredictability in artistic research has guided me to an unknown place that is different and the same, strange and familiar, there and here.

My thesis, *Dive into Movement – Movement Improvisation as a Fountain of Dancing and Writing* offers one way to write about dancing. The empirical material that is used in the research comprises students’ writings about experiences from a movement improvisation workshop at the Lund Institute of Technology in Sweden.

So the journey started from a movement improvisation workshop that was offered to industrial design students who were non-dancers. The students’ written materials about the experiences gained from a movement improvisation workshop form the empirical material. As a comparative viewpoint for these writings by non-dancers the research employs the texts of Merce Cunningham and other authors’ publications on his artistic activity. The experiential writings by the students are set within the context of the dance world, and this reveals differences and similarities between the activities of dancers and non-dancers. The writings of the students, the meanings they gave to the dancing experiences, are interpreted through a kind of close reading, in which I as a researcher-dancer also consider the lived events I experienced together with the students at the workshop.

Dancing is my daily bread and with the help of the students it became strange again. The way in which they moved and wrote about the dancing experiences re-opened my horizon. The happenings with those students at the workshop have led me to unknown territory, and writing has done that even more. The act of writing allows one to lose oneself, to let the body be awake and sensitive to the bodily experiences. My body is a channel through which something may happen, and where writing takes place.

Laurel Richardson has described writing as a method of inquiry; it is a journey of exploration that travels in the act of writing. I use language in a variety of ways to describe the dancing experiences – which the student experiences at the workshop as well as some performing experiences of mine.

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1 Richardson 2000, 923–947.
However, language does not fully capture dancing. Writing is not to have clear thoughts beforehand; instead, writing guides me, and I listen to the body.

In the research process my native language, Finnish, has become an experience as such. To choose a language is a methodological choice and so is the manner in which it is used. I find words by attuning myself to the language, to my mother tongue. This language, English is alien; one can never know a foreign language because one has not experienced the nuances, the words in the body, from the beginning. Often I feel lost, somewhere else even in my native language. The words pierce through the skin, and they take one elsewhere. Elsewhere is a place of uncertainties and a land of shadows.

In the process of artistic research I am standing somewhere; the place is unknown to me. Dancing, reading and writing pull me in various directions; my understanding, will, and reasoning fade away. Often I have to dance as if to validate the writing by dancing, but it does not work that way, dancing soon takes me somewhere else where the words step aside. Shadows appear and darkness eats thoughts. The senses open themselves up to the happening, to the dance, to the environment. The senses are like the lighthouse in the sea. The only thing to be certain of is that something has happened: dancing has happened. One has lived through that kind of certainty, but it cannot be translated into clear informative words.

I write of flesh where flesh is darkness, it is not-knowing that guides my writing somehow, somewhere. The outlines of my body become blurred, my personal history is a matter of no importance, but instead the happening in writing that reveals and hides dancing experiences has the utmost importance. Words keep on rolling; they appear and disappear. When something is said, something else retreats. This movement reminds me of the Saying and the Said, the concepts used by Emmanuel Levinas. There is something radical in the Saying; it goes beyond being thematized or totalized. By contrast, the Said belongs to the area where everything can be known and determined. In the spiral movement, the way in which saying and said intertwine; something will be said, something will be denied.² The echo of the words leaves a trace in the air that is felt, lived, received.

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² Levinas 1996, 22.
Dancing has its own reality that cannot be fully grasped and it is not a weakness but its way of being. Words create a reality of their own; words also offer a place to the reader to visit, where he can join in.

I grasp one book here, another there. I select reference books by listening to my body, to my senses: something echoes in the writings of the chosen authors, researchers, and philosophers. The echo in my body resonates to the chosen texts; the body makes the choice. I wander in a research field that seems to have no limit, a field that consists of the acts of everyday life: walking, watching movies, also the work as a dance artist in the social and health field. I write fragmented texts and use various ways to use language. And my senses guide the way to trust a body that is never known totally. It means flesh that is unknown, it is darkness itself that one cannot ever fully comprehend or grasp. My own bodily experiences show the way in the midst of research material and reference literature.

I have lived out some writings by Georges Bataille. The inner experience is the only authority and value; it is the only goal he writes about. Non-knowledge lays bare what one has known, and non-knowledge is based on the state of the inner experience. His cryptic book *Inner Experience* fascinates me; I do not understand it by rationalizing the text; I live through the strange words and something hits me. The reality of non-knowledge leads to the fields of openness and wind. So whatever I write to you or in whatever language, it might be as Bataille writes: “Life will dissolve itself in death, rivers in the sea, and the known in the unknown. Knowledge is access to the unknown. Nonsense is the outcome of every possible sense.”

On the research journey I have also walked with mystics like Saint John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila. Saint John of the Cross has taught that only at the darkest end of the darkness one may find the godhead. In the darkness of the body one can recognize something not recognized before. In her book *Inner Castle* Teresa of Avila opens doors to various rooms which one can enter, to the rooms of prayers, and it is like an architectural map in the midst of searching or researching. She describes the journey of the soul in a prayer. There is something similar between the journeys of dancing and of praying, as well as the journey of research, because the way in which a human being is in the world changes during the journey. The known landmarks disappear. Religious language echoes something of the experience that is meaningful. Darkness is meaningful.

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5 Juan de la Cruz 2004.
6 Teresa de Jesús 2007.
This way of opening oneself up to various texts – the research belongs to phenomenology that is not a monolithic viewpoint but offers various opportunities to go back to the things themselves – depicts the nature of the research: sidewalks, sidesteps are presents. It is as important to describe a film and to discuss the issue at hand as it is to have Levinas, Heidegger, Derrida or other philosophers in the text.

To sense the meaning or the meaningless of the words is part of my pathway. When one has attuned oneself to the senses, words create a reality of their own; the tongue is present in manifold ways. The author Oscar Parland gives one example of this when he describes in his novel *The Enchanted Way* a situation where a young boy listens to his grandmother reading the Bible.

“The only thing I understand is that love is in your tongue (...) it also sounds quite right when you think about the animals in the Garden of Eden, because it was with their tongues they tasted the fruits they gave each other, and it was with their tongues they licked each other’s faces and necks when they wanted to show how much they liked each other, and it was with their tongues they whispered endearments in each other’s ears.”

To write of flesh means to have the courage to know that something will be told, that somehow something will be communicated to the reader. But nothing is sure; the way in which the researcher gives in to the act of writing also asks the reader to leave herself or himself to the rhythm of the words, to the silence that is in the words, between the words, and between the lines.

I have breathed the darkness. Nothing is sure, but something can, perhaps something will be communicated through the text by celebrating our senses, our sensibility.

I write as a dancer and thus writing needs dancing alongside it, to think in the bones. Writing and dancing are alive side by side; dancing turns some of the written material of my research into flesh. Thus, during the research journey, the dance film *Routes from here to here* was born some years ago. The solo dances in this film were inspired by some of the writings by students as well as a few other already existing texts. I danced in and directed the film. The dance film

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makes the reality of dancing present together with the progression of the writing. It gives feedback about the dark pathways; particularly in a dark editing studio after hours and hours of work, one solo started to speak to me in another manner. I was stunned. It was as if something hidden had showed something of itself. Though I was dancing in the film, I was looking somewhat strange, weird, which I had no idea of before. I got home and I had to write for hours about the experience that struck me so strongly. The images took me somewhere else; the darkness of the editing studio hit the strangeness in the images that I did not realise when I danced. To give in to the research journey has had some consequences: it pushes and throws one to a place where everything is otherwise. This supports the state of wonder, to orientate oneself again and again. The flesh is the place where I am; it is an unknown place.

Not-knowing has become enormously important, to let things be, to leave my will aside, to let things appear without taking hold of them. The space opens up, an ethical state perhaps. I have landed at a place to meet a singular experience of dancing that hides itself. To keep its singularity, I have to step aside and let flesh speak via me. I melt into the landscape. And at the same time a unique place of mine has opened up.

The only possibility is to accept and appreciate non-knowledge that belongs to the nature of artistic research. This journey to a strange land has left marks in my body. I have visited places that have made traces on my skin, on my bones. Something has changed. I have fallen down into an abyss by doing research; I have written myself into an abyss, and there is no exit.

This research journey of mine is not a matter of personal growth; instead it is about emptiness, about joining in something, about being part of something where nothing is permanent, about allowing oneself to wander in the darkness, about letting the emptiness be empty. When one is lost, one can find things that one has not even dreamed of before.

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9 I have written an article about this experience in English. Heimonen 2007.


Hanna Johansson: John Constable’s Cloud Studies as an artistic research

In June 1836, in the fifth lecture of a series on *The History of Landscape Painting* at the Royal Institution in Great Britain, Constable stated: “Painting is a science and should be pursued as an inquiry into the laws of nature. Why, then, may not landscape painting be considered as a branch of natural philosophy, of which pictures are but the experiments?”

Reading of this sentence today, we have to keep in mind the contemporary meaning of the words science, natural philosophy and experiment and how they differ from what we mean and understand by these words today. Nevertheless, I think that Constable’s statement summarises some crucial points about his ideas of the connections between painting and research that are worth considering in discussing artistic research today.

As an art historian, I approach the topic of how artistic research change us, with an historical example, the oil paintings of cloud, sky and climate by the Englishman John Constable (1776 – 1837), which he created during the early 1820s.

The broader context for my article is the extensive discussion around the factual, the real and materiality going on in academia. These topics have long been abandoned in favour of discursive strategies, which have dominated academic thinking in recent decades. Today’s rethinking of the real and the factual does not, however, recommend a return to the modern idea of empiricism, but as the French sociologist of science, Bruno Latour, states to ‘second empiricism’, a realist attitude that ‘assembles’ and that is based not on matters of fact, but on matters of concern.

My special concern here today is climate and weather. One reason I am interested in Constable’s paintings is that he is considered an early naturalist or artist with empirical interests, i.e., he leans towards rendering factual, material and observable landscapes. I consider his cloud studies as evidence of that tendency, i.e., I observe how he uses clouds and other phenomena of the sky as agents in his artistic practice. Clouds are not only passive, observable objects, but also subject to the ever-changing history of the climate.

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1 Leslie 1995, 274.
In Constable’s time, there was no concept of ‘second empiricism’ but only emerging of first empiricism. The natural sciences were not understood in the modern sense of implying a set of separate, specialised disciplines aimed at the ‘study of material or the external world from the standpoint of a neutral, methodical observer’ conducted by professionals. The natural sciences were still closer to the idea of natural philosophy. They were more pursuits carried on by men of independent means and encompassed a wide range of inquiries from mineralogy to the study of antiquity, all of which were seen as interconnected. Only from the 1830s on did the professionalisation and specialisation of the sciences start to emerge in England.

Yet by the time of Constable’s lecture, the objects of scientific and artistic investigation were diverging rapidly, and by the 1830s a good deal of scientific activity had already shifted away from the observation of natural phenomena to laboratory work. My focus today is the period before that time, precisely the 1820s, a time when Constable’s repertory of subjects and views remained virtually constant, and he was painting the same scenes and places near London, such as Stour Valley, Hampstead Heath and Salisbury Cathedral.

Constable concentrated on cloud studies for two years: 1821 and 1822. These studies consist of several dozen quick, small and accurate sketches of clouds in *plein-air*. He tried to catch the fleeting and ever-changing visual effects as well as the forms of the clouds. A small annotation that records the precise time of the painting and the weather at that moment accompanies every study.

For those familiar with the history of landscape painting, it is worth mentioning that Constable was by no means the earliest landscape painter to pay close attention to clouds. But his scientific interest made his studies extraordinary. Clouds became part of the post-Waterloo *Zeitgeist* in both science and art. And it is said that there was a ‘meteorological moment’ in British culture in the decade after Waterloo. And we can understand the renewed interest in Constable’s clouds today because globally we are living our own meteorological moment. A fresh reading of Constable’s cloud studies as ‘the representation of the reality of historical process’ -- call it climate – seems almost imperative.

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4 Klonk 1996, 150.
5 See also Thornes & Metherell 2003.
To understand Constable’s works and their relation to the sky, I want to remind you about that precise meteorological moment in British culture. In the early years of the nineteenth century a small group of naturalists in England made observations and collected striking phenomena even though they had few books and only simple instruments. These naturalists were Gilbert White, Thomas Forster and Luke Howard, and Forster and Howard especially devoted themselves to phenomena in the sky.

Luke Howard later was called ‘the father of meteorology’ because of his comprehensive recordings of weather in the London area from 1801 to 1841, which he collected for example into a three-volume book called *The Climate of London* (1818-1820; 1833). In addition he wrote an *Essay on the Modification of Clouds* (1803). There he identified the four principal categories of clouds, cumulus, stratus, cirrus, nimbus, as well as a series of intermediate and compound modifications, such as cirrostratus and stratocumulus, in order to accommodate the transitions occurring between the forms. The earth’s atmosphere was eventually considered a vast chemical laboratory, well suited to the growth of laboratory sciences in the first half of the nineteenth century. Howard’s pursuit of classification reminds of the Linnaean method of systematic inquiry into natural objects.

