PROCEEDINGS

Twenty-Fourth Annual Conference
Goucher College
Baltimore, Maryland
21 - 24 June 2001

Proceedings

Society of Dance History Scholars

Twenty-Fourth Annual Conference

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SDHS Conference 2001
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A Fight for Women's Rights: A Moment From Stockholm, 1650, and the Coronation Festivities of Queen Christina of Sweden [1]

Peter Bohlin

During the Coronation festivities of Queen Christina of Sweden, there appeared in Stockholm, to the surprise of most, on November second (2), 1650, three Amazon queens: Antiope, Penthesilea and Thalestris. They had arrived to settle a dispute.

The Amazons delivered a written statement:

"Already for some time now, on the Elysian fields, there has been an argument as to which sex should be considered to be the most excellent one. We [the Amazons] have demonstrated, with irrefutable evidence, that women are born to govern and men to serve. Famous heros resident on these fields have vehemently opposed us regarding this issue, and have in every way refused to let themselves be persuaded to acknowledge in words that, which they in their hearts are convinced to be true."(3)

For this reason the Amazons had prepared themselves to accomplish with swords what they could not achieve with words, and they had started to rally other women for a battle. But Pluto, sovereign of the Underworld, forbade them to start bringing about confusion in his realm. At the same time, though, so as not to infringe any of their rights, he allowed the Amazons to depart to earth, in order to solve the dispute. The Amazons then got to know, that the coronation of the illustrious Queen of Sweden was settled to take place in Stockholm, and they drew the conclusion that many honourable and esteemed persons, both females and males, would gather to that occasion. In short: they found no more convenient place, and no better opportunity, to have their just cause presented and tried, in the presence of so many noble and important persons. So they arrived in Stockholm to pay their respect and honour to the venerable Queen, who "has raised the repressed prestige of the female sex to levels higher than ever previously." They also wished to celebrate the whole female sex, and to endow it with additional reputation at the announced tiltings. "In combats with all chivalric weapons we are here to prove, that women are more splendid, and more proficient than men in all prominent commissions, as well in war as in peace, especially considering the fact that women are disposed more towards virtue and less towards vice, than men."

This constituted the cartel, or letter of challenge, which served as the cause, to defend or refute, by the par-

ticipants in the following equestrian games.

The presentation of this cartel, in 1650, is the moment I have selected for this conference. The Amazons' proud challenge and the homage to the pre-eminence to the female sex, with the contests to follow, are reasons why I decided to choose the title A fight for Women's Rights. This piece is so much more than just another way of flattering Queen Christina in person. At this moment in history, there was an singular opportunity to compare the sexes in favour of the female, and ask the idea to be seriously considered - and someone actually took it. The name of the author seems, sadly, not to have survived, but we know who commissioned the entertainment - three counts (4), one of them had been the commander-in-chief of the Swedish army in the thirty years' war, Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie. He turned out to be a favourite of the Queen.

Queen Christina

When Christina's father, Gustavus Adolphus, was killed in the battle of Lützen, in 1632, during the 30 years' war, Christina was not even six years old. A regency was established, and Christina ascended to the throne in 1644, at the age of eighteen, but she was crowned only six years later, in 1650. When Christina was still very young, the regency council, the parliament and other important men of the state, counted on Christina to marry her cousin, the Count Palatine Carl Gustaf, but soon Christina started to have second thoughts about it, and before long she refused to even contemplate the matter. She herself found a solution on the question of a successor to the throne by making the parliament agree to accept Carl Gustav as her successor, and as such he was taking part already in the Coronation ceremonies.

Artists of the time dealt with her refusal to marry by depicting her, in text and images, as the chaste and virtuous Diana / Artemis. Another quality emphasized was her wisdom (quite deservedly; she was fluent in several languages and came to own one of the greatest libraries of her time), then she was depicted as Minerva / Pallas Athena, sometimes with an effigy of an owl. After the peace treaty of Westphalia, in 1648, which ended successfully for Sweden, with land conquerings and the gaining of an enormous war indemnity, she was also hailed as victorious (as Pallas Athena) and as a peace-maker (with laurels).

An excellent portrait (5), from about 1650 to 1674, by an unknown artist, depicts Queen Christina as Minerva,

with a shield and dressed to her knees in polished armour. But from there down, she is wearing a light gown, and on her feet gold-embroidered slippers. This, then, is a portrait of a woman dressed to fight if she must, but equally prepared for a life in peace. Above all, here we have a woman who is not going to let herself be dominated. The artist has admirably, I think, been able to catch several facets of her complex character.

Queen Christina's reign lasted only until 1654, when she abdicated, 28 years old, converted to Catholicism, and moved to Rome, where she was a passionate arts patron, commissioning works from composers like Corelli, Scarlatti and Stradella. She died in 1689 in Rome and was buried there, in St. Peter's Church.

In short: Queen Christina, with her life as weapon, also fought a battle for women's rights. She gave up her position and her country rather than to agree to marry, she chose to convert to cathohlicism at a time when it was a crime to be a catholic in Sweden, and she chose to pursue, for practically her whole life, her passionate interest in the arts (6).

Queen Christina has often been described as enigmatic, almost as often, I suppose, as the writers of her history have been men. The most provocative issues have been her abdication, her refusal to marry and her conversion to catholicism. She has also been severely criticized, by historians, for having spent large sums on diversions and pleasures. Indeed, enormous sums were spent - particularly after the return of Swedish warlords from the Thirty years' war. They brought, in many cases, enormous fortunes. Queen Christina's Swedish years were the heyday of the court ballets and entertainments in Sweden.

There are printed texts for 19 court ballets and entertainments (7). Together, they make a total of over 400 pages. 15 of the texts are French ones, 8 Swedish, and 7 German ones - some texts had versions in more than one language. The names of two maîtres de ballet are known: Antoine de Beaulieu and, from 1650, his assistant Jacques de Sonnes, also spelled des Ausne (8). Four authors have been identified: René Descartes, Hélie Poirier, Urbain Chevreaux and the Swede Georg Stiernhielm - by Swedish literary historians hailed as the father of Swedish poetry. With the exception of his texts, that have been scholarly edited, little research has been done. A beautiful sort of exception is, of course, the creation (closely after Then fångne Cupido), by Mary Skeaping, in 1956, of the ballet "Cupid out of His Humour", which formed the start of a splendid series of historical ballets in Sweden. In the original ballet Queen Christina performed, in 1649, the part of Diana.

Beside these entertainments there were bergeries (shepherd and shepherdess games, often outdoors), Schäfereien (which seems to be a German word for much the same thing), Wirtschaften (dressing up for mock receptions at inns), and there were ballets without printed texts, masked balls and other balls. Queen Christina is known to have taken an active part in these amusements, and was reported, at a masque on April 8, 1654, to have dressed up first as a moorish lady, then as a citizen's wife (9).

The text "Nachricht durch was Gelegenheit..." - Report on the Occasion when three Amazon Queens ...

The cartel was printed in two languages, German and Swedish, and there are actually four different versions preserved of that page only. The Swedish version seems to have been the first one, as there is one page with only two Amazons as signataries. I take that to be an early version, as all other documents have three Amazons. Then there were thirteen more text pages. The title page is an impressive one, with the letters printed in about ten different sizes. Obviously a lot of effort was made to give this page an impressive look. Seven of the other pages provide a literary motivation and dramatic foundation for the event. On several occasions, and this is an excellent example, organizers went to great lengths in order to supply a solid background for the staging. Let me call the seven pages the synopsis. It starts with Jove, finding himself one day being displeased with conditions being so calm and undisturbed in the Underworld. He decides to do something about it, summons Mercury, and sends him, dressed up as a deceased person, so as not to be recognized, to the Underworld with a letter addressed to "the most splendid sex". The consequences turn out to be just what Jove has hoped for - as indicated in the cartel. There are also in the synopsis extended discussions about which sex is the most outstanding one, and long reasons are given for travelling to Stockholm. There is also included a detailed exposition about the retinue going with the Amazons. In the end, Jove also wants to come along to see what happens, and he transforms himself into a falcon, as he does not wish to be recognized. Before leaving the Underworld, the Amazons ask Pluto if he would be so kind and let them be accompanied by creatures that once lived on earth, but are no more anywhere to be seen, so they got two pygmies, the cyclops Polyphemus, one man with a dog's head, one man with an enormous foot, one man with no head but his face in the chest (10) and one man with ears so long that they touch the ground. For security reasons Hercules was also sent, to keep an eye on these creatures.

Also included in the synopsis is a picturesque description of a pyramid, erected by the three Amazon queens to the eternal glory of Queen Christina. Four virtues personified, Prudence, Fortitude, Clemency and Temperance are described carrying a pyramid so high that its top touches one of heaven's spheres, and on top of this sphere is standing Eternity personified, holding in one hand a picture of Queen Christina, in the other an imperishable Crown to put on the Queen's head.

Two separate pages in the printed text give the order of the pageant, which was formed by no less than 35 units. It was lead by Fame followed by one Amazon beating kettle-drums and then by eight Amazons playing trumpets. The pageant included a total of 68 Amazons, some twenty gods and goddesses and classical heros, the muses and several nymphs, 36 horses, many sheep and dogs, 8 white oxen with silver horns, 2 bears, 2 monkeys, 2 mules, 1 deer, the falcon (Jove), and there was Pan with two satyrs. Except the pyramid there were four cars. On one of them was seen Mars, the god of war, reclining at the feet of Pax and Justitia.

The only iconography of all these ballets and entertainments is a four metre long set of gouaches, attributed to Nicolas Vallari, court painter to Queen Christina from 1647. The occasion was the pageant "The Splendours of Felicity", held on October 24th, 1650, four days after the coronation. Five pieces have been published in colour (11): 1. Mars and three knights - and three dancing girls, carrying their own instruments. 2. Amor and Venus and Happiness personified on a self-propelled car. 3. The car of Felicity, drawn by four unicorns with wings and a nymph on either side of them. In the car there are four nymphs, two children and, in the back, Unity and Felicity personified. 4. Apollo and the muses on Mount Parnassus. 5. Twenty warriors.

These pageants started at the Royal Castle. When equestrian games were to follow, the goal of the pageant was the tilting ground, north of the castle. About ten years later, the ground was converted to an indoor space. On an engraving (12), in the fashion of the time, the artist made very best efforts to make the building look impressive. We may safely assume that the persons in this engraving are severely diminished in size. But there were a hundred chandeliers hanging from the ceiling (13), so the building ought to have been in impressive sight.

One must bear in mind, though, that the challenge seems to have been forgotten once the equestrian games had started. They used to include moments like catching little rings on a lance from a horse in full gallop, but not tournaments in the conventional sense of the word. The important matter after the start of the games seems to have been to crown a winner, and there were award ceremonies with special prizes, as the Ladies' prize.

The Amazon entertainment has been poorly considered in the literature. The only reference to the cartel that I have found is a full quotation of the German version, without comments, in a Swedish book from 1911 (14). I insist, of course, that the text deserves better. I hope now that I have showed, that it deserves to be included also in dance history, even if not a single dance step was performed.

Notes

1. Five years ago I got a grant from the Board of Research and Artistic Development at the University College of Dance, Stockholm, to make a study on the text of this entertainment. I never succeded in having the study published. Here, a part of it has been used, with additions. For my journey, the Carina Ari Foundation in Stockholm generously made man an indespensable grant.

2. The date, not on the printed text, is given by Jonas Petri, member of Parliament, for the estate of the priests. He wrote a report from the parliament session in 1650. Petri is quoted by Beijer, Agne: Upptåg och ringränning in *Det glada Sverige; våra fester och högtider genom tiderna*, Stockholm 1947, part II, p. 780.

3. My translation here, and everywhere in this paper, is a loose one, staying close to the contents of the text. The title page was printed in German only: *Nachricht durch was Gelegenheit die berühmte Königinnen der Amazonen Antiope, Penthesilea Und Thalestris Mit etlichen Heldinnen auß den Eliseischen Feldern auff dem Creis der Erden angelanget/den Vorzug der Weiber für den Männern zuerweisen; welcher gestalt unterschiedliche Göttinnen/die Musae und die Tugende sich bey ihnen verfügt / und auff was weise diese gantze ansehnliche Gesellschafft Christina Der Durchleuchtigsten/Großmächtigsten und Hochgebornen Königin in Schweden/Bey Ihrer Crönung eine Ewige Gedechtnüß Ihrer unvergleichlichen Vollkommenheit auffgerichtet*, Stockholm, no date. The text is not paginated. My basis has been the Swedish version of the cartel.

4. The other two ones were Jakob Casimir de la Gardie (brother of Magnus Gabriel) and Gustaf af Ortala (Torstensson), according to Grönstedt, Johan: *Svenska Hoffester. I. Baletter, Idyller, Kostymbaler, Spektakler och Upptåg Uppförda vid Drottning Christinas Hof åren 1638-1654*, Stockholm 1911, p. 128.

5. Published in Rangström, Lena (ed.): *Riddarlek och tornerspel; Tournaments and the Dream of Chivalry*, bilingual exhibition catalogue, Livrustkammaren / The Royal Armoury, Stockholm, 1992, p. 154.

6. In fact, only last month, on May 30th, 2001, "La forza delle stelle" (The Power of the Stars), with scenario by Queen Christina and music by Stradella, was given its first performance in modern times - it seems not to have been established if it was actually performed at the time of its creation, around 1675. The collaboration was apparently a close one, as Queen Christina indicated which singers she wanted. See Loewe, Peter: *Premiär för verk av drottning*, Dagens Nyheter, May 29, 2001.

7. My list has been established after Klemming, Gustaf Edvard: *Sveriges dramatiska litteratur till och med 1875: bibliografi*, Stockholm 1863-1879, and Collijn, Isak Gustaf Alfred: *Sveriges bibliografi 1600-talet*, Uppsala 1942-46, and after photocopies from the originals, at the Royal Library, Stockholm.

8. Skeaping, Mary: *Ballet under the Three Crowns*, Dance Perspectives 32, New York 1967, p. 18.

9. Skeaping, pp. 26-27, quoting the Journal of Cromwell's ambassador, Bulstrode Whitelocke.

10. A nice picture was published in Rangström, Lena (ed.): *Riddarlek och tornerspel; Tournaments and the Dream of Chivalry*, Stockholm 1992, p. 155. There are also discussed German models to Swedish pageants.

11. Same catalogue, pp. 155-156.

12. An engraving by G. C. Eimmart, after Ehrenstrahl, was published by Skeaping. The size is larger in the Swedish edition, *Den svenska hovbaletten*, Stockholm 1983, p. 30.

13. Beijer, p. 784.

14. Grönstedt, pp. 129-131.

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See list of printed texts on last page.

Bohlin

Printed texts for court ballets and pagents/entertainments during the regency and reign (1632-1654) of Queen Christina of Sweeden.

Date	Author Title	Nr of pages
? 1638	(-) Le ballet des plaizirs de la vie des enfans sans soucy danzè deuant sa Majest. la Royne de Suede à Stockholm	(8 p.)
	(-) Le balet du cours du monde dansé deuant sa Majesté la Reine de Svede ...	(10 p.)
(Nov. 30) 1642	(-) Ballet, Vom Lauff der Welt, getantzt für die Königl. May:tt zu Schweden...	(11 p.)
Dec. 8, 1643	(-) Balet des phantaisies de ce temps dansé à Stockholm le 8. dec. lannee M. DC. XLIII. en presence de sa maiesté	(6 p.)
	(-) Balet Om thenna tijdzens fantasier ...	(7 p.)
Jan. 1, 1645	(-)Le Monde reiovi Balet, Dansé pour la Regence de sa Maiesté, à Stockholm ...	(28 p.)
	(-) Balet Om Heela Wärdenes Frögd förorsakadh aff Hennes Kongl. M.ts Lykelige Regeringz begynnelse / Dantsat upå Stockholms Slott / den 1 Januarij åhr 1645	(22 p.)
June 28, 1646	(-) Boutade [p. 1: Boutade Les effects de l'amour] Dansée à Stockholm ... en presence de sa Maiesté & de sa Cour [Note: The names of the performers have been added, in handwriting, in the copy at the Royal Library, Stockholm.]	(8 p.)
Sept. (?) 1646	(-) L'amour constant	(17 p.)
April 4, 1649	(-) Les passions Victorieuses et Vaincues Ballet. Dancé En presence de leurs Majestez à Stokholm le 4 d'Avril [Note: Also the names of the dancers are printed.]	(21 p.)
Nov. 1, 1649	(Poirier, Hélie) Le vaincu de Diane. Balet. Dansé au château Royal de Stokholm. En la prézance de la Sérénissime Rène, Mére de sa Majesté ... *also printed as* La Diane Victorieuse. Ballet. Dansé au château Royal de Stokholm. En la prézance de la Serenissime Rene, Mere de sa Majeste ...	(21 p.) (12 p; with several scenes abridged)
	(-) Die Überwundene Liebe. Ballet. ...	(21 p.)
	(Stiernhielm, Georg; Swedish version) Then fångne Cupido. Ballet.	(25 p)
Dec. 8, 1649	(Descartes, René) La Naissance de la Pais Ballet. Dansé au chasteau Royal de Stokholm	(15 p.)
	(-) Des Friedens Geburts-Tag. Ballet. ...	(13 p.)
	(Stiernhielm, Georg; Swedish version) Freds-Afl. ...	(18 p.)
March 3, 1650	(-) Les boutades ou proverbes. Balet. Dansé au Chateau Royal de Stockholm, en presence de leurs Majestez ...	(11 p.)
Oct. 24, 1650	(-) La Pompe de la felicité Conduite au couronnement de la tres Auguste Christine ...	(15 p.)
	(Stiernhielm, Georg; Swedish version): Lycksaligheetenes Åhre-Pracht ...	(11 p.)
(Nov. 2), 1650	(-) Nachricht durch was Gelegenheit die berühmten Königinnen der Amazonen ... [also called "The Moors' Pageant"]	(14-15 p; different versions)
(Nov. 5) 1650	(-) Nachdem das Gerücht fast täglich etwas newes ...	(1 p, but two versions)
	(-) Efter såsom Rycktet snart dageligen något Nytt ...	(3 p.)
Nov. 11, 1650	(Stiernhielm, Georg) Virtutes repertae. The igenfundne Dygders Vptogh Vppå then Stormechtigste Drotnings Christinae Lycklige Crönings-fest ...	(7 p.)
Jan. (9) 1651	(-) Le parnasse triumphant ... Ce Magnifique Ballet Fut dansé devant sa Magéste, dans son Pallais de Stocolme, en la grande Salle des Machines ... [Note: Includes the names of many performers]	(24 p.)
	(-) Der Triumphierende Parnaß ... Getantzet wurd den 9 Ianuarii ...	(17 p.)
	(Stiernhielm, Georg; Swedish version): Parnassus triumphans Ballet ...	(20 p.)
Dec. 8, 1651	(-) Einhalt des Ridderkampfes zu Fuße / Welcher Cristina, der Durchleuchtigsten / Großmechtigsten und Hochgeborenen Königin ... zu Stockholm ist gehalten worden ... [Includes a list of participants]	(4 p.)
	(-) Spectaculum Certaminis Pedestris ...	(11 p.)
Dec. 8, 1652	(Chevreaux, Urbain) Les liberalitez des dieux ...	(22 p.)
? 1653	(-) La Masquarade des Vaudeuilles ... [Includes a list of participants]	(7 p.)
(Dec. 8) 1653	(-) Mars introduisant les Chevaliers du Combat de Barriere ...	(7 p.)

Dates within brackets are disputed and/or from other sources. Particularly important contemporary sources are letters written by the young courtier Johan Ekeblad to his father and brother, practically every week, and a diary by Jonas Petri, member of Parliament, representing the Clergy.

These entertainments were performed only once. The only exception seems to have been Le vaincu de Diane / Then fångne Cupido, which was performed twice.

December 8, when several of the entertainments took place, was the Queen's birthday.

Recovering Meaning: Documents and Interpretation

Lynn Matluck Brooks

In this presentation, I urged a reconsideration of some current trends in academic history research, including dance history research. I focussed on two trends: 1) the use of jargon-laden language that made much recent work awkward to read and difficult for any but the initiated to understand; and 2) the imposition of research theories, methods, or agendas overlaid on the historical material that is purportedly the subject of the research. The former trend, I have observed, is often prompted by the latter. Recognizing, however, the powerful influences of current theories of truth, knowledge, and historical fact, I pointed to the helpful resolutions I have found in the work of Hans Georg Gadamer, whose "philosophical hermeneutics" addresses the nature of "alienation" in our encounters with art and with history—appropriate encounters for the dance historian. Gadamer's stress on "dialogue" between text and researcher provides a useful context for reconsidering the role of the historian as a translator or mediator of the past into the present.

Drawing on my own archival experiences, over the course of more than twenty years of work in both European and American contexts, I discussed the nature of encounters I have had with specific sorts of documents, including dance images, and the ways I attempted to "hear" the meanings embodied in those texts. The particular sorts of contextualizations the documents called for to make their meanings clear was a further subject of this presentation. I posed the following as appropriate questions for the (dance) historian:

1. How can I approach a document to "let it read itself" to me?
2. How can I hear what a document is telling me?
3. What sorts of questions yield which sorts of answers?
4. How critical is the role of language in penetrating meanings of documents we encounter?
5. What is the role of visual imagery (iconography) in understanding verbal documentation?
6. How does the researcher determine the contextualization necessary for bringing the document to life?
7. How can the historian translate the document's meaning into a perspective understandable to the contemporary reader?

I stressed also the importance of what we recognize as belonging to the category of history—that is, the history *of* something or someone—rather than fitting better into the category of a related social science— anthropology, sociology, economics, or statistics, for example. By confusing what constitutes the doing of history and the product of historical research, we run the risk of losing access to the sorts of research and findings that result only from historical study. Further, we face the error of applying theories before we have the facts to sustain them.

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Cancan: Blurring the Line Between Social Dance and Stage Performance

Renée Camus

During the nineteenth century, a dichotomy began to grow, differentiating dance as a social event and dance as a stage performance. The dance master Henri Cellarius in his 1847 treatise stated, "For a longtime, and even in the present day, people have confounded, or at least have not distinguished with sufficient clearness the fashionable dance from the dance of the theater. . . . In our day, . . . the drawing-room dance, according to the new character which has invested it within the last few years, is almost entirely independent of that of the theater."[1] One of the earlier forms of dance that was both a social dance as well as a professional entertainment was the *chahut,* danced by professional dancers in a social milieu, and more commonly known as the cancan.

The cancan has become an icon of 'Gay Paris,' in the 1890s with its chorus line of long-legged girls, kicking high into the air in perfect unison, their many white petticoats making a frothy sea of fabric around their stockinged skin. Few are aware, however, that this picture of 1890s Paris did not actually come into existence until the 1920s. The cancan of the 1890s was a dance for a few people, usually from one to four, not in a line, and not performed in unison. It was more of a social dance, performed in a social venue. This paper will explore the cancan as a dance that was simultaneously a social and a performance dance.

The term 'social dance' is a relatively recent one, in use since the end of the nineteenth century. Previously, dance masters used terms such as 'fashionable dances' or 'drawing-room dances' to differentiate from 'theatrical dances.' Toward the end of the century, as drawing-room dances became standardized and dance masters were teaching and publishing steps, 'social dance' became a universally accepted term.

Earlier social dances assumed a knowledge of complicated steps and figures to be repeated in a specified sequence. As dances evolved in the nineteenth century due to societal and political changes, the emphasis in social dances shifted from fancy footwork to group movement patterns, especially as the middle class began to join the upper classes in its pursuit of leisure. The dances grew simpler, as Cellarius stated, "having for its principal characteristic ease, nature and freedom of motion, all of them qualities that we may consider inherent in people of fashion."[2] This movement differed from that of dancers becoming known for their prowess in stage dancing, as dance master William DeGarmo wrote in 1875, "befitting the

genius of Taglioni, Elssler, and Grisi . . . [and] requir[ing] in its classic poses, poetical movement, and almost supernatural strength and agility."[3] Despite the acclaim that these dancers may have garnered, stage dancers were often thought of as little more than prostitutes, and a difference in dance movements may have been needed to appease 'people of fashion.' Again, to quote Cellarius, "why should not the graces of the drawing-room and of fashionable life differ from those of the stage, which are of necessity more studied, and in some respects of a graver character?"[4] All of these factors drew to the necessity for distinguishing terms.

Social dance, as defined in the *International Encyclopedia of Dance,* describes "dancing to musical accompaniment by men and women in contemporary dress on celebratory, secular occasions. They involve a variety of dances with a generally agreed upon vocabulary of steps that may be combined at will by the individual. They arise from among the more robust, less constrained layers of society to find general acceptance."[5] Author and historian Jack Anderson writes, "there are at least two basic kinds of dance. One exists primarily for the benefit, edification, or amusement of the dancers who perform it. Folk and ballroom dances are examples of this form . . . The other basic kind of dance assumes that its movements can be watched with pleasure; in fact, it exists to be watched. This kind of dance might be called theatrical dance . . ."[6]

As the nineteenth century progressed, and as social dances moved away from the set patterns of quadrilles and contredanses, improvisation became more of a factor. Improvisation is one of the major characteristics of social dance. It is often difficult to remember what one has done when improvising, unless one tries specifically to choreograph it or notate it after execution. For that reason, improvised dances are different every time. Theatrical or performance dances are usually choreographed, sometimes by the presenting dancers, but more often by an outside party, and are practiced and rehearsed the same way, many times, before being performed. As a result, each performance is essentially the same.

Social dances are usually done not on a stage, but in an open space, such as a social club, classroom, dance hall or pavilion. Performance dance is usually danced on a stage with an audience who pays for the opportunity to see that particular performance, or those particular dancers. If there are any observers in the social situation, they are probably also there with the intention of dancing, not

necessarily expecting to watch or to be entertained. They do not pay to see the performance, and the dancers, in turn, are not paid for their efforts, nor are they expecting to be the entertainment.

Professional dancers, people who are paid to dance to entertain others or who make their living by dancing, are in a different category than amateur dancers. Professionalism implies a level of specialized training or ability worthy of payment. Performance dance is often presented by professional dancers, but social dancers can be either professionals or amateurs. Audience members at professional performances expect this level of expertise, and therefore go with a critical eye. Some even go hoping or expecting to see mistakes, which was especially true in the nineteenth century. Attendees at social dances do not necessarily go with the intent of being an audience, nor do professional dancers attend social dances with the intent of performing. In fact, they go to a social dance in order to let loose and enjoy themselves, capering about in any way they please. If people choose to observe, they are not necessarily expecting the dancers to perform flawlessly. This was definitely the case with the cancan, especially as aristocratic patrons would attend dance halls like the Moulin Rouge while 'slumming it.'

One may say that there were three eras of the cancan. It began its development in the 1830s, in response to the rebellion and social unrest of the July revolution. Created by the students and working class girls who frequented the *bals* and dance halls of Paris, it was originally called the *chahut*. These dancers took the steps of the polka, popular at the time, and expanded them, making them larger and much more grandiose, incorporating kicks, leaps, and even acrobatics, to make it more interesting. With the inclusion of such large movements, female dancers felt it necessary to lift their heavy skirts out of the way. Elaborating on the polka-quadrille, a square dance using polka steps, the *chahut* was danced in quadrille formation. As the dance was based entirely on improvisation, the number and variety of people dancing had a great effect on its development.

During the Second Empire in France, dancers from the Paris Opera began attending these *bals*, and incorporated some of their fancier and more difficult steps. With the invention of the *quadrille naturaliste*, a version of the *chahut* in which partners separated, participants were allowed more room for solo improvisation. The rebellious spirit of the revolution of 1848 combined with decadence and blind-sighted idealism during the Second Empire to create larger and more dynamic steps. Many dancers invented 'signature steps' for which they became known. These steps were passed around, traded, or stolen, and incorporated into later choreographed versions, becoming some of the more familiar aspects of the dance today. However, despite the repetition of signature steps, the dance was still improvised, and therefore different every time it was performed.

The cancan nearly died out with France's loss of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, but saw a resurgence in the late 1880s, thus beginning its second era. Adding greatly to the cancan's surge in popularity was the opening of the Moulin Rouge in 1889. Frequented by both the bourgeoisie and the working classes, this combination dance hall, cabaret, and pleasure garden offered an array of entertainment and leisure activities, from dancing or watching dancers, to eating, drinking, and socializing, and presented a variety of entertainers, including singers, exotic dancers, acrobats, trapeze artists, and musicians, even one who created music by breaking wind. The manager, Charles Zidler, was aware of the growing popularity of the *chahut* and *quadrille naturaliste* at nearby dance halls, and sought to promote it, inviting the best dancers from those balls to dance at the Moulin Rouge. As fewer men were taking part, this quadrille was often danced by four people, rather than four couples, usually three women and one man, or four women.

With the popularity of skirt dancers like Kate Vaughan, and the innovative movements of Loïe Fuller, cancan dancers began incorporating skirt manipulations much more than in the earlier cancan, and often for intentional display of the frilly underclothes, the most embellished and pleasing variety yet in history, rather than for ease of movement. This dance still included fancy high kicks and signature steps such as *la roue* or the cartwheel, the *port d'armes*, a figure in which the dancer holds her outstretched ankle in her hand while hopping around in a circle, and the *grand écarts*, or split.

In both of the previously mentioned eras of the cancan, many of the dancers became stars, known for their prowess and value as entertainers, and often associated with certain signature steps. The stars of the 1890s are better known today than those of the Second Empire, thanks to the fact that many of their audience members were artists who captured their likenesses in paintings and posters of the time. These artists include Pablo Picasso, Georges Seurat, Jules Chéret, and of course, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Lautrec, who "tried to depict the true and not the ideal,"[7] painted many scenes of dance halls and *bals*, many of which included cancan dancers in action. Lautrec helped to further the careers of many of the *cancaneuses*, especially after being commissioned by Zidler, the manager at the Moulin Rouge, to advertise for his club. The two most well known of the 1890s *cancaneuses* were La Goulue and Jane Avril, both favorite models of Lautrec. Just as Toulouse-Lautrec turned a conventional idiom, posters intended for advertising, into an art form, so did the social dancers he portrayed become larger than life representations of the dance hall culture.

While it is true that many of the stars of the Second Empire cancan were dancers from the Paris Opera ballet corps, many of them were not. Especially in the latter part

of the century, the cancan stars were not necessarily stars of any other sort of dance or entertainment genre. They were regular customers who happened to have a flair for the dance, and suddenly found themselves thrust into the limelight. Many of the women danced as a release from the hard working day, or to escape their unpleasant home life. The more they enjoyed themselves, allowing complete acquiescence to the music and the movement, the more they caught the attention of passing observers. At the Moulin Rouge, they also caught the eye of Zidler, who invited them back and offered to pay them to dance. In the terms of this paper, the practice of payment in exchange for dance graduates an amateur dancer to a different category, that of a professional.

The previously mentioned Jane Avril and La Goulue are both examples of amateurs turned professional. Jane Avril suffered a difficult childhood, having spent some time in an asylum, and was nearly forced into prostitution by her mother. She began dancing as an escape from her home life. She was Lautrec's favorite model, captured in more than 50 of his works. A demure, quiet woman who preferred to dance alone, often to a waltz rather than a polka, her cancan was more alluring; sensual and uninhibited, without being coarse or vulgar. Her dancing was more refined and artistic than the other *cancaneuses*, using a style more akin to skirt dancing, but she still displayed abandon and sometimes volatile acquiescence to the music. Arthur Symons described her appearance as suggesting "depraved virginity, a mixture of corruption and innocence."[8] Everyone respected her, including the other dancers at the Moulin Rouge, though perhaps because of the protection shown her by Zidler. She was the only dancer at the Moulin Rouge allowed to wear colored knickers, rather than the traditional white required of the other dancers. Also unlike the others, she was the only one able to avoid having a nickname, though attempts were made to call her Mélinite, a type of dynamite, and Jane la Folle, "Crazy Jane," both descriptive of her frame of mind when she danced.

La Goulue, born Louise Weber, a laundress' daughter who would often 'borrow' the fancy underclothes of her mother's wealthier clients, was known for her boisterous, provocative version of the *quadrille naturaliste*. She was a coarse woman who reveled in her individuality and strength, and was the perfect counterpart to Jane Avril. Many were taken by her, probably entertained by, or even jealous of, her brash courage and unabashed behavior, both on and off the dance floor. The cheeky (perhaps literally?) La Goulue became known for tossing her skirts over her back and flashing her derriere to the audience, displaying a small red heart embroidered on her knickers. She was discovered by dancer Valentin-le-Désossé. Le-Désossé, meaning "the boneless one," was the only man known for the cancan in the Belle Époque, and was also captured, though not as prominently, in the works of Toulouse-Lautrec.

In 1896, Jane Avril traveled to England with three other dancers to perform the cancan on a music hall stage. They called themselves the Troupe Eglantine, named for the dancer who assembled the troupe. The dancers found that they needed to change the dance to suit this new performance space. This was the first time the cancan began to incorporate the kick line formation so well known today. The chorus line, with its precision dance style, was introduced to France by a troupe traveling from America in the 1890s. Despite the 1890s costumes that modern cancan performers wear, it was not until 1924 that the version so familiar today evolved. The resident choreographer of the newly reopened Moulin Rouge, Pierre Sandrini, is credited with developing this cancan, having adopted the regimented, unison style of the chorus line and adding it to his choreographed cancan.

As previously mentioned, the cancan developed in the open area of the dance floor at working class balls and dance halls, helping to define it as a social dance. Although the dancers were in the large parameters of the ballroom, their space was limited by their observers. This is unlike what we saw in the first video, but many descriptions and paintings of the period depict this, including many of Toulouse-Lautrec's. Despite the fact that the dancers' classification may have changed from amateur to professional, paid for their performances, they still danced in the middle of the open dance floor, just as they did when they were amateurs. As spectators stopped to watch, surrounding the dancers on all sides, they delineated the perimeters of their self-made stage. Ivor Guest quotes an observer at the Bal Mabille: "The foreigners and country visitors and *gobemouches* [simpletons] would gather around, forming a wall six or seven deep leaving a space of ten to fifteen feet for the dancers."[9] There are accounts of passing audience members being injured by the high kicks of the *cancaneuses*.

This raises the question: how much does an audience add to a performance, especially when they are as close to the performers as they are in these dance halls, in fact, giving the 'stage' its dimensions? The closeness of the audience has an absolute impact on the effect of the performance, for many reasons. Often, the cancan dancers would involve the spectators in their performances. Finette la Bordelaise, a *cancaneuse* in the Second Empire, made popular the practice of kicking the top-hat off an unsuspecting observer's head, a trick which many others also practiced, including La Goulue; in fact, Nicole Kidman alludes to it in the new movie *Moulin Rouge*. A scene at the Bal Mabille, described by an American observer, helps to prove several of the previously mentioned points:

> A young girl, brown-eyed and with long masses
> of chestnut hair, then bounded to the centre of
> the circle, and commenced to throw herself into

the wildest and most indecent positions, in which exhibition she was soon joined by another of the group. Each fresh pose was more pronounced than those which had preceded it, and called down lively applause from the spectators. One of the women suddenly sprang into the air and then came down to the ground with both legs at right angles to her body. A shout of laughter hailed this exploit, and a dozen hands were held out to help her from the ground; but disdaining all such aid, she sprang lightly to her feet, and both she and her companion took their places for their final effort. Deliberately gathering up their long skirts, they threw them over their shoulders and thus left themselves unencumbered and exposed to the public view from their waists to their feet. In this condition they executed all manner of capers, with the utmost ease and coolness. One of the spectators venturing to thrust his face too close, the younger girl suddenly threw up her leg and with her foot sent his hat rolling into the circle amidst the yells and laughter of the lookers-on, and without pausing a moment went hopping around the circle with her foot higher than her head.[10]

In the ballrooms, regardless of either the lack of spectators, or the spectators being on all sides, there was no restraint on the direction the dancers needed to face. They were able to face any direction they wished, and their movements could be observed from all sides. Part of the adoption of the kick line formation owed to the fact that the dance could no longer be observed from any direction, as the audience was in one place: the 'fourth wall.'

When considering the effect an audience has on a performance, one must sometimes take into account the audience's expectations. This may have been a problem in the initial performances of the Troupe Eglantine, with whom Jane Avril traveled to England in 1896. The audience did not react to the dancers as favorably as they may have liked. They were perhaps anticipating much more of the perceived naughtiness of France in the 1890s, combined with the kick lines of chorus girls who had preceded the Troupe Eglantine. This perception seems to have influenced the later cancan of the twentieth century.

In the ballrooms, the dancers could also be restricted by the other dancers with whom they shared the floor. Dancers would sometimes compete for space and the attention of the audience. These dancers could be professionals or amateurs, though it is believed that the amateurs did not participate at entertainment venues like the Moulin Rouge and the Jardin de Paris as much as they would at some of the other *bals*. Not all dancers, however, would compete for audience attention. Some danced more for their own enjoyment. Jane Avril was one such dancer,

trying to avoid being classified as a professional. She would often dance for no pay at halls like the Moulin de la Galette, and the Bal Bullier, public *bals* frequented by amateur dancers.

The ballrooms acted as a leveler among classes, especially with the opening of the Moulin Rouge, in which members of the elite could socialize with members of the working class. More often than not, the men, more spectators than participants, were from the upper class, and often considered themselves to be 'slumming it,' while the women, especially the dancers, were of a lower social standing. A perfect example of this is La Goulue with her working class upbringing, and her partner Valentin le Désossé, who came from a respectable bourgeois family. Toulouse-Lautrec was an aristocrat, but would spend hours every night at the Moulin Rouge sketching scenes. At the dance halls, spectators, despite their class or social status, could pay one price for any 'seat' in the house. If they were unhappy with their location, they could move until they found a better one. In addition, they could see a variety of performances, either different dancers performing their own interpretation of the cancan, or other acts.

With many of the performers, the show did not end when the dancing finished. This was especially the case with La Goulue, whose very personality became part of her act. She flirted with and insulted customers, challenged other dancers, and even tossed back some of the patrons' drinks, living up to her nickname "the Glutton." The nickname was probably also given for her voracious sexual appetite, and it was well known that she actually preferred women. La Môme Fromage, "the cheese kid," another *cancaneuses*, was her lover, and they were often seen together, sometimes fighting, in public. In one well-known painting by Lautrec, she is seen entering the Moulin Rouge arm in arm with La Môme Fromage, wearing, especially for that period, a very low-cut gown, under which it would have been impossible to wear a corset. At that time, women who did not wear corsets were considered loose, in more ways than one.

When the cancan took on the chorus line formation in its development as a stage dance, it lost some of the spontaneity it had in the dance halls. This is due in part to forgoing improvisation in lieu of choreography, which is needed to maintain the precision and unison necessary for the chorus lines. This is often a problem when placing social dances on a stage, as staging a social dance for performance automatically makes it a contradiction in itself. As mentioned earlier, a major difference between social dance and performance is improvisation and spontaneity. With choreographed dances, there is the risk of the dances becoming staid or uninteresting to the dancers as it is repeated and practiced many times the same way, especially something that requires as much energy and stamina as the cancan. This, combined with the distance between the performers and the audience, can result in a lack of

the energy that improvised social dances have. Perhaps to make up for the drop in energy, the later cancan choreographers tried to create a spectacle by choreographing for large numbers of dancers.

All dances develop and change over time, and many can be said to be simultaneously performance dance and social dance. The cancan was one of the first since the separation of social and theatrical dance. As we have seen, it incorporates aspects of both forms, especially in its origins as a social dance and its eventual metamorphosis into one for performance. Often performed in a social milieu, a cafe or dance hall rather than on a stage, the 1890s cancan was steeped in improvisation as a social dance, but danced for an audience. Cancan dancers were amateurs turned professionals, admired for their skill and paid for their performances. They created an intimate atmosphere for their audiences, who were appreciative and paid money, either intentionally or inadvertently, to see them. In its transformation into a stage performance – the style more commonly envisioned today – the dance became more a reflection of Hollywood in the twentieth century than that of the nineteenth century. Despite the fact that one can see the necessity for adopting the chorus line formation as the dance was geared more for audience enjoyment, one should still be aware of the differences seen in the early cancan, the dance that truly was a social dance and a performance in one.

Notes:

1. Henri Cellarius, *The Drawing-Room Dances* (London: Damrell & Moore, 1847), 11.
2. Ibid., 12.
3. William DeGarmo, *The Dance of Society: A Critical Analysis of all the Standard Quadrilles, Round Dances, 102 Figures of Le Cotillon ("The German"), &c.* (New York: Wm. A. Pond & Co., 1875), 13.
4. Cellarius, 11.
5. Don McDonagh, "Twentieth Century Social Dance Before 1960," *International Encyclopedia of Dance*, edited by Selma Jeanne Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1998), 5:626-27.
6. Jack Anderson, *Dance* (New York: Newsweek Books, 1974), 8.
7. *T-Lautrec: The Posters of Toulouse-Lautrec.* San Diego Museum of Art, 1996. <www.sandiegomuseum.org/lautrec/quotes.html>
8. As quoted in David Price, *Cancan!* (New Jersey: Farleigh Dickenson University Press, 1998), 51.
9. Ivor Guest, "Bal Mabille," *Ballet* [London], 3/2 (February 1947): 42.
10. An American observer reported by Ivor Guest, as quoted in David Price, *Cancan!* 42.

Changing Views: A Critical History of Second Wave Feminist and Post-Feminist Debate and Its Manifestation in Writings on Ballet

Alexandra Carter

This paper is a development of recent research on ways in which feminist scholars have treated ballet - and the ballerina - badly (Carter, 1999). This research concluded with suggestions for how the history of the art form, its repertoire and its executants could be rescued from the stern frown of feminism by reconceptualising the theoretical frameworks which bound its viewing. Although an historical perspective on the gender debate was not my intent, during the research process it soon became clear that there were not only distinctive theoretical approaches at any one time, but changing views over time. This is inevitable, for feminism has always embraced a variety of approaches within its broad political remit and changes in 'extrinsic' paradigms have been absorbed in to dance scholarship.

The following analysis traces the trajectory of discourse from the 1970s to 2000, identifying how key concepts and concerns in second wave feminist and postfeminist debate are manifest in dance literature.[1] Ballet is chosen as a 'case study', for it offers a useful model through which to demonstrate the relationship between changing theory and changing views of dance. In tracing this relationship over the last thirty years or so, the intention is not to indicate progress in critical thinking. As Barrett & Phillips (1992) suggest, later theory is not necessarily better theory. Earlier readings of the repertoire were not 'wrong', later ones are not 'right'; they merely demonstrate a currency of debate particular to their time. That currency may change, but its value does not. Mindful of the dangers of conflating literature from the USA and the UK, I also make the assumption that there is a shared currency of ideas.

While it is a consensus of agreement in feminist debate that there has never been a consensus of agreement, that there is no one 'feminism', there were common assumptions which formed the bedrock of Anglo-American writing from the 1960s. These included a search for the causes of women's oppression which was identified as rooted in the social structure; in the inequalities of patriarchal systems. 'Feminists united around the need to establish theories of social causation and to specify "sites of oppression" for "women" as a social group' (Brooks 1997:7). The institutions and systems of the social order embodied dominant patriarchal ideologies; the feminist project centred on the identification of their mechanisms in order to expose ways in which the binary oppositions of masculine and feminine were unequally constructed.

From the 1980s there was, as Barrett (1992:204) describes, an 'extensive turn to culture' which broadened the enquiry from the historical and sociological to the cultural and artistic. The writings of Daly (1987/8), Alderson (1987) and Adair (1992) exemplify approaches which seek to identify how the historical repertoire of ballet embodies the masculine - feminine divide and symbolises, on stage, the dominant gender ideologies of a patriarchal society. In an influential article, Daly (1987) offers an excellent example of writing which placed ballet firmly in the debate on the constructed nature of cultural representation. Her analysis of ballet in general and Balanchine in particular centred around notions of how male and female danced roles present the active/passive; displayer/displayed; strong/ vulnerable, etc. My own work (1996) similarly identifies these polarities in relation to all forms of dance. The classical ballet repertoire was seen also to present binary images of womanhood itself. For example, Hanna (1988: 173) claimed that ballet presented the 'virginal love or the passionate heartthrob' and Adair (1992: 105) suggested that 'for many people, the virginal Odette and the whorish Odile are the essence of ballet'.

Ideology, characterised by Mills (1995: 208) as 'a set of seemingly coherent ideas which represent our experience to us in stereotypical ways', was a central concept in gender discourse. In relation to ballet, Daly (1987:19) pleads that the audience must 'learn to look critically: past the chivalric rhetoric to the underlying ideology'. In his discussion of Giselle, Act 2, Alderson aptly entitles his work ' Ballet as Ideology'. Although he acknowledges that we cannot dismiss aesthetic readings of art, for 'we must still come to terms with the actual experience of beauty' (p.291), the main thrust of his argument is that our 'experience of beauty' is ideologically grounded and we have, therefore, 'to perceive how ideology is presented in and through aesthetic value and not apart from it' (p.291). The aesthetic realm, our 'experience of beauty', is one that is often overlooked in ideologically-based readings of dance, where 'readings' do become, almost literally, readings of narrative.[2]

In addition to the masculine/feminine constructs which embody a gender ideology, a further binary which pervades feminist writings on dance is that of ballet and modern dance. Although ballet was rejected by many modern dance practitioners as not conducive for expressing the concerns of the new century, in critical writings the casting of ballet as all 'bad' and modern dance as all

'good' reflects the postmodern, and postcolonial, suspicion of the privileging of 'high', Western culture and a rejection of the reverence accorded to history. Germaine Greer, back in 1971, categorised ballet as 'the favourite spectacle of the middle class female' (p.181), a claim which is inaccurate but which reflects the suspicion of any cultural endeavour seen to be tinged with a class bias. The tendency to place popular culture as central to analyses of culture resulted in an implicit or explicit damming of 'high' culture. If ballet was the dominant meta-narrative of theatre dance, feminist writers were not just incredulous but overtly dismissive of the form. This stance is summarised in Dempster's (1988) claim that ballet tends to 'reinforce patriarchal and phallocentric modes of social and sexual interaction' whereas other dance forms - the modern - can 'challenge and deconstruct dominant cultural inscription'. Thus, whilst 'Western theatrical dance provides feminist analysis with its potentially richest material' (Daly 1991:2), ballet came off poorest.

The advantage of these approaches which focussed on how ballet re-presented gender ideology was that they placed the art form in the debate on the symbolic - and actual - relationship between art and culture. It was claimed that ballet was not a transcendent form which embodied universal ideals of beauty, nor did it present relationships between the sexes in fairy stories which apparently bore no relationship to life as it is lived. On the contrary, in its presentation of polarised representations of women and the binary constructions of femininity and masculinity, ballet's hegemonic role was revealed.

Dempster's aforementioned characterisation of ballet as a 'phallocentric' mode of social interaction reveals an alternative way of approaching dance which drew upon theories from psychoanalysis. Feminist criticism had shifted 'from an earlier sociological emphasis on "content" to an emphasis on the production of meaning' (Brooks 1997: 163). This analytic strategy was not on how cultural representations resonated with inequalities in the social structure, but on 'the unconscious of patriarchal society' (Brooks 1997:164) wherein 'the silent image of woman ... (is)... the bearer not maker of meaning' (p.165). The image of the ballerina as silent is prevalent in most feminist writing, most particularly so where she is cast as object of the male gaze. For the female viewer, this is gaze is problematic (see, for example, Foster 1996) but the construct has infiltrated much feminist writing on ballet.

Lacanian theory which claimed language as a symbolic order also provided a strategy for conceiving ballet as 'a patriarchal symbolic order . . . the language of the father' (Dempster 1988: 41). The metaphorical construct of the phallus, symbolic of male power, has been harnessed to the image of the ballerina. As far back as 1971, Jill Johnson saw the leg extension as 'an unrelieved exercise in phallic erected exhibitionism' (in Hanna 1988: 174). Rose English (1980) analyses the appeal of the ballerina

to men in the audience by using the phallus as an image projected on to the dancer's body - described as erect, stiff and manipulated by the male dancer. Later, Susan Foster similarly suggests 'the ballerina-as- phallus provokes an analysis of the performance of both feminine and masculine desire' (1996: 30).

In summary, approaches to ballet and gender from the 1970s onwards drew upon either theories of cultural representation which, by reading narrative, privileged the meanings of 'content' or on psychoanalytical theory which focussed not so much on the 'meaning' itself but the processes by which meaning is produced.

I take a small digression here to reflect upon how dominant theoretical paradigms not just frame our view of the world, but become our view of the world. For example, when reviewing the literature for this research, I began thinking about my own past work and was pleased to find that, as Nancy Miller discusses, 'personal criticism . . . entails an explicitly autobiographical performance' (1991:1). As thinking about oneself has now been theorised as 'an autobiographical performance' I feel better about speaking about myself. I do see my own research as deeply embedded in the feminist consciousness which I've outlined in this paper so far. My work on the music hall ballet started off as a history but I 'found' that images of the dancers, as constructed on stage and in other contemporary media, were polarised into images which neatly mirrored, and contributed to the dominant perception of the period which cast women as either angel or whore, lily or rose. I wasn't looking for binary oppositions - but I found them. But if I had not had a consciousness of them, would I have recognised them? Who knows? This does not invalidate my research, nor any of the research I discuss in this paper, for to claim that there is a 'pure' way of looking at the world is nonsensical, but it has been an interesting exercise to reflect on how sympathetic theoretical stances are imbued within one's own work - and how, over time, changing theories shift one's perceptions, one's views. External paradigms about gender 'shifted', although, as I'll now go on to suggest , early dance writing was troubled by inconsistencies but writers were bound by theoretical models which constrained their outlook.

As suggested in my paper presented at the SDHS Conference in 1999, most of the writers who explore the relation of ballet to gender reveal some ambiguity in their approach. They are 'strenuously disassociating themselves from the seductiveness of the feminine texts . . . (for) . . . the critic turns against her own "worse" self, the part of her which has not yet been "liberated" from shameful fantasies' (Modelski 1982: 14). For example, as Griffiths (1995) discusses, many women reject romantic fiction because of its appeal to traditional femininity but they also enjoy it - a case of reading Mills and Boon behind a brown paper cover. The feminist ballet critic has, perhaps, re-

acted against the 'fantasies' of ballet, for identification with its traditional casting of femininity might be 'shameful'. Nevertheless, usually as an aside, these writers acknowledge two tensions in their own argument. First, that ballet is a seductive form which draws not just on a political response but on our sensory engagement. Second, part of its seductiveness is our admiration for the virtuosity of the dancers. Even Germaine Greer acknowledged that the dancer's 'solo exhibitions demand great power and discipline' (1971: 181). There were also hints in earlier writings of re-readings of traditional narratives, as Adair does when suggesting that the 'baddie' Madge, the soothsayer in La Sylphide who controls James' fate, by not allowing him to possess his ideal woman 'is victorious in the end' (1992 :100). Perhaps morality lies with Madge. Similarly, Foster anticipates an escape from the psychoanalytical constructions which trap the dancer. At the end of a powerful polemic which appears to cast the ballerina forever more in her phallic identity, silent subject of the gaze, Foster asks how the ballerina might '. . . create a new identity, dangerously ambiguous or constantly changing that would elude the viewer's grasping gaze?' (1996: 16/17).

The tensions and problems in early writings on ballet can be summarised as:

- a turn to culture meant a turn away from history; 'discourse' replaced the material conditions of the production and reception of dance (Palmer 1990)
- tensions are evident between political readings of narrative - its ideological function - and the writers' holistic experience of the dance itself
- similarly, suspicion of the virtuosity which objectified the dancer was tinged with admiration for her remarkable skills
- the male gaze implied a psychoanalytic construction which rests on a binary conception of power in which women - and the performer - have no place.

Those writers - and dance practitioners - who did not find a resolution to the tensions embodied in their response to ballet were, I suggest, straining at the leash of a unitary feminist position. They/we were speaking our own personal experience against the political discourses of a pluralistic, but nevertheless 'universal' feminism. We were, as Miller (1991) suggests in relation to the changing nature of feminist criticism, on the cusp of new ways of conceiving identity politics wherein the universal 'I', the universal 'woman', is ruptured; where identity is not a stable, unitary whole but an unstable, fragmented 'web' (Griffiths 1995). It is this notion of a multiple identity, which can embrace a multiple viewing identity, which forms a key trajectory in postfeminist debate.