In the 1950s the German art historian Kurt Badt linked Constable’s interest in sky or ‘skying’ to the contemporary fashion for meteorology and argued based on careful study of Constable diaries that Constable was acquainted with meteorological experiments and with Luke Howard’s cloud classification. Later, it was disputed in art historical writings whether Constable knew the work of these scientists; some have argued against that kind of topological and historical explanation, while others have argued for it. Debate has characterised research on Constable and has divided opinions between meteorological and modernistic poles.6

However, I think it is indisputable that Constable’s artistic practice was in dialogue with the scientific atmosphere of his age. The topic has reawakened interest in recent years. For instance, two large exhibitions in the last decade were devoted to the Hampstead skycapes and a monograph *John Constable’s Skies* (1999) was made by a meteorologist John Thornes. It was based on Thornes’ earlier study7 where he compared the accurate dating of Constable’s cloud paintings with the historical weather records. So the topic seems to be relevant and the discussion far from over.

6 See for example Bonacina, 1937; Badt 1950; Reynolds 1965.
7 Thornes 1978.
To place these cloud studies in the context of today’s artistic research, I want to point out two aspects: First Constable’s studies were not considered complete or finished paintings, but studies for improving artist’s rendering of the skies in the final, large (six-foot) canvases. Second, there are approximately fifty cloud studies in all, each are oil painted in about an hour’s time. This means that they are made very quickly out of doors.

**Artistic research**

Is artistic research something new or is it only an institutional disguise to get more attention and economic support for art academies? The answer is probably both. The CARPA colloquium asks the further question of how artistic research changes us. As an art historian, I would have to answer that I have no idea because I am not creating art and the artists can only make artistic research.

There are various definitions for artistic research. Here I will not review them systematically. However, it seems relevant to argue that the different definitions can loosely be put into two categories: one inherited from the methods of natural sciences and a second stemming from philosophy. This is also the basic division made by Tuomas Nevanlinna in his essay ‘Is “Artistic Research” a Meaningful Concept?’ in the book *Artistic Research* (2002).

Nevanlinna divides the different fields of research into two axes; the first one discusses how truth happens and the second one whether the research is experimental or non-experimental. The first axis he subdivides into two modes of truth or two ways in which ‘truth happens’. He calls the two modes indivisible truth and divisible truth.\(^8\)

Whereas indivisible truth is mathematical and unchanging in nature, divisible truth is associated with the emergence of things that might be called works. Works exist only when divided into multiple voices at the moment of reception. Division and partitioning are the necessary conditions for this type of truth.\(^9\) Truth is thus partial and dialogical and is never entirely right, because divisible truth resists every attempt to reduce truth to a single interpretation.

The other example Nevanlinna uses is whether the research is experimental or non-experimental. And he proposes that artistic research is experimental research in which truth happens ‘singularly’.

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\(^8\) Nevanlinna 2002, 64-67.

\(^9\) Nevanlinna 2002, 64.
In artistic research, the work assumes the position of an experiment. The work is the way in which the artist seeks an answer to a question and at ultimately presents conclusions.

As Nevanlinna puts it: ‘Experimental research always starts from a question. The question is then examined using experimentation. Finally, experiences about the dialogue between the question and the work are explicated. The question might be, for example, “how does space affect a theatrical performance?”’ Or the work itself can be the source of the question, which might also be the case in the natural sciences. At its best, Nevanlinna argues, research carried out in this way will give researched information on the subject, information that is experimental, but not mathematical. To conclude, one can argue that artistic research could be understood as experimental research in which truth nevertheless ‘happens’ in the divisible mode.11

Constable’s creative process seems to fit this model suggested by Nevanlinna, especially the cloud studies, but also the bigger paintings, the so-called six-footers. According to Nevanlinna’s model, we can argue, for example, that Constable’s larger paintings such as The Hay-Wain12 tried to answer the question of how the formations of clouds affect the scene and the landscape. Here, however I want to focus especially on the cloud studies and set the scenery as such aside. I examine Constable’s small cloud studies more closely to determine the meaning and intention of these small sketches and their function when considered as artistic research.

Constable described the technical aspects of his painting process in his writings. In 1821 he wrote: ‘The clouds accumulate, smaller clouds pass in front of them appearing as dark patches on them: even darker areas of cloud are formed by lower clouds passing beneath shadowed parts of larger, higher clouds, resulting in a “grey, pale, or lurid hue”.’13 A technical problem emerged when he tried to incorporate these three-dimensional clouds into his larger landscapes. The sky became too obtrusive, and the two systems of powerful chiaroscuro in the same painting came into conflict.

But what kind of information or knowledge do Constable’s a cloud studies give us? Constable’s interest in representing different states of weather and the various effects of light began with the

10 Nevanlinna 2002, 68.
cloud studies carried out in Hampstead in the summer of 1819 when he rented a house in the Hampstead area. The best-known example of his works from that period, however, is not a picture of the sky alone, but a pictorial landscape, the so-called Hay-Wain, whose original name was Landscape: Noon from 1821. His interest in weather and clouds is obvious in this painting and continued to mark his work until the end of his life. Constable returned to Hampstead year after year until 1827, when he settled there permanently. However, in 1821 he began to make studies of clouds in an attempt to capture their transient energy.

In the 1980s the art historian Ann Bermingham wrote that during this period in Constable’s life, the ‘change of weather and effect’ became as important to Constable’s work as its subject; storms, clouds, rainbows, and other transitory aerial effects came to carry as much meaning as the familiar sites over which they played. This focus on aerial elements transformed Constable’s sun-filled naturalism into meteorological expressionism.  

Right at the beginning of her seminal book Science and the Perception of Nature published in 1996, the art historian Charlotte Klonk points out the notion of science as something special at the turn of the eighteenth into the nineteenth century. She argues that Constable’s art provided a short period of synthesis between the scientific observation of nature and the personal response of the perceiver. Klonk uses the notion of phenomenalism instead of empiricism or naturalism, because it expresses better the pursuit of faithfully capturing reality, not as it is in itself or in its underlying essence (if it has one), but as it appears.

As mentioned earlier, Constable also made notes on the reverse of his cloud sketches, which underline his analytical observation of the weather conditions. Close attention to the content of these annotations shows them to be more than simple descriptions. For instance, the annotation ‘Hampstead July 14, 1821 6 to 7 pm N.W. breeze strong’ records the place, the date, the year, the exact time of day, the direction of the wind, and finally, its strength. He recorded these data more in the manner of a scientist than an artist.

By nature of their subject, the annotations cannot help but lead directly to consideration of the passage of time. Rather than disassociate this more abstract element from the studies, it should be

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15 Klonk, 1996, 150.
embraced as an important aspect of the artist’s purpose in making them. It is perhaps not too much
to argue that, in his cloud studies Constable was making experiment in how weather has an effect
on the landscape, an opinion reinforced by art historical studies.

Many scholars, including Michael Rosenthal, Ann Bermingham and Edward Casey, have
emphasised that Constable’s paintings were organised by the contrast between the principle of
repetition and the principle of difference, between the sameness of the subjects and the infinite
diversity of the conditions under which the subjects are seen, i.e., ever-changing weather. \(^\text{17}\)

While Ann Bermingham, for example, sees that with repetition Constable was trying to assimilate
change and control and triumph over it, culminating in his ‘metaphysical surrealism’; \(^\text{18}\) I would like
to suggest another interpretation. For this, I must draw on Kurt Badt as well as more recent studies
of Constable’s clouds.

First, however, it is important to note that Luke Howard had argued that nature could be understood
historically, as developing in time. Howard expressed a desire to found ‘a history of climate’. This
same endeavour is also found in Constable’s cloud studies.

In 1950 Kurt Badt insisted that Constable did not want to depict a single moment in time, ‘not a
present tense removed from the passage of time; it was precisely the passage of time itself that he
wanted to show and that could be indicated by various signs in a pictured landscape’. \(^\text{19}\) This
purpose also explains Constable’s idea of understanding the earth from the sky, which is in fact the
phenomenon that revels most clearly the changing face of nature in time.

Badt takes up Constable’s own description of one of his pictures of Hampstead Heath as a ‘serene
afternoon’ with sunshine after rain and heavy clouds passing by. The artist added remarks about the
wind and temperature to his cloud studies, because previous changes in wind and temperature
explained the different forms of the clouds. What is important here is that by accurately
representing clouds, Constable also made it possible for an expert to judge the previous state of the
weather. \(^\text{20}\)

\(^{17}\) Bermingham 1986, 147-150; Casey 2002, 76-77.
\(^{18}\) Bermingham 1986, 150.
\(^{19}\) Badt 1950, 64.
\(^{20}\) Badt 1950, 63-65.
In addition Badt pointed out that Howard’s classification gave Constable an understanding of the specific structures of temporal phenomena and of processes that told the ‘story’. The story Constable wanted to tell was about moisture and heat, clouds and winds in the sky, not a story about the life of country people. Nor did he want to place historical events in the landscape, which previous landscape artists had favoured. Constable regarded nature as an “ever-changing history of the weather”. 21

Not only were the three elements of time, movement and clouds uppermost in his mind when approaching these sketches, his use of the participle “verging” stresses an understanding of the image as representing a transition, a duration rather than an instant, whether present or past. This indicates that he saw landscape as a narrative, developing in time.

Constable’s sketching now possesses a specific content that resembles snapshots of climate history more than representations of historical process. In Constable’s words, the sketches represent ‘the natural history… of the skies’. 22 Clouds interested Constable, not because they tested his powers of description or classification, but because they could help evoke the unity of history and landscape.

The compositional organisation of The Hay-Wain lead the viewer to think of georgic landscape, its permanence and stability, but the cloud studies do something different. Their subject is change itself or weather as a figure for change. 23 The emphasis is not on a dramatic meteorological event, but on the mundane unfolding of weather itself. Constable’s skies are not spiritualized, as, for example, those by his contemporary Joseph Mallord William Turner; Constable’s are purified of sentiment. His cloud studies represent ‘reality as historical process’; they are studies of process itself.

From our meteorological moment in the twenty-first century, the process of weather represents a specific moment in climate history. It is worth remembering that the early decades of the nineteenth century was a time of early industrialisation, of modern, man-made climate change. Some climatologists predict that over the course of the present century if coal emissions remain at their current levels, there will be a small increase in annual rainfall in Britain, but 30 percent less rain in the summer in southern England, the area where Constable was sketching. 24

21 Badt 1950, 64.
Rain is the future of Constable’s paintings, but also the past; he never painted his clouds studies in the rain. Constable preferred to paint his landscapes after a night of rain, which brought out what he called freshness. As he put it: ‘in the mornings of July and August… it is still more delightful if vegetation has been refreshed with a shower during the night.’

Constable preferred to paint on days when a westerly wind brought his favorite rain-bearing cumulus clouds. But the clouds that so often promise rain in Constable’s landscapes are fewer in number and precipitate less today. Constable’s country and the climate that produced it is vanishing, an artefact of climate history. That fact makes the half-century long debate between the meteorological and modernist art historical readings of Constable’s cloud studies redundant.

Gillen D’Arcy Wood, a scholar of American literature argues that Constable’s cloud study painted in September 11, 1821, has crosses from the literal to the figurative, from the meteorological to the apocalyptic. The climate recorded in Constable’s paintings has vanished. From our historical moment, they represent the irrecoverable September-mood of 1821 in southern England. Constable’s September is not ours. We can say today that Constable’s cloud studies represent a climate memory.

Nevertheless, the relationship between art and science in the early nineteenth century was exceptional. Phenomenalism, in its concentration on the observable, produced a convergence between the object of scientific knowledge and the subject-matter of artistic depiction. And isn’t this just what Nevanlinna suggests and what Constable has done with his cloud studies?

But in Constable’s case the right time for artistic research he was realizing is only just beginning, which at least reveals one important fact that can be emphasised by the notion of ‘second empiricism’ in the sense of how we assemble things. Constable saw the clouds in the sky as agents of an historical story, the history of the climate. His naturalistic attitude as well as the right intellectual atmosphere of the early meteorological moment made possible his recorded and systematic paintings, consisting of experiments, descriptions and a truth that is not mathematical, but divisible; we can share the results Constable made, but the divisibility makes that truth is

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27 Wood 2007, 25-34.
impermanent and always graspable, as happens when we integrate truth into our own historical moment.

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Sources:


Literature:


Eeva Anttila: Art, aesthetic qualities, and understanding the human condition

Introduction

I started to think about the question posed for this colloquium from a researcher’s point of view and thus, asked myself: How does artistic research change us as researchers? My professional background is in arts education, especially dance education, and I have been trained as an educational researcher. From early on, I have been critical about traditional research methods that claim to generate objective and stable knowledge about human beings and social reality. My embodied experience in dance and especially as a dance teacher have lead to me explore areas of knowing that are fuzzy, unpredictable and difficult to put in words – let alone numbers. I rejected quantitative research methodology already as a graduate student in education in the 1980’s, when very few people were serious about qualitative research methodology in Finland. This kind of methodology started to develop at that time as a counteraction to the ever growing fuss and hype around calculations that became easier to use with the development of information technology. Human science was becoming a science interested in numbers and figures and I really think that even today, some human and social scientists are blinded about the beauty of graphs and neat tables that rarely have anything relevant to say about human condition and cannot depict anything of the complexity of social reality. The complexity is the beauty that intrigues me, and reducing it into flat, two-dimensional formats does no justice to it, nor takes us any closer to understanding the human condition. So, when I think about artistic research, I think about another step towards depicting the nature of human life with a bit more truthfulness and accuracy than qualitative research, the kind of research that I consider as predecessor for artistic research. Qualitative research and artistic research are much closer to each other than qualitative research and quantitative research. Both have rejected the possibility and desire for finding universal truths and have no interest in grand narratives. Both are interested in local and particular knowledge, tacit and embodied knowing and respect intuition and imagination in the research process. The epistemological and ontological premises of qualitative and artistic research are manifold, but the departure from positivist paradigm is clear and cut. Thus, both qualitative and artistic research methodologies are based on postpositivist paradigm. I like to define postpositivist as anything and everything that comes after believing in certainty and the possibility of universal truth. As postpositivist researchers, we accept that there is nothing certain in this world, and that is the beauty and excitement of it.
My starting point for building my presentation revolved around the question how of artistic research may change the way we approach other human beings as researchers, and also, how we interpret social life. It is not uncommon in professional and private life to experience insensitivity and rigidity in human interaction, and I keep asking myself how could we change these patterns of interaction and become responsive to subtle qualities and changes in dynamics that characterize and can be detected in human and social processes. I consider these dynamic changes as aesthetic qualities, very much akin to dynamic changes in dance or in any art form that speak to our senses and deep, non-verbal levels of awareness.

As a researcher interested in social change I really think that the first thing that we need to change is the researcher and the process of research. I suggest that paying attention to aesthetic qualities inherent in human interaction may be the path towards sensitivity and flexibility in responding to and interpreting social life and may give us qualitatively different information and understanding about the complexities of social life than traditional approaches.

Art as an everyday phenomenon: Some viewpoints from selected writers

Another starting point for developing my arguments here is my longtime interest in art as an everyday, "everyman" phenomenon. I have an aversion towards categorizing, and I guess, I can be defined as a "boundary worker" (citing Henk Borgdoff). I think that art can be anywhere and everywhere. Paradoxically, it can also be nowhere even in an art contexts. It is thus, no surprise that viewpoints like Ellen Dissanayake’s (1997) ethological approach to art appeals to me. She writes that the arts are biologically evolved and that aesthetic aspects are inherent in human thought and cultural behaviour. Based on her observational research she claims that precursors of the "arts of time" (dance, music, dramatic performance) appear spontaneously in the earliest interactive relationship between infants and their caretakers and that infants possess a capacity to respond to "rhythms and modes". Rhythmic-modal sensitivities become the means for co-creating emotional relationship, reciprocity and mutuality. According to Dissanayake "rhythms and modes create and sustain love” (1997, 1). They coordinate and unify members of a group, generate feelings of belonging, meaning and competence. They also give rise to the arts.

Another writer that I find appealing is Paul Crowther (1993) who has formulated an ecological theory of art. According to him, there is an existential primacy of mental image versus thought and
language. Aesthetic experiences play an important role in harmonizing the “basic ontological reciprocity” between human beings and the world. The aesthetic domain answers the needs of self-consciousness. Crowther writes that, “our inherence in the aesthetic domain is part of our full definition as human beings” (1993, 206). Imaging allows for creative interpretation of reality and this is the basis of personal identity and artistic making, and that,

By so doing it enables the embodied subject to engage with his or her essence at the level of perception. In this way self-consciousness intersects with itself in the fullest sense. Its ontological reciprocity with the world is complete but not rigid. It is a free-belonging. (Crowther 1993, 205)

I have become familiar with Dissanayeke’s and Crowther’s writings quite long ago. Quite recently I encountered another interesting viewpoint that supports these claims on the aesthetic nature of human interaction. This viewpoint comes from sociologist George Simmel (1950/1964). He claims that human beings possess an impulse to sociability, and that this impulse has an aesthetic “charm” to it:

The vitality of real individuals, in their sensitivities and attractions, in the fullness of their impulses and convictions . . . Is but a symbol of life, as it shows itself in the flow of a lightly amusing play . . . A symbolic play, in whose aesthetic charm all the finest and most highly sublimated dynamics of social existence and its riches are gathered. (Simmel 1950/1964, 162-163)

He writes about associations between human beings through which the solitariness of individuals is resolved into togetherness. These associations are characterized by free-playing, interacting interdependence of individuals. In these playful associations individuals must not emphasize themselves too individually, with too much abandon and aggressiveness but in a spirit of fun and affection. This kind of interaction should also be free of any disturbing material accent, by which Simmel refers to monetary profit. He speaks for democratic, constructive, stylized, cultural forms of interaction. Riikka Haapalainen (2009), who has studied Simmel’s thinking in connection to participatory approaches to art, writes that this kind of rationale can be found in participatory approaches to art. These approaches are gaining more and more space even in the professional art world. Haapalainen claims that participatory approaches to art are an attempt to balance the experiences of alienation and indifference brought about by modernization. The impact of art is not solely based on its observable aesthetic qualities, but on how it impacts everyday lives and how it connects human beings, and how they bring people together. The participatory “movement”, if we can already recognize this as such, may bring about a change towards a more communal, inclusive and ethically sensitive artistic practices. They can also have an impact on research methodologies.
To me, an intriguing question is, how participating in artistic research might bring about learning and change within communities.

The role of the senses and the body in research

Qualitative researchers following the heritage of the American philosopher John Dewey (see, for example, Dewey 1934) base their view on research on his notion of art and aesthetics as intensified experiences. According to this approach the process of research involves heightened curiosity and perception, deepened meaning making, quest for empathy, and improvisatory style of research in response to the unexpectedness of real life (Bresler 2005). Elliot Eisner (1991) emphasizes the role of the senses. For him, expanding the modes of inquiry from the verbal and numerical to the senses is crucial for qualitative researchers. In this sense, qualitative research itself has made a move towards artistic (or arts-based) research, in looking for data in other forms than words (please see Appendix 1, Patricia Leavy’s recent depiction on differences between quantitative, qualitative and arts-based research). Eisner introduced the notion of research as connoisseurship and spoke of the need for an ‘enlightened eye’. Eisner’s background is in visual arts, and Liora Bresler, a musician who studied and has worked with Eisner for many years, explored the possibilities and implications of an enlightened ear in perceiving the world. According to her the ear is deeply connected to a larger set of musical sensitivities, and kinaesthetic, cognitive processes. The processes involved in making, listening to and creating music can teach us about the processes of research. These processes include form, rhythm, harmony, timbre, melody and polyphony. Also, ways of doing/becoming related to musical processes, like improvisation, embodiment, communication and collaboration can teach us about ways of doing research. She writes that,

Our engagement as musicians with the fluidity of sound and music, I argue, can sensitize us to the fluidity of personal and cultural experience, the heart of qualitative research. (Bresler 2005, 170)

As a “dance person” I would like to continue developing this idea further, and speak for the need of an enlightened body in human research and in artistic research. I have developed ways to involve movement and embodied knowledge in research, for example by developing a method based on embodied memories and on introspection while engaging in physical activity (please see Anttila 2004 and 2007). Previously, I have been engaged in movement analysis and found it very helpful in understanding for example, my dance students’ experiences (Anttila 1996 and 2003).
Understanding movement is, for me, the key in understanding human life and social reality. The following list encapsulates some insights on the significance of understanding movement:

- Movement is patterned
- Movement is dynamic
- Movement creates space
- Movement creates relationships
- Movement is functional
- Movement is expressive
- Movement contains cultural meanings

These claims are by no means my inventions. My longtime engagement with Rudolf Laban’s writings and methods, as well as Irmgard Bartenieff’s (1980) and Peggy Hackney’s (2000) work is the origin behind these claims. With the support of great movement analysts, somatic educators and dance scholars it is possible to discern many tools for understanding human movement. These tools include:

- Bodily consciousness, bodily awareness
- Kinesthetic empathy
- Mirroring – embodied social cognition
- Embodied dialogue
- Heightened perception, sensitivity and curiosity about shapes, qualities, and patterns of movement
- Interpretation of meanings
- The notion of social choreography
- Communities as moving ecologies/systems

**Conclusion**

Further questions that intrigue me in the process of developing aesthetically and ethically sensitive research methodologies are, for example:
- How to conceive of violent impulses in art and in human life?
- How to overcome naive or idealistic suppositions about a "good" and "ethical" life?
- How to make space for the grotesque, the ugly and the undesired in life and in art?
- How to deal with indifference and desensitization towards sensory/aesthetic experiences and towards others and the world?

The last question has been addressed by critical theorists and pedagogues, like Theodore W. Adorno (1966/1991) already after the world wars. Violence and indifference are deeply rooted in human communities and even in most civilized societies. My “pathology of hope” (quoting Baz Kershaw, 2009), includes a desire to make a difference as a researcher (qualitative, artistic or any kind... does it really matter what we call ourselves?) and scholar and bear at least a slight amount of responsibility as a human being and at least, every now and then, remind myself about the larger picture of the society and the world.

To close, I think that it is possible to draw analogies between artistic processes or qualities and human, social processes. These analogies could take part in generating a new paradigm for understanding the deep complexities of human and social life: patterns of interaction, group dynamics, learning, and creativity, to name a few. This complex, non-linear and systemic way of depicting various human processes could replace mechanistic, causal and linear ways of studying and explaining these phenomena. Artists-as-researchers, or researchers who are deeply touched, moved and transformed through artistic experiences could generate new understanding of the human condition through rigorous artistic research. My proposal is that this kind of understanding is much needed in creating non-violent and just social systems and societies. It will, most likely enhance or lead to a paradigm change, a change towards embodied, collaborative knowing and a change that is already in full swing.

References:


Appendix 1.

Main tenets of different approaches to research (Leavy 2009, 259)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Traditional qualitative</th>
<th>Arts-based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Stories, images, sounds, scenes, sensory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td>Evocation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tabulating</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Re(presenting)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value-neutral</td>
<td>Value-laden</td>
<td>Political, consciousness-raising, emancipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>Truthfulness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prove/convince</td>
<td>Persuade</td>
<td>Compel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disciplinary</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Transdisciplinary</td>
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Commentary on Leavy’s chart: It could be added that quantitative research most often is based on positivist paradigm, whereas both traditional qualitative and arts-based research are postpositivist.
Susanne Ravn & Leena Rouhiainen: Approaching Artistic Research in Dance; The challenge of 1st person methodologies

Introduction

This presentation brings together our experiences, observations and reflections on research in dance, as well as our previous scholarly work with an emphasis on exploring the experience dance artists have of their professional practice. Leena’s contribution in this area has been in utilizing Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology as a method and framework for analyzing interview material. In so doing she has moved from second-person access to experience retrieved and constructed through face-to-face interviews with dance artists to a third-person interpretation of the interview material. In addition to her continued phenomenological research in dance, she has likewise contemplated issues related to a collaborative approach to artistic research in the field of the performing arts. (e.g. Rouhiainen 2009; 2008a; 2008b; 2007a; 2007b; 2003.) Susanne in turn has scrutinized phenomenology and ethnographical methods. She has contributed to a methodological investigation on how the researcher’s conscious travel between ‘nearness in’ and ‘distance to’ ethnographical fieldwork offers constructive ways of straddling over first- and second-person perspectives in the generation of ethnographical data. She has also addressed how such data can be utilized in the phenomenological explorations of a multiplicity of experiences of movement experts – such as dancers (Ravn 2009a; 2009b; 2007; Legrand & Ravn 2009).

These backgrounds inform the manner in which we, for the first time together, examine the centrality and nature of subjective approaches to researching dance, paying special attention to first-person access to dancing and performing. In this presentation we want to emphasize the importance of the first-person approach to investigating dance by dance artists themselves through first theorizing on its integrality to current contemporary dance practice and by some ontological argumentation. We will also make suggestions on how first-person access to experience relates to the second- and third-person perspectives. We believe that, even if the subjective knowledge dance artists have of their practice is individual, it has a strong social and contextual frame. Exploring the practical and bodily knowledge dance artists deal with can both elucidate and reinvent this frame. What we are aiming at is through phenomenological and ethnographic argumentation to substantiate subjective but socio-culturally informative research practices. However, ours is still a work-in-
progress and in this sense we, for the time being, are proposing only some tentative conclusions and will continue scrutinizing pertinent themes in future research.

**On Artistic Research and Contemporary Dance**

Following art theorist Henk Borgdorff’s line of thinking artistic research is a form of practice-based, processual and performative research. It has a contextualizing point of view and is conducted by artists themselves. Artistic research allows experimentation in practice and interpretation of this practice to be its component parts and attempts to reveal and articulate tacit knowledge involved in artistic undertakings. Artistic outcomes are an indispensable part of this kind of research. (Borgdorff 2006.) In it the practice of art challenges existing theories and generates new ones. Artistic research deals with knowledge from an artist’s point of view that is retrieved through practice and reflection and is articulated artistically and verbally. (Kirkkopelto 2008; Barrett 2007.) According to Borgdorff (2006, 19), what artistic research aims at is that the tacit and implicit “knowing how” is placed on an epistemologically equal footing with “knowing that” a more propositional form of knowledge (see also Rouhiainen 2008b).