Postfeminism can be characterised as a series of challenges to the unitary categories of thought which were taken as 'given' in feminist analysis:

> contemporary Western feminism, confident for several years about its 'sex/gender distinction', analysis of 'patriarchy' or postulation of the 'male gaze' has found all these categories undermined by the new 'deconstructive' emphasis on fluidity and contingency'
>
> Barrett in Barrett & Phillips 1992:202

Postfeminism, which developed through the 1980s and 1990s, is not a rejection of past political stances, but a teasing out of the premises on which they are based. It represents 'a confident body of theory and politics, representing pluralism and difference' (Brooks 1997: 1). Conceptual categories such as 'oppression'; 'patriarchy'; 'women' are seen to be not monolithic but contingent on social and personal context, for 'though all women are women, no woman is only a woman' (Spelman in Evans, 1995: 6/7). The one-axis analysis of gender and patriarchal ideology had negated this pluralism of social experience. The binary construction of gender into masculine and feminine left out the possibility of accommodating the gay, lesbian or bisexual experience. A rejection of binaries, a consideration of sexuality and a questioning of the gaze allows, therefore, for much more fluid, open and changing perspectives on dance.

Writings on the *pas de deux* exemplify how our approach to the 'meanings' of dance have broadened. This doublework has been theorised as 'the outstanding and widely recognised sign of sexuality. . . in which the man supports, manipulates and often conquers the woman' (Hanna 1988:166). Although Hanna also notes that the *pas de deux* can convey a host of contradictory messages, the constraints of feminist theorising about gender did not accommodate the contradictions which she glimpses, but cannot pursue. Burt, in 1995, takes a more cautious line:

> it would be simplistic to discuss the *pas de deux* as no more than an exhibition in which the female dancer is an object to be manipulated. The actual practice of partnering and lifting is one which requires a high degree of co-operation between male and female dancer'
>
> Burt 1995: 55

Similarly, Adair's conception of the Rose Adagio from The Sleeping Beauty (Petipa, 1890) as 'an excellent example of the woman on display. . . (which) . . . demonstrates virtuosity (but) . . . emphasises the woman as object' (Adair 1992: 104-5) can be accommodated alongside a different approach by Jowitt. Here, the virtuosity which Adair touches on is privileged and Jowitt's interpretation offers a different, more positive metaphor:

. . . the way in which (the dancer) ... balances unsupported . . . showcased the virtuosic equilibrium of the original Aurora . . . yet these balances can poignantly suggest the testing of a young princess's maturity and her ability to be calm, gracious and balanced in her judgment under stress.

Jowitt 1988: 250-1

These writers are coming from different stances and have different interests. They do not cancel each out, but enrich the range of perspectives which we can adopt - or resist. Debate is necessarily dynamic, and I have tried to demonstrate how it is moving. It has moved now, perhaps, to a position taken by Sally Banes, who claims that

if one starts neither with an assumption that all women are victims nor with the idea that they are all heroines, and neither with the idea that images of women are all negative nor that they are all positive, but rather, looks closely at the evidence of the works themselves, one actually finds a much more complex range of representations than has previously been suggested.

Banes 1998: 3[3]

The monolithic construction of the gaze has also been challenged in relation to dance for, as Daly argues, 'although it has a visual component . . .(dance). . . is fundamentally a kinesthetic art whose apperception is grounded not just in the eye but in the entire body' (1992: 243). Recent work on lesbian desire and dance by scholars such as Valerie Briginshaw (2001) expands debate about gender by exploring the broader experiential and conceptual category of sexuality. Perspectives drawn from queer theory and research on male sexuality in dance have also disrupted essentialist conceptual categories and the male dancer is no longer cast just in the role of porter, powerhouse or manipulator of the phallus.

Postfeminist thought has, therefore, problematised the monolithic and universal categories on which feminist analysis was largely predicated, although these more recent ways of thinking do not necessarily embrace ballet where the multiple voices of new feminisms or other approaches are still largely absent (Carter,1999). But we can now site ourselves within a web of identity which can accommodate conflicting personal responses, for we are not imprisoned by a unitary feminist ideology. We can continue to read the narratives of dance but our analyses can accommodate a plurality of perspectives, recognising that 'readings' are contingent on cultural and historical context, and on the interpretation of the dancers. The ballerina does not have to be a passive sylph or a seductive siren any more, for sylphs can be powerful and sirens deeply moral.

Yes, we still need to investigate what the image of the ballerina meant to the men of the Green Room in Paris in the mid 19c and how that might have embodied dominant power relations - but we also need to value equally what the image of the ballerina means to those nine year olds whom Virginia Taylor discussed in her paper for the SDHS Conference in 1999 - and, of course, to the dancer herself.

I conclude by reminding us that 'there is no possibility of the acquisition or creation of stable, unchanging knowledge, since all knowledge must be subject to critique from other viewpoints' (Griffiths 1995:61). The construction of knowledge about dance is a never-ending spiral. Into that spiral has been written new debates about plurality, difference, contingency and context. These are all key concepts in recent theorising which allow the writer - and the audience - to change their views.

Endnotes

1. 'Second wave' feminism is the name given to feminist politics and theory which developed in the West from the 1960s.
2. Narrative readings are central to the majority of feminist writings on ballet. Adair (1992), for example, exposes how the narratives (and the training systems and institutions) uphold dominant ideologies of patriarchy; Carter (1995) examines the subject matter and stories of the music hall ballet in relation to the sexual psyche of Victorian /Edwardian England. Daly (1987) interprets a non-narrative work of Balanchine's as a gendered ideological 'story'.
3. Bearing in mind, of course, that one cannot look at the works in any kind of theoretically neutral capacity, and our theoretical stance, explicit or not, will determine how we discover and deal with 'the evidence of the work'.

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Dances about Spain: *Guns & Castanets* and *Adelante*

Elizabeth Cooper

In the spring of 1939 both the Chicago and New York City dance units of the Federal Theatre Project premiered dances inspired by the events of the Spanish Civil War. *Guns & Castanets*, subtitled "Carmen in Modern Spain," was co-created by Ruth Page and Bentley Stone for the Federal Ballet in Chicago. It presented an up-dated version of the famous Bizet opera set in a Loyalist village in the Pyrenees and included poetry by Federico Garcia Lorca. *Adelante*, choreographed by Helen Tamiris, depicted a broad vision of Spanish history and culture seen as a flashback through the eyes of a Loyalist soldier as he lay dying from the bullets of a Fascist firing squad.

In this paper, I will examine the difficulties that arose in creating and presenting dances about the Spanish Civil War - a conflict to which the United States Government adopted a position of staunch neutrality, but one in which many Americans felt passionately and took a profoundly partisan stance in support of the Loyalists struggle against the Fascists.

The difficulties encountered in bringing these dance-dramas to the boards stemmed from the WPA's promise of artistic freedom, alongside the federal government's financial and administrative control of the Federal Theatre Project and its subsidiary, the Federal Dance Project. WPA Head, Harry Hopkins and National Director of the Federal Theatre Project, Hallie Flanagan, viewed the Project as a non-political organization - neither influential in, nor influenced by political considerations. Their shared vision of a Federal Theatre that was "free, adult and uncensored" encouraged this non-partisan concept of Federal Theatre. Indeed, some of Flanagan's strongest directives to Project employees endeavored to ensure that the Federal Theatre Project would not be used to propagandize specific political viewpoints[1] .

> I will not have the Federal Theatre Project used politically. I will not have it used to further the ends of the Democratic Party, the Republican Party or the Communist Party.[2]

Despite these assertions, Flanagan's own commitment to developing a new, relevant American theatre that probed into contemporary social issues came into direct conflict with her desire to maintain a non-partisan organization that operated smoothly within the parameters of New Deal politics. The Federal Theatre Project was harried by allegations of political maneuvering from all angles: Federal Theatre was accused of propagandizing Communist ideology, the Democratic Party's agenda, specifically, Roosevelt's New Deal, while simultaneously fending off attacks that Federal Theatre did not support Roosevelt and his New Deal. It is this last accusation that is aptly applied to the dances under discussion. Amidst this barrage of complaints, "Flanagan adamantly insisted upon the Project's neutrality but such insistence was rendered impotent as Federal Theatre's controversial productions became hopelessly entangled in volatile political issues."[3]

In the case of dance, the political commitment of many project artists, specifically their belief that dance should be socially relevant, made it daunting to create works of verity and artistic integrity that would be deemed sufficiently non-partisan by a watchful administration, and an increasingly suspicious Congress with its newly formed House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC).

The ideal of an uncensored Federal Theatre was a priority for many participants on the project. Yet in the end, it remained a utopian vision. In the case of *Guns & Castanets* and *Adelante*, archival material reveals that these dance productions were subjected to various forms of internal censorship because they dealt too explicitly with the events of a war in which the Roosevelt administration wanted no official part. Additionally, during the House Un-American Activities Committee's investigation of the Project, Federal Theatre officials grew increasingly reticent to guarantee artistic freedom to the choreographers due to the controversial nature of their ballets.

By the late 1930's, Ruth Page had already established herself as a choreographer attracted to modern themes and daring subject matter. She and Bentley Stone were appointed ballet directors for Chicago's Federal Dance Project in spring 1938. Their initial offerings for the Project, *American Pattern* and *Frankie and Johnny*, had been extremely successful with Chicago audiences and with Hallie Flanagan. Page shared Flanagan's passion for relevant theatre. Earlier that year, Page had contributed an article to *Dance Observer* on ballet in Western Europe in which she stated,

> It seems that the people in Europe like their dancing as an escape. Perhaps in America, where life is not yet too hard, we do not feel so strongly the desire for escape and therefore seek a dance form derived more directly from the experiences of turmoil and suffering no less than the joys of our complex and chaotic world of today.[4]

Page's original notes for *Guns & Castanets*, originally subtitled, "Shadow Over Spain" sets the one-act ballet in a Loyalist village in the Pyrenees, through which arms and munitions are being received from English and other foreign vessels which have succeeded in running the Franco blockade. As the curtain rises, Loyalist soldiers are seen carrying munitions from dock to warehouse. Boxes are marked with Russian characters to show their origin. Spanish village women are helping the soldiers. The ballet concludes as the Loyalist officer José stabs Carmen, who feebly gives the Loyalist salute as she dies. She is then covered by the Loyalist flag.[5]

Page first pitched her idea for the ballet to Flanagan in a letter dated September 16, 1938. This was only four days after Representative J. Parnell Thomas of the House Un-American Activities Committee (also known as the Dies Committee) made his infamous radio address in which he called the Federal Theater Project a "veritable hotbed of Un-American activity" and claimed it "produced communistic plays, favored giving jobs to radicals and fostered New Deal propaganda." Significantly, Page's description glosses over the details of the staging and seems aimed to be read as non-controversial in nature:

> ...what I am most interested in doing is my dance version of Carmen. The scene is to be laid in Loyalist Spain and Carmen is a symbol of the futility of civil war, and her death an expression of the tragedy of civil conflict rather than just the personal tragedy of her death...in general it is much the same as the opera story except that Escamillo will be a Franco aviator instead of a bullfighter. The ballet will not be propaganda for either the Loyalists or the Fascists, although of course being laid in Loyalist Spain the conflict will be clearly indicated.[6]

It seems evident from the letter, that Ruth Page understood Federal Theatre's policy of political neutrality, and was perhaps aware that Federal Theatre was under the scrutiny of HUAC. Federal Theatre also had a policy of promoting the development of anti-war productions; whether Page was aware of this policy is unclear. At any rate, she was definitely in tune with Flanagan's own leanings towards theatre that explored contemporary themes. Despite HUAC's inflammatory indictment against Federal Theatre, Flanagan responded favorably to Page's proposal for the "Spanish Ballet" and its development continued.

The archival material demonstrates that the Spanish Civil War theme is proving to be troublesome by January 1939. On January 11th, Emmet Lavery, Director of the Play Department of the National Service Bureau, a branch of Federal Theatre that dealt with reading, rewriting and developing plays, sent a memo to all regional directors that the scenarios of ballets must be cleared by his office.

One can infer from this, that previous to this memo, dance scenarios had been exempt from this screening process. There were, at most, four Federal Theatre dance productions under development at this time. These were *Guns & Castanets*, *Adelante*, an *Evening of Modern Dance* by the Philadelphia unit, and a review titled, *Invitation to the Dance*, in Tampa. Perhaps it is mere coincidence, but it does seem odd that after three years in operation, the dance units should suddenly come under the purview of the play department precisely when two dances based on the Spanish Civil War are being rehearsed. On January 13th, Lavery noted in a memo to Hallie Flanagan that he had received the full version of the modernized Carmen in Chicago and Tamiris's dance ballet in New York [*Adelante*]. Lavery makes no mention of either the Philadelphia or Tampa productions. On January 17th, Harry Mintern, Director for the Illinois Federal Theatre Project, received a letter from Emmet Lavery that was also sent to Hallie Flanagan. It is clear from this correspondence that *Guns & Castanets* is being delayed and that Mintern is awaiting further instructions on how to proceed. Lavery writes:

> The delay in advising you specifically about the ballet GUNS AND CASTANETS was occasioned by the fact that Mrs. Flanagan had hoped to speak with you on the phone but could not arrange the matter. I feel first of all that little if any emphasis should be given either in the program or in the press releases to the lines describing Federico Garcia Lorca as " the finest and proudest poet of revolutionary Spain, who was executed by a firing squad in Granada and whose books were burned in the Plaza del Carmen in July 1936." Let is read that Lorca was one of the most prominent modern Spanish poets. I question the use of the Rebel or Loyalist salute as such. Frankly, I feel that any identification in terms of current symbols in Spain is not advisable. It should be possible to do a ballet, with the CARMEN theme, stressing the horror and futility of civil war without identifying the respective sides taken by the protagonists.[7]

Lavery was responding to an early printed version (no date given in archives) of the ballet scenario and program notes for *Guns & Castanets*, which states that the production was to premiere in late January or early February. The ballet did not premiere until March 1, 1939. In this earlier draft of the program notes there is no indication of the ballet's setting other than the piece's subtitle: Carmen in modern Spain. The scenario accompanying the notes, however, clearly states that the story unfolds in a Loyalist town during the Civil War and indicates that the ballet concerns itself with depicting a Loyalist perspective of the conflict.

Less than two weeks later (Jan 28, 1939), Ruth Page's husband, Thomas Hart Fisher wrote the following letter to Harry Mintern:

> Enclosed please find amended program and program notes for the ballet. You will note that all reference to either side in the Spanish war has been eliminated. The same is true of the action in the ballet itself.[8]

Fisher was true to his word. The amended scenario and program notes make no mention of either side in the conflict. The text is devoid of Rebel and Loyalist salutes and Lorca is no longer a revolutionary figure, but instead, the outstanding poet of modern Spain. Fisher's final statement in the letter is intriguing though, because it is the only evidence that Page and Stone complied with Lavery's request to alter the choreographic content of the ballet. What is equally intriguing is that Ann Barzel's 1939 film of Guns & Castanets reveals that the use of Rebel and Loyalist salutes were not removed from the choreography. Further substantiation that these politically loaded symbols remained in the ballet stems from a 1980 interview with Walter Camryn. Camryn, who danced the role of the Loyalist soldier José in the Federal Ballet production, stated that it was a very good ballet but could never be done again because Page used the Communists and the Fascists in it. "She used their salutes and all sorts of things. It wouldn't go after that...It was very modern."[9]

A few days before its premiere, Federal Theatre's publicity department issued a press release that marketed Guns & Castanets as a "story of love under fire," and maintained that

> it makes no comment on the social implications of the Spanish conflict...In short, the war throws the lives of all concerned out of kilter. Carmen's death, at the hands of the jealous José, is rendered insignificant by the fact the hundreds are dying all about her. She is a thoughtless girl. In plain enough language, she has no idea what the struggle is all about. Her last act is to raise her hand in the Loyalist salute. She does this, not because of an eleventh-hour feeling that José's side is right, but because of a growing awareness-previously indicated-that in war one must take sides and govern his affections accordingly. In time of war-even love is regimented.[10]

This press release is further proof that Page and Stone did not remove the offending partisan salutes from the choreography. It is also a clear indication that Federal Theatre officials wished to diffuse the political volatility of the ballet before its premiere. Their effort to nullify the political aspects of the ballet, thereby making it more palatable to Federal Theatre's opponents, succeeded only in misleading the public and confusing the critics.

It is my contention that, despite both Page's and Federal Theatre's assertions that Guns & Castanets was a tragic love story set in war-torn Spain and basically apolitical, the actual staging of the choreography portrays a pro-Loyalist sympathy that is revealed and understood on a symbolic and kinesthetic level.

Guns & Castanets is a thrilling dance drama. The choreography for the corps de ballet is cleverly devised to outline the conflict between Loyalist and Fascist forces. When the ballet begins the village women are divided into two sculptural masses. Between them, the Loyalists soldiers tote boxes of arms and munitions along the diagonal, creating a strong spatial tension between the opposing groups as they exchange Fascist and Loyalist salutes in close succession. The presence of archetypes in the ballet such as the virginal Micaela, the woeful mother and the young girl killed by enemy fire, paint a one-sided and wholly sympathetic picture of the Loyalist villagers.

Page and Stone have adeptly combined ballet, modern and Spanish dance to suit both characterization and plot development. The relationship between the Loyalist officer, José and his betrothed Micaela is told in the balletic idiom and is representative of a pure and ideal love marred by the bitter circumstances of war. The use of open palms, arms reaching overhead and sustained arabesques in the pas de deux reveal the pious nature of these characters and their relationship.

The choreography for Carmen, Escamillo and the Gypsy women is the antithesis to this. It is lusty, earthy and brazen. Bentley Stone reveals an astounding technical bravura perfectly suited for the role of the self-assured aviator, Escamillo. Yet despite the ballet pyrotechnics, or perhaps because of them, he seems a two-dimensional character. Escamillo commands our attention but not does elicit our sympathy. He makes a flashy entrance into the Loyalist village after his plane is shot down and uses Carmen to shield him from the enemy soldiers. Although deeply attracted to Carmen, he does not protect her from José's jealous rage, nor take the opportunity to kill the Loyalist officer in a duel. Instead, he allows Carmen to come between the two men, and makes his escape at the first opportunity.

Page also alters Carmen's character in her ballet. Earlier in the ballet, Carmen exhibits her defiant nature by giving the Fascist salute and is seized by an angry group of village women. By the conclusion of the ballet her defiance dissipates. Although Carmen tries valiantly and successfully to shield Escamillo from José, she does not reject José in the final scene of the ballet. After José shoots Carmen she deliberately struggles down stage and gives the Loyalist salute before dying in his arms.

Contemporary critical responses to the ballet, however, do not support my own appraisal of the ballet's ar-

tistic merits nor political leanings. Comments from the *Chicago Tribune*, *Times* and *Journal of Commerce* are generally lackluster and say little about the choreography. Critics mention that the ballet is set in war-torn Spain but make no further commentary on the ballet's political symbolism - that is, with one exception. Writing for the *Daily Record*, Ben Burns, lambasted the production for its alleged neutrality:

> For about thirty minutes I watched GUNS AND CASTANETS and after the curtain came down, I couldn't make up my mind whether it was pro-Loyalist or pro-Fascist... In a pinch I would say the Fascist was the more sympathetic of the two, simply because he is a better dancer. Perhaps there are some - and I'm sure there are—who will say GUNS AND CASTANETS is neutral...On this issue, there can be no neutrality...Ruth Page, Bentley Stone and her company ought to be congratulated for ...trying to present a ballet that says something significant. They are to be sharply criticized, however, for their skimpy research into Spanish events, which results in a thin, confusing production, that does more harm than good.[11]

The critic for the *Chicago Dancer* responded to Burn's accusations as follows:

> This review of GUNS AND CASTANETS is based entirely on the supposition that the dance drama is centered around Carmen and concerns itself primarily with the vacillations of that character's heart. That the scene is laid in present-day war torn Spain is incidental. We strongly feel that there is no political comment intended here and that the superb and outstanding dancing of Bentley Stone in the role of the Fascist aviator does not bespeak especial sympathy on the part of the choreographers for the Fascist cause.[12]

The critical responses to *Guns & Castanets* indicate that Federal Theatre's efforts to render the ballet uncontroversial actually worked against them. By dictating that the ballet be read as an apolitical love story, the ballet's setting in modern Spain seemed inconsequential to the plot, thereby crippling its potential to stimulate an interest in current social problems, be understood as a pro-Loyalist statement, and as we can see for Burn's review, allowing for an interpretation antithetical to anyone's wishes.

In a letter written by Thomas Hart Fisher to Hallie Flanagan during the run of *Guns & Castanets*, Fisher addresses what he believes to be the strong political nature of the ballet:

> Ruth and I were both very surprised to hear that you had passed through Chicago last Saturday morning, and sorry that you did not actually see her ballet performance... it seems to me that a remarkably effective dance evening could be had by the Chicago Dance Project doing just the two ballets of Carmen in Modern Spain and Frankie and Johnny...they would appeal very strongly to the Labor Union crowd and the more radical type of audience.[13]

Fisher's letter clearly points to what he considers the type of audience that *Guns & Castanets* would appeal to, yet was deliberately not targeted by Federal Theatre's publicity department. There is no response to Fisher's letter in the archives. Thus, one is left to speculate why Flanagan did not attend the ballet. Certainly, she was very consumed with trying to save Federal Theatre from extinction during this period.

Federal Theatre had been embroiled in controversy since September 1938 when Representative J. Parnell Thomas of the House Un-American Activities Committee led the charge against Hopkins, Flanagan and all "Communists and fellow travelers" on the project. Yet, Flanagan chose to produce these Spanish Civil War ballets despite the onslaught of negative press and political jockeying from anti-New Dealers.

The Page-Stone production of *Guns & Castanets* ran at Chicago's Blackstone Theatre from March 1st to March 25th, 1939. Less than one month later, Tamiris's unequivocally pro-Loyalist ballet, *Adelante* opened at Daly's Theatre in New York City for a two-week run. It should have come as no surprise to Hallie Flanagan that Tamiris's ballet on a Spanish theme would exhibit leftist sympathies. Flanagan was well aware of Tamiris's interest in making dances that exposed social injustices and championed the oppressed, such as her earlier productions for the Federal Dance Project, *Salut Au Monde*, *How Long, Brethren?* and *Trojan Incident*. Flanagan also knew that, unlike their colleagues in Chicago, the NYC dance unit "made up a volcanic group, frequently in eruption."[14] They were a politically active bunch that frequently took to the picket lines in response to budget cuts, work stoppages and production delays. They responded to the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War with like conviction, making dances and holding benefit concerts that demonstrated their allegiance with the Popular Front in the fight against Fascism in Europe.

Adelante was billed as a dance production on a Spanish theme based on a group of anonymous Spanish poems. The poems narrated during the dance, entitled, "Who Went By Here?" and "Generals - On Your Knees," speak of the peasants' sufferings, the devastation of the countryside and are a bold indictment of the Fascist military campaign against the Loyalists. Told in episodic form, it is the

story of

a young Spanish peasant that has been captured and placed before a firing squad. As he falls to the ground, mortally wounded, the history of his country and the struggle of his people for democracy pass in review before his eyes... The play ends as the young peasant falls to the ground dead with his fellow countrymen surging forward. The dancers go by in a heroic processional sequence, which builds and mounts while the voices sing - Adelante, Adelante, forward over Death.[15]

A letter from Tamiris to Hallie Flanagan dated December 12, 1938, demonstrates that by that date the choreography, score and set design were already completed and that costumes were being designed. Despite this fact, Tamiris could not secure an opening date for the ballet for four months. There were, no doubt, numerous reasons for the production's delay related to budget cuts and layoffs. But in the midst of HUAC's investigation of the Federal Theatre Project, one cannot dismiss Adelante's controversial subject matter as a compelling reason for postponing the production. The December 12th letter states that Tamiris had just sent the script of Adelante to Emmet Lavery, as requested, as well as a copy to Flanagan. Lavery's comments on the script are not present in the archival record but Flanagan' s are, and her desire that the ballet upholds a non-partisan stance is stated overtly:

Be sure emphasis on the whole production is on the human tragedy of war, and that the script does not come out for or against Loyalist Spain. Inasmuch as the Government for this country has very decidedly not come out for one side or the other, we as a Government sponsored agency certainly have no right to do so.[16]

Following this directive, Flanagan made more specific comments, such as her suggestion that Tamiris abstract the Rebel and Loyalist salutes in the ballet and cut a scene in which army generals are satirized. In the absence of a notated score or film of Adelante, we have no visual evidence that Tamiris altered the choreography to suit any of Flanagan's recommendations. The archival remains, however, suggest that she did not. We know that Tamiris did not cut the satiric scene because John Martin's first critique of Adelante states, "the inept little scene in which the generals are subjected to doggerel ridicule should be deleted in toto," indicating that Flanagan's recommendation may have been in the interest of good theatre not politics.[17] Further, a review from the New York Sun of the same date claimed that Adelante was "based on the Loyalist view of that conflict, " and that, "questions of its political bias aside, there is originality in the conception and a good deal of resourcefulness in its exposition."[18]

By the time Adelante premiered, on April 20th 1939, the Spanish conflict was over; the communist-backed Loyalists had been defeated by the Fascists and Franco was in power. As John Martin stated in his second review of the ballet,

Adelante has been through the wars: in this embattled period of the Federal Theatre, it has suffered cuts in personnel which necessitated patient adaptation and, in what might be called the normal functioning of all relief projects, it has had to make replacements from time to time of dancers who found employment in other channels. But these are comparatively external difficulties. Planned a year ago when Spain presented quite a different face it has also had to survive a major psychological change in its makeup. Nevertheless, with almost everything possible to interfere with it, it comes through now with dignity, conviction and integrity.[19]

This last phrase written by Martin, further substantiates that Tamiris remained true to her political convictions regardless of the pressure that she may have felt from Federal Theatre Project officials. But pressures outside the Federal Theatre Project were mounting. The redbaiting campaign initiated by the House Un-American Activities Committee was creating an atmosphere of fear and paranoia in the United States. Tamiris, I believe, was responding to this pressure when, after more than ten years, she chose to "Americanize" her stage name to Helen Tamiris for the premiere of Adelante.[20] Tamiris had particular reason for concern. Her ballet, Trojan Incident, produced by Federal Theatre a year earlier, was one of the productions singled out by Thomas in his radio address of September 1938, in which he said that the authors of Federal Theater Plays "have taken unbridled license to ridicule American ideals and to suggest rebellion against our government." He went on to summarize Trojan Incident as a play that "deals with the fall of Troy in modern times, wherein the people are shown the way to revolution."[21]

Tamiris may also have begun to feel that, amidst mounting political pressure, the Federal Theatre Project's advocacy for her brand of socially relevant choreography was waning. When Adelante opened at Daly's Theatre, the program notes contained a disclaimer, not present in other dance project programs, stating that "the viewpoint expressed in its productions is not necessarily that of the WPA or any other agency of the government."[22]

Federal Theatre Project officials were no doubt trying to offset a steady stream of negative publicity regarding the notion of a communist-run organization. Apparently, pressure was also coming from Catholic organizations. In

her oral history, Paula Bass Perlowin, a cast member of *Adelante*, stated that due to its pro-Loyalist message, the ballet was closed because of pressure exerted on Hallie Flanagan by the Catholic Church (the Catholic Church sided with the Monarchists and Fascists against the communist-backed Loyalists).[23] Although I have yet to uncover any definitive proof implicating the Catholic Church in any censorship of *Adelante*, a memo from Emmett Lavery to Hallie Flanagan regarding his attendance at the Catholic Theatre Conference lends credence to Perlowin's statement. Lavery mentions that the Catholic Theatre Conference is very concerned over the perceived influence of communist organizations on project employees, and that the Conference will be preparing several objective studies of Federal Theatre that will scrutinize all new plays written and produced for the project, as well as its labor policies. Lavery concludes that given these circumstances, "a good liaison with the Conference is greatly to be desired."[24]

The public's response to *Adelante* was such that, the ballet, originally slated for a brief one-week run, was performed for an additional week. Audience enthusiasm and favorable critiques, however, did not counter the negative attitude that Federal Theatre Project officials had adopted with regard to *Adelante*. On March 8th 1939, two days after *Adelante's* closing, George Kondolf, Director for the Federal Theatre Project in NYC issued a report stating that

> The earlier thought of the [Play Advisory] Board of using *Adelante* for the [World's] Fair as the dance production part of the program has been abandoned in view of the consideration that that dance was decidedly not American, and it is obviously wise to make the project's contribution to the Fair as American as possible. [25]

In the end, the dance that was slated to replace *Adelante* was not ready in time, and a slightly abridged version of Tamiris's dance was performed at the New York World's Fair into mid-May. [26]

One might speculate that, had *Guns & Castanets* and *Adelante* been mounted in 1936 or 1937, before the formation of HUAC, they might not have been subjected to any form of censorship, but the history of the Federal Theatre Project does not support this sentiment. The subject matter of these ballets sets them apart from Federal Theatre's most controversial productions, which were criticized for fostering New Deal propaganda. By exploring the Spanish Civil War, and further, depicting a version of the conflict sympathetic to the communist-backed Loyalists, the choreographers of *Guns & Castanets* and *Adelante* disavowed the Democratic party line of neutrality and bolstered HUAC's allegations of a communistic and un-American Federal Theatre Project. The history of the Federal Theatre Project, in particular, the dance productions under discussion, reveals that Hallie Flanagan was very

willing to put herself on the line in support of productions centered on controversial social and political issues when they were in keeping with New Deal politics. But when the subject matter was not in tune with the policies of the Roosevelt Administration, the notion of a "free, adult and uncensored" Federal Theatre was neither vigorously defended nor upheld.