Exploring first-person methodologies in dance research is not only necessary owing to the nature of artistic research and its interest in what artists know. It likewise has to do with the current trends in especially European contemporary dance. There is progressive interest in exploring first-person comprehension of bodily processes and the world while creating second- and third-person manifestation in dance-making. The meaning that such subjectively accessed experiences as sensation, perception and kinesthesia have for bodily skill and knowledge are likewise increasingly contemplated and theorized within dance studies. A preoccupation with the sense and perceptual experience of the motional body has led to new strategies for choreography and ways of seeing dance. All the more emphasis is placed on allowing the spectator to see how dancers think, make decisions and act on the spur of the moment. With this focus the dancer’s task has been depicted to consist of a necessity to probe between a first-person perspective on movement experience and a third-person perspective on the visibility of movement. The dancer explores the inter-relationship of the invisibly experienced and visibly seen motional body as well as the embodied and mobile significance of the subjective and intersubjective realms. She often does so in the immediacy of the moment and in intimate inter-action with other dancers and the audience, which likewise underline the importance of dealing with second-person access to experience and otherness. (e.g. Fabius 2009; Pakes 2009: 2003; Rubidge 2009; Ravn 2009a; Rouhiainen 2009: 2008b: 2003; Kozel 2007; 1994;
A Phenomenological Perspective on First-Person Access to Experience

In order to continue our discussion we will shortly clarify what we mean by the first-, second- and third-person perspectives. Drawing on the phenomenology of Dan Zahavi, first-person modality can be described as the first-personal givenness of or accessibility to experiential phenomena. All experiences come with a quality of mineness and a sense of self-awareness. The self-consciousness that is present the moment I consciously experience something does not necessarily entail some kind of reflection, introspection or higher-order monitoring. As Merleau-Ponty has argued, it is an intrinsic feature of experience already on a pre-reflective level, as an immediate and non-cognitive reflexivity. (Zahavi 2005, 12, 16, 21; Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 100.) The first-person perspective can be considered to include a weak and strong attribute. The strong attribute of first-person perspective denotes the reflective and more focal grasp we can have on our self-experiences. The weak attribute relates to the immediate and non-objectifying sense of self involved in conscious experience. This experience belongs to what in phenomenology is most often referred to as the pre-reflective dimension of consciousness. Generally speaking, first-person givenness makes experiences subjective and entails a built-in self-reference. (Zahavi 2005, 12, 16; Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 100, 371–372.) In this presentation we are mainly addressing this aspect of self-awareness.

In turn, the second-person perspective is concerned with sharing experiences of other persons through an inaccessible gap. We can experience, for example, the anger of another through her or his verbal and physical expression. This experience usually comes as an immediate recognition that our being is witnessing the anger of another person. This means that self-awareness is not solipsistic. Integral to it is experiential interaction with the world. Self-awareness is always the self-awareness of a world-immersed self. Finally, the third-person viewpoint is concerned with a we-perspective that considers a common, intersubjectively shared world. However, this social dimension is accessible only through the first-person perspective, which is mediated by the second-person perspective. (Zahavi 2005, 123, 151, 154, 155.) As Zahavi (2005, 123) states, in this sense “there is no pure third-person perspective, just as there is no view from nowhere”. It is a view that we adopt arising out of at least two first-person perspectives; that is, it involves intersubjectivity.
The sense of mineness involved in our experiences has a bodily basis. Through the self-reflexivity of the body, having a sensation of one’s own body actually involves a sense of ownership, of the individual sensing a lived experience of her or his own being (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 93, 100, 371–372, 404). In this sense, bodily awareness and self-awareness coincide. What is more is that for its development and sustenance, this sense of self requires and is movement. The felt-sense of the body is heightened through movement. Merleau-Ponty puts it like this: “It is true that even in the normal person the perception of the body and of objects in contact with the body is vague when there is no movement” (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 108). However, when we move our bodies in dance or according to other bodily disciplines, it always is a phenomenal body that moves. We do not use our personal or reflective faculties to command each body part separately. It is the body itself that accomplishes movement according to its disposition and our more general intentions. (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 106, 150.) The phenomenal sense we have of our own mobile body relies on non-observational proprioception or kineasthetic awareness. Here proprioception denotes an intrinsic sense of the whereabouts of our body parts and overall posture. It is not an attentively mediated perception of the body, but rather a non-perspectival awareness with an implicit spatial frame of reference. (Gallagher & Zahavi 2008, 143, 144.) Therefore, it is through the motility of the body and the consequently registered sensations that a pre-reflective sense of a unified body and self is augmented.

In sum, the requirements of having a sense of self involve a rudimentary sense of mineness, a sense of agency, and a capacity to distinguish self from non-self (Zahavi 2005; Gallagher 2003). In line with the phenomenological arguments of Maurice Merleau-Ponty cognitive scientist Marcel Kinsbourne states that “the familiar feeling that one’s body exists as a backdrop to whatever one is thinking, experiencing, or doing through its various parts” forms an “ever present background” that may “be the basis for constructing continuity of the experiencing self” (Kinsbourne 1998, 217; Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 406, 407; see also Rouhiainen 2008b.)

As an extension to the previous notions, phenomenologist Jaana Parviainen terms the sensuous experiences the body renders through its actions in a first-person modality kineasthetic knowledge. She underlines the fact that this kind of knowledge concerns not only one’s own bodily experiences but allows for the epistemic access that individuals have to the world more generally. (Parviainen 2006, 74, 76.) The body is directed towards the world through a sort of an “I can” attitude, according to which practical and motor functions intertwine with the world in an immediate manner (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 137). Therefore kinesthetic knowledge at least indirectly involves
interaction with the world. This is so since the experience of movement reveals the world as an if-then-structure. Our surroundings are part of our self-regulatory system. While being functionally related to the world and adapting to it we gain experiential knowledge about the tactile-kinetic nature of the things and the environments we are in. We simultaneously sense the body and tacitly comprehend its possibilities for movement. (Parviainen 2006, 27, 74, 75; Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 106.)

Interaction with the world requires perception. It is based on the above-described scarcely detailed pre-reflective awareness we have of our embodied selves. In a phenomenological point of view, perception basically is intermodal and generated from the subject’s interaction with the world. However, through adaptation the initial contingence of perception is refined throughout life. Perception becomes a culturally ingrained interpretation of being. It is to be compared to an act of communication in which the thing perceived is inseparable, from the person perceiving it. (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 430.) Perception is a “background from which all acts stand out” and contributes to how any interaction is shaped, becomes conscious and meaningful (ibid, x-xi). With its functions the body predisposes our perceptions but never predetermines them (Crossley 1996).

Throughout ‘Phenomenology of Perception’ Merleau-Ponty emphasizes that movement and perception form a system. Perception is formed through and integral to our bodily abilities and skills. Philosopher Alva Noë describes this state of affairs by writing: “The world makes itself available to the perceiver through physical movement and interaction. . . What we perceive is determined by what we do (or what we know how to do)” (2004a, 1). He argues that perceptual experience is a temporally extended activity of skillful probing and thinks that perceptual consciousness is, in fact, a type of thoughtful or knowledgeable activity (Noë 2004a, 3; 2004b, 426). We need to move, act and focus our attention in order to allow the perceptual information of the things we want to perceive to fill us (e.g. Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 55, 209–210). Therefore, to perceive is to implicitly understand the effects of movement on sensory stimulation (Noë 2004a, 1). It is in this sense that kinesthetic or bodily knowledge requires functional interaction with the world (Parviainen 2006, 76). It involves both a non-observational and non-perspectival awareness of the body as an implicit frame of references, as well as the knowledgeable bodily activity through which it makes itself and the world known in more focal acts of perception.

Methodological Implications and Suggestions
The previous sections offer ontological and epistemological grounds for substantiating methodologies that appreciate the weak and pre-reflective sense of the first-person perspective in artistic research in dance. In the following we will address related methodological issues more closely. Will we do this by focusing on how the practice of the (dancing) dancer can be understood to involve pre-reflective first-person accessibility to experience. In so doing we also address the tacit dimension of artistic research.

In line with phenomenologist Dorothée Legrand’s work we believe that the physicality of the body might be present to consciousness without taking the body as a object (Legrand 2008: 2007a; Legrand & Ravn 2009). She argues for a third dimension in body consciousness that functions between the subject and object related dimensions of consciousness. The first corresponds to the weak sense of first-person perspective and the latter to the strong, reflective sense. In general terms, this third dimension of body awareness relates to an overall sense of how it feels like to undergo a movement experience. (Legrand 2007b, 584.) Legrand (2007a, 512) points out that the subjective character of experiencing one’s body, for example while dancing, can overcome the “forgetfulness” that generally characterizes the pre-reflective dimensions of consciousness. Dancing can ”put this subjective character of experience at the “front” of one’s experience without turning it into a mere intentional object” (Legrand, 2007a, 512). It is important to emphasize that Legrand is not arguing for the pre-reflective level becoming reflective in and through movement. After all, one can be reflexive but never reflective of the pre-reflective realm. She brings attention to how the pre-reflective might be experienced through a sensitization that has been accomplished by practicing different bodily techniques. In moving and experiencing this movement the prereflective can form an active part of the dancer’s awareness, while she simultaneously can be concerned with focal perceptions that are used actively in and for the dancing.

This relates to the fact that dancers’ mobile engagement with dancing is to an extent determined by the intentional attitude involved in their action. Generally the intentional attitude of a person consists of their purposive intentions, which are functions of their attentional focus. Such intention can be inferred from the performance of perceptual, motor and linguistic activities and also from the task demands and external situation. The total context of an action is made up of the intentional attitude and the related external circumstances. These are largely but not totally interdependent. The intentional attitude is also characterized by the mode of attention. In an observational mode one is detached from that which is the focus of attention; in a nonobservational mode one is immersed in it. (Gallagher & Marcel 1999.)
While immersed in her dancing, the dancer “thinks-in-action” (e.g. Sheets-Johnstone 1981). She engages in an interactive embodied reflection that feels neither purely mental nor purely physical but rather is an environment enacting mind-body unity (Rosch, Thompson & Varela 1993, 27, 29; Parviainen 1998, 22; 137; Rouhiainen 2003, 302-310, 357). She is in a state of ecological self-awareness and attends to her proprioceptive and kinesthetic sense of movement. But she likewise rehearses embedded reflection in which the situation and possible actions are measured in pragmatic terms. In the act and process of dancing these modes of awareness intertwine in a contextual flow. (Gallagher 2005, 84, 213.) This means that the dancer is immersed in non-observational access to experience about her environment that simultaneously is informative of her self and embodied position in it and vice versa (Gallagher & Marcel 1999, p 20-21). This entails that a certain closeness between mind, body and the world forms part of dancers’ expertise (Rouhiainen 2003, 302-310; 357). This closeness can be described as a sustained motional state of awareness (ibid. 328). In such states, behavior tends to be more integrated, presumably because the agent’s intentions encompass more than the immediate action itself. Their attentional focus goes beyond it, and its significance is part of the larger projects and concerns of the person. (Gallagher & Marcel 1999, 10.)

When brought together Legrand’s notion of a non-objective awareness of the physicality of the body, ecological self-awareness and embedded reflection emphasize how dancing involves different levels of pre-reflective consciousness. In explaining the sense of pre-reflective experiences, phenomenologist Sara Heinämaa points out that their essential features are not stable structures. Instead, they are something she refers to as, while using Merleau-Ponty’s terminology, manners of being or original styles of becoming. (Heinämaa 1996, 67; Merleau-Ponty 1987/1968, 109.) In addition, several ethnographical and anthropological works illuminate how perception takes form in a social and as a socializing process (Howes 2005; Potter 2008; Grau 2007: 2005; Csordas 1993: 1990; Seremetakis 1994). Any experience and any communication about first-person experience comes about in and through interaction with other subjects – and differs from cultures and subcultures to next.

From a methodological perspective the above points to the importance of an active process of becoming related to the experience of dancing. This suggests an aim to explore processes that brings things, themes and others into being for us – the goal then being a pre-objective analysis of experiences. However, it is important that one acknowledges that any pre-cultural analysis is
impossible. When we say pre-objective we do not mean pre-cultural (Csordas 1990, 10: 1993, 137).

A Move Beyond Introspection as Method

Following phenomenologists Gallagher and Zahavi, we agree that it is a “metaphysical fallacy to locate the phenomenal realm within the mind, and to suggest that the way to access and describe it is by turning the gaze inwards (introspecio)” (2008, 21 authors’ italics). Developing introspective ways of listening to the body when moving can not in itself form a phenomenological method. Nor does the tacit knowledge of the body present an authenticity of experience that gives direct access to describe ontological aspects of the body and consciousness. This is so, since tacit knowledge and sensuous experiences are, like language, communication and actions, and intertwined with a cultural world. (Merleau-Ponty 1995/1962, 215, 221; Noë 2004a: 2004b; Gallagher & Marcel 1999.) In addition, like Gallagher and Marcel (1999, 5) point out “The introspective framework takes consciousness and the self as objects and thereby fails to capture their role in the realm of action, where they are specifically not objects”.

From the perspective of ethnography and anthropology, methodologically this entails that dancers’ descriptions of the kinesthetic sensations of their bodies might appear to them as if they simply derive from an internal process. However, kinaesthetic sensations are, like any other mode of perception and any other sense experience, to be understood as socially made and mediated (Hsu 2008; Chau 2008; Ravn 2009a; 2009b). Sensing is formed by and formative of a shared process (Seremetakis 1994). Thereby it implicitly emphasizes that perception and experience always “involves a reference to the world, taking that term in a very wide sense to include not just the physical environment, but the social and cultural world” (Gallagher & Zahavi 2008, 7). This is so since sensation and perception are strongly influenced by the intention and frame they are retrieved through (Gallagher & Marcel 1999).

Co-relatively phenomenological anthropologist Csordas (1993, 138) argues that “Somatic modes of attention” are “culturally elaborated ways of attending to and with one’s body in surroundings that include the embodied presence of others”. They denote a process through which we attend and come to objectify our bodies in relation to the cultural-world we inhabit and form part of (ibid., 138). They emphasize that culture reside in the process of sensation and perception. Sensing as well as sensuous awareness is an intertwined process of the body-subject and intersubjectivity that is
given life and being through the performed and embodied presence of others (ibid., 137, 146, 150). As Csordas (1999, 155) states “the deployment of senses and sensibility – not only their content, is empathically cultural”.