Endnotes

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Dancing For The Digital Age: Merce Cunningham's "Biped"

Roger Copeland

Traditionally, when a great artist lives to the venerable age of eighty, the birthday becomes a retrospective occasion, an opportunity to look back —with immense satisfaction, but also a touch of nostalgia— on a substantially completed body of work (most of whose high water marks are securely situated in the past). But when the indefatigable Merce Cunningham turned eighty on April 16, 1999, there was very little time for backward glances , historical re-assessments, or even festive birthday parties. The focus—as usual— was on the future rather than the past. . This tirelessly prodigious choreographer was hard at work on a new dance: a high-tech , multi-media work called "Biped," which premiered at Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall later that same month (and which went on to become one of the most talked about dances of year, generating a wave of press coverage that included a feature article in Time magazine.)

Merce Cunningham can trace his career as a professional choreographer back to 1944. His virtually non-stop stream of dances (two hundred plus) during the past fifty-seven years is impressive enough in its own right But what made "Biped" particularly distinctive is the fact that it pioneered an unprecedented marriage between concert dance and state- of -the -art computer technology . (Alas, so much for the assumption that the digital revolution is being waged entirely by whiz kids who look too young to shave.)

Cunningham of course, is no newcomer to the digital world. In fact, for over ten years now he's been the only dance-maker of international renown to routinely utilize computer technology as an essential component of his choreographic process. His use of the software animation program called LifeForms as a compositional tool has been widely documented ; so I'm not going to do much more than touch upon it here. But with "Biped," Cunningham was exploring a much newer and more radical digital technology known as "motion capture," a process which , in effect, propels his dancers —or their digital counterparts— into cyberspace.

More about that bold claim in just a moment; but for now, suffice it to say that computer technology, almost by definition, offers a number of strategies for confronting (and transcending) the supposed "limitations" of the human body. For example, the animated LifeForms figures can, with very little effort, be made to carry out transitions between steps that even the most technically-proficient Cunningham dancer would find difficult, if not impossible, to execute. But motion capture takes us in a very different direction (one that can be thought of as

both the antithesis and the compliment of LifeForms.) . Unlike the LifeForms figure, which originates in the world of computer animation, motion capture begins in the dance studio where living, breathing, three dimensional bodies are moving in three dimensional space. But— its name implies— motion capture proceeds to extract or "capture" the outlines of motion from the flesh and blood dancers who originally embodied it.

Merce Cunningham's first experiment with "motion capture" was "Hand Drawn Spaces" from 1998, a collaboration with multi-media computer artists Paul Kaiser and Shelley Eshkar. In the initial stage of the process, two bona-fide Cunningham dancers (Jared Philips and Jeannie Steele), performed in front of a digital /video camera while wearing light sensitive disks called "motion capture sensors" attached to key joints of their bodies. The movement of these sensors was optically recorded as "points in space" and then converted into digital 3D files. These data files capture the position and rotation of the body-in-motion without preserving its mass or musculature. Movement is thereby extracted (i.e. "captured")—some might even say, "liberated"— from the performer's body. So in a quite literal sense, motion capture attempts to reverse the import of Yeats' famous question "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" Motion capture attempts to give us the dance minus the dancer. (This explains why many of its more enthusiastic proponents believe that motion-capture has a bright future ahead of it as a new tool for dance documentation and preservation).

The completed version of "Hand Drawn Spaces — which was projected on large-scale, multiple video screens—existed solely in virtual space. To be sure, the ultra-articulated limbs one saw in the projected images of "Hand Drawn Spaces" were performing a vocabulary that was unmistakably Merce Cunningham's. But the arms and legs of the dancers appeared to have been X-Ray-ed through -to -the -bone. These were performers divested of flesh and blood. The projected figures resembled nothing so much as dancing skeletons.

This raises a philosophical question that I'd like to consider: Does a work like "Hand-Drawn Spaces" lead us into the world of William Gibson's 1984 novel, Neuromancer — the book that first popularized the concept of "cyberspace? " Case, the protagonist of Neuromancer , is the original prototype of the cyberpunk, a "keyboard jockey" who escapes the physical, geographical limitations of his body by plugging himself into "the matrix" :

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Case was twenty-four. At twenty-two, he'd been a cowboy, a rustler, one of the best in the Sprawl...He'd operated on an almost permanent adrenaline high, a byproduct of youth and proficiency, jacked into a custom cyberspace deck that projected his disembodied consciousness into the consensual hallucination that was the matrix. A thief, he'd worked for other, wealthier thieves, employers who provided the exotic software required to penetrate the bright walls of corporate systems, opening windows into rich fields of data.[1]

But Case gets caught stealing from his employers; and as retribution, they impair his nervous system in ways that make it impossible for him to plug back into the matrix. Case is thus encased in "the prison of his own flesh." And in this cyber-universe, to be subject(ed) to the limitations of one's body is to fall from grace:

For Case, who'd lived for the bodiless exultation of cyberspace, it was the Fall. In the bars he'd frequented as a cowboy hotshot, the elite stance involved a certain relaxed contempt for the flesh. The body was meat. Case fell into the prison of his own flesh. [2]

Here we begin to edge toward the dark, dystopian side of cyberpunk culture (although some might regard this as the bright, utopian side) where the "techno-body" becomes the only body. Or at least the only desirable alternative to life as a mere "meat puppet" (i.e. life as lived in an old fashioned "organic" body). Generalizing about the recurrent obsessions of cyberpunk literature, Bruce Sterling—himself a major contributor to the genre— notes that

Certain central themes spring up repeatedly in cyberpunk. The theme of body invasion: prosthetic limbs, implanted circuitry, cosmetic surgery, genetic alteration...[3]

One could of course argue that Merce Cunningham— from the very beginning of his career as a choreographer— has viewed the body as a collage-like assemblage. As early as 1953, in "Untitled Solo," Cunningham's head, arms, and legs appeared so oblivious to one another that they could have been grafted together from three different bodies, moving at three different speeds. By the 1990's—the decade in which he began to choreograph "at the computer" with the assistance of LifeForms, this "cut and paste" vision of human identity found its real-life equivalent in the emerging concept of the techno-body, a "machine organism" whose component parts—limbs, organs, even genes, as Bruce Sterling suggests, seem increasingly alter-

able, exchangeable, spliceable, ultimately... cloneable.

But on the other hand, neither Cunningham nor his digital collaborators (Kaiser and Eshkar) share the cyberpunk's utter "contempt for the flesh." "Hand Drawn Spaces" may be a work for virtual reality; but as its title suggests, it never completely severs its ties to the human hand or body. More to the point, Shelley Eshkar is a very talented graphic artist who embellishes these motion-captured skeletal shapes with a digital equivalent of hand-drawn lines and squiggles which resemble elegant charcoal drawings. Furthermore, the skeletal dancing figures in "Hand-Drawn Spaces" never completely soar into the weightless world of cyberspace. They remain firmly planted on the floor.

The fact that these phantom figures have more in common with human skeletons than with robots or cyborbs is also surely significant. Merce Cunningham was seventy-nine years old when "Hand Drawn Spaces" premiered; and thus, on an existential level, it's difficult not to see the movement of these skeletal traces as a dance macabre, a glimpse of the skull beneath the face, an intimation of mortality—a melancholy reminder of human limitation— rather than a glimpse of immortality in the bodiless world of cyberspace.

There's a dynamic give-and-take between Kaiser and Eshkar — who begin in the digital world and then work their way back toward the realm of the "hand-drawn"— and Cunningham , who begins in the world of the body, but then replaces its flesh and blood with the digital mapping of movement we call "motion capture." As a result, the choreographer and his digital collaborators meet "midway" between the realm of the fleshly and the virtual.

Conversely, this idea also helps to demonstrates the way(s) in which LifeForms and motion capture "compliment" one another. To work with LifeForms is to begin in the world of computer animation, but with the intention—at least in Cunningham's case—of devising movement for human beings who will eventually perform "live on stage." Seated at the computer, Cunningham can dictate —and simultaneously record— a wide variety of choreographic variables (everything from the flexing of a joint to the height and/or length of a jump, the location of each dancer on stage, the transition from one phrase to the next, etc.) The process of motion capture, on the other hand, begins with the live dancer— but ultimately leaves his or her actual, physical, body behind. Solid joints become digital points (in space). If Cunningham's "Hand-Drawn Spaces," is an example of "dot.com dance," then it's motion capture that puts the dots in the dot.com.

This sort of reciprocity between the physical and the virtual was explored even more fully in Cunningham's next collaboration with Kaiser and Eshkar, "Biped" ('99), a work conceived for the stage, juxtaposing live dancing with virtual imagery. Disembodied ("motion-captured") images of Cunningham dancers were projected on a downstage scrim

curtain that covered the entire width of the proscenium. Kaiser and Eshkar generated approximately twenty-five minutes of motion-captured animation, slightly more than half the length of the dance. This material was subdivided into a series of discontinuous sequences, ranging from about fifteen seconds to four minutes in length. The order in which these sequences were projected on the scrim was determined by chance operations.

The fourteen dancers wore silver-blue jumpsuits designed by Suzanne Gallo that were treated with an iridescent metallic sheen which reflected both the projected light of the motion-capture sequences (as it traveled through the scrim) and beams from more conventional lighting instruments positioned overhead and in the wings. Gavin Bryars' lush commissioned score interwove deep rumbling electronic tones with the acoustical sounds of cello, double bass, electric guitar, and keyboard.

"Biped" utilizes much of the fiendishly difficult movement vocabulary Cunningham has been devising for the past several years with the assistance of LifeForms. Feet planted firmly on the floor provide the foundation for almost impossibly "torqued" bending and twisting of the back and neck. In other words, the upper body tends to work in disjointed counterpoint to the legs. Both arms frequently stretch up and over the head, but then curl back down toward the shoulder blades in a jagged arc. Necks often tilt upward, directing the dancer's gaze toward the ceiling.

As with much of Cunningham's recent choreography, the arms now seem at least as active—and often more prominent— than the legs. But this is work that makes extreme demands on the lower body as well. For example, the dancers often execute low, rapid jumps on one foot, with the other leg raised and tilted at a forty-five degree angle. Sometimes, as both arms rise to frame the head symmetrically, both feet perform a bent-legged jump that finishes in first position.

All of that—shall we say, "actual" movement—takes places upstage of the scrim. But again, what distinguishes "Biped" from the earlier dances composed with LifeForms is the fact that we often view this actual movement in juxtaposition with mutating motion-captured images of virtual movement projected onto the downstage surface of the scrim curtain. The result is a complex interplay of flesh and image that begins to challenge our conventional notions of animate and inanimate, interior and exterior. For example, it sometimes looked as if the dancers were wearing their skeletons on the outside of their bodies. Paul Kaiser, commenting on the dance's first performance at Berkeley in 1999 has written,

> By a miracle of chance operations, one of the first dancers on stage (Jeannie Steele) was haloed in a projection of her own motion-capture—"as if I were dancing inside myself," she said afterwards. ...[4]

The projected image of Jeannie Steele to which Kaiser refers was similar to the skeletal imagery from "HandDrawn Spaces." But unlike "Handrawn Spaces," where the virtual figures maintained their anthropomorphic outlines throughout the piece, here they metamorphosed—or simply "morphed"—into a variety of other shapes.

For example, on some occasions, the projected images consisted solely of the actual motion-captured "points in space" with which the transformation of "live" into "virtual" dancer begins. (Imagine a lighted Christmas tree, but then erase the tree, leaving only the lights: glowing dots that roughly approximate an organic form). If we understand the technology behind the motion-capture process, we realize that these virtual dots have been extracted (or "captured") from the joints of actual bodies. Subsequently, in the course of "Biped," these image-traces transmute into a variety of other shapes. Diagonal lines fan out in a kaleidoscopic way recalling the photo-montage-like replicating edges in Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase." Kaiser refers to these forms as "stick bodies" and acknowledges that they were inspired by the yarrow sticks sometimes cast by Cunningham and Cage as they utilize the I Ching to generate compositional choices. According to Kaiser,

> Having motion-captured about five minutes of the 'Biped' choreography, we now used it to animate our figures much more freely than in 'Hand Drawn Spaces.' Freely, but still truly: we took care never to lose the underlying perception of real and plausible human movement. A case in point: when our stick figure leaped, its various lines were flung upward in the air, then gathered back together again on landing. While no human body could do this, you could still feel the human motion underlying the abstraction. ...[5]

Kaiser is here focusing on one of the most intriguing and distinctive possibilities afforded by motion capture technology : the fact that the motion "captured" from a live dancer can be easily transformed into (or superimposed onto) a variety of inanimate shapes which then begin to move in ways which incorporate key choreographic qualities of the original, "human" dance. These techniques have become commonplace in film, television commercials, and computer games (e.g. the dancing baby in "Ally McBeal" and "Tomb Raider's" Lara Croft). Not only is motion-capture a technique that graphic designers use to create images of cyborgs (as in "Terminator II"); but the technique itself exemplifies the ever-increasing fusion of "organic" and "inorganic" forms in the age of the techno-body.

Now...around the time that Merce Cunningham's "Biped" had its first New York performances in 1999, a

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television documentary about the work appeared on cable's "Sci-Fi" channel. This was not altogether inappropriate. If ever a Cunningham dance appeared to have been inspired by the writings of Arthur C. Clarke, it was "Biped." Needless to say, I'm not proposing this as a definitive reading of the dance. In fact, I'm well aware of the dangers of interpreting Cunningham's dances in allegorical ways (a practice that in most other contexts, I've strenuously argued against). But here was a work whose very title evokes an evolutionary landmark: the emergence of upright posture, that dividing line between human beings and most other primates. In addition, "Biped" juxtaposed live , upright bodies with motion-captured outlines of forms—both animate and inanimate— that existed only in "virtual" space. Paul Kaiser suggests that the title "Biped" has a dual connotation: technological as well as anatomical. Discussing the genesis of the dance –and the multiple meanings that he associates with its title— Kaiser has written:

> Merce had started choreographing a new full-length dance, which he had decided to call 'Biped', a name of special significance to us. 'Biped' had been the working title for the alpha and beta releases of the figure animation software we had used to choreograph the virtual dance of 'Hand-drawn Spaces.' Biped was as apt a term for Cunningham's choreography as it was for the software, for Merce's lifelong interest has been to figure out all that a body on two legs can do ...Merce usually gives his collaborators just a phrase or two about his own intentions. For 'Biped,' he had told the composer (Gavin Bryars) and the visual artists (Shelley and me) that it was 'about technology' and would be like 'flicking through channels on TV.' ...[6]

Question: Is there more than a purely coincidental connection between computer technology, two-leggedness , and upright posture? Here's one possible "reading" of "Biped"—with a strong emphasis on the word "possible": On one level, Cunningham's "Biped" seemed to imply that the next great evolutionary transformation of the human species above and beyond the emergence of upright posture may well be the technologically-assisted transcendence of the "grounded" body.

Virtual reality and cyberspace promote precisely that sort of transcendence. The recent tendency of Cunningham choreography I alluded to earlier—the lifted neck that directs the dancer's gaze up and away from the ground—may signify an anticipation of this process. The motion-captured imagery that's projected on the scrim in "Biped" seems to take us alternately backward and forward in evolutionary time, with the emergence of bi-pedal upright posture as the dividing line. On occasion, we see

wafting wisps of smoke that slowly congeal into suggestions of living forms.

Analogously, the partnering of the live dancers upstage of the projections sometimes takes the form of back-to front, with two bodies facing the same direction—thereby hinting at the possibility that a single body is replicating or perhaps cloning itself. There are many images in "Biped" that suggest either division or multiplication of forms, both actual and virtual. "Biped" for example begins with a series of solos, in which each dancer seems not so much to exit as to dissolve into a fathomless black abyss at the rear of the stage. When one dancer re-enters and stands opposite four additional bodies, it's as if her image had suddenly been multiplied by mirrors. One could even suggest (again, this is tentative.....heavy emphasis on "could") an allegory in which images of recombinant DNA illustrate evolutionary growth at the genomiclevel. But the bulk of the dance suggests a more futuristic vision of re-combination: the emergence of cybernetic organisms that can transcend the usual anatomical limitations of the human biped.

Earlier I mentioned the motion-captured "stick figures" that seem to suggest an animated version of Duchamp's "Nude Descending A Staircase." Kaiser specifically cites these "cubist/chronophotographic bodies" – that's his phrase—as : "our nod towards Duchamp." Cunningham has long been fascinated with the allegory about the mechanization of sex that underlies Duchamp's "Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even." Indeed, the iconocgraphy from Duchamp's magnum opus was appropriated by Jasper Johns in his setting for Cunningham's most explicit tribute to Duchamp, "Walkaround Time" from 1968. And Johns' setting for "Walkaround Time" was incorporated into a new, one-time-only work called "Occasion Piece" that accompanied the New York premiere of "Biped."

It's also worth pointing out that "Walkaround Time," choreographed in 1968— long before Cunningham began his work with LifeForms and motion capture— took its title from computer jargon. References to the computer have been central to Cunningham's way of thinking for several decades now. In his book Changes, also published that same year (1968), Cunningham wrote "...the use of chance methods demanded some form of visual notation...A crude computer in hieroglyphics." [7] Similarly, John Cage had long conceived of the computer as little more than a high(er) tech version of the I Ching, which he and Cunningham had utilized since the 1950's as a principal tool for chance-dictated decision-making. In fact, the computer program Cage eventually had designed for generating random variations of pitch, timbre, amplitude, and duration was called ic.

But "Biped" is the first Cunningham work that seems to be "about" the computer and its capacity for transforming our most basic conceptions of space, time, and mat-

ter. At the very least, it qualifies as Cunningham's most extensive exploration of the relationship between proscenium space and the collage-like, "liquid architecture" of cyberspace. "You stop thinking of space as being one set construction, but rather as a myriad of possibilities,".[8] says Shelley Eshkar. (The porous, spatially-indeterminate nature of computer space, its absence of fixed boundaries and fixed "centers," the way in which fragments of hypertext can be "linked" to a seemingly infinite number of other "sites"—all of these aspects of cyberspace were alluded to in one way or another). Indeed, I'm almost tempted to say that they were "illustrated" in one way or another by "Biped."

For example, the dancers both entered and exited through an upstage wall—a dimensionless, black abyss—that gave the impression of bodies alternately materializing and dematerializing (as opposed to the impression of bodies moving "toward" or "away" from the audience in the manner of conventional entrances and exits). In actuality, this upstage wall was a black velvet curtain with narrow slits through which the dancers made their magical-looking entrances and exits. The floor of the stage was divided into a grid pattern of white and blue squares of light that cross-faded in ways making it difficult to determine which squares were solid floor and which were mere projections of light from overhead. The result was a collage-like blurring of the distinction between "negative" and "positive" space.

Although never a literal representation of a computer screen, the cross-fading patterns on the floor poetically evoked the image of multiple "windows" displacing one another in the same plane. A similar perceptual complexity was visible in the stage space between the scrim and the upstage black-velvet drop. If patterns of light on the floor reminded one of the layered flatness of a computer screen on which a number of windows are opened simultaneously, then the space upstage of the scrim suggested how effectively the computer screen can generate the illusion of deep, three dimensional depth. According to Paul Kaiser,

> if we were to put three vertical lines in perspectival depth, then we could imply that the three different planes between the lines formed picture-planes – and malleable ones at that, for by moving the lines we could animate the planes. Thus we could create virtual projections within the actual projection, making for an intriguing perceptual complexity. This was especially true when we varied the degree of transparency and occlusion of these different elements: sometimes our black ground would read as a clear space into which anything might suddenly enter, while at other times it would mask whatever might be behind it. ...[9]

This emphasis on transformation and malleability explains why "Biped" lends itself so readily to an interpretation emphasizing the evolutionary significance of upright posture. The psychologist and philosopher Erwin Straus has written a series of remarkable meditations on the way in which upright posture fundamentally changes the relationship between human beings and the natural environment, including our relationship to the law of gravity. Straus proposes a connection between what he calls the gaze of upright posture and the cultivation of various varieties of "distance" between the biped and his natural surroundings (e.g. "upright posture removes us from the ground, keeps us away from things, and holds us aloof from our fellow-men."[10]) Straus also connects upright posture with the organism's evolving ability to oppose "automatic" responses and instinctual "drives."

"Evolution," he writes, "is a passage from ...the most automatic to the most voluntary":[11] Straus elaborates on this idea in the following paragraph:

> Upright posture characterizes the human species. Nevertheless, each individual has to struggle in order to make it really his own...While the heart continues to beat, from its fetal beginning to death, without our active intervention, and while breathing neither demands nor tolerates our voluntary interference beyond narrow limits, upright posture remains a task throughout our lives...In getting up, in reaching the upright posture, man must oppose the forces of gravity. It seems to be his nature to oppose, with natural means, nature in its impersonal, fundamental aspects. However, gravity is never fully overcome; upright posture always maintains its character of counteraction. It calls for our activity and attention.
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> Automatic regulation alone does not suffice. An old horse may go to sleep standing on its four legs; man has to be awake to keep himself upright. Much as we are part of nature with every breath, with every bite, with every step, we first become our true selves in waking opposition to nature. [12]

"Waking opposition to nature." A marvelous way to sum up the sensibility that informs so much of Cunningham's choreography. (His reliance on chance methods is but one of many strategies he has employed over the years to oppose the unselfconscious dictates of physical instinct and tactile habit.) "Biped" can be read as a study of our evolution away from the rest of the natural kingdom and toward an increasingly cybernetic future.

In recent years, a vast literature has come into being—both fictional and non-fictional— devoted to cyber-

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netic organisms (e.g. cyborgs). The underlying premise of much of this writing is that the next great evolutionary leap for the human (or, more properly post-human) being will be driven by the convergence of neurophysiology, robotic hardware, and "virtual (computer-enhanced) reality." A few weeks after seeing Cunningham's "Biped" for the first time (during the summer of 1999), I learned of a recently completed experiment at .The San Diego Institute for Non-Linear Science. Utilizing a process known as reverse engineering, a mathematical model was produced that "mapped" the neural circuits in a spiny lobster. Clusters of biological neurons were replaced with electronic substitutes; and the creature—now a true cyborg—continued to function "normally."

Analogously, the Media Lab at MIT has been experimenting for some years now with "wearable computation.". Steven Mann, one of the pioneers of this technology, has devised a pair of ultra-enhanced sunglasses that contain a miniaturized computer screen and video camera enabling the wearer to transmit what he sees directly onto his Web page. Mann's computer files thus become an immediate extension of his visual memory; and the special features on the mini-cam, when set on say, freeze-frame setting, allow him to read the writing on the rotating tires of a car— or to, in effect, zoom-in on the individual blades of a fast moving airplane propeller

Clearly, it's only a matter of time before neuron-transistors implanted in the human brain will be able to communicate wirelessly with the Internet. Indeed, Ray Kurzweill, also of MIT, predicts that within fifty years, microscopic "nanobots" will carry these neuron-transistors to the nerve fibers that control the five senses. The result will be "virtual reality from within" —computer enhanced experience that is perceptually indistinguishable from externally -generated sensory stimuli.