When we understand pre-reflective subjective experience as involving a non-objectifying sense of the physicality of the body, an ecological perspective and contextually involved embedded reflection, first person methodologies need to be appreciated as actually cutting across what with the points made in the above discussion could be termed the internal and external or subjective and intersubjective.

Further Fields of Exploration

Our presentation thus far has mainly dealt mainly with first-person perspective by addressing its weak sense and not its more reflective articulation. Gallagher and Zahavi (2008, 205) state: “When speaking of first-person perspective, one should consequently distinguish between having such a perspective and being able to articulate it linguistically. Whereas the latter obviously presupposes mastery of the first-person pronoun, the former is simply a question of the first-personal, subjective manifestation of one’s own experiential life”. Articulating the first-person perspective relates to an autobiographical and narrative self, which introduces to selfhood, among others, the problems of the temporal dimension, memory, reflection and linguistic communities. The social constitution of this dimension of self is quite grasppable. Our life-stories evolve in interaction with others. They are interwoven in their stories and embedded in larger historical and communal meaning-giving structures. Our life-stories are then only partially determined by our own choices and decisions. (Gallagher & Zahavi 2008, 201.) This means that the concepts I use to express the salient features of the person I take myself to be are concepts derived from tradition and theory that will vary widely from one historical period to the next and across social class and culture (Zahavi 2005, 108).

However, like Zahavi (2005, 114) maintains: “In order to begin a self-narrative, the narrator must be able to differentiate between self and non-self, must be able to self-attribute actions and experience agency, and must be able to refer to him- or herself by means of the first-person pronoun. All of this presupposes that the narrator is in possession of a first-person perspective”. It is this weak sense of self, which is extended and enhanced in self-narrative. Without the basic sense of differentiation between self and non-self, we would not be able to refer to ourselves with any specification, and self-narrative would have no starting point. In self-narrative, the narrator-narrated
depends on a body that is capable of action, and on embodied action that is socially contextualized. (Gallagher 2003.)

As Conclusive Remarks

While acknowledging the importance of reflective and narrative accounts on first-person experience, with our presentation we are arguing that first-person methodologies occupied with research in the practices of dance should address the pre-objective dimension of the activity of dancing and performing. In so doing, we claim that first-person methodologies should cut across the internal and external. In artistic research, on one level this means that performing itself is both the activity and outcome of investigation. On another level it requires artistic research to illuminate the mode in which experiences are retrieved, their frame, in addition to the contents of the experiences themselves. This it should do both in action and reflection. Yet still on another level it suggests that co-researchers working with dancers should engage in their practice and performance, inter-acting on both a physical and verbal level. It might likewise suggest, that reflection and writing as forms of conscious action might require dialogical and conversational forms respective of immersed action and be themselves considered performances producing effects in their actuality (Bolt 2008; Shotter 1999)

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References:


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Ari Poutiainen: From Innovation to Irrelevance - A Change of Perception to Research Object within a Practice-Based Doctoral Research Project

1. An Unexpected Side Effect

In my doctoral music studies, I conducted a practice-based research project on jazz violin left-hand technique. As a conclusion for these studies, I prepared a dissertation entitled *Stringprovisation: A Fingering Strategy for Jazz Violin Improvisation* (2009). The research reported in this publication drew from my wide experience in and knowledge of jazz violin performance and pedagogy. The study was divided in two parts: Part I, *Setting the Frame*, consists of a comprehensive, more conventional research on certain fingering approaches in relevant pedagogical literature while Part II, *Stringprovisation*, presents an innovative violin fingering strategy and an extensive collection of related musical examples and applications.

During the many-sided research process my perspective to violin composition changed radically. This change was initiated by the challenges I faced in compressing my practice-based research results (i.e., an original fingering strategy) into a formal, academic document. Due to conventional academic research requirements (e.g., discussion of preceding research, establishment of a theoretical framework and research method, and expression of results as condensed, logical, and transparent statements), the research came to alter me as a researcher and as an artist. Consequently, also the research object (i.e., my violin technique) altered. Luckily the change, a surprising but welcomed development in creative work, was positive by nature. In this article, I introduce and discuss this change of perception as an example of frequently appearing but often unexpected “side effects” of practice-based and artistic research.

2. From Innovation to Irrelevance

According to several discussions with other artists who conduct (or have concluded) their practice-based or artistic doctoral studies, it seems that many artists similarly experience changes of perception like I did.¹ It appears that as artists expose themselves to academic research conventions,

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¹ I refer to tens of discussions with practice-based or artistic researches that I have encountered in Finland and abroad, for example, in seminars, conferences, symposiums, colloquiums, concerts, exhibitions, performances, public defenses, etc. During my doctoral studies I attended the Finnish Graduate School of Folk and Popular Music for five years (2003-2008). This school consisted of some 30 practice-based and artistic researchers or artists conducting their studies for
several, both expected and unexpected, alterations in their artistic work and methods follow. In many cases, one of the goals of practice-based and artistic doctoral studies naturally is to engage such alterations: Some artists choose to bring their work, projects, and work groups in closer contact to academia in order to develop their work, achieve fresh points of view, and elaborate approaches. Often one of the most important motives is the open-minded (intellectual) interest. For me at least the idea and chance of combining creative work with academic research sounded so crazy and challenging that I simply had to try it. Curiosity was a significant motivator of my early doctoral study plans.

Despite all the good intentions, wishes, and prospects, many practice-based and artistic researchers find (or have later found) that the discourse between art and academia appears to be somewhat problematic and perhaps also disappointing. Many colleagues of mine report that the challenges they face (or faced) in adjusting their artistic work or approach to academic environment and conventions were much bigger than they ever could have expected. Some agree that they have (or had) to go through changes or conduct alterations that they cannot (or could not) find welcome and positive. Some go as far as arguing if such alterations and changes actually are (or were) beneficial and satisfactory regarding their artistic expression.

Academic requirements may sometimes appear as a force changing an artistic innovation to a documentation that appears, for example, “dry”, “boring”, and “stiff.” Introducing, explaining, and examining artistic innovations and their results as academic, formal documents, often requires, for instance, some changes, applications, or compromises in communication. These do not always advance the creative work per se but seem to distract artists from their art and expression. In respect to artists’ practical perspective, scholarly customs frequently lead to communication that appears irrelevant, inapt, or remote to the actual research object and contents. Several practice-based and artistic researchers admit that they feel (or felt) frustrated when they see (or saw) how their artistic contributions transform(ed) within academia “from innovation to irrelevance.” At worst, unfortunately, this frustration results (or has resulted) in interrupted or prolonged doctoral studies.

Regarding my research project, I admit that I could not either avoid at times feeling slightly helpless in adjusting my research object (i.e., violin fingering and development of a fingering strategy) to certain academic formalities. I also faced some of the popular issues concerning practice-based or

their artistic doctoral degrees. In this school, a change of perception was a matter frequently discussed both formally and informally, for example, in seminars, sessions, and gatherings.
artistic research within the present day academia. Due some alterations and adjustments I had to conduct, my perception of the research object changed in great extent. These changes were provoked by some especial, extra research I conducted for my project. Since this extra research was secondary by nature (i.e., secondary to the primary research interest and focus), the perception change was largely unexpected.

The status of practice-based research mode within the music university I chose to attend (Sibelius Academy, located in Helsinki, Finland) naturally appeared as the larger framework for the adjustments and alterations I had to go through. Luckily, some of the necessary applications initiated a positive stimulus within my artistic work. I like to identify this coincident as “a research side effect.” In my case, a pleasing side effect caused by the internalization of a research practice that was “prescribed by the academia” revealed the grain of truth suggested in one popular academic joke: “If you know what you’re doing, how long it will take, or what it will cost—it just isn’t research.”

3. Stringprovisation

The goal of my doctoral research project was to develop a fingering strategy for modern jazz violin improvisation. In order to meet the academic requirements, I agreed to express the strategy as a large document, a dissertation. My strategy design and development were, however, completely practice-based: The origins of the fingering approach (soon to become a strategy) were in various ambitious experiments I had conducted as a part of my artistic and pedagogic work (I am a performing jazz violinist and have worked as a jazz violin teacher for years). At the moment I completed my project and submitted the dissertation I had spent approximately ten years with the particular matters of the left-hand violin technique. Part I of the document acknowledged the tradition of conventional musicology as an extensive background study. Part II introduced the fingering strategy.

My initial idea was to demonstrate the strategy in concert performances or as a set of pedagogical experiments. Reflections of these demonstrations were to support and explain the diverse artistic and pedagogical decisions involved in the strategy design and presentation. It appeared, however, that argumentation including performing and teaching and their reflections was not sufficient

2 Several of these issues are identified and discussed, for example, in Borgdorff’s contribution “Artistic research and academia: An uneasy relationship” (2008).
according to the degree regulations of the university I attended. I was therefore encouraged to introduce the fingering strategy as a published book would carefully follow the scholarly customs.

After long considerations, open discussions, and debates I admitted to this. I, however, did not do this quite willingly since I could naturally foresee that following the rigid scholarly customs would lead me to an extensive literature study and that this kind of study would have a negative effect on the focus of my research. It would take time from developing and designing my fingering strategy. Consequently, the final strategy most likely could not come to represent a system as advanced as I desired.

In my fingering strategy, Stringprovisation, I laid the focus on modern jazz improvisation. In modern jazz violin improvisation, only the lower end of the fingerboard is typically employed. In order to create an approach that enables violinist utilize the entire violin fingerboard in modern jazz improvisation, I designed a strategy that included an extensive collection of practical musical examples and exercises. The related decision-making was supported with both theoretical and pedagogical analyses and discussions. In my theoretical framework, I relied to a technical approach that is commonly identified in violin literature as schematic fingering. The schematic fingering reflects well, for example, the tactile and kinesthetic aspects of violin playing. Through schematic fingering approach I could complete a strategy that appears to provide a significant alternative fingering approach through which modern jazz can be effectively improvised across the entire violin fingerboard. At the end I could even conclude that my application of schematic fingering may be ideal for jazz violin improvisation. 

4. Applying the Practice-Based Research Mode

For the large background research (in the Part I of my dissertation), I designed an original research method. Here naturally emerged some first, minor changes of perception to my research object as I had to make some agreements and adjustments concerning how to report of my background research that included also practice-based analysis (i.e., analysis conducted on the violin fingerboard). In order to communicate the use of practice-based research mode (e.g., my practice- 

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3 In this respect my fingering strategy has been acknowledged as a pioneering contribution in the field. I am pleased to report that Stringprovisation has received very positive reviews in leading bowed string instrument magazines that enjoy an international distribution and following. Stringprovisation has been seen, for example, as a work that “should appeal to players and teachers outside of academia” and “should be useful to those interested in serious jazz violin studies” (Strings, 1/2010). It has also been suggested that my approach to jazz research and pedagogy can “serve as a standard for other jazz instruction books” (Fiddler Magazine, Summer/2010).
based actions and results) in an academic document, I was involved, for instance, in a discussion of previous studies and an explicit presentation of my research method. These contributions were naturally quite in agreement with the musicological tradition and conventions. The background research itself reported in detail the comparative (both theoretical and practice-based) analysis of the related literature that I conducted. I did all this although I was aware right from the beginning that the entire background research could not significantly advance my fingering strategy in any particular way.

In my research method presentation, I identified my project as action research. In this I relied to Cain’s discussion of “The characteristics of action research in music education” (2008) and Somekh in her conclusions in Action Research: A Methodology for Change and Development (2006). When addressing the difference between artistic and academic research and knowledge I found support, for example, in Dormer’s The Art of Maker (1994) and Sudnow’s Ways of the Hand: The Organization of Improvised Conduct (1978 and 1993). Many respect Sudnow’s contribution as a classic, phenomenology-influenced study in the field of improvised music. It was also necessary to define and discuss the related, different research modes in some extent. In order to make a distinction between practice-based, practice-led, and artistic research modes I applied Rubidge’s arguments that she had expressed in her keynote ”Artists in the academy: Reflections on artistic practice as research” (2004). Regarding improvisation as a particular research tool I found support from Bresler’s “Research education shaped by musical sensibilities” article (2009) and from Hannula, Suoranta, and Vadén’s a bit older method book, Artistic Research: Theories, Methods and Practices (2005).

When introducing and discussing my self-designed research procedures I could relate to conclusions and recommendations announced, for example, in Edström’s article “To rest assured: A study of artistic development” (2008) and Scrivener and Chapman’s article “The practical implications of applying a theory of practice based research: a case study” (2004). At the end my procedures came to remind rather closely the particular model Scrivener suggests for practice-based doctoral research projects in his article “Reflection in and on action and practice in creative-production doctoral projects in art and design” (2000). I was determined to make my somewhat complicated research procedures extremely transparent and therefore described, explained, and illustrated them carefully. This all resulted, I admit, in a relatively heavy and long method chapter. However, I could later learn that respected colleagues in research did acknowledge my detailed
producers and suggested that my formalization should be employed as a model for similar research efforts.

Due to several research modifications related to following the academic tradition and more conventional scholarly customs, I could not advance my fingering strategy within this research project as much as I originally wished to. To my great disappointment, the fingering strategy completed to the document came to represent a level much lower than my original plans were and I had already achieved in my artistic work. It occurred that my “innovation” had to be communicated as something that appeared to be regrettable “irrelevant” if compared to the especial opportunities and possibilities of the particular practice-based contribution at stake. In this respect, I also had to conclude that the academia unfortunately appeared to work against a creative effort.

5. Change of Perception

If I could not celebrate reaching my original plans in developing and announcing an original fingering strategy, my doctoral research project initiated though a fascinating change of perception that was, after all, extremely positive.

Regarding the background study I conducted for the fingering strategy, my primary research material consisted of a considerable selection of classical and jazz violin, guitar, and mandolin pedagogical literature. After carefully studying this material, I had to submit that the background research had not advanced my fingering strategy design. I had anticipated this result when I prepared my research method and procedures and thus the negative result was expected. Consequently, regarding a change in perception of violin fingering, the background study had no effect. However, in respect to the appreciation of violin tradition, pedagogy, and history, I admit that studying a comprehensive selection of pedagogical classical violin literature made me more aware of the historical context. This minor change in perception I could naturally acknowledge.

According to my research procedures, I also examined an exhaustive, diverse collection of material that I considered to be secondary by nature: I conducted some additional research on the most popular classical solo violin etudes, caprices, concertos, and other works. In addition, I performed intensive listening and auditory analysis of hundreds jazz violin recordings and also carefully examined an inclusive selection of jazz violin pedagogical literature. I strived investigating this secondary research material—and especially the classical violin solo works it included—in order to
minimize the risk of expressing as my fingering strategy something which would have little relevance or new to give for violin education and tradition. Moreover, the investigation played a significant role in motivating my artistic work and practice routine. However, already at the beginning I knew that this part of my research could not be reported within the limits of a dissertation. Therefore, I did not construct a formal approach for analyzing this material or reporting its results.  

As a part of the secondary research, I studied several of the most important classical violin etude or caprice collections. In this respect, the research included contributions by composers Jakob Dont, Federico Fiorillo, Pierre Gaviniès, Rodolphe Kreutzer, Pietro Locatelli, Niccolò Paganini, Pierre Rode, and Henryk Wieniawski. In addition, I studied several examples of the most important solo violin or viola repertoire and included works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Paul Hindemith, Max Reger, and Eugène Ysaÿe to my selection. The majority of the above material (tens of hours of sophisticated and demanding classical violin music) was part of my daily practice routine for some four or five years. Beside the desire and striving to improve my technical capabilities as violinist (and violist), I hoped to find ways to connect parts of the above works to my fingering strategy. This however appeared to be very difficult or even irrelevant. I realized that connections between a schematic fingering technique and this particular part of my secondary research material could not easily be made or that they would have been artificial.

Although this part of the research was secondary in respect to the primary focus (i.e., the fingering strategy), at the end this particular, especial analysis actually changed considerably my understanding and view on violin fingering in general and thus modified my fingering technique and practice. All this later resulted in a notable change of perception. Practicing the best of the classical solo violin works significantly supported and accelerated my progress with violin technique. Internalizing the tradition of classical violin by studying and analyzing it through playing increased my tacit and personal knowledge of violin technique. This progress then unexpectedly realized as a fresh interest to compose solo violin works. Consequently, this also led to some rapid development in violin composition techniques.

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4 Regarding practice-based and artistic research, the visualization of research, material, actions, etc. that may appear secondary to the main focus of the research project is encouraged and recommended by Scrivener in his interesting article “Reflection in and on Action and Practice in Creative-Production Doctoral Projects in Art and Design” (2000).

5 Since these classical violin works are not in focus in this article I do not list them in detail. The comprehensive listing appears in Stringprovisation (Poutiainen 2009, 325-326).
6. Solo Violin Compositions

While studying the secondary research material I became motivated anew in solo violin composition. This change I could immediately celebrate as an extremely positive “research side effect.” Due exposing myself to classical solo violin works, my perception of the violin instrument changed thus that the tool again appeared to interest me in the light of creating own musical works. Earlier, I had from time to time composed on violin but now I developed an urge to explore and do it more frequently. As I went through tens of hours of solo violin music I became convinced that the schematic fingering approach could and should be also applied in violin compositions. I was fascinated by the creative potential the approach conveyed in this respect.

I began with a minor solo violin composition entitled Long Time Between Dreams. The first version of the work dated back to 2003. I had, however, never been quite satisfied with this first version; its solo section appeared to lack something. In 2007, I returned to this composition and started to rework the solo section. Suddenly simple applications of schematic fingering seemed to resolve all the problems: Through employing the same fingering throughout the outlining of the background harmony the chords of the section became very comfortable to indicate. As the background harmony was thus framed more clearly, the improvised solo fills also appeared to become quite easy to produce.

The excerpt below illustrates how I applied schematic fingering in Long Time Between Dreams, at the beginning of its improvised solo section. The double-stops (i.e., two notes appearing simultaneously) that imply the chord changes of the background harmony repeatedly employ the first and third fingers when a new chord occurs (the chords are indicated as chord abbreviations above the staff). This is visualized in Arabic numerals (as numerals “1”) that appear in small printing below the double-stops, under the staff.

Example 1: “Excerpt of Long Time Between Dreams, measures 40-47 (page 2)”
After the pleasant surprise gained with *Long Time Between Dreams*, I next composed a series of solo violin compositions called *Digits & Abbreviations* (2007-2009). In this series, all the three parts (entitled as 4…-4, 7…2, and *Emi…Gmi*) also frequently apply schematic fingering. In these short works, I realized that schematic fingering could be creatively but effectively applied, for example, in sequential, modulating, and repetitive sections: When I wanted to sequence a musical pattern from a pitch level to another, transpose musical material, change a key or key center, or repeat melodic patterns as a background for improvisation, I could reach higher consistency and practicality through keeping the fingerings the same (i.e., through taking an advantage of the schematic fingering in composition). To my humble opinion, the results were at least moderately interesting; they were not mere mechanic musical experimenting and testing. My colleagues’ positive feedback for these new compositions encouraged me to continue.

Later, in 2008, I decided to attempt to create my first chaconne-type solo violin composition. In a few months I finished *Chaconne Cristalline*, an approximately 15-minutes-long solo work in which the majority of the musical material is based on applications of schematic fingering. The composition may appear to be harmonically and melodically somewhat complex (since it, for example, constantly modulates and travels through all the twelve different minor keys) and can thus give an impression that is a difficult work to perform. In reality, however, the composition is

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6 *Chaconne* is a type of musical composition often involving a fairly short repetitive bass-line which offers a compositional outline for variation, decoration, figuration, and melodic invention. Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Chaconne* (i.e., the last movement of his Partita for Solo Violin No. 2, D minor) is one of the most popular and admired historical works for solo violin.
technically not that challenging since—due the use of schematic fingering—it reflects well the tactile and kinaesthetic aspects of violin playing. In short, the chaconne is relatively easy to internalize and comfortable to perform. As an illustration, below appear two pages of *Chaconne Cristalline*. In this excerpt, the sections in G, G#, A, and B♭ minor can be seen in complete while the sections in F♯ and B minor are only partly shown.

Example 2: “Excerpt of Chaconne Cristalline, measures 138-229 (pages 5 and 6)”
Composing *Chaconne Cristalline* was a highly rewarding experience both intellectually and emotionally. After finishing this work, I could subscribe that I had really accumulated something precious while conducting my doctoral studies: My perception of solo violin composition had significantly changed and I had become a more ambitious composer of solo violin works.\(^7\)

7. Conclusions

Like many practice-based or artistic researchers I struggled a bit with the problematic relationship between art and academia. Due to the lack of academic respect and acknowledgement towards submission of arguments that are initiated, developed, and supported in and with the artistic practice or work, I also had to modify the communication of my practice and results (i.e., my innovations concerning the left-hand violin technique) in such way that the research object altered. Consequently, my results appeared much lesser than I anticipated. According to discussions with colleagues that have finished a practice-based or artistic doctoral research project, academia is still somewhat selective in accepting and supporting artistic or practice-based research. Many doctoral students begin from an (artistic) “innovation” and later conclude with a study or artifact that seems to convey some “irrelevance” regarding the extraordinary, original artistic contents and expression and related ideas, plans, or goals. This irrelevance typically results from the “academic baggage”—that is, various scholarly customs, requirements, and demands—that also artists need to adjust themselves to.

Although it may yet be somewhat hard and frustrating to apply artistic and practice-based research modes in present-day academia, the struggle may also have some positive “research side effects.” Regarding creative forces, an “opposing force” can sometimes stimulate artistic productivity and lead to new innovations, works, projects, and achievements. I can submit that in this respect I was lucky: The academic baggage pushed me towards a type of creative work that I had not previously found that interesting, and I started to compose solo violin works. I could enjoy a truly positive “research side effect.”

As a conclusion, I feel that I should attempt to summarize my experiences with my first larger practice-based research project. I thus finish with three empathetic pieces of advice. The first two are applications of relatively common academic jokes, the last one is the way I finish my

\(^7\) While writing this article I plan to record and publish these solo violin works within a year.
Stringprovisation. I hope these could be of help and support to dear colleagues in research when the times temporarily get rough.

1. Discoveries are made by not following instructions.
2. Documentation of a practice-based or artistic research (or both) is like sex: When it is good, it is very, very good—and when it is bad it is still better than nothing.
3. Stay creative!

References


Anna Allgulin: Researching Changes

- If God means the never changing changer I try to build a theatre machine, an actors perpetuum mobile, from my hypothesis about what perhaps could work as God for theatre. So whether I really found something or only thought something up, perhaps doesn’t change the value of my research – who knows, perhaps we certainly do have to invent God, if God doesn’t exist...?

In my artistic research changes are playing an important role. And if maybe what I change sometimes changes - how I change hardly changes at all.

I try to change acting in theory and practice. Often an acting theory appears as a reaction against some kind of acting, and after a while an opposite acting theory appears as an answer to the first. We have through history such a dialogue about actually quite a few problems often concerning how near or distant the actor should be to the character or the emotions of the play. What I am trying to add to this dialogue, is a coherent system, where the actors always change between these opposite positions. I use to call my always changing actors ”spectactors”.

Some basics

I would like to start with some thoughts about the two most obvious associations to the word change considering acting. The first has to do with the actors change to a character, the second has to do with how a performance changes after the first night. From an actors pragmatic point of view (and I am basically an actress) these probably are two of the most interesting questions. Here even a small change could change a lot...

About the first change, I never understood why theatres almost always hide the most interesting moments and let actors change to characters behind the curtain (not always literally). My ideal is the opposite. I want to see the very changing in front of my eyes – or at least try to. I love to see how actors who doesn't act at all suddenly just are their characters and I also love to miss, although it all happens in front of my eyes, the very moment of changing. I want to be cheated. When a magician shows me an empty hat, I never take my eyes away from it - and still I never ever see how the rabbit enters. I want nothing less than a miracle. I want to see, but still not see, the change. This is how I want to change acting.
About the second change I know that one of the most demanding tasks for actors is to keep a performance alive (if there ever was life in it of course...) when repeating it night after night. As a result actors often more or less purposely change small things every night. Sometimes it really gives the performance more life, but more often these small changes steal, more and more, the very essence of the performance. As an actress I worked in different ways. In "experimental" performances, in "normal" performances, and in a performance played some times per month during five years. I have met different solutions of the problem. None of them fully satisfied me. My opinion is that already while making the performance you should think about its repeatability. And I need a certain hierarchy among the theatre elements to make a performance that can survive for a long time – being changed still remaining itself. The actors should know where the constants are and where the variables are, they should know what is holy and unchangeable and what could perfectly well be refreshed by improvisation. This is why I found it impossible to change acting the way I want, without also changing the very principles of making a performance.

To make such fundamental changes possible I have to start with the basics. The spoken word. In my workshop I explained and showed some of the operations with words and voice I am working with in my research, to make the actor change between maximally different polarities. Since spoken words consist of sound and meaning I get a lot of help from music and philosophy. And of course the human voice and brain are also in my focus.

**Duality and hierarchy as tools in a game of sound and meaning**

Theatre is dual by nature. The form itself is a meeting between the real world and another one, and already the language in which it is spoken has one first reality, its sound, and another (second) reality, its meaning. These are not two equally worth realities - one reality is more real than the other. The theatrical situation is more real than what the play is about, and the sound of the words is more real than the meaning of them. The sound belongs to science of nature but the meaning is just an agreement between people.

Nevertheless it is a fact that when we have learnt a new language and at last are able to hear the meaning of its words, our ears are suddenly not (anymore) able to enjoy the beauty of its sounds as before. And when we learn to read, we suddenly cannot see the letters anymore without reading meaning in them, as we could before we learnt to read. Real learning is irreversible, the knower can
never ever get back the virginity of the not-knower. Getting out of Plato’s cave is indeed very hard – and it is painful for the eyes to meet the light – but returning to the cave is even harder...

This language phenomenon I use to call a natural kind of platonism. The reason why language works at all is this often called ”automatization” between sound and meaning. The thoughts – as soon as you have detected the code - kind of turn the sounds into shadows. (Nota bene: they should turn the sounds into shadows – if they do not, we get problems; aphasia and dyslexia are for example both results of dysfunctions of this automatization.) This change in hierarchy between sound and meaning is actually nothing less than the reason why language works as a tool of communication. In any language – and that is in fact what makes it a language - meaning (idea) has turned to be more real than sound (materia)!!! Language is an idealistic territory. And theatre as any art is also a kind of language...