Of course, it's more than a bit of a leap from Cunningham's tentative work with the computer to that sort of cybernetic future. But one of Cunningham's most distinguished—and distinctive— legatees, the choreographer and dancer Kenneth King (who first came to prominence in the mid-1960's), has long been fascinated by the relationship(s) between the dancer's body and the science of artificial intelligence. King's prose, I must warn you, often borders on incomprehensible techno-babble. But for all of its daunting difficulties, his extended tribute to Cunningham (written in 1991) is worth quoting, because it associates the latter's technique with a tendency toward both robotics and artificial intelligence. King characterizes Cunningham as "the most advanced choreographer on the planet"[13] ; and this is why he makes that claim:

> Merce's body was the first to systemically synthesize ballet and modern dance to find all the multiplex ways the contracting and rotating spine could work with and against the mechanics of

the legs to create planar shifts and axial transformations, and the first to register the digital pulse, coincidentally around 1950, at the time when TV's were entering every household. The digital pulse links three contracting spinal and thoracic zones in the lower , middle, and upper spine. And: when you pulse, contract, and rotate the spine's 'geomimetric' facings, you get the metatheoremics of robotics! Merce's dance is already a kind of futuristic Artificial Intelligence...[14]

Let me be the first to confess that I haven't the faintest idea what geomimetric facings or metatheoremics are. Clearly, we've left the realm of anatomy and entered the realm of science fiction. And yet, what other dance-maker could inspire such flights of futuristic fancy? Cunningham was the first choreographer to unleash the potential inherent in the gaze of upright posture; and once one's gaze is no longer directed toward the ground, the horizon of possibility becomes (virtually) limitless.

Endnotes

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A Different Expression: Recognizing the Work of Oskar Schlemmer

Michelle Ferranti

This paper serves two purposes. The primary intention of the paper is to present the argument that the choreographer Oskar Schlemmer deserves a place among the otherwise rich body of historical discourse related to the expressionist dance of the Weimar Republic. The secondary intention of the paper is to present an example of a dance-centered historical inquiry drawing on the principles and methodologies of cultural history. It is necessary to focus on the latter intention first. The paragraphs that follow briefly consider the meaning of 'culture,' and the ways in which 'culture' is revealed to the historian.

The importance of 'culture' is not new to historians, and certainly not to dance historians, yet it is impossible to deny that the concept of 'culture' is being reevaluated. Historian Peter Burke suggests that we are currently experiencing what might be called a "'cultural turn' in the study of humanity and society."

> 'Cultural studies' now flourish in many educational institutions…A number of scholars who would a decade or so ago have described themselves as literary critics, art historians or historians of science, now prefer to define themselves as cultural historians, working on 'visual culture'; the 'culture of science', and so on. Political 'scientists' and political historians are exploring 'political culture', while economists and economic historians have turned their attention from production to consumption, and so to culturally shaped desires and needs. Indeed…'culture' has become an everyday term which ordinary people use when talking about their community or way of life.[1]

Considering the broad applications of the term 'culture,' it is important to clarify the meaning of cultural history as it is used in this paper.

Classical cultural history is epitomized by the nineteenth century writings of historians such as Matthew Arnold and Jacob Burckhardt, as well as Johan Huizinga's writings of the early twentieth century. "For all three scholars, 'culture' meant art, literature and ideas, 'sweetness and light' as Arnold described it, or in Huizinga's more prosaic but more precise formulation, 'figures, motifs, themes, symbols, concepts, ideals, styles and sentiments'."[2] This classical interpretation of 'culture' has been replaced by a more comprehensive one in which knowledge of the po-

litical, economic, and social infrastructure is also essential. Likewise, the diversity of appropriate source material matches the diversity of the cultural historian's subject matter.

Literary critics endowed the discipline of cultural history with one of its most powerful means of analysis. Cultural historians appropriated the idea of the 'close reading' of texts from literary critics, and then adapted the method "to the study of non-literary texts." Burke suggests that the term text be presented in "inverted commas" to refer to cultural artifacts encompassing not just the written documentation left behind by a culture, but also by its rituals and images.[3] Dance historians have been doing this for decades by reading movement as 'text' in order to expose the social gravity of ethereal gesture, yet questions remain. How should we 'read' the dances that are our 'texts'? How do we apply such readings to our scholarship? Finally, what is the importance of a dance-centered historical inquiry after all? How can we make a place for dance scholarship outside of the dance department?

Art historian T.J. Clark suggests an approach in which text and context merge. Every cultural production including the work of art, suggests Clark, anticipates the context in which it will be received before it is created; cultural context can not be cast as "mere surrounding," separate from form.[4] Inscribed into the 'text' of choreography are the "values, traditions, practices, [and] representations" of a specific time and place.[5] Therefor, it is not enough to examine Oskar Schlemmer's choreography within the artistic, political, economic, and social framework of Weimar Germany. Instead, this paper is an initiatory attempt to examine the manner in which specific axioms of modernity are represented in the choreography of Oskar Schlemmer. Schlemmer's work is particularly suited to this type of examination because a basic premise of the work was his belief that form yielded meaning, rather than the reverse. Political and artistic revolutions were nourished in Weimar Germany by the conviction that society had been radically liberated from its past course following the conclusion of the First World War, and that a new society and conception of Man must be constructed in its place. Oskar Schlemmer's choreography reveals the belief that an ultimately rational, yet spiritual, conception of Man can reside in a humanistic, utopian society.

Oskar Schlemmer's radical vision of the future of dance and his singular aesthetic established his work as a

mediating response to the austerity of *Ausdruckstanz* and the decadence of ballet. The originality of his work also left him vulnerable to critical assault and historical neglect. Oskar Schlemmer was compelled to defend his work against misinterpretation when critics described his dances as 'mechanical' and 'dehumanized.' Reconstructions of Schlemmer's choreography have motivated similar responses. Modern critics and historians have disregarded Schlemmer's works calling them "a painter's, not a choreographer's dances,"[6] while maintaining that his costume designs seemed to "deny the humanity of the dancers" who wore them.[7] Moreover, reconstructions of Schlemmer's dances often exaggerate the mechanical aspects of the choreography, drastically misinterpreting basic premises of his work.[8] Although innovations of Schlemmer's Bauhaus theater workshop prefigure by thirty years parallel developments in American modern dance, he is largely excluded from the narrative of dance history. Schlemmer is regarded as an anomaly resistant to classification, yet Schlemmer's own publications and correspondences challenge the notion that his choreography was located in sharp opposition to the German expressionist aesthetic. Analysis suggests that Schlemmer's choreography is commensurate with salient principles of the expressionist dance of the Weimar Republic and that his work may be seen to expand, rather than oppose, the received interpretation of this aesthetic.

In order to locate Schlemmer's choreography within the broadly received interpretation of the German expressionist aesthetic the relationship between dance as self-expression and dance as a genre of expressionism must be clarified. The expressionist aesthetic in dance emerged from the tensions of modernity and the crisis of war; it was closely related to earlier manifestations of German Expressionism in the visual arts such as the publication of *The Blue Rider Almanac*. Choreographic themes of the period frequently emphasized intense subjective experience including the exploration of mystical, psychological, and emotional states. This type of content, and the fact that many performers had little or no professional dance training, led to the sustained notion that dance of this period was little more than "insufficiently disciplined self-expression."[9] Dianne Howe suggests a more complex definition of the relationship between self-expression and dance as a genre of expressionism. Howe's redefinition suggests that the importance of the work be determined by its intent to transcend self-expression by reaching "beyond the personal viewpoint to the supra-personal."[10] Oskar Schlemmer's personal correspondences, diaries, and lecture notes, as well as visual and choreographed artifacts establish that the objective of his work was to replace the personal with the universal, the temporal with the eternal.

While most choreographers who adhered to the expressionist aesthetic believed that content must dictate the structure of their choreography, in Schlemmer's dances the 'supra-personal' viewpoint was embedded within a formal approach to choreography which took as its point of departure the line of Expressionism whose exponents in the visual arts included Wassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc, and Schlemmer himself. These painters rejected "the search for meaning as a starting point for artistic creation. Instead they sought to establish the primacy of form. Form was considered to be meaningful in itself."[11] This premise guided Schlemmer as he sought and found metaphysical truths within the corporeal structure of the human body. Schlemmer identified the star shape of the spread hand and the inherent cross of the shoulders on the spine. He saw the symbol of infinity in a person's folded arms.[12] The conviction that form yielded meaning rather than the reverse also motivated the thematic content of Schlemmer's first work of choreography, *The Triadic Ballet*. Schlemmer wrote "three is a supremely important, prominent number, within which egotistic one and dualistic contrast are transcended, giving way to the collective"; by creating a ballet based upon threesomes Schlemmer created a formalist, utopian environment in which his transcendent vision of Mankind could reside.[13]

Schlemmer first conceived of the notion of creating a ballet in 1912 while he was a student studying painting at the Stuttgart Academy of Art. Commencement of work on the ballet coincided with the publication of Kandinsky's *On the Spiritual in Art*, of which Schlemmer was familiar, and the structure of the ballet was informed by a synaesthetic approach that the two painters shared. In *On the Spiritual in Art*, and in several preliminary essays, Kandinsky proposed a harmonic relationship between color and shape, using as his foundation the arrangement of sounds in time as a means of expression in musical composition. Kandinsky called for a formal language of color-shape correspondences that would approach "quantitative" meaning in service of the creation of an "eternal art." Kandinsky also called for the creation of a "Monumental Art" that was the combination of every art in a single creative work. Stage composition combining musical movement, pictorial movement, and dance movement would be the first 'Monumental Art' according to Kandinsky.[14] A synaesthetic merging of light, color, sound, movement, and dramatic plot characterize both Kandinsky's description of his own stage composition *Yellow Sound*, and Schlemmer's earliest notations about the structure of a then as yet untitled dance composition. The following excerpt is drawn from Kandinsky's introduction to *Yellow Sound*.

> Over the stage, dark-blue twilight, which at first has a pale tinge and later becomes a more intense dark blue. After a time a small light becomes visible in the center, increasing in brightness as the color becomes deeper. After a time,

music from the orchestra...Behind the stage a chorus is heard which must be so arranged that the source of the singing is unrecognizable...[Ellipses indicate pauses.] Stone-hard dreams...And speaking rocks.../ Clods of earth pregnant with puzzling questions.../The heaven turns...the stones...melt.../ Growing up more invisible...rampart.../Tears and laughter...Praying and cursing.../Joy of reconciliation and blackest slaughter./Murky light on the ...sunniest...day/(quickly and suddenly cut off)./Brilliant Shadows in the darkest night![15]

Schlemmer's diary contains notes outlining a dance meant to serve as a bridge between the archaic form of ballet and the modern dance that would replace it. It strongly resembles Kandinsky's description of *Yellow Sound*. The following excerpt is drawn from Schlemmer's diary and is dated December, 1912.

Gray: conventional set, with a moon perhaps, to provide a sense of evening! Choreography and music: perfection, thanks to having convention to fall back on, familiar, easy to absorb. The style of the Russian ballet, the basis of its success...A demon scurries across the stage...provocative yellow-orange color, a mask, and takes up a position at the front of the curtain, gesticulating, conjuring; the dancers (their dance interrupted) shrink back, startled...the atmosphere has something unclear, groping about it, as of something just taking shape; the music is dark and confused, melodies and the tempo springing up, then falling back again; the same true of the dancers...The mood intensifies from red to bright orange. Music and dance full of passionate excitement – erotic delirium. The demon dances along with it victoriously. The mood climbs progressively from orange to lemon yellow, symbolizing morbid over-stimulation, ecstasy. The movements of the dancers and the music: shrill, high notes. Then: like a sudden fall into darkest night – black backdrop, the dancers wrapped in gray. The music deep, minor. Mourning. At center backstage appears a violet dot, which widens into a circle. The circle passes over into a blue square...The music: majestic, solemn. The dance: measured, noble. The cherub (an angel in silver...) appears; the mood moves from dark to light blue, growing lighter and lighter until it passes over into pure white (or silver). The dancers brought together, led by the cherub. A white star appears in the background. The music softly fades away. The demon: dead.[16]

A comparison between *Yellow Sound* and the work which was the germ for *The Triadic Ballet* reveals more than Schlemmer's alignment with the Expressionist painters, particularly those of The Blue Rider; Kandinsky's *Yellow Sound* and Schlemmer's diary notations foreshadowed a cataclysmic rupture in the cultural continuum. Kandinsky and Schlemmer invoked images of a broken peace followed by confusion, terror, and destruction culminating in regeneration. Schlemmer's 1912 diary entry constructs a vision of a new dance as well as an apostolic vision of a new society, each made possible only through destruction of the old. Political theorist Marshall Berman defines this dialectic as a "maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal" and identifies it as a distinguishing characteristic of modernity.[17] Artists and intellectuals who tried to deconstruct political, economic, and social structures with words and images confronted a war in 1914 that accomplished their mission conclusively and grimly. Their response was one of both horror and euphoria. Rene Schickele made this appeal to artists.

The new world has begun. It is here: mankind liberated! A face appears in the atmospheric maelstrom of anxiety and lies: the face of Man. The face of a creature bathed in heavenly light...At last he can begin his work. The Man. At last...Now! Let us begin afresh, freed from the burden of the Middle Ages. Let us create the Man of Modern Times. Forward![18]

The war leveled Europe's political, economic, and social infrastructure and effected a cultural year zero.

The artists who responded to Schickele's appeal engaged in a thoroughly Faustian pursuit in which subjectivity, time, and space fused in the pursuit of 'the Man of Modern Times.' Schlemmer emerged from the war in 1918 strongly committed to the realization of his ballet, and his experience as a soldier on Germany's western front crystallized the ballet's structure. Schlemmer now found the "irrationalist and ecstatic impulses" of art before the war "disagreeable." He rejected the senseless brutality of war, articulating instead a view of artistic modernism, society, and Man "that embodied rational order and discipline."[19] *The Triadic Ballet* was constructed in three sections distinguished by a color and corresponding mood. The first movement was 'yellow, a gay burlesque'; the second was 'pink, a solemn ceremony'; and the third was 'black, a mystical fantasy.' Schlemmer described the formal properties of the ballet in his diary.

Derived from trias = triad, the ballet should be called a dance of the threesome...One female and two male dancers: twelve dances and eighteen costumes...form, color, space; the three dimensions of space: height, depth, breadth; the basic

forms: ball, cube, pyramid; the primary colors: red, blue, yellow. The threesome of dance, costume and music.[20]

The ballet premiered in 1922, ten years after its inception, by then Schlemmer had accepted a teaching position at the Bauhaus. At the Bauhaus Schlemmer eventually lead both the sculpture studio that he turned into a scene shop, conducting experiments in mask making and sculptural costume design, and the theater workshop.

Schlemmer wrote of his teaching at the Bauhaus that he hoped to provide his students "enchanting pedagogy" and to give himself over to them as a "Schillerian tribunal."[21] Schlemmer's identification with Schiller's aesthetics is understandable; like Schlemmer, the writer and philosopher Friedrich Schiller sought both personal and social perfection through the unity of man's rational and sensuous natures, but it was Schiller's conception of an archetypal Man that most strongly informed Schlemmer's creative vision. Schiller wrote "Every individual human being…carries within him, potentially and prescriptively, an ideal man, the archetype of a human being, and it is his life's task to be, through all his changing manifestations, in harmony with the unchanging unity of this ideal." Schlemmer dedicated himself to the Schillerian search for that which is "absolute and unchanging," for the element of being that is definitively human.[22]

Schlemmer's stuffed and padded costumes are the most vivid manifestation of Schiller's philosophy and of his own passionate humanism, and yet they are perhaps the most alienating feature of his oeuvre. Schlemmer's costumes are the materialization of Schiller's declaration that "Every individual is that much less a human being the more he is individual."[23] The intent of these costumes was not to dehumanize the dancer, instead they were designed to cover the dancers' individual anatomic idiosyncrasies.[24] Far from inhuman, when wearing Schlemmer's costumes the dancers became what Sally Banes called "larger than life, an intensified concept of bodiliness."[25] Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius called the costumes "pure creations of the imagination, symbolizing eternal types of human character and their different moods, serene, tragic, funny or serious."[26]

At the Bauhaus Schlemmer continued to push toward a utopian objective, using the theater as his means. Schlemmer wrote "There are no noble tasks to which the utopian fantasies of the moderns might be applied. The illusionary world of the theater offers an outlet for these fantasies. We must be content with surrogates, create out of wood and cardboard what we cannot build in stone and steel."[27] He created more than a dozen short works at the Bauhaus. The dances ranged in tone from solemnity to the comical and the grotesque, many featured elaborate masks, props, and costumes constructed in Schlemmer's workshops. Schlemmer's utopian objective

fit easily into the Bauhaus curriculum. The founders of the Bauhaus were engaged in their own ideological project of reconciliation: reunification of the fine and applied arts. The school used as its metaphor the medieval guild system in which craftsman and artist united in the construction of the gothic cathedral. The cathedral became a symbol of a rejuvenated modernism that Gropius invoked in the Bauhaus Manifesto written in 1919.

> Let us then create a new world of craftsmen without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsmen and artist! Together let us desire, conceive and create this new structure of the future, which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in one unity and which will one day rise toward heaven from the hands of a million workers like the crystal symbol of a new faith.[28]

As the 1920s progressed, bringing political and economic stability to the Weimar Republic, proclamations such as the one made by Gropius in the Republic's chaotic first year began to seem plausible; ironically, it was at this apex of German culture that Schlemmer's utopian imaginings began to foreshadow a more uncertain future. In 1926, the Bauhaus relocated to a new facility in Dessau that was built with a theater "well equipped for a serious approach to stage problems" according to Schlemmer.[29] It ushered in a period of tremendous productivity for the theater workshop and it was during this period that Schlemmer choreographed *Block Play*. In this dance three figures arrange and rearrange a stage filled with blocks. This playful task turns ominous as "tensions and jealousies"[30] erupt. The figures struggle to assemble a precarious tower of blocks and then prostrate themselves before it. The collapse of the tower marks the end of the piece. Schlemmer frequently introduced props as foundations for improvisation but *Block Play* emerged as a uniquely prophetic vision of the future. The collapse of the tower signified a second cultural rupture that would destroy the 'crystal' cathedral that embodied the mission of the Bauhaus and countless utopian fantasies.

Artistic innovation was encouraged by the liberal cultural policies of the Weimar Republic, but the rise of fascism precipitated by economic collapse destroyed the brilliant flash of modernity that illuminated Schlemmer's vision. Schlemmer's students and colleagues at the Bauhaus adored him, affectionately calling him Master Magician, but in 1929 Schlemmer made the difficult decision to leave the Bauhaus because of heightening ideological and fiscal tensions at the school. He accepted a position at the State Academy for the Arts and Crafts in Bresslau where, unable to pursue his stage work, Schlemmer retreated to painting. Dismissed from his teaching position there in 1932 for political reasons, Schlemmer's wife and

children fled the country becoming refugees. Accepting tremendous personal risk, Schlemmer chose to stay in Germany desperately hoping to sell more paintings. Eventually the only things left to paint were buildings and barracks, and Schlemmer painted them in camouflage. He died in exile in his own country, waiting to reunite with his family in 1943.

At the Bauhaus Schlemmer introduced "a form of artistic invention which in the 1960s would be dubbed 'happenings' and in the 1970s 'performance art.'"[31] When directing classes at the Bauhaus studios Schlemmer relied on improvisation, often dividing the class into individuals or small groups. Later he reassembled these separate components to create a dance, feeling that meaning would be suggested by form, and could not be predetermined. Schlemmer's choreographic language consisted of simple pedestrian movement accompanied by an early form of musique concrete utilizing percussion and found sound punctuated by silence. Schlemmer's work at the Bauhaus resembles the collaborations that took place between Merce Cunningham and John Cage at Black Mountain College, and there is a connection between the two schools. In 1936 Xanti Schawinsky joined the faculty of Black Mountain College, Schawinsky had been Schlemmer's student, a collaborator, and later, his assistant. Black Mountain historian Mary Emma Harris writes "Schawinsky's Black Mountain productions were among the first American presentations of what was later to become known as 'performance theater.'"[32] Harris notes that even at the time, Schawinsky's work was recognized as derivative of Schlemmer's work at the Bauhaus.

Schlemmer's Bauhaus dances also forecast the work of Alwin Nikolais. Like Schlemmer, the work of Nikolais was rooted in the exploration of the formal elements of choreography: motion, shape, color, time, and the internal and external space of the dancer. Both Schlemmer and Nikolais created their own sound scores and experimented with light projections. Both choreographers sought to transform the dancer into a metaphoric being with prop, mask, and costume. Perhaps most compelling is each choreographer's vision of dance as a medium poised to embrace the future. In 1957, nearly thirty years after Schlemmer created the last of his Bauhaus dances, Nikolais concluded "Now we are moving in the direction of a kind of abstraction that begins to speak of basic natures, and just as we can release ourselves from the mimetic act, so too can we release ourselves from the literal, pedestrian function and look of the body and use it truly as an esthetic instrument."[33]

At the nucleus of Oskar Schlemmer's choreography was an obsession with the condition of Man, and with Mankind's relationship to the universe. While the fate of Mankind was a common expressionist theme, for Schlemmer the image of Man was not merely a "vehicle for expression," but was instead a being whose form approached absolute meaning. Schlemmer dedicated himself to the creation of a canon that was a synthesis of Man's physical and metaphysical configuration. Understanding this canon allows us to see Schlemmer's choreography as a genre of Expressionism. Moreover, this paper challenges and reverses the historiographical relationship between canon and context. Peter Burke concludes "Today, the process of 'canonization' and the social and political conflicts underlying it has become an object of study by cultural historians, but more for the light which it throws on the ideas and assumptions of the canonizers than those of the canonized."[34] Schlemmer's choreography reveals the intensity and gravity with which artists approached their world-making endeavor in Germany amid the instability of the world wars; an endeavor which would be perverted in the most extreme way with the rise of National Socialism.

Notes

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6. Jack Anderson, "New York Newsletter," *The Dancing Times*, Jan. 1983, 280.
7. Susan Au, *Ballet and Modern Dance* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1988), 115.
8. D.S. Moynihan and Leigh George Odom, "Oskar Schlemmer's Bauhaus Dances: Debra McCall's Reconstructions," *The Drama Review* 28 (Fall 1984): 51.
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12. Oskar Schlemmer, Lazlo Maholy-Nagy, and Farkas Molnar, *The Theater of the Bauhaus*, ed. Walter Gropius, trans. Arthur S. Wensinger (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 27.
13. Oskar Schlemmer, *The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer*, ed. Tut Schlemmer, trans. Krishna Winston (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1972), 196.
14. *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, vol. 1, eds. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (Boston: G.K. Hall and Co., 1982), 89; Ibid., 88; Ibid., 87. Kandinsky's essay "Content and Form" was published in late 1910 or early 1911 only in Russian, therefor Schlemmer could not have been familiar with it. In it Kandinsky introduces themes, including the idea of Monumental Art, that recur one year later in *On the Spiritual in Art* published in German.
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16. Schlemmer, *Letters and Diaries*, 7-8.
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18. Rene Schickele, *Der neunte November* (Berlin, 1919), quoted in Eva Forgacs, *The Bauhaus Idea and Bauhaus Politics*, trans. John Batki (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1995), 15.
19. Vernon L. Lidtke, "Twentieth-Century Germany: The Cultural, Social, and Political Context of the Work of Oskar Schlemmer," in *Oskar Schlemmer: The Baltimore Museum of Art*, eds. Arnold L.

Lehman and Brenda Richardson (Baltimore: The Museum Press, 1986), 25.

20. Schlemmer, *Letters and Diaries*, 196.

21. Ibid., 189.

22. Friedrich Schiller, "Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man," in *Essays*, eds. Walter Hinderer and Daniel O. Dahlstrom (New York: Continuum, 1993), 93, Ibid., 115.

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24. Moynihan and Odom, 54.

25. Sally Banes Review of *Tensile Involvement, Noumenon, Count Down*, and *Pond*, by Alwin Nikolais, City Center, New York; and *Figure in Space, Space Dance, Form Dance, Gesture Dance, Block Play, Hoop Dance*, and *Pole Dance*, by Oskar Schlemmer, reconstructed by Debra McCall, Ethnic Folk Arts Center, New York, *Dance Magazine*, February 1983, 80.

26. Schlemmer, Maholy-Nagy, and Molnar, *Theater of the Bauhaus*, 8.

27. Schlemmer, *Letters and Diaries*, 107.

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32. Mary Emma Harris, *The Arts at Black Mountain College*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987), 40.

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Urban Bush Women and the Continuum of Black Performativity

Anita Gonzalez

Today I will be speaking about the Urban Bush Women, the African American dance company whose photograph appears on the front of your conference program. I would like to discuss how this particular dance company creates a narrative that emerges from the African American experience, yet responds to the historical and critical moment of the company's appearance on the New York stage. Urban Bush Women gained national notoriety in the late 1980's by performing dances that created a visceral audience response to the energy and cultural specificity of their work. Typical reviews used adjectives like "vibrant," "feisty," "sensual," "bold," "folkloric," "sassy," "poignant," and "joyous" to describe the dancing. However, the ethnic vitality of this dancing was later tempered by the inclusion of more linear and extended modern dance movements. These movements helped to locate the repertory as contemporary dance group.

The company, like a crystal with many facets, has been received and analyzed within a variety of critical frames. The work has been placed within the context of postmodern dance expression (Banes 1994)[1], African American women's autobiography (Goler 1994)[2], community empowerment (Aduonum 1999)[3], and radical feminist performance (Chatterjea 1996)[4]. Seldom has the work been critically examined in its most obvious context: as an extension of African American nightclub acts, floor shows, and vaudeville formats that were developed and popularized by the TOBA circuit.

Viewed through this lens the Urban Bush Women become a part of a larger panorama of African American stage work that re-imagines folk and pop cultural forms. Their work moves beyond the broad category of the vernacular to embrace specific symbolic icons of the African American experience. Even though the company uses gospel rifts, communal chanting, fancy footwork, seductive hip shaking, and high-energy dance to create rousing shows that appeal to a cross-section of Black and White audience members, they also draw from less obvious spiritual and cultural paradigms as they shape their repertory.

I identify five specific African American aesthetics that define the Urban Bush Women repertory: Africanist artistry, the jazz aesthetic, theatrical storytelling, community empowerment, and religious and spiritual ecstasy. By Africanist artistry I refer to the qualities of African American performance that have been analyzed by Robert Farris Thompson, Brenda Dixon Gottschild, and others and that includes concepts of dynamic tension, juxtaposition, ephebism, poly-rhythm, and the aesthetic of the cool.[5]

The jazz aesthetic refers to the use of jazz formats and improvisational music as both a method for determining choreographic structure and as mode of musical accompaniment. Kansas City Jazz shaped and nurtured Zollar's early dance expressions. Her mother was a musician and entertainer who played the nightclubs of the Midwestern town during an era when African American music styles set the pace for the city. Traditional jazz dancing encompasses a variety of forms ranging from Big Band dance hall music to nightclub blues to rousing vaudeville routines. Jawole's early experiences of dancing within these settings and later, working with Joseph Stevenson on floor shows irrevocably shaped her aesthetic. Jazz music and dance were not esoteric traditions for Zollar, rather, they were a way of communicating to an audience through the cadence of the music.

When she first arrived in New York in the early eighties, Jawole selected Dianne McIntyre's Sounds in Motion Studio as the site of her apprenticeship. Dianne was then most known for her ongoing work with jazz musicians and for her commitment to using music as a generative force for the development of choreographic works.[6] The association with Sounds in Motion was ideal for Jawole's continuing incorporation of the jazz aesthetic into her work. In the studio dancers played like instruments; voice and body uniting to produce a variety of pitches tones and melodies. In rehearsals the dancers were encouraged to improvise within set structures, then to hone the material so that it consistently communicated a unique response to a musical impulse. The jazz sensibility was consequently imbedded in the substance of each developing performance work.

Urban Bush Women dances are often narratives that include theatrical storytelling. Like the African Griot or storyteller the company communicates with their audiences through language sound, and gesture. The movement, although sometimes abstract, is designed to send an emotional message to viewers that reflect the content of the African American experience. Recurring themes are oppression and abuse. Often the central characters are transformed through interactions with a women's community until, eventually, they experience healing or spiritual growth. The incorporation of theatrical staging techniques has evolved over time. In the early works the theatricality of the dance emerged from the process of establishing relationships between the dancers. Later, in projects like, *Praise House, Song of Lawino,* and *The Gilda Stories,* literary works were creatively used as a spring-

board for dance theater projects. Eventually Urban Bush Women began to employ professional directors to help craft the material into more mainstream theatrical formats.

Community Empowerment refers to both the empowerment of the individual dancers through the community of the company and to the codified community workshops the company sponsors while on tour. Zollar strives to revitalize the vernacular vocabulary and to remain connected to the African American (and other) communities through local public encounters. She responds to the community of company members, the community of practicing artists, the *amateur* or arts lovers who attend her performances, and local community constituencies that she engages as participants in her empowerment projects.[7]

Finally, the Urban Bush Women, under Zollar's leadership ground their work in spiritual and religious experiences that extend from Africa Diaspora religions. The spiritual component of the company's work is the least written about. Zollar has lived a life filled with adverse circumstances and her personal experiences with pain have resolved into a fascination with the way in which people transition out of pain, into acceptance, and ultimately into peace. Many of her works are grounded in healing spiritual experiences that extend from Africa Diaspora religions, but expand to include Native American, East Indian, and Euro-American forms of "magic."

Jawole describes Elegba as a god who opens the door and clears the path for others to follow. She sees her own life's work in these terms. After her mother's death in 1977 she experienced a series of depressions that she now reinterprets as "diving for pearls." She says: "from a very young age I experienced a lot of death. Some people would say that's really depressing, but this is also my life, and death has been as much a part of my life as anything else. I think that's why it's reflected so much in my work." Part of her personal healing process is the exploration of various healing traditions that appear as symbols and characters in her choreography. *River Songs*, for example, was spurred by a dream that Jawole had about her mother's death. A central image that propels the work is the dancer's struggle against an overwhelming current that threatens to drown them. In the dance the dancers resist and survive the deluge through collective effort—they link arms and fight with their chests thrust forward to defy the current.

Dreams are but one component of the spiritual experiences that she interprets. Transformation of the spirit, either collective or individual is apparent in dances like *Transitions, Bitter Tongue, Girlfriends, Praise House, Shelter, Bones and Ash*, and all of the *Life Dances*. Frequently her dances depict anger, dramatize a moment of cathartic release, then resolve with the performer moving into a state of peace or spiritual clarity. Stages of spiritual awareness are marked by symbolic props—crosses, blue fabric, knives, totemic figures. Dressing and undressing is repeatedly used a symbolic metaphor for the process of trans-

formation—in *Girlfriends* the women don negligees, in *The Papess*, Jawole sheds a blue raincoat, in *Praise House* the grandmother puts on her white dress. Each undressing marks the beginning of a new cycle of spiritual growth.

These five components, Africanist artistry, the jazz aesthetic, theatrical storytelling, community empowerment, and spiritual and religious ecstasy provide one critical context for analysis of the Urban Bush Women work. However, it cannot be ignored that the Urban Bush Women is most often described as a feminist dance theater company. While the company certainly profiles the work of Black women and supports feminist notions of the subversive body, the choreographic work was not conceived as a feminist project. Original company members were gleaned from the pool of available artists at Sounds and Motion who were available and willing to work. They happened to be women. Once the company was constituted with women dancers the work was labeled feminist because of the many images of strong women that appeared onstage. However, in the case of Urban Bush Women, the representations of fiery Black women may be more easily linked to a social history of African American women as survivors than to the tenets of 1980's feminist activism.

Let us imagine the body of the Bush Women repertory as a broad avenue that flows down the central street of an American town. On one side of the avenue stand the African American vernacular performance styles that enliven and provide a context for the dance vocabulary. The other side is an audience forum, a composite of the historical time period and popular tastes that partially determines the aesthetic and critical reception of the work. As the company dances flow through the central channel of this binary universe, interpretive perceptions of the choreographer's work shift. Zollar's work surfaced during a historical moment that celebrated the "personal as political." Postmodern artists had paved the road for positive reception of multi-cultural art through previous experiments in modern dance form and structure. At the same time, the choreographer's dance experiences had been honed in the cabaret performance styles of her mother's nightclub acts and her mentor's floorshows.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the first performance of Urban Bush Women was staged at the Ethnic Folk Arts Center in New York City. The company premiered as a dance ensemble on June 30, 1984, in a downtown loft in Soho. The evening length show called "Homegoings" included a dance suite called River Songs that depicted communal gestures of women soothing, raging, chanting, bathing, and nurturing on the banks of an imaginary river. From this initial impetus the company embarked upon an eighteen-year journey that transported the group to national and international performance venues.

The first show was a deliberate move from the relative isolation of the Harlem community into the cauldron

of downtown performance art. I remember this first presentation as a transformative event. Company members had been rehearsing at Dianne McIntyre's "Sounds in Motion" studio in Harlem for several weeks. Most of the performers were scholarship students at McIntyre's and our access to the rehearsal space eased production costs. When Jawole announced that we would perform downtown we were excited about the possibility. "Downtown" meant White people, a higher public profile and possible press. The rehearsal period was intense because Jawole insisted that her performers invest in an emotional presence that included both improvisational and technical expertise. She selected a summer performance date hoping that the absence of other "major" company performances would increase our visibility. Production funding came from a minor inheritance that her uncle had left to her.

The first weekend of performances at Ethnic Folk Arts was for small audiences of about thirty people. Company members included Teri Cousar, Christina Jones, Janice Reed, Viola Sheely, Carol Webster, and myself with music by Carl Riley, Ghanniyya Green, Tiye Giraud, and Pam Patrick. Marlene Montoute created the set and Robin Wilson, who had participated in the rehearsal process, watched with her newborn daughter Asmahan. On the following Monday, dance critic Jennifer Dunning published a review in the New York Times that brought audiences flocking to the theater. I specifically remember arrived at the loft space and seeing a line of strangers wrapped around the block waiting to attend the show.

The Dunning review was pivotal for the critical reception of the company's work and for its later appeal to a cross-section of audiences. The company's work was grounded in the Black experience, yet it premiered during a time when the arts community was particularly receptive to new forms of Black art, a time that Sally Banes describes as a "return of the oppressed' in terms of character, mood, emotion and situation"[8] During the 1980's notions of the "personal as political" held sway within the arts community of New York. Treading paths opened by the Judson Church artists, performance artists experimented in lower Manhattan performance spaces like PS 122, Franklin Furnace, Dance Theater Workshop, St Mark's Place, and Dixon Place. While experimentations with forms and structures were common, the trend was autobiography expressed through collage art, text/movement, and monologue performance work. Urban Bush Women appeared at the peak of this movement. The all-female dance company seemed a confirmatory testament of the relevance of Black feminist performance to a universalized multi-cultural women's community.

Like other African American performers who work within political and social frames that dictate to some extent the production, reception, and aesthetics of their public work, Zollar has, over time, shaped and honed her material to better accommodate the downtown public that now shares in her artistic vision. In a recent interview Jawole says:

> I forget that a lot of my experiences were outside the mainstream. So, when I'm presenting them, people are thinking, I'm trying to be provocative, or I'm trying to be an outsider. I'm just working from the experiences that I know of growing up in an all black community. Where the only white people I think were storeowners....It took me a long time, and it still is taking me, to figure out white codes that people take for granted. And I'm sure that it takes white people a long time to figure out black codes. I think I'm starting to master now, what I call, white cultural language.[9]

The company's marketing of its own self-image is partially determined by African American self-consciousness. Urban Bush Women fortuitously premiered during a historical moment that was uniquely receptive to popular and folk-based art. Its birth into the cauldron of downtown postmodernism propelled the company in to its commercial success. Early advertisements were more ethnic and emphasized the Afrocentricity of the company's work. More recent graphics (like the one on your program) depict linear and extended movement with a contemporary flair.

The work of Urban Bush Women continues a historical pattern of theatrical mediation by African American woman. Black female artists develop and market artistry during historical moments when there are economic and social resources to support the work. I mention the Whitman Sisters, Katherine Dunham, Pearl Primus, Dorothy Dandridge, and Josephine Baker (to name just a few), all artists who flourished when critical and commercial venues allowed for public acceptance, and faltered when their creative impulses grated against the shifting borders of artistic trends. Like many ethnic artists, African American choreographers walk through a rather narrow aesthetic path that requires them to adapt the veracity of Black gesture to appeal to a commercial, and frequently uninformed audience. These artists in some ways conceive and market their work to accommodate to mainstream expectations.

As a comparative case study I use Sissieretta Jones, a late nineteenth-century artist who was also known as "Black Patti." Her performance vehicle, Black Patti's Troubadours, achieved critical notoriety for their rousing renditions of Black popular culture. The company director, trained at the New England Conservatory, strategically included familiar schticks and scenes from plantation life that appealed to American audiences into her presentations. Later, to underscore the technical virtuosity of her artists, she added an "Operatic Kaleidoscope" into her act.

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As a result, Jones was frequently equated with the Italian opera singer Adelina Patti. For Black Patti's Troubadours, the minstrel show was an aperture for the commercial display of crafted African American performance vocabulary.

Critical responses to Sissieretta Jones performances were mixed. While some critics wrote: "In addition to her beautiful voice and exquisite art, nature has endowed her with a bright intellect and queenly form,[10]" others recorded "As is usually the case with Negroes, when they are elevated or try to play the part of a Negro, they overdo the thing and are unnatural and unreal. The majority of the performers last night were not real, however, there were several who 'were' Negroes and the comic dialects furnished by them were much enjoyed.[11]" Like much of the Urban Bush Women repertory, the performances partially affirmed expectations about Black performance and partially introduced new performance paradigms to the viewers. Both Sissieretta Jones and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar transform African American vernacular performances into effective vehicles for universalizing their unique cultural perspective. Working though public expectations about folk art, they shape and hone their material for commercial and critical success.

In the case of Zollar and the Urban Bush Women, the company has changed its public face over the years to accommodate to its increasing popularity as a feminist modern dance company. Public imagery surrounding the work of the Urban Bush Women increasingly responds to postmodern and modern dance paradigms partially determined by the historical moment of its popularity. Over time, as Zollar writes and rewrites her personal and cultural experiences, she craftily weaves a narrative of African American woman's experiences into a unique tapestry of more universal multi-cultural female artistry.

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Rethinking Humanness: The Place of Automata, Puppets and Cyborgs in Dance

Naomi M. Jackson

Today many of us are anxious about the proliferation of virtual bodies made possible through motion capture and digital editing, yet, throughout American and European history there have been non-human figures portrayed in dance. From the endearing animated cartoon characters who dance with Gene Kelly, to Paul Taylor's menacing Big Bertha who directs an all-American family in a macabre dance of disintegration, the dance world, along with popular film, has long been fascinated by the relationship between live human bodies and inanimate beings created in the image of the human. What seems to be at issue is what, if anything, differentiates humans as a species, kinetically, and mentally, from beings created by continuing advancements in craftsmanship and technology? Examining this question is an exercise in self-reflection at its most poignant, for studying the fraught issue brings us closer to understanding ourselves and some quintessential concepts of the nature of being and non-being in our society. Through studying this topic we can also come to some fascinating insights into the styles of live concert dance popular in American and Europe today, namely release and martial arts based technique, and fractured ballet.

This paper consequently offers some initial thoughts on how the non-human person (doll, puppet, automaton, robot, and cyborg) has been represented in Western dance (with additional references to popular film where relevant) from the nineteenth century to the present.

In the background research for the paper I used a combination of choreographic analysis and cultural studies to address the following questions: First—What are the movement conventions associated with the non-human figure in dance? Stiff, jointed action? Super fast, suspended movement? Spasdic/frenzied? (This is an interesting question since dance itself is based on highly codified movements of the body, so how are dancers distinguished from robots, etc. that are also defined by codified movements?) Secondly—how do these non-human characters function from a thematic point of view within the narrative? Are the non-humans perceived as threatening to humans? Do they mock humans? Or do they act as heroic outsiders who bring humans to a closer understanding of their humanity?

Coppélia vs. The Matrix

To set the stage for my findings, I would like to begin by showing you two sets of video clips. The first are taken from the ballet Coppélia, a work originally choreographed in 1870 by Arthur Saint-Leon. The second clips are from The Matrix, the 1999 film directed by Larry and Andy Wachowski. While watching these clips I would like you to think about the way the non-human is represented at a movement level in contrast to the human. Also, reflect, if you can on the narrative in both works, and how the non-human element is represented at a thematic level.

These two excerpts provide an excellent insight into a fascinating reversal that has occurred over the past century in the way the live human and artificially produced human have been portrayed in dance and popular film.

In Coppélia, there is a clear division presented between the mechanistic and the human, with the live human being portrayed as superior both physically and metaphorically. In Coppélia, the dolls' limbs move with jerky, stiff, staccato motion. The dolls are limited to being dolls, which must be activated by humans. They lack free will and emotion, and are defined by their stillness. Swanhilda, in comparison, who is the young, vibrant star of the ballet, is defined by her lively, vivacious dancing. Physically she is capable of the smooth execution of virtuousic movement. Moreover, she is capable of free will, and is able to assume different guises—as when she assumes the role of Coppélia to trick the toy maker. Overall, the human Swanhilda is more exciting than the doll Coppélia in a narrative in which an organic and vitalist world view wins out over a mechanistic perspective. As Craig Owens writes in his article "The Politics of Coppélia," "the role of Swanhilda seems to reproduce in miniature the confrontation of philosophies at the center of the ballet. The plot requires that she impersonate the automaton in order to unmask it; the dancer must therefore successfully communicate two distinct styles of dancing, one imitative of the precise, stiff movements of the mechanical; the other, of the broad and uninterrupted flow of the natural. Through their juxtaposition, Swanhilda demonstrated the infinite preferability of the living dancer over the seductive, yet ultimately threatening, automaton."

In the Matrix, the situation is fascinating in how different it is. Here the living, real, human body holds little interest, or narrative power. It remains relatively still, in the space ship of the Resistance Team. What matters is the virtual, digitized body, which is capable of extreme physical feats—extreme speed, suspension, anti-gravity movements, and high velocity kick boxing moves. This digitized body is also exciting for its ability to transform itself

through manipulation of the digital world of the "matrix." At the end of the film, Neo is able to "kill" Agent Smith by disappearing into his body and exploding it from the inside out. In the *Matrix*, humans win out over the non-human AI's by being able to transform completely through a technologized, digital body. The message seems clear — real living bodies are of little use in a newly digitized, computer dominated world; in order to survive we need to embrace technology and see the digital self as an exciting and liberating entity that will allow us to survive as a species.

The glorification of the technologized body in the *Matrix*, and other recent science fiction films, television ads and music videos, offers a fascinating challenge to the dance world, where real, living breathing bodies have been at the heart of the profession. "How will live dancers deal with the digital acrobatics of the computer age?" Before considering this question, however, it is instructive to look more closely at it within a historical context. The next section of the paper, therefore, considers how the non-human human has long been a featured character in dance, with a range of movement conventions and meanings associated with it.

Historical Overview

What follows is a brief overview of popular dances and dance styles in which automatons, puppets and other non-human humans are featured. While in many instances the non-human automata or puppet has been represented as scary and evil, in others it has been portrayed as a role model — either because of its ability to show us our humanity or present us with a superior mode of living. Overall, however, it is evident that there has been an increasing synthesis in which humans and machines have become fused together and less differentiated.

Following *Coppélia*, (in ballet history) was *Die Puppenfee*, or *The Fairy Doll*, premiered in 1888. Set in a doll shop, the ballet tells the story of how various dolls (including a Chinese lady doll, Spanish doll, Japanese doll, and Moorish doll) engage in midnight revels after the shop has closed for the evening. The main attraction of the party is the lovely Fairy Doll who oversees the affair. The ballet ends as the Shopkeeper, awakened by the revelers, enters the shop in nightclothes. As the doll horde advances toward him, he sinks fearfully to his knees before the Fairy Doll. This pose is held frozen as the final tableau.

In this work, the classic representation is made of the doll as evil and a threat to mankind. Moreover, as in *Coppélia*, the seductive power of the non-human character is evident by having the main doll represented as a beautiful female. (One also sees this in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, 1926, where is a female automaton.) Moreover, there is a link made between the non-human and the exotic other, as the dolls in the Fairy Doll, (and in *Coppélia*) are presented as Chinese, Japanese, etc..

Very similar is *La Boutique Fantasque* by Leonide Massine, which premiered in 1919. Again set in a toy shop, the dolls come to life after the shop closes. In this ballet, two of the dolls who are a male and female can-can dancer decide to flee since they are about to be sold to two different customers, and therefore be split apart. In the morning, the irate customers turn on the shopkeeper, but all the dolls return to life and chase the terrified customers and shopkeeper on the street. Here again, the dangerous, threatening nature of the non-human is presented.

A different perspective of the non-human human is presented in the ballet *Petrushka*, choreographed by Michel Fokine and premiered in 1911. While at a movement level, the puppets are again represented through repetitive, joint-like actions and limited range of motion (Fokine said he wanted to "create puppet-like, unnatural gestures"), in this more subtle and complex work, it is possible to interpret the *Petrushka* puppet in two very different ways. He is either a subversive, sullen character who mocks and insults the evil Magician for trying to control him, and the crowd for its simplicity, ignorance, and blind acceptance of social convention. Or, he can be regarded as a creature who actually reveals to us our humanity by making us see the sufferings of an oppressed outsider in society.

While *Petrushka* may contain a mixed message regarding the puppet figure, Nikolai Foregger, in his famous *The Dance of the Machines* from 1923 blatantly idealized the mechanical. Inspired by a new age of industrial mechanization manifest in Europe during the 1920s, Foregger wrote that "our life creates dances of the sidewalks and speeding automobiles, and renders homage to the precision of machine functions, the quickness of flowing crowds, and the grandeur of skyscrapers." The new ideals were simplicity, precision, and expediency; *The Dance of the Machines* was a revue of various machines portraying the industrial process, with each group enacting the movements of gears, levers, fly-wheels, and motors. Here, the movement qualities of precision, firmness, muscular effort, clear lines and geometric patterns, simplicity and economy, acrobatics, and aggressiveness in fulfilling the pattern of the musical accompaniment were regarded by Foregger as the ideal vs. softness, slackness, incompleteness in the dance pattern, and passive surrender to the musical melody. (Interestingly, in Foregger's writings, machines were identified as male, the dance of the past, female.)

Significantly, Foregger linked mechanization with music hall, acrobats, and clowns due to his interest in production workers and their consumption of popular entertainment in the form of vaudeville, jazz and social dances popular in America. In his productions, therefore, dancers combined acrobatics, with mechanistic movement, social dance and comic entertainment, all in a glorification of the machine age.

Interestingly, similar elements reappear in dance his-

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tory forty years later when automata imagery again appears in dance, namely hip hop dancing. The hydraulic movement known as "The Robot" from early hip hop was inspired by the early 1960s T.V. show "Lost in Space." (Note that in the 1950s positive, friendly images of robots appear in sci-fi like Robby the Robot on the *Forbidden Planet*.) "Locking" (from LA) involved the body moving out of control then back into control, snapping into position, like the small plastic puppets that collapses really fast when you press the bottom of the platform, then goes back into shape when you let go. "Popping" (from Fresno) involves the passing of energy through the body with a pop at each joint as it passes.

During the 1970s this style of movement was performed on the streets of California and New York as a form of friendly competition among young men. With the release of *Flashdance* in 1983, breakdancing was widely popularized for the next couple of years among youth culture in the U.S., Europe and Japan. Understanding its full significance is beyond the scope of this paper. What I would like to point out here, is the way in which early hip hop represented automata/robots as "cool," friendly, entertaining creatures that embodied the values and ideals of largely low-income youth from Hispanic and black families. The linking of the stiff, jointed action of the robot, with virtuosic acrobatic movements, and personal style (people were encouraged to develop their own unique styles), moreover, created a new <u>synthesis</u> of human and mechanistic qualities. (Almost as if the dolls in *Coppélia* came into their own, and outshone Coppélia with their abilities, and unique personalities!)

It is this new synthesis, of technological and humanistic elements, that continues today in dance trends popular in America and Europe. While not always so blatantly related to robots and automata, the influence of developments in technology are nonetheless evident. This is a good place, consequently, to examine some recent trends in live concert dance and consider how they relate/respond to today's hi-tech, digital age.

Recent Responses in Live Concert Dance to the New Technological Body

The first I will discuss is the trend in contemporary dance to push the <u>limits</u> of live human physicality. In this trend, perhaps best represented in North America by Elizabeth Streb, a functional approach to the body is combined with acrobatics and circus imagery to celebrate the strength, flexibility, endurance, precision and power of the human body in a manner reminiscent of Foregger. While not as blatant as Foregger, it seems as if Streb is demonstrating and reveling in the body's ability to match the power of machines. (Note: Stelarc seemingly takes this trend to an extreme by combining freak show conventions with imagery that pushes the limits of the physical body, and explores its synthesis with digital technology to create a cyborg creature capable of bizarre feats.)

In Europe, the extensive use of robotic-like movement—the stiff, jointy, angular movement stemming from *Coppélia* through break dancing—marks a more troubled and ambivalent acceptance of an actual synthesis between the human and technological. The use of puppet-like movement, either on its own, or when juxtaposed with ballet vocabulary, seems to express a cluster of values including: agitated urgency, irony, information overload, breaking down of tradition, belief in both the puppet-like nature of people, vs. their freedom, and celebration of a certain degree of anarchy where the human and technological are totally intertwined.

Release-Based Movement in America

In America, however, it appears as if there is still a predominating will to hold on to the human as distinct from the mechanical and digital, and to valorize a particular view of human nature. This can be seen in the release based movement work so popular today. In this style, a fascinating fusion is evident between different traditions. On the one hand, release-based theory and practice is focused on a task-like efficiency, and kinesiological/functional approach to movement that is suggestive of values connected with industrial production. When combined with acrobatic, high powered martial-arts movement, release seems to embody a hi-tech society that values speed, efficiency and power.

On the other hand, release-based movement is also closely linked to social movements of the 1960s that valued an organic connection to nature, individuality, and improvisation — all characteristics that are historically linked to a humanistic view of the world in which humans hold a unique and special place. Consequently, in the work of some American choreographers like Liz Lerman, release-based movement is found in projects like *Shehechianu* (1995-97) and *Hallelujah!* (1998-2002), which celebrate human beings for their uniqueness, diversity, imaginations, and ability to improvise. In her work, compassion, tolerance and the ability to make choices that lead to social change are the overriding message, in narratives that celebrate the triumph of the human spirit.

Indeed, what is so interesting about release, is that when you look more closely, even the more acrobatic, high powered versions of release actually celebrate humanness over technology. This is because release stems from a certain way of seeing the world in which one's state of mind is one of being free of restraints. Stemming from a zen-like openness, living in the present, and going with the flow, release is a movement style where the virtuosity of movement stems from a state of mind rather than a desire to be virtuosic. And this state of mind is linked closely to American values such as democracy, freedom of expression, and individuality. (See Cynthia Novack's book on Contact Improvisation titled *Sharing the Dance*.)

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Indeed, returning to the *Matrix*, it is possible to see this exact same philosophy at work. In the Matrix, despite the allure of the technologized body, humanity ultimately triumphs over Artificial Intelligence because of Neo's ability to break rules, have original thoughts and exercise his free will. Neo's wise teacher explains to him that he will win over the machines/programs, not because of his ability to move faster, defy gravity or be stronger—these are simply bi-products, but because of his ability to perceive the Matrix for what it is—a mere simulation—and thereby control it. In the end, Neo is presented as the lone genius, like the frontier hero of American mythology, who through his superior courage and free will (and the kiss of a woman!), saves humanity from the evil machines. For this reason, my observation at the beginning of the paper that in *The Matrix*, a complete reversal has occurred from the past, in which technology is shown to be more alluring than the live human, is <u>not</u> revealing the whole story. Just as in *Coppélia*, the ultimate age-old narrative in *The Matrix* is one in which live human beings win out over the threatening world of technology.

In Conclusion

The advent of the computer age has brought great challenges to the dance world, as it increasingly seems to threaten the efficacy of the live moving body. And yet, the beauty of the challenge seems to lie in the fact that moving human bodies are still at the center of the debate over human nature. Regardless of the deeper messages of the *Matrix*, the human body is still there being presented as beautiful, expressive and capable of incredibly meaningful motion. Moreover, it seems clear that in both live American dance and contemporary popular film, choreographers are seeking to render the artificial as more human, in the sense of using technology as a way of more fully expressing a uniquely rich "human" imagination in all its creativity and complexity. As science fiction historian J.P. Telotte writes in his book *Replications: A Robotic History of the Science Fiction Film*, the direction in which we are headed is "less toward showing the human as ever more artificial than toward rendering the artificial as ever more human, toward sketching the human, in all its complexity, as the only appropriate model, even for a technologically sourced life."

Dancing in a Virtual Moment: Look Mom No Flesh!

Suzanne M. Jaeger

This paper began with a desire to defend a notion of presence. Although the term has currency in contemporary performance theory, for example, in Peggy Phelan's work, it has been, since ancient philosophy, notoriously difficult to explain.[1] In contemporary theory, the presence, for example, of the body is understood to be an effect or product of representational practices and institutional forms of knowledge. "Nothing in humans" say Michel Foucault, " – not even their body – is sufficiently stable to serve as the basis for self-recognition or for understanding others" (Foucault, 1984, 87-88).[2] The concepts of différance, citationality and iteration in Jacques Derrida's explanations of linguistic meaning, oppose "the metaphysics of presence." Peggy Phelan can therefore claim that, "the body is not coherent; only reading practices ... make them beautiful, sick, well, living, or dying" (Phelan, 1998, 16).