The Russian linguist Viktor Shklovskii (1893–1984) wrote about the necessity to purposely make a text unfamiliar if you want people to really listen to it. His term ”otstranenie” was borrowed by Bertolt Brecht who gave ”verfremdung” a specific theatrical meaning. I am returning to Shklovskii but I develop it in my own specific way; I also believe that what makes art art is that it makes us look upon things with new eyes. Art should de-automatize language. But in order to do so, actors have to re-automatize it... My aim is to let both actors and audience experience a few seconds now and then (more is hardly possible without drugs) of pure perception without any interpretation (the returning to the lost virginity of the not-knower). My way of doing this is to do the opposite; to increase to a maximum the level of interpretation. I think that every time you use the language you partly reinvent it. And that it is naïve to think that it is easy to change any human being into a non interpreting creature. Our human intellect that made us more powerful and dangerous than bears and tigers is not only a God blessed gift – it is also a curse. It is indeed very, very difficult to return to the cave. If we want to experience some seconds in the head of a non speaking creature, we have to use our intellect to get rid of our intellect for a while.

According to the Swedish neuroscientist David Ingvar (1924-2000) the main difference between the human brain and the brain of a chimpanzee is not the thickness of its cortex, with its ability to take in and store huge amounts of information (what I used to learn in school), but paradoxically the opposite; the human brains ability to reduce irrelevant perception. This ”silencing”, or ”censoring” sense, is choosing which information among all our perceptions we actually notice. We, like no other creature, can see, but not see - and hear, but not hear. This sense above all senses is highly
necessary for our planning, for our logical thinking and also for our speaking. It is also placed in the frontal lobe near the language centre. When this sense doesn't work we get problems. A schizophrenic can sometimes hardly hear his own thoughts because he is disturbed by the feeling of his clothes touching his body! Even a diagnosis like ADHD occurs because this “filter” doesn't work well enough. Maybe also some of us know what it is like to wake up early in the morning after a good party, hearing the sound of a dripping bathroom tap echoes loudly... But a lot of us are normally more like the professor seeing nothing at all here and now, because all the attention is there and then. Instead of just taking in information, we reduce it, then interpret it, think further about it and compare it to our old knowledge – in other words; we change it. To make an audience and a group of actors to be really present in the very moment, experience, accept and listen to what ever there is, not changing anything at all, is in other words not easy.

Another Swedish neuroscientist Jan Fagius (1946-) points out for my research highly relevant facts, actually already known for a long time. In an academic article published 1745 the Swedish writer Olof von Dahlin (1708-1763) describes a man who after stroke suffers from aphasia. He cannot say one single word except yes - but still sings chorals in the church! This is maybe not too strange. Music and language affect different places in the brain. What really strikes me is that this totally mute man also pray his prayers! Rhythmically and loudly! It seems, that these words learned by heart were stored, not together with his forever lost language, but with music! This means, I assume, that actors actually do not really speak on stage, but sing. Here, it seems to me, I probably found one of the reasons to the so common ”theatre tone”, which often makes me fall asleep when I watch theatre. If actors really, according to neurology, rather sing than speak – could there be any preciser approach to acting than through music, sounds, silences, dynamics, energies and rythm? In my rehearsals I am working mainly with this. I do my best (in my composing of the ”score”) to de-automatize the speaking of the words. And the actors (often including me) work hard to re-automatize them. The language I want to hear on stage ought to be extremely natural and extremely artificial, extremely physical and extremely metaphysical. The language should help the actors to pass from the concrete world of senses to the abstract world of thoughts - and back. Over and over again. As did Hermes with wings on his sandals and hat.

To be able to compose this way of speaking I have formulated a set of rules which could be used (if actors are very skilled) in improvisation just like football rules or rules of any other game, with the slight difference that these rules hopefully have an effect even on an audience that is not at all familiar with the rules. While to enjoy watching football you need to know the rules. These rules of
mine try to treat the brain as a muscle; they make it work harder to make it more tired – to make it relax deeper. (They try to cause temporary dis-balances between brains excitation and inhibition.) They use polarities, duality and hierarchy among words, to create holes of semantic and phonetic silence, holes in which a certain vacuum creates a certain suction - a change without any visible changer... I tried my best to show a little bit of that in my workshop.

Normally I use these rules in texts learned by heart, as an instrument 1) to make performances based more on invisible factors than visible. This makes it possible for me to take part in them. My ears work better from any angle of the room than my eyes, 2) to make performances where all the actors work both with precision and improvisation to be able to make repeatable performances that could be played for a long time, being changed remaining the same, 3) to give an answer to different acting theories, that what matters in acting is when you do what, the chairos, the timing. This means that an actor must change position between different kinds of acting – between different qualities of presence - many times during a performance, and that an actors skill is an art of changing, 4) to start from one point, from the spoken word, and in every single play from a very few concrete words, and to let these few words change everything else, 5) to let hierarchies between words replace hierarchies between people...

I mentioned some of my goals, but not all. But actually all of them have a lot to do with each other. I think the most challenging (spectacular/questionable) one, is to cause change without changing. Or in other words to cause movement without moving. And action without acting. I continue to look for miracles. But of course this is not the whole truth; I do not only allow, but also ask for certain changes before the ”miracle” - but I forbid to do anything at the very moment of it. I am looking for, and I think I perhaps have found – or thought up – a law of nature in theatre, easy to compare to entropy or even better to gravitation. And if there are social darwinists – why couldn't there be theatre Newtonists or perhaps Einsteinists? (Einstein’s thoughts about acceleration and speed changes are for example applicable to rhythm in speech, song and music...) This is why I need dualism and hierarchies. I need to create ups and downs and distances between these ups and downs. Because, the bigger the distance - the better effect of the ”falling". I return to the varieté culture, now not to magicians but to circus performers. For the audience it is clear; the higher the wire of the trapeze artists or the wire dancer - the more excitement. And although a lot has changed, there are sometimes still, in our time, artists who work without safety net, because they know that scaring the audience for real, is an important part of the show. It is quite interesting how physical you can experience butterflies in your stomach, your legs trembling, sweat and even faint just by
watching these circus artists. But what is even more interesting is that even my “invisible falls” - of energy, level of abstraction, psychological strength, decibel and chaos - sometimes cause similar reactions...

Well, this is artistic research still going on, much is still to do, I would like to add that my method in thinking and writing, is to do exactly the same as the theoretical researchers do - but the opposite way. If they happily write about art, to have starting points and examples for their theories - without necessary being professional ballet dancers, composers of electronic music or playwrights themselves – I, as a practitioner, gladly use theory, and I pick and choose what I need from different fields like philosophy and neurology, to get inspiration and support for my practical work – but that does not make me think that I am a professional theoretician. Although it is an undoubted fact that my research of changes changes even me...

Stockholm - 2010
Pauliina Hulkko: How Did We Facilitate a Colloquium Workshop

One attempt to create mutual understanding of my singular artistic research (interests and methods)
In my proceedings, I attempt to show the ways in which our research workshop at CARPA was
generated and how it articulated the questions I discuss in my artistic research in general.

The structure of these proceedings is
1. before
2. here-and-now (at the carpa workshop)
3. after

1. Before
My initial idea for CARPA was to give a retrospective talk on how my having started to do artistic
research had changed my way of doing art, making performances. This paper would have followed
my artist/researcher’s footsteps with a slightly nostalgic tone – a little like the narrator of the
nature documentary explaining the extinction of a lost species.

However, the colloquium organizers suggested that I should arrange a workshop instead. I had
already given a choreophony workshop together with my colleague choreographer Soile
Lahdenperä in the Performance and Research working group at the IFTR conference in Lisbon in
July 2009. So, I decided to continue that work and invite Soile to join me.

Choreophony – a conceptual tool for the practical workshop

Choreophony could be defined as ‘a spoken, uttered dance or space’ (from the Greek words χορεία,
dance, space, and φωνή, voice). It is a self-made notion to explore the connection between the
perceived, the uttered, and the embodied.

The basic task in choreophony has so far been to speak out loud what you perceive in the space
around you here and now – what you feel, smell, hear, see, experience with any of your senses in
and outside your body.
Carpa Presentation Details (October 2009)
Pauliina Hulkko & Soile Lahdenperä

1) Title
Body Speaks – Body Listens

2) Description
In this workshop we examine the relations between perception, speech and embodiment.

We invite you to experiment with your own way of perceiving, speaking of it and sharing it with the others. Furthermore, we explore how the speech of the other touches us and moves us. And finally, we attempt to delineate how this speech could be re-embodied and turned into an artistic means.

A meeting with Soile (5. November, 2009)
Our first meeting concerning Carpa workshop took place only some two weeks before the very colloquium. We had both been extremely occupied with several things during the entire autumn. I had been elaborating my work on choreophony in an artistic project called “Pavlova Experiment” which gave its first work-in-progress performance at the Museum of Contemporary art Kiasma in October. Soile had been busy writing her doctoral work and teaching. Therefore, we had to remind ourselves of our fundamental interests and aims in relation to the questions of perception, speech and embodiment.

Soile
Hearing the experience of the other is an inspiration for movement, for dance. Free association of that speech is the best. An interactive thing: How can one become interested in the speech of another person? Where do you grab in it? How does the speech of the other move me?

Pauliina
For me, the important points in the task of choreophoning are:
1. Examining one’s own perception and speech
   - Yealding oneself to speaking?
   - What do I perceive, what do I speak about and how?

2. Listening to the perception of the other and yielding/being exposed to it
   - First mere listening
- How does the other’s speech touch me?
- How does it move me?

3. Absorbing the other’s speech and embodying one’s own perception

*After delineating the necessary points above, we made a scheme for the Carpa workshop and then tried it out on our own.*

1) Own perception – all together
a) On the chair – description

Soile
I realized I criticized and forbid myself to do things.

Pauliina
I became aware of various boundaries: those of my own body and the room, of different parts of the room, of indoor and outdoor space, of the houses outdoor – spaces within each other.
I realized an urge to correct my posture and perception. When I became aware I wanted to improve my body and sensations.

b) Standing or walking – description
- Experiences?

Soile
Superficial talk, at intervals extremely interesting, at intervals impugning. Understanding the space, when I went to the corner and came back: Dance creates the space! Space is great!

Pauliina
Body wanted to create perception, began to move. Nothing else made any difference: the outdoor space etc. Pleasure: soles, clothes, warmth, coldness, the significance of the floor contact, great pleasure.

(c) Possibly one more, for instance by moving (i.e. by following and leading your perception?)

2) The other’s perception – in groups of approx. 5
a) One describes (x 2)
   - The others listen/sense lying on the floor

b) One describes (x 2)
   - The others move
   - Something more?

3) Embodying the other’s perception
   a) One speaks, one moves
      - The others watch
   b) One moves, one describes her/him, the third moves according to the description
      - Others watch
      - Something else?

(c) Soile moves according to a pre-recorded description (which someone else has done from
    watching another someone else dance), someone describes Soile’s dance and that is recorded, the
    rest watch
    - Then everybody listens to the recording and does
    - Finally we listen to the description from Soile’s dance simultaneously with watching the original
      dance tape (which tape???)

Remarks from that meeting:
   - speaking protects you when you can speak out loud about painful spots (Therapy), speaking
     makes things factual.
   - Why do I need to stick to the “authentic” perception?
   - In your research you can trust in your experience
   - When something is said (also perceived?), it is already gone

2. Here-and-now (at Carpa workshop)
   Our Carpa workshop was the one to start the entire colloquium. We were in the Academy’s most
   beautiful room which commanded a view to a lovely autumn day in the nearby harbour area. The
   atmosphere in the workshops was really calm, open and relaxed.
There was a nice group of people – none of them native English speaking! – attending the workshop: Joa, Mikko, Eira, Jan, Eduardo, Christine, Lea, Pekka, Per Roar, Ilka (hopefully I didn’t miss anyone, the participant list given to me is incomplete.)

The workshop program: body speaks – body listens
Carpa workshop 19.11.2009

Introduction
- Participants + native tongue
- Workshop leaders, their individual backgrounds and starting points for this WS (vocabulary + main concepts, working context etc.)
- What is Choreophony?
- The aim of the WS: experience, perception, speech, embodiment; being curious about the relationship between the experienced, the spoken and the embodied/Performed
- The structure of the WS (series of experiments, variations): moving on from your own perception to the perception of the other, and finally embodying the perception (first your own, then that of the other)
  - You are free to ask/comment at any point; there are no right or wrong ways of doing
  - A short break in the middle

Task 1: Listening to my own experience – all together x 5 min.
A) On the chair – speaking in your native tongue about your perception

B) Standing or walking in the space – speaking in your native tongue about your perception and experience (We can leave the chairs where they are)
- Comments? - Questions?

C) On the chair – speaking in English about your perception

D) From standing moving in the space (following your speech, letting your speech lead you) – speaking in English

Task 2: listening to the experience of the other – in groups of approx. 5 persons
- Divide into 4 groups, choose your own corner in the space
- After each task, please change the person in charge of the speaking

A) One speaks while the others, lying on the floor, listen
- First: eyes closed x 2
- The second time: pay attention to how the speech feels in your body
- Move clockwise to the next corner in the space

B) One speaks while the others stand or move (eyes open) x 3 (or as long as everyone has tried out speaking)


**TASK 3: EMBODYING THE EXPERIENCE OF THE OTHER**

A) Back to the earlier task where you were speaking out loud your perception and following the speech, letting your speech lead you while moving in the space
– In english, but speaking ”inwards”, soundlessly
- Comments?

B) Pair up (take on partner)
- One speaks her/his perception, the other describes what s/he perceives
- Change the roles
- Comments?