And so presence as the appearance of the real, something there, or here or now, "being-there" or "being here," the appearance of our selves, our bodies in the world, engaged reciprocally with other real bodies or other real features of the world, "in the moment," in "this" moment, in the present - all of these ideas which relate to the notion of presence seem impossible to philosophically defend. It was therefore intriguing for me to discover that a subjectively experienced phenomenon of presence is central to the development of virtual reality technologies. Designers of computer generated artificial environments are guided by a user's reported sense of presence. A technical definition is being worked out, thought about and researched by computer scientists. There must after all be some phenomena to which the term refers.

Before I discuss presence in the context of artificial reality as well as a comparable notion of stage presence, let me briefly explain why I want to defend the tenability of some notion of presence. Despite the persuasiveness of postmodern language theory, it is nonetheless commonly assumed that as we think and when we talk to one another our words make both concrete things in the world which are not actually at hand and abstract ideas intellectually present to us. To refuse all explanations of presence precludes the possibility of communication and of non-projective relationships with others. We would be, as Lacan, believed "condemned by our natures to an existence of inevitable alienation" (Meares, 2000, 121). Language would never have the power to provide self-expression, but only self-alienation. According to Lacan, in using language, a socially determined symbolic system of values to describe personal experiences one only becomes alienated further and further away from any original, authentic self-presence to an experience of an actual other in an actual world. Lacan's theory is certainly compelling, but does practical experience bear testimony to its truth? I am not sure.

Contemporary feminist philosopher, Linda Martin Alcoff argues against the kind of epistemological skepticism that results from a conception of language as only a self-referring system (Alcoff,, 2000, 262). "There is no conceivable alternative basis or ultimate justification for knowledge," states Alcoff, "other than experience of my body in the world. If we refuse this fact, and attempt to define explanation as a self-referring system without source or ground, we are in effect espousing a form of epistemological skepticism as well as incorrectly understanding the phenomenal features of language itself.... Meaning and knowledge are not locked into language," says Alcoff, "but emerge at the intersection between gesture, bodily experience, and linguistic practice" (262).

There is a logical impossibility in the impossibility of presence. Meaning arises in human experience because we are language users, but we are language users because we are engaged in a world with others and in distinctive ways that arise out of our bodily-ness, the incontrovertible fleshy-ness of our being, our tongues, our cheeks, our vocal chords, our ears, our peculiar ways of moving, touching smelling, seeing and so on. In some sense, we are present to the world – in the flesh. But how does one make sense of the conflicting sensibilities around the notion of presence?

Part I: Presence in the Context of Live Performances

In some contexts, it still means something to talk about 'dancing in the moment,' and having stage presence. There are, for example, exercises performed by young actors to help them enhance their physical presence (Perry, 1997, 40-41; Cohen, 1978, 30-31). So much of Peter Brook's work has been developed around the idea of theater as immediacy and the actor's ability to be present to the spontaneity of events that occur only once (Brook, 1980). Most of us can recall similar experiences to that of the American drama critic John Lahr when he writes of his response to Tina Turner's "luminous presence" on stage: " "Hi, Tina!" we say, forgetting where are ... People move

toward [her] like moths to a light. Her energy is superhuman" (Cohen, 1978, 221).

Performers sometimes talk about 'being in the moment' or having an 'on performance," in the sense of being really on top of it, or in good form. In *Unmarked*, Peggy Phelan points out that presence relates to a particular performer's ability to be "convincing," "commanding," and "captivating," and to create a believable self, to successfully trick the audience into believing the representation of the character portrayed (Phelan, 1993, 115-117). However, presence is, I suggest, phenomenologically more complex than Phelan acknowledges. Presence involves an awareness of things uniquely coming together: one sees a spark of brilliance, a special communication between the artist(s) and the audience, a sensuously and perhaps emotionally heightened, lively awareness that unfolds within and is unique to a specific performance.

This "on moment" occurs when the performer not only correctly repeats everything she rehearsed, she also has a keen awareness of herself, the other performers and the audience in the immediacy of a live performance. It is reported as a feeling of being fully present to the audience and other performers, a feeling of supreme control and power, but also paradoxically an openness to the contingencies of a live performance. It is sometimes described as a kind of "flow" or "grace," a sense of everything coming together. It is also spoken of by some performers as a vulnerability or risk in the immediacy of live performance.

Robert Cohen explains stage presence as an ability to relish in the moment. "There can be no great performance without a quality of pure relish" (Cohen, 1978, 29). Such moments that can last the entire performance or perhaps only for a portion of it are tied to the actor's pleasure in being. "It is to say that from moment to moment, in the here and now of human behavior, we are who we want to be, doing what we want to be doing, and taking a delight in it all. To lack that delight in performance is to fail to create the life of your character" (Cohen, 1978, 30) Cohen thus identifies a psychological component of presence.

How are these observable, peak moments of stage presence explained? In his book, *A Measured Pace*, philosopher Francis Sparshott talks about an aspect of elite forms of artistic expression that seems pertinent to the notion of stage presence. He explains the extraordinary achievements of a professional dancer in comparison with the amateur as the mastering of a system of skills and related options to a level of refinement that the amateur never achieves (Sparshott, 1994, 34). The professional artist has a fine tuned, distinctively developed set of bodily powers. Thus, we might say, for instance, that when having an *on performance*, the professional dancer is closer to perfect articulation of his or her style of bodily movement that makes full use of these skills and bodily powers in a distinctive way relative to the objective demands of the art form. And in fact dancers as well as other artists talk

that way. Artists strive for perfection as an important value integral to the objective standards of their art form. This view also corroborates Phelan's explanation of presence as an actor's skill to create a believable self (Phelan, 1993, 117).

Another explanation of presence comes from Graham McFee, also a philosopher who writes about dance. In *Understanding Dance*, McFee claims that a purely technical account of what makes a particular dancer's performance special is challenged by the distinction between a technically flawless, but nonetheless "empty" performance and "an artistically animated" performance. He attributes the difference between these two kinds of performances to the capacity for some dancers to "invest" the dance with a "psychological reality". Although the difference is always concretely visible in perceived features of the dance, the origin of the difference is a mental event McFee ambiguously calls a "psychological reality."

It might be true that the achievement of a distinctive stage presence is by virtue of an invested psychological reality. But the dualistic nature of McFee's explanation is philosophically problematic. It sounds like the philosophically objectionable 'ghost in the machine' story - an insurmountable dualism. Because the only way of knowing whether there is a ghost in the machine is through its material, perceptible manifestations, it seems that McFee's account of stage presence contributes nothing further to Sparshott's explanation.

On the other hand, Sparshott's emphasis on the fine-tuned, distinctive, bodily control of the professional dancer seems right, but it doesn't really explain why some technically perfect performances seem to lack that special spark that some less technically proficient performances have. Furthermore, Sparshott's account seems to turn the dancer into a kind of dancing machine who paradoxically exhibits both the agency or ghostliness of someone able to master an art form that requires superb control over the body and, alternatively, the total subordination of the ghost-self to the aesthetic values of the art form. Although the language of self-expression may be preserved by artists, for the literary minded interpreters of dance, the dancer's body becomes no more than a cipher or zero point generated by the dance as a readable text itself determined by a socially and politically significant economy of aesthetic values. Reference to the dancer's artistic intentions is made obsolete.

Part II: Presence in the Context of Artificial Reality

There are varying definitions of presence used by those who work and develop virtual reality technologies.[3] There is another distinction in artificial reality research made between *place presence*, or the sense of being at a location, and *co-presence*, the sense of being with other people. An example of co-presence is Laura Knott's World

Wide Simultaneous Dance project which was presented live over the Internet at noon Greenwich Mean Time on June 7th 1998 (Knott, 2001). Using video teleconferencing software, Knott created a web site that broadcast dancers performing simultaneously at the specified time in order to create a cyberspace performance event. There is also a growing literature resulting from a fair amount of empirical research on the topic.[4] In this literature, the term presence is used to describe an individual's subjective feeling of being in a place, even if not there physically. It is a sense of being in a world generated artificially by the computer and so no longer aware, for example, of the actual lab in which the computer equipment is located. Presence in this context is related to *immersion*, the sense of being enveloped by sensory experiences. Generally immersion is thought to contribute to a sense of presence, but be distinct from it. However, some researchers conflate the two terms, and so immersion and presence get used interchangeably. For the most part both presence and immersion are measured by self-report. Different researchers have used different rubrics for self-report questions.[5] Some researchers use simplified questionnaires, the most important question being to what degree the user felt as though he or she had forgotten the actual room and visited another place.[6]

A number of factors are said to contribute to presence, all of them pertain to an increasing approximation towards replicating the nature of perception and sensation in actual reality.[7] Such things as resolution of the perceptual images, scope of the perceptual field, range of bodily movements and engagement as well as social interaction, the goal-directedness of the task, the possibility of interactive choices and the addition of sounds, and other multi-sensory integrations all seem to make a difference to a virtual reality user's experience of presence. The use of Head Mounted Displays (HMD) affords a better sense of presence than desktop machines because of the encompassing field of visual perception. On the other hand, the cumbersomeness of these devices can also work against the sense of presence. Some researchers have also shown that there are psychological and/or personality factors contributing to the experience of presence.[8]

Although empirical studies are inconclusive, it does seem as though presence in artificial environments is closely tied to immersion, the feeling of being engaged in a world and undistracted by the real physical world. This experience of total immersion entails, a bifocal point of view that must be overcome if a feeling of presence is to be achieved. One's actual physical body is displaced by one's virtual presence in the artificial reality. A split attention or focus seems to work against the subjective feeling of presence. In other words, presence as a kind of peak moment in the user's virtual world seems also to be a unifying moment and, at least by report, also disembodied in the sense of entailing a self-forgetfulness of the actual physi-

cal environment with the intensification of one's experience of a virtual self within the artificial environment.[9]

More recently it has been determined that it is not necessarily through the realism of the environment that this self-forgetfulness is achieved. Some research shows that presence is experienced in some very simplistic environments (Nichols et al., 2000). New developments in artificial reality technologies thus focus on "body centered interaction" (Magnenat-Thalmann and Thalmann, 1994; Slater et al., 1998). Integral to a body centered approach is a notion of the self. It is not so much the realism of an artificial environment that lends to a sense of self- presence, but certain ways of interfacing the particular user's motor, visual, auditory and other bodily capacities with the computer generated environment so that the user experiences his or her various actual bodily powers as "intuitively" connected with the represented self in the virtual environment. The term 'intuitive' seems to mean something like a natural or predisposed and holistic way of using the body. For example, a better sense of presence is achieved when the virtual body walks in the virtual environment in response to the user's actual walking-like steps rather than in response to a mouse click or a pointing finger with the data glove. The experience of presence is improved with the intuitive connections gained by using certain mapping sensations and body tracking systems. For example, when the virtual body has the capacity to grow smaller, the program responds when the user presses down on his actual head or in order to grow tall again pushes up under her actual chin. To select a distant object in the virtual environment, the user stretches her actual hand out far away from her body (142). Empirical research has shown that whole body gestures that connect the representation of the self in these so-called intuitive ways with the user's actual and familiar sense of bodily self provide a better sense of presence (Magnenat-Thalmann and Thalmann, 1994).

This idea of a present self preserved in intuitive connections made possible by whole body gestures is particularly important here. It pertains to certain reported aspects of the experience of 'dancing in the moment.' Like stage presence, presence in an artificial reality, is a subjective feeling experienced by the performer. It is similarly a feeling of being fully engaged within a world, a kind of virtual or imaginative environment, for example, the imagined world of the performance distinct from the actual world. It is a feeling of self-presence achieved through the power of a bodily 'being-there'. However, unlike presence in artificial reality, stage presence can be perceived by the audience. Although some objective measures of presence in artificial reality are currently employed, they have been less successfully developed.[10] Copyright 2001, Suzanne M. Jaeger There is a sense in which presence remains a bit of a mystery for artificial reality creators.

There are, nevertheless, important non-aesthetic rea-

sons why artificial reality researchers want to understand the subjective experience of presence better. They seek answers to such questions as, how is presence related to the successful performance of tasks within simulated environments such as those used to train soldiers in the military, to train physicians, surgeons and pilots? How is the experience of presence related to successful learning, accuracy in completing the task, motivation and transference of skills to actual environments? Current research tests the correlations between presence and these specific outcomes. The bodily-ness of presence is an important factor with practical implications. A non-literary minded explanation of presence is needed.

Part III: Merleau-Ponty's Ontology of Presence

Philosophers interested in the ontology of experience turn to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of bodily being-in-the-world. His descriptions of a bodily image or schema and of the chiasm offer useful concepts for thinking about the bodily nature of human experience. In this last section of my paper, I say something about the relevance of these concepts to an understanding of presence.

Merleau-Pony was committed to the idea that human experience is not meaningful only because of language, but also because human experience is fundamentally constituted by many bodily powers of perception. In the *Phenomenology of Perception* Merleau-Ponty discusses the powers of mobility, vision, hearing, taste, touch, smell, sociality, sexuality and language all of which comprise bodily being-in-the-world. Although these various powers are distinct from each other in so far as each one of them brings with it a structure of being in the world which can never be exactly transposed, they also intertwine. He calls this interaction, "synaesthetic perception" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 230).

> One sees the weight of a block of cast iron which sinks in the sand, the fluidity of water and the viscosity of syrup. In the same way, I hear the hardness and unevenness of cobbles in the rattle of a carriage, and we speak appropriately of a 'soft', 'dull' or 'sharp' sound (230).

Thus, touching resonates in certain ways with taste, smell and language. Our way of moving, walking on two legs, the way we use our hands influences cognition and the language we use as well as how and what we see and feel. Language too affects the structures of other modalities of perception. This transposition of the senses occurs within the limits of each modality as distinctive, material mediums or bodily structures of power to engage with certain features of the world. Our ways of moving are not just effects of the force of values inherent to linguistically articulated identities that we have internalized. We move in certain ways because we have a particular body with

particular capacities to move, some very similar to other humans, some fairly unique to one's own body and because these distinctive bodily powers are geared into particular features of the world.

There are many ways in which we are connected in and to the world, some physical, some emotional, some social-linguistic or cognitive, some sexual, some unique by virtue of the uniqueness of our bodies, some general, more commonly recognizable ways by virtue of our similarities with others and the social nature of the human world. These connections are multifarious and complexly constituted. A bodily schema, according to Merleau-Ponty, is a certain style or rhythm that an individual has in the gathering together of the various powers into a way of connecting with or gearing into the world or certain features of the world in a particular activity. A style is like a habit, for example, a style of walking or running. A style is a sedimented, recognizable, pattern of connection with the environment. A kind of "reversibility" to use a term of Merleau-Ponty to describe this bodily gearing into the world.

Because it is also a connection with specific features of the environment, a bodily schema or style of comportment is also a chiasm, open to subtle shifts. The unity of the bodily schema is open and limitless (233). To be connected to the world is to be open to shifts in the habituated structures of one's style of connecting to the world. The on performance, the moment of stage presence and, I want to suggest, even presence within a virtual environment is possible because of this capacity of the performer to be open to the environment, open to what is other than a mere repetition of one's style of being in the world. Being present in this way requires having a style, a way of being in the world, but it also requires the power to concentrate and focus on the singularity of the moment, ready for the shifts, accommodations and adaptations belonging to the challenge of being present, active, bodily engaged and bodily conscious 'in the moment.' Audiences can see it. The performance is alive with that special quality some dancers have and that we call stage presence or 'dancing in the moment.'

Conclusion

I conclude by presenting two examples to illustrate the persuasiveness of Merleau-Ponty's account of presence. Troika Ranch is a New York based performance group that uses interactive computer media in their live performances. *Isadora* is the computer program designed by the company's co-founders Mark Coniglio and Dawn Stopiello and which connects live performers to the computer by using various devices including light and motion sensitive sensors that trigger sound, light and video manipulations. The dancers' movements generate auditory and visual effects via the digital technology.

Some have observed that Troika Ranch "explores the

conflict between an 'electronic body' and the tangibility of flesh" and, Coniglio and Stopiello have also commented on how their use of the technology seems to transform the boundaries of the body (Kepner, 1997, p 1). Using Merleau-Ponty's language, one would say that they are changing, for example, the familiar bodily schema of a trained modern dancer. As well as moving with a certain recognizable dancerly style that may also signify certain symbolic meanings, bending an arm, for instance, can also modulate specific sounds, lights or video images. Stopiello now choreographs with these new technologically enhanced bodily powers integrated with the more familiar ones. Although the interface of computer technologies is sometimes described as disembodying the dancer, it is more accurate to say that the technology is re-embodying the dancer. There is still an element of presence, of "being there." However, the unity of the bodily image, the underlying bodily structure of experience or style of bodily being in the world is being transformed.

But what about the experience of disembodiedment so often reported by users of virtual reality technologies? What about the challenge to bodily-ness and presence made by computer-based technologies, for example, the possibility of living out solely imaginative identities by playing "fictional" characters in various chat rooms and through email messages?

I come now to my second illustration in support of the explanatory power of Merleau-Ponty's account of presence. Although experience in artificial reality is sometimes described as disembodied, it must be acknowledged that any artificial reality experience depends on the user having a body and many perceptual variables must be considered in order to create feelings either of immersion or presence in a virtual environment. What is also true, however, is that computer technologies facilitate a form of presence or being-in-the-world constituted greatly by cognitive powers of imagination. It is thus disembodied in the sense that the bodily schema is constituted more by cognition and therefore language rather than, say, by structures of experience belonging to the powers of touch, movement or hearing. Because virtual reality technologies use, for example, direct light stimulation of the retina rather than reflected and refracted light (which is how we perceive actual objects in the real world), an artificial environment will reconfigure the bodily schema. This shift in the intentional structures that bodily gear a person into the world in specific ways may explain why many virtual reality users experience the nauseousness of extreme disorientation and why the nauseousness dissipates with frequent use. One's visual connection to the world is different. Familiar structures of perceptual orientation are modified. Artificial environments require new ways of using the body, hence new forms of consciousness, a reconfiguration of the unity of a bodily schema that constitutes a person's meaningful experience. The person is

not disembodied by using technology, but re-embodied in the experience of presence to a new environment, whether actual or virtual.

Notes

1. In Plato the problem is accounting for participation between the ideal Forms and their perceived individual instances. In Aristotle the difficulty lies in the notion of essences that are both universally intelligible and materially inherent to natural beings. In empirical philosophy it is the given of sensory experience that creates epistemological tangles.

2. Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), pp. 87-88.

3. The term telepresence refers to a sense of being in a remote or simulated site, for example, as in the robotic motor control of an arm on a satellite by a technician in a lab on earth. The senses of the operator are projected into the device. By contrast, virtual presence is the sense of presence in a computer-generated virtual environment. One's body is represented within the framework of the imaginary world of the AR. A good example is a simulation game at Disney Quest in which through the reality created in the Head Mounted Display (HMD) one sees and experiences oneself as a monkey on a flying carpet. Some researchers also distinguish between ego presence, where one projects oneself into another environment and object presence, where one projects an object from this remote environment (i.e., a virtual object) into the physical world. Ego presence is similar to the notion that one creates a mental representation of a self to use in the virtual world. An example, might be a fictional identity one takes on in a chat room. A hologram would be an example of object presence, and so would some of the virtual reality technologies used in live performances.

4. Valeria Simms unpublished manuscript, "Presence Issues," University of Central Florida, 2000.

5. They include such things as: 1) The degree to which the user experiences a sense of being there in a rich multi-modal environment; 2) The degree to which the user has a sense of control over movements and changes within the environment; 3) The degree to which the virtual environment becomes dominant over the real world, and the user is undistracted by the physical world and; 4) The extent to which an individual recalls having visited a place after experiencing a virtual environment.

6. Some objective measures of presence have been developed, for example, physical measures involving realistic startle responses to stimuli in the game, or attentional measures involving the ability to notice background music in the real world that was not relevant to the virtual world.

7. There are ten listed in a study done by Nash, Edwards, Thompson, and Barfield (2000). (I am relying here on Valerie Sim's summary of this report.) They include: breadth, the importance of numerous sensory modalities being stimulated simultaneously; resolution, the continuity in the perceptual field; depth, which requires high resolutions; consistency, the degree to which one can anticipate and predict upcoming events; motion, participatory bodily movements of the user yield greater presence as does; self-representation, having a realistic representation of oneself in a simulation; speed, having fast updates of information; range, having many aspects of the environment that can be changed and; mapping, having natural controls that map onto typical interactions in the virtual environment and finally; social interactions , the perception of which contribute to a greater sense of presence.

8. Sometimes it sounds as though artificial reality creators are looking for a virtual orgasm - as in the Woody Allen film, Sleeper. They are looking for some kind of peak moment of engagement, this sense of being there that is intensely pleasurable, a kind of ecstatic self-forgetfulness in a virtual reality. Others seek to make the experience of an artificial environment so close to actual reality that you could not tell the difference only that virtual reality would be

better than actual reality: virtual reality would make possible *any* imaginable experience (Krueger 1991, xvi).

9. It bears emphasizing here that the term presence for those working in the field of artificial reality technologies refers to a subjective feeling that is reported by the user. Although some research is concerned with objective measures of presence, they are less developed and problematic. See for example, "Measurement of presence and its consequences in virtual environments" by Sarah Nichols, Clovissa Haldane and John R. Wilson in *Human-Computer Studies* (2000) 52, 471-491. Available on line at

10. See for example, "Measurement of presence and its consequences in virtual environments" by Sarah Nichols, Clovissa Haldane and John R. Wilson in *Human-Computer Studies* (2000) 52, 471-491. Available on line at

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American Dreams: New Frontiers in 21st Century Dance

Angela Kane

My paper explores contemporary manifestations of Americana choreography. It, therefore, challenges Clive Barnes' view that "the Americana spirit seems to have come, served its purpose, and now pretty much gone in American dance" (1993, p.82). The idea was first pursued in my doctoral thesis on the work of Paul Taylor (Kane, 2000) and I now want to extend the premise to works by other contemporary choreographers. This is partly to determine the extent to which the Americana "spirit" permeates American dance today and also to demonstrate how, in its revisionist attempts to address issues of national and/or regional identity, this trend is in marked contrast to 21st century theatre dance abroad.

By making reference to Paul Taylor's choreography and to recent work by other American choreographers, I aim to refute the notion that the term 'Americana' should be restricted to a relatively small number of ballet and modern dance works, created during the mid-20th century; all of which celebrate - and thus reinforce – a traditionalist view of historical events. Instead, I hope to demonstrate that the Americana "spirit" can embrace a much wider and more contemporary range of choreography. Moreover, I would argue that recent works which critique (rather than glorify) America's past and/or those which address present-day cultural mores are as valid – and possibly more meaningful – today than earlier dance chestnuts, such as Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* (1944), Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo* (1942) and Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free* (1944).

Before focussing on particular choreographers and works to illustrate my argument, it is necessary to define the term 'Americana' in dance – not least because it has been used indiscriminately to describe a stylistically diverse range of ballet and modern dance choreography, and in the case of Graham's dances, it has been used to identify an entire period of her work between the early-1930s and 1944.

Although the term itself is neutral, there is an assumption in all of the dance references discovered to-date that:

i) 'Americana' is a descriptive term delineating a particular *type* or *genre* of work;
ii) There is general consensus as to what type of work this is.

Conversely, most dictionary definitions of 'Americana' provide fairly broad parameters as to the scope of the term, as for example:

The Columbia Encyclopedia (1963) p.61: "all that has been printed about the Americas, printed in the Americas, or written by Americans, but usually restricted to the formative period in the history of the two continents."

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1973) p.37: "materials concerning or characteristic of America, its civilization, or its culture; a collection of materials."

Importantly, definitions such as these emphasise *artefacts* associated with America. In this sense, indigenous symbols - such as a Coca-Cola bottle, a baseball hat, the famous photograph of Marilyn Munroe standing over a subway grate - would all count as Americana. However, the term has been appropriated by the arts to mean *works* - that is, meditations on and/or abstractions of - American history and tradition.

It appears that the term 'Americana' was first used in the arts in the late-18th century, to describe the patriotic pageants which became popular after the War of Independence (1775-1783). These included *Americana and Elutheria* (1798), an elaborate spectacle by the French ballet master, Alexandre Placide.[1] During the 20th century, however, the term was used predominantly in dance and musical theatre to describe a narrow series of works, created during the 1930s and '40s. These works all perceive past events and personalities in a positivist light and they can be grouped generically according to what Alan Murdock (2000, p.328) defines as a "utopian humanism". The most obvious examples of such works are:

Year	Title	Choreographer
1932	*Americana*[2]	Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman
	American Provincials	Martha Graham
1935	*Frontier*	Martha Graham
1936	*Pocahontas*	Lew Christensen
1937	*Barn Dance*	Catherine Littlefield
	Yankee Clipper	Eugene Loring
1938	*Filling Station*	Lew Christensen
	American Document	Martha Graham
	Billy the Kid	Eugene Loring
	Frankie and Johnny	Ruth Page and Bentley Stone
1942	*Rodeo*	Agnes de Mille
1944	*Appalachian Spring*	Martha Graham
	Fancy Free	Jerome Robbins

In his article in *Dance Magazine* entitled 'Americana – Then and Now', Barnes (1993) focuses on several dances, all of which were created during the 1930s and '40s. He describes Loring's *Billy the Kid* as "the first Americana ballet to enter the permanent repertoire" and *Appalachian Spring* as Graham's "Americana masterpiece". Furthermore, Barnes identifies de Mille as "the most important, and most enduring, of all the Americana classical choreographers" and he singles out *Rodeo* as "the archetypal Americana ballet". Denby (1948, p.525) acknowledges *Fancy Free* as "by far the best of the Americana to date" and, interestingly too, in a *New Yorker* review entitled 'Americana', Croce identifies 1938 as "that consciously American year" (1980, p. 315).

Conversely, rather than characterizing a particular period in the development of American dance, Americana choreography has been a recurrent trend – one which has paralleled particular political situations and sensibilities. Thus, it is no mere coincidence that all of the dances identified above were created either during the Depression or World War II and similar parallels exist in the work of subsequent generations of American choreographers. For example, Taylor's *American Genesis* (1973) coincided with preparations for his country's Bicentenary and *Company B* (1991) was created during the closing months of the Gulf War.