C) One speaks inwards and moves, the second describes it, the third embodies this description using it to move her/himself (as an impulse, source of association, etc.; any kind of expression is ok(x3)
- The rest can observe sitting in the chairs
- Change roles
- Comments?

D) One speaks, 3-5 embody

**Finishing discussion**
(+ The beginning chair in your own native tongue)
3. AFTER

Comments from the participants:

- Speaking is very slow compared to what you perceive, especially in English.
- Perception goes ahead; at times that leads to superficial speech, in which you don’t have time to reach the perception, the sensation.
- Very controversial reactions to how speaking is very opposite to reacting etc.
- The task of lying on the floor with eyes closed:
  1) “It felt as if I was all alone, speaking in English to myself.”
  2) “I wondered whether the different sensation of that task was due to the fact of lying or to having the eyes closed.”
  3) “I tried to concentrate on breathing but speaking made that impossible.”
  4) It was wonderful when I breathed and spoke, I had to think against how I would have done it otherwise, an interesting discrepancy.”

Speaking and contact

- When one person was speaking: it was difficult to listen and move/do simultaneously
- When everyone spoke and moved/did it was difficult to speak and react simultaneously / also interesting when I just kept doing it all, one thing started to affect the other, that to the next etc.
- When one person was speaking, three moving/doing the speech started to dominate; Who gets to speak, whose voice is heard?
- How can we simultaneously use speech and be in contact? Several possible choices. Possible to myself when by means of speech I found myself a trajectory. Only then I was able to leave for the other.
- A choice: first I listen, attempt to find a relationship to my speech, after that I “switch on” the contact: Interesting!

My own remarks

- Speech seems to create its own world, an experiential circle
- Space/distance between my own speech and being with the other
- Turning speech into movement didn’t seem to be a problem, quite the opposite: Speech seemed to invite movement in several ways which surprised also the mover: “Speech just led me.”
- The different aspects of speech: tone, height, words, silences, breathing, etc.
Theatre, since its beginnings, used technology. In fact, technology is, since Greek theatre, a significant part of theatrical performance. How would the ghost appear to Hamlet on stage, if not by using a trapdoor? Or how would the hero ascend to a godlike status, if not by being pulled by a machine (deus ex-machina) from the stage, thus ending the play?

Technological effects not only surprised the audience but also intensified the experience of viewing theatre. Magic happened on stage right in front of the spectators’ eyes. But, as much as a good magician never reveals his tricks, so technology was also something to be kept invisible. Nevertheless, over the 19th century, due to the industrialization, the appearance of big urban cities and the formation of mass mobs, technique became part of everyday life. The Spanish philosopher José Jimenez, in an article called “The Electronic Art Revolution”, claims that: «Mechanical objects, the machines, aroused and multiplied rapidly in the 19th century. Suddenly, they were numerous, countless, when compared to the ancient singularity of the old automaton. Magic had become common.»

In the beginning of the 20th century, several theatre movements were born with that fascination with technology. From Meyerhold’s biomechanics aesthetic to Brecht’s V-effect theory, showing the action on stage was also to show the technology: it was part of what happened on stage, not something external to it. Nevertheless, the technicity of modern life and its effect on art soon came across with several critical voices.

Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, founders of the Frankfurt School, stated that the work of art, when trapped in an industrialised production system, becomes alienated, bearing no relation between producer and product. In that sense, art is no longer art but rather a technique of transforming the audience into a mass. However, several art movements, such as the Futurists, saw it as something positive and useful; the machine could be the way for a new form of art.

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1 in Revista de Comunicação e Linguagens [Communication and Language Journal], p.49
Steve Dixon, in his book *Digital Performance*\(^2\), traces Futurism as a major influence on digital art. Arguing against Lev Manovich’s theories that exclude this art movement, Dixon considered it as essential to understand today’s digital performance: «We argue that Futurism, which emerged prior to all these *avant-garde* movements [Bauhaus, Constructivism, Dadaism and Surrealism] and exerted significant influence upon them (particularly Constructivism), deserves a much higher place in the history of digital arts and performance.»\(^3\)

Experimentation with the machine and the exploration of new technology is thus something that has been happening for a quite a while in performance, most of the times aiming at the creation of *avant-garde* works. Guillermo Gomez-Peña even says that performance is obsessed by innovation, thereby fascinated with technology. But should we consider the use of technology in digital performance as merely an ornamental element?

«(...) we are equally unequivocal that the conjunction of performance and new media has and does bring about genuinely new stylistic and aesthetic modes, and unique and unprecedented performance experiences, genres, and ontologies»\(^4\), states Steve Dixon in the introduction of his book.

Digital performance often evokes political issues, and is claimed as something that goes beyond the established boundaries of art, media and culture. Or, in other occasions, is stated as a way for the performer to create something “new”. On the one hand, we may say that research methods are centred on the experimentation with technological devices, but, on the other, they also serve as a quest for the “uniqueness” in each piece.

In the digital era, technology can no longer be thought only as a device, or just a technical concept that allows information to “navigate”, as it encompasses the fields of philosophy and anthropology. When studying digital performance, one should also discuss if there is an aesthetic of technology that can be common to all digital performance pieces. Creating with new digital technology, artists

\(^2\) Steve Dixon, in the preface to his book, defines digital performance as such: “Digital performances concerns the conjunction of computer technology with the live performance arts as well as well as gallery installations and computer platform-based net.art, CD’rom, digital games where performances constitutes of either its content (For example, through a focus of moving, speaking or otherwise “performing” human figure) or form (for example, interactive installations that prompt visitors to “perform” actions rather than simply watch a screen and point and click)”, *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theatre, Dance, Performance Art and Installation*, p. X

\(^3\) *idem*, p. 9

\(^4\) *idem*, p. 5
aim at the development of a new vocabulary. Nevertheless, they seem to do it at every new piece, almost as if there is a necessity to start from scratch every time.

The rapid upgrades on new technological media, the easy access to software and hardware – where the user can also be a producer –, and the pressure for “interactivity” can be possible causes for this “hunger for the new”. When doing research for their works, artists contemplate their action field as something that needs validation in complex academic theories. We may even say that, contrary to Adorno and Horkheimer’s fears, digital performance aspires to uniqueness, to be a form of avant-garde, horrified by the possibility of industrialization.

In order to understand how new technological media can influence the creative process in digital performance, I propose to look closer at two different approaches to digital performance, using them as case studies. The first is the “low tech guerrilla” performance “Ballettikka Internettikka”, developed by the Slovenian artist Igor Stromajer, and the other is the “high tech” performance in “.txt”, developed by the Portuguese-based artists Fernando Galrito, Fernando Nabais and Stephan Jürgens.

In 2001, Igor Stromajer, in a partnership with composer Brane Zorman, presented the first performance of “Ballettikka Internettikka”. This performance initially intended to “tell/show/dance” the history of ballet through a series of images captured and broadcast live to the internet. Since then, Stromajer has been presenting (and will continue to present until 2011) several variations of the piece, integrating it in what he has called “low-tech solutions for intimate guerilla strategies”.

Currently, “Ballettikka Internettikka” is a political play that defies not only the traditional notions of theatre and performance but also intends to be a social statement. Stromajer and Zorman invade theatre spaces such as the Bolshoi or the La Scala, identify the play with the Chechnyan terrorists’ acts in 2002, place a robot as a main character, among other variations, always with the goal of creating emotions.
«The fact that I chose the internet as the tool for my artistic expression helps me understand the mysterious ways of communication, its sadness and its emotional handicap», says Stromajer in his website intima.org.\(^5\)

It is interesting to observe that the core of “Ballettikka Internettikka” presentation is the “mobile wireless internet connection”. Without it, it would be impossible to be performed. The Internet is thus a performance collaborator, as much as a broadcasting medium. The essence of “Ballettikka Internettikka” is to “conquer” a space, placing the audience in a dangerous place, while at the same time keeping it safe.

In “Ballettikka Internettikka”, danger is experienced by the performer and by the spectator/user. Although it is the performer that, by moving the performance to a place where it should not be (e.g., the underground floors of the Bolshoi Theatre or the kitchen of the La Scala Theatre) and in spite of facing the risk of being physically threatened (by being arrested, for example), he is not alone. The spectator is there, watching, sharing the anxiety of that moment in which fiction and ‘real’ blend. The Internet keeps them together. Bojana Kunst defines Stromajer’s guerrilla approach as the desire of the performer and the desire of the audience to be linked:

«The guerrilla performance, with the help of wireless mobile connection, is done in the name of the desire to perform, but what is performed here is exactly the desire itself; the desire to be there, which is today very often the same as being connected»\(^6\).

It is also through a mobile device that the performance “.txt” interacts with the audience. The artists provided a mobile phone number and each spectator could send text messages to a server; later, during the performance, those messages were integrated with the action on stage. Contrary to Stromajer’s net ballet, “.txt” was performed live before an audience. The dancer performed several scenes where words seemed to attack him and through a skilled routine, he was always able to escape.

In 2007, the Portuguese digital artists Fernando Nabais and Fernando Galrito got together with choreographer Stephan Jürgens\(^7\) to create the performance “.txt”. Using William Burroughs’

\(^5\) [http://www.intima.org/mmi.html]
\(^6\) [in http://www.intima.org/bibk71.html].
Electronic Revolution as the basis for the dramaturgy of the play, the performance aims at being also a critique of the abusive use of multimedia technology.

Since 2007, several performances were presented, but always as a work in progress, as something unfinished. Only in October 2009 the artists decided they had achieved the final version. During this two year process, the play grew from an almost “low tech” performance (the choreographer, at first, programmed the animation with the help of the software “Isadora”), until it reached the status of a “high-tech” performance, so much that a specific software had to be created (developed by the Portuguese start-up Y-Dreams).

The authors define the play as “an interactive digital performance supported by several sensorial technologies, which explores forms of contemporary transversal artistic languages. The result is a unique vocabulary, which is physically articulated by means of interactive soundscapes, visual compositions, and real-time choreography, which represent a source of artistic expression that support the dramaturgical intention.”

The performance has a few central research ideas: 1) The “big bang” of language (artistic language) – the birth of a gesture, a sound, an image, as well as their evolution in a relationship with the performer; 2) Taking into account interactivity by itself, as a medium, the interface between performer and technology is also explored as content, and 3) A critical reflection on the fusion of art and science in their social, historical and aesthetic dimensions as part of the performance.

This was an ambitious project. How can a performance embody such an amount of concepts and communicate them to the audience, as wished by the artists?

It is curious to see that this is a performance where technology is indeed the central focus. Computer technology is much more than a significant tool in the performance; it is also its content. The limits of the choreography are imposed by the rigid images that are reflected on stage. Therefore, technology does not increase the choreographic possibilities – as seen in the work of other choreographers that use technology, like Merce Cunningham –; its functionality is to communicate a concept to the audience.

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7 Collaboration is also a characteristic from digital performance. It happens because rarely an artist has enough technological expertise. What normally happens is that technicians and artists collaborate in a project, influencing each other.

8 In http://txtwork.wordpress.com/about/
When beginning their artistic research for a new piece, both Stromajer and Nabais, Galrito and Jürgens admit that technology is not their departing point – conceptualization is the departing point –; nevertheless it affects the outcome.

The imagery of each play is the result of “low tech” transmission, in the case of “Ballettikka Internettikka”, by intentionally broadcasting poor quality images – using webcams and other digital devices used in everyday life –, and the “high tech” animation, in the case of “.txt”, that invades the stage over and over again.

Another peculiar aspect in the two performances is that in “Ballettikka Internettikka”, given that some of the images that are transmitted resemble live news broadcasts, technology works as a *mise-en-scene* of the “real” and of the truth. In “.txt”, the opposite happens: the frame on the stage – that is used to the animation projection – resembles a computer interface. Nevertheless, as part of the audience, I felt more close, and related easier, to the images that were mediated by the Internet than the ones presented on stage⁹, possibly because “Ballettikka Internettikka” makes use of an imagery that became commonplace to us during the 20th century.

There is no doubt that new digital media play a key role in contemporary life (Internet, mobile phones, webcams, etc.). David Morley, in *The Geography of the New*, stated that «Clearly when we come to the era of the mobile phone (...), not only is the technology entirely personalized, but it is treated by many of its users as just as much a “body part” as their wristwatch»¹⁰. In a similar fashion, in *Smart Mobs* Howard Rheingold describes how in Finland the use of mobile phones «seems to be an extension of the hand (...)».¹¹

Technology became something easily accessible, affordable, and, above all, a part of our identity. Communities found new vitality through social networking sites, hence becoming extremely important in establishing personal and professional bonds.

On the article “Why youth (heart) social network sites: the role of networked publics in teenage social life”, researcher danah boyd described her notion of a “virtual body”. boyd considers that this

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⁹ Philip Auslander argues in *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* that the cultural dominance of television has changed our mode of spectatorship. In a way, a technological mediated *performance* may have as much validation as a live one.

¹⁰ p. 205

¹¹ p. 12
virtual body, when creating an online profile, is an extension of the individual, hence an extension of his individual identity. This is not a simulation of the material body but a collection of individual data.

Issues like these are increasingly the ones that digital performance reflects on when using technology, given that the very grounds of performance creation (body, space and time) have undergone significant changes with the arrival of the computer and related technologies. However, as Steve Dixon affirms, digital performance has not yet fully encapsulated and revived the historical avant-garde’s goal to have a major role in the advancement of social change and to transform “the way arts function in society” 12

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