That these later choreographers are of a subsequent generation to Graham, Loring, de Mille and Robbins – both chronologically and ideologically – is highly significant. And, in the case of Taylor, it is crucial to note that he began to develop his Americana choreography in the mid-1960s, that is, during the burgeoning Civil Rights movement and the growing antagonism to the Vietnam War. As Taylor writes in his autobiography (1987, p.332), when comparing his work to Graham's:

> The way I felt about America's past didn't match her rosier view, at least if the upbeat *Appalachian Spring* was any example, or her tendency to turn caves of despair into phalluses of renewal. This may have been because I'd absorbed some of the disillusionment of my generation.

This paper will argue that, in-keeping with its broader dictionary definition, the term 'Americana' requires a more open usage in dance. Thus, Americana choreography can embrace a range of themes and issues and it has the potential to critique as well as glorify American cultural mores, both past and present-day.

In this way, the term is timeless and it can be used in dance as it is in contemporary American literature and film noir. Thus, I believe that today's Americana choreography is more akin to the cynical exposés of writers such as Don DeLillo, whose first novel, *Americana* (1971) focused upon "American television's parasitic use of people's lives" (Mottram, 1990, p.53) while in a later book, *Libra* (1988), the assassination of John F. Kennedy serves as a metaphor for the decline and fall of the U.S.A. as a whole. Similarly, the recent writing of James Ellroy, author of *L.A. Confidential*, has taken a revisionist turn. *American Tabloid* (1995), Part I of his yet-to-be completed political trilogy,[3] re-assesses the period 1958-1963 (including the Bay of Pigs and Kennedy's assassination) through the lives of three main characters: Pete Bondurant, Howard Hughes' hence-man and Jimmy Hoffa's hit-man; Kemper Boyd, who was employed by J. Edgar Hoover to infiltrate the Kennedy clan; and Ward Littell, who undermined Robert Kennedy's campaign against organized crime.

In his preface to *American Tabloid*, Ellroy condemns the orthodox, sanitized accounts of America's popular 'heroes' and events:

> Mass-market nostalgia gets you hopped up for a past that never existed. Hagiography sanctifies shuch-and-jive politicians and reinvents their expedient gestures as moments of great moral weight. Our continuing narrative line is blurred past truth and hindsight.

The aim of his book was thus to,

> demythologize an era and build a new myth from the gutter to the stars. It's time to embrace bad men and the price they paid to secretly define their time.

Just as the searing indictments of American contemporary culture in DeLillo's and Ellroy's novels can be allied to the revisionist attempts of the New Historians to challenge standard versions of events, so too, can the work of some recent choreographers.

Taylor created his first Americana work, *From Sea to Shining Sea*, in 1965. In it, he juxtaposed figures from 20th century popular culture, such as Mighty Mouse and a Hell's Angel anti-hero, with key characters from America's past. In the first section, entitled 'Send me the wretched refuse of your teeming shores',[4] a Native American (Taylor) tries unsuccessfully to communicate through sign language with the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth Rock. Subsequently, both the Native American and the Statue of Liberty (Bettie de Jong) are trampled by the usurpers and, in the final section, 'Living Pictures', Liberty is shunned yet again – this time, by a contemporary symbol of dissent. In the closing scene,

> Paul Taylor, dressed as a Hell's Angel, enters and contemptuously throws her broken halo to her as the curtain falls.
>
> Barnes (1967)

It is interesting to note here that although Barnes' article on Americana choreography, cited previously, focuses solely on works created during the 1930s and '40s, in an early review of *From Sea to Shining Sea* (1965b, p.30), he included a description of the work which comes closest to the broader dictionary definition of the term:

The subject of *From Sea to Shining Sea* is America and its people, its mythology and its sociology, its folk heroes and its pop heroines.

Taylor's treatment of his country's folk heroes and pop icons has deviated significantly from textbook accounts and he has shunned hagiographic reverence. As he writes of *From Sea to Shining Sea*: "The dance is old Miss America's wrinkles, patriotism past its prime". (1987, p.234) This parallels the sardonic assessment of American culture in DeLillo's *Americana*. For example, DeLillo describes a secondary character in the novel, Jack Wilson Pike, thus: "he was as American as a slice of apple pie with a fly defecating on it". (1990, p.47)

In Barnes' review of the première of *From Sea to Shining Sea* (1965a), he deemed the work to be,

shrewdly un-American activity, taking pot-shots at everything America traditionally holds dear – home, flag, and even mother.

and it is significant that Taylor's 'New' historical reading resulted in the Dance Advisory Panel of the U.S. State Department classifying *From Sea to Shining Sea* as 'UnAmerican' and it attempted to dissuade him from performing the work on overseas tours.[5]

Taylor took more than "pot-shots" in his next Americana work, *Big Bertha* (1970), and most particularly because here, rather than lampooning historical figures and events alongside a more searing critique of present-day social ills, he chose to focus exclusively on one of America's most cherished contemporary myths: the 'ideal' family unit. Marcia Siegel (1973, p.212) identified the subject matter of *Big Bertha* as follows: "It's about an all-American tourist family mesmerized into bestiality by a nickelodeon" while Joseph Mazo (1977, p.269) interpreted the work as "a parable of the rape of America by the Machine or the worship of the Machine by America". In a review of *Big Bertha*, Siegel (1973, p.213) noted,

Paul Taylor has a merciless eye for this kind of Americana. His 1965 satire *From Sea to Shining Sea* comes out of the same dusty carnival trunk. I think these dances say more about us as people than all the romances of Agnes de Mille or the jazz of Jerome Robbins.

By not only debunking but also vilifying the myth of the nuclear 'all-American family' in *Big Bertha*, Taylor challenged national perceptions of order, hegemony and power. In the same way that DeLillo focused on one character, J.K. Kennedy, in *Libra* as the microcosm of broad cultural regression, Taylor's "typical bloodless, 1946-nice family that doesn't have problems" (Siegel, 1973, p.213) was a metaphor for the moral and social disintegration of 1970s America.

Similarly, in *American Genesis* (1973), Taylor used the first book of the Bible as an allegorical narrative for the birth and tempestuous evolution of modern America. Ellen Jacobs (1974, p.26) identifies *American Genesis* as the work which best reinforces the view that Taylor's Americana works are the antithesis of Graham's:

Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* and Paul Taylor's *American Genesis*, created thirty years apart, present divergent points of view of America, probably resulting from the enormous political and social upheavals that have altered the American conscience and consciousness in the past three decades. While both dances are similarly concerned with the contradictory strains and pulls in our country's spirit, in the end they forecast quite different futures for the American Dream. Taylor, appropriately reflecting the cynicism of the late sixties and early seventies, negates what Graham affirms.

Although Taylor's critiques of historical events and national stereotypes in *From Sea to Shining Sea*, *Big Bertha* and *American Genesis* were atypical in American dance during the 1960s and early-1970s, the build-up to the 1976 Bicentennial celebrations prompted a series of Americana works during the latter part of the decade. As Walter Terry noted in 1976 (1978, p.645),

Well over a year ago, as the Bicentennial of the United States of America approached, American dance companies were frantically casting about for suitably patriotic ballets. There were those who desperately wanted performing permission for George Balan chine's enormously popular *Stars and Stripes*, the Russian-born ballet master's amused and amusing glance at his adopted country's love of parades, precision drills, and field days. In lieu of the Balanchine hit, ... ballet directors from coast to coast were (and are) willing to settle for "something like *Stars and Stripes*" or stepping to Sousa or Stephen Foster, Charles Ives or Scott Joplin.

In his review, Terry singles out Stuart Sebastian's *Winterset*, created for the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, as "the most important" work seen during the "first lap of my

ballet Bicentennial travels." [The company also revived *Frankie and Johnny* as part of its Bicentennial repertory.] Sebastian's ballet was based upon Maxwell Anderson's play, *Winterset* (1935), which was inspired by the Sacco-Vanzetti case of the 1920s.[6]

In the same review, Terry also refers to the pre-Broadway première of the musical *Very Good Eddie* and to *Drums, Dreams and Banjos*. He describes the former as "pure Americana of the show-biz variety" and the latter as the Joffrey Ballet's "major Americana offering". It is important to note, however, that here, Terry was using the term 'Americana' pejoratively. He goes on to say,

> If, by Americana, one will accept cheap American camp as a substitute, then one must accept this distressing aspect of our culture. ... *Drums* is simply surface camp, rootless, unappetizing, without substance.

The works I want to focus on are neither cheap nor camp; instead they make a serious attempt at socio-political commentary. From my research to-date, it would appear that one of the most successful – and most controversial – Americana works of the late-1970s was Michael Smuin's *A Song for Dead Warriors* (1979), created for the San Francisco Ballet. Smuin (in Steinberg, 1983, p.115) describes the work as "a series of vignettes which traces the life of an Indian man from his birth to his death and, in so doing, reflects on the contemporary Indian situation" while Steinberg deems it to be a "hard-hitting tale of a contemporary Indian who lives and dies under the thumb of white corruption." Smuin's inspiration for the work was the real-life story of Richard Oakes, a 27-year old Native American of Canadian Mohawk heritage, who was one of the main protagonists in the 19-month occupation of Alcatraz Island, begun in 1969.[7]

At this point, it is necessary to draw upon a key argument in Susan Manning's recent writing. In reference to both the subject matter and dancers in early-20th century modern dance, she states (1997, p.34):

> In developing 'an American art of the dance', the Euro-American artist looks to indigenous sources, but Native Americans and African Americans cannot, it seems, speak in their own voices. Graham's 1931 work, *Primitive Mysteries*, exemplifies this vision of the Euro-American artist transforming – and transmitting – Native American subject matter through Eurocentric female bodies.

This is an important distinction – one which I shall return to later when discussing Dance Theatre of Harlem's *Creole Giselle* (1984). In the case of *A Song for Dead Warriors*, however, Smuin appears to have been far more

cognisant of what Manning (1996, p.192) describes as the "one-way representation of racial identity" than the modern dance choreographers of the 1930s. [Smuin grew up in Montana, close to a large Indian community, and he spent three summers visiting reservations researching his ballet.] As Smuin acknowledges (in Steinberg, 1983, p.115),

> Somehow the idea of taking an Indian legend or story and putting it on a proscenium stage in a European setting always bothered me. I had great respect for Indian life and I thought perhaps that their lives shouldn't even be presented as a dance piece, that it would be disrespectful. Here we go, I said to myself, it's Hollywood all over again. I didn't want to do a ballet where a lot of beautiful Indians in warbonnets and feathers prayed on a cliff during a beautiful sunset – I didn't want anything that solemn and false.

A Song for Dead Warriors generated a vociferous press. As Steinberg (1983, p.115) reveals, following the first night ovation,

> many critics attacked the ballet as propagandistic, cliché-ridden, over-simplistic, over-produced, and excessively 'relevant' – a melodramatic, albeit theatrically powerful, piece of agitprop. ... No other ballet in the Company's recent history, perhaps its entire history, has aroused such heated debate or so sharply divided the public and press.

I would argue that one of the main reasons for such a mixed reaction to *A Song for Dead Warriors* was because - like Taylor's *From Sea to Shining Sea* - the work conformed neither to the idealized visions of America, as portrayed by Smuin's ballet-and-Broadway predecessors, de Mille and Robbins; nor to the populist works which had been generated by the Bicentenary.

Although Smuin's choreography changed direction after *A Song for Dead Warriors*, Taylor has continued to create Americana works with the same degree of regularity during the past two decades, including his most recent work, *Black Tuesday* (2001), which is set in the Depression era. During this time, other choreographers have also turned to native themes. Possibly, two of the most prominent choreographers to do so are Twyla Tharp and Mark Morris. Significantly, one of Morris' first steps in choreography in high school was *U.S.A.* (1972). This work was inspired by John Dos Passos' trilogy of the same title – which was a chronological critique of America between 1900-1930.[8] And I would also include later Morris works, such as *Songs That Tell A Story* (1982), *Deck of Cards* (1983), *Strict Songs* (1987) and *Going Away Party* (1990) in this category. Curiously, although Tharp's early choreographic

explorations were essentially formalist, many of her dances draw upon distinctly American sources. As she reveals in her *Scrapbook* (Tharp, 1982), *Eight Jelly Rolls, The Bix Pieces* (both 1971) and *Sue's Leg* (1975) were "three nostalgic pieces, all rooted in an American past – personal, theatrical, musical." Moreover, one of her recent works, *66* (1996) can be clearly defined as Americana – it is Tharp's homage to Route 66, which she first travelled as a child when her family uprooted from Jay County, Indiana to Rialto, California. As Debra Crane (1997, p.31) suggests, *66* "illuminates the positivism that propelled thousands along the highway to the American dream" while Joan Acocella (1996) writes:

> Here we see again all the themes – America, democracy, youth, pop culture, the war between the sexes – that Ms. Tharp has been mulling for the last 30 years.

I want to turn now though to *Creole Giselle* because I believe it to be a paradigm of contemporary Americana choreography. Although the repertory of Dance Theatre of Harlem is very eclectic[9] and it had previously included traditional stagings of 19th century classics (such as a one-act *Swan Lake* and grand *pas de deux* excerpts from *Le Corsaire* and *Don Quixote*), *Creole Giselle* was the first Americana work in which African Americans were - to requote Manning (1997, p.34) - able to "speak in their own voices".

This was in marked contrast to the racial paradox which Manning (1996, p.193) identifies in American dance during the 1930s: "whereas the white body could represent a universal body, the black body could represent only a black body." Thus, as she suggests, the performative conventions of the time meant that black dancers were, in effect, disenfranchised because "only the white body could represent the universally American body". (Manning, 1996, p.197) Over the years, Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater have been instrumental in debunking this myth – and, undoubtedly, DTH has been the foremost company to challenge the notion of body stereotype in classical ballet. But, what makes *Creole Giselle* so significant is its two-fold revisionism. By re-locating the action from its original rustic, Rhineland setting to antebellum Louisiana, the ballet not only reinforces a pluralist view of the "American body"; it also enables African Americans to "physicalize their own historical experience" (Manning, 1996, p.183) within a classical ballet context. In the adapted scenario - by DTH's artistic director, Arthur Mitchell, and the production's designer, Carl Michel - the social divide between Giselle Lanaux, a first generation free slave, and the long-established landowner's son, Albert Monet-Cloutier, is as intransigent as the class hierarchy which divided their peasant-and-prince predecessors. Moreover, instead of Albert's

double-deceit - that he is not who he says he is and that he is already betrothed - in my reading of *Creole Giselle*, Albert is unobtainable to the innocent but doomed Giselle predominantly because of their social polarity. Thus, the focus in DTH's version is on a localized history of African American emancipation rather than on the 'universal' theme of love and betrayal.

In conclusion, I believe that the landscape of 21st century American dance has been – and is continuing to be - extended by the search for new Americana frontiers. Inevitably, my perspective is one of an 'outsider' looking in at American dance and I may well be on an 'Other' track in trying to distinguish a distinct Americana trend within current choreographic practice. If nothing else, I hope that this paper will prompt us to question the use of the term in dance: on the one hand, to extend its parameters beyond choreography which presents an idealized vision of the past; and on the other, to avoid its use solely as a euphemism for "cheap American camp".

Endnotes

1. Marian Hannah Winter (1974) provides a detailed account of the scenario of *Americana and Elutheria* in *The Pre-Romantic Ballet*, London: Pitman Publishing, pp.176-177.

2. This revue programme included two works by Humphrey – *Water Study* and *Dance of the Chosen* (under its new title, *The Shakers*) – and two by Weidman – *Ringside* and *Piccoli-Soldati* (re-titled *Amour à la Militaire*) - together with two new works: a polka, *Whistling in the Dark*, and a jazz bacchanale, *Satan's Little Lamb*. The producer was J.J. Shubert.

3. Ellroy's latest novel, *The Cold Six Thousand* (2001) forms the second part of the trilogy. It begins where *American Tabloid* ends, with the death of J.F. Kennedy.

4. Taylor's first note appeared in programmes in 1966. Then, it read as follows: "a small troop of performers, viewed both on and off stage, present a dance collage of various real and imaginary images gathered from the American heritage." The programme note was replaced in 1969 and it was at this point that the three main sections of *From Sea to Shining Sea* were identified as: 1. Send me the wretched refuse of your teeming shore; 2. Us; 3. Living Pictures.

5. Taylor makes reference to such political intervention in his autobiography (1987, p.235) and in two taped interviews, with Gruen and Stern (both 1976). In the former interview, he reveals that he disregarded the panel's advice because *From Sea to Shining Sea* "was one of the best touring pieces which we could have had as far as good will because, everywhere we went, [the reaction was that] Americans were able to make fun of themselves."

6. On 15 April 1920, the financial manager of a shoe company in South Braintree, Mass. and his guard were fatally wounded by two men, who escaped with over $15,000 in a car with three other men. Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were arrested when they attempted to claim a car which local police had connected with the crime. Both men carried firearms; neither, however, had a criminal record, nor was there any evidence of them having the money. They were indicted and tried by the Grand Jury in May-July 1921 but much of the evidence against them was subsequently discredited. Nevertheless, despite huge public outcry, demands for a new trial were denied and the two men were executed in August 1927.

7. Oakes left Alcatraz Island during the early stage of the siege following the death of his daughter. He drifted around San Francisco for several months, was badly beaten in a bar and, on his

recovery, he became involved in activism again on a small reservation in Sonoma County. Then, in 1971, he was shot and killed by a YMCA worker. *A Song for Dead Warriors* was recorded as part of the *Dance in America* series in 1984. The programme, entitled *San Francisco Ballet: A Song for Dead Warriors*, was televised on 16 January and the principal dancers were Antonio Lopez, Evelyn Cisneros and Vane Vest. (See Kinberg entry in the Bibliography for further details.) The programme includes insights from Smuin and a documentary on Richard Oakes.

8   The trilogy comprises *The 42nd Parallel* (1930), *1919* (1932) and *The Big Money* (1936).

9   In Richard Long's book, *The Black Tradition in American Dance*, (1989, pp.153-154), he identifies seven different strands:
   1. The Balanchine tradition – works by George Balanchine, Arthur Mitchell and John Taras;
   2. The Ballet Russe tradition;
   3. The Black Heritage – including Geoffrey Holder's *Dougla*;
   4. Contemporary Fusion – works by Glen Tetley and Billy Wilson;
   5. Bravura pieces – *Le Corsaire* pas de deux;
   6. Modernist revival pieces –*Les Biches*;
   7. Dance drama – de Mille's *Fall River Legend*; Valerie Bettis' *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

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Architecture and Icon in Caroso's *Nobiltà Di Dame*

Nancy Kane

Very little has been included in this paper concerning the actual steps of the dance.[1] Although I have set the dance on a college dance company, the main focus of this paper is the visual interpretation of two of Caroso's illustrations, both of which support his purpose in relating dance to other arts and elevating its status by means of scientific and mathematical theory.

Fabritio Caroso's interest in the arts of architecture, music, poetry, fashion design, and illustration are evident in his dance manual, Nobiltà di Dame (1600).[1] However, of all of these arts, architecture, in particular the symmetrical constructions of the sixteenth century, most exemplified and reflected Caroso's ideals of dance construction. For example, in writing about what he terms the Corinthian step, he states "that in architecture there is a Corinthian style belonging to the fourth order, and I admit that this architecture is most accurate."[2] The orders of architecture, as depicted in columns ranging from heaviest to lightest, are Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite, with the Corinthian noted for its lightness and decorative acanthus leaves. The Corinthian step consists of four parts moving lightly across the floor, three reprises and a falling jump.[3] More on this step later.

Another example in which he relates a dance movement to architecture is in his discussion of the non-symmetrical Riverenza movement, comparing it to "a door in a façade of a well-designed palace,"[4] by which he means a palace designed according to Vitruvian architectural standards (which, above all, display symmetry). Angene Feves has noted that symmetry, both as a rule of art and a rule of nature, seems to have been an idée fixe of Caroso's,[5] which modern-day psychologists might interpret as a manifestation of an obsessive-compulsive disorder. With the notable exception of the Riverenza, all of Caroso's Nobiltà di Dame step sequences must be repeated to the opposite side so that over the time of the dance, balance is intentionally achieved in rhythm and structure.

However, symmetry is only part of good structure. Renaissance architecture, music, and visual arts also used Neoplatonic and Pythagorean mathematical formulas to describe ideals of proportion and tonality. Of particular importance in this paper are the 2:1 (octave or *diapason*) ratio and the 3:2 proportion of the musical fifth (also known as the *sesquialtera* or *diapente*). Caroso's adherence to mathematical principles for dances indicates his strategically considered effort to move the status of dance and dance education into the realm of scientific art, worthy of scholarly study beyond its already accepted status

as an essential element of any noble's social accomplishment. He was not the first or last dancing master to make such an attempt: Barbara Sparti has noted that the earlier dance treatises of Domenico da Piacenza and Guglielmo Ebreo each "included an Apologia in their case aimed at proving the worth of dance at a time when, like painting, it was considered neither art nor science. One of the ways the dancing masters sought to give dignity to their treatises, and hence to the dance itself, was to imbue both defense and theory with references to antiquity."[6]

Spatial mathematics (i.e., carefully constructed proportions, lines, and figures) distinguished Renaissance architecture. Drawing on classical literature, Renaissance architects particularly related proportion to musical harmonics. Leone Battista Alberti's belief that Pythagoras' system of musical harmony is the key to correct proportion,[7] Palladio's contention (derived from Alberti) that beauty can be mathematically defined,[8] and the ancient Vitruvius' explicit recommendation that architects be trained in music[9] are all attempts to bring heavenly and naturally occurring harmonies into human understanding. Renaissance scholars read Macrobius' fifth century AD Commentary on the Dream of Scipio to learn of the music of the spheres and the symbolic meaning of Pythagorean numerology.[10] Neoplatonist writers such as Marsilio Ficino were studied along with Christian writers as musical harmonics were used to postulate the precise nature of the relationship between God and humanity, passing by way of all orders of heavenly hosts, heavenly bodies, and earthly Aristotelian elements. Classical mythology melded with Christian symbolism in pictorial representations of harmonic structure such as Fludd's Templum Musicae (1617).[11]

Before the fifteenth century, architecture had been considered a manual exercise by comparison with the arts of the quadrivium (music, astronomy, mathematics, and geometry). During the two centuries preceding Caroso's Nobiltà di Dame, the status of architecture had risen considerably. "[I]n order to raise them from the level of the mechanical to that of the liberal arts, they had to be given a firm theoretical, that is to say, mathematical foundation."[12] Caroso's development of dances such as the *Contrapasso Nuovo*, "fatto con vera mathematica," and his reference in his frontispiece to "perfetta theorica," likewise demonstrate his attempt to raise dance training from a physical or mechanical skill to a liberal art.

The human body is not simply a mathematical abstraction, however. Nevertheless, Renaissance art theorists wrote of the human body as having an "exactissima

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harmonia," as Pomponius Gauricus wrote in De Sculptura (1503). Recalling ideas from Plato's Timaeus, Gauricus wondered, "What geometrician, what musician must he have been who has formed man like that?"[13] Dancers in classical Rome were held to strict standards of body shape: Lucian's De Saltatione, written in the second century AD, insists that the dancer's shape should match the proportions detailed by the fifth century BC Greek sculptor Polycleitus.[14]

In the sixteenth century, Lomazzo's Trattato dell'arte della pittura (1584) followed Albertian principles when he compared human proportions to musical tonal relationships.[15] In De Harmonia Mundi (1525), Francesco di Giorgio's studies in proportion combined Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy with Vitruvian figure studies (those unfamiliar with Vitruvius' drawings can probably call to mind a similar figure by Leonardo da Vinci, depicting a male drawn with double limbs inside a circle/square enclosure). Di Giorgio used the combination of human figure drawing and mathematical theory to create ideals in architectural element proportions such as the Corinthian column and church plans.[16]

Renaissance humanism allowed for the human body (specifically, the male body), to serve as the model of proportion for sacred architecture and art. Lomazzo in Idea del Tempio della Pittura (1590) reminded readers that the human body followed harmonic proportions, and that Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Gaudenzio Ferrari learned their architectural proportions by way of musical study. Therefore, the human body, "created by the Lord in his own image," manifests "all numbers, measures, weights, motions and elements."[17]

Turning attention now to examples of styles and symbols Italian Renaissance architects used in their frontispieces, consider The First Book on Architecture (1545 edition)[18] by Bolognese architect Sebastiano Serlio. Notice how the strong lines of the ornamentation seem to rise up from the foundations of the straightedge, angle, compass, and basic geometric shapes. The compass merits particular consideration: not only is it an essential drafting tool, it also makes reference to the Pythagorean proportions, which were sometimes depicted graphically along the lines of a compass. The geometric basic shapes are drawn in two and three dimensions and include a cube with Vitruvian circles and squares and a pyramid (both of which pay homage to the historical heritage and excellence of architecture in theory and in practice). Other objects include a dowel-shaped object and something incongruous in this hard-edged collection: a rope and tassel knotted over one of the ornaments on the left side of the drawing. Part of the rope hangs vertically, suggesting a plumb line, but the other part weaves snake-like, defying gravity and the downward pull of the other elements.

In contrast, consider the frontispiece of the 1570 Venetian edition of Andrea Palladio's The Four Books on Architecture.[19] It is dramatically different. The strong curved lines are still there, but they form a harmonious part of the building's total ornamentation. Draped and undraped winged figures abound, holding draftsman's tools and playing trumpets (relating architecture to music). The Corinthian columns are four in number, significant for several reasons besides their symmetrical arrangement. First, they belong to the fourth order of architecture, appropriate for a work containing four books on the subject. Alberti wrote that "the number four is dedicated to the Deity,"[20] and we see the queen sitting exalted over the entire structure, seemingly deified.

Compare the Palladio drawing to the frontispiece for Caroso's Nobiltà di Dame. The structure of Palladio's frontispiece is preserved, with four modified Corinthian columns. Julia Sutton has written that Caroso meant the word Corinto as a play on the word cuore, or heart. Caroso's instructions for that step say the "term is derived from the way these graceful movements pull at the heartstrings, causing onlookers to become enamoured of them."[21] That seems appropriate for a work dedicated to newlyweds Ranuccio Farnese and Margarita Aldobrandini. By the way, Margarita was a niece of Pope Clement VIII, né Ippolito Aldobrandini, and the rumor is that she was actually his illegitimate child. This drawing places far greater emphasis on music and contemporary fashion than did Palladio's drawing, with four well-dressed musicians and plumb lines of musical instruments and scores, with the ropes ending in tassels (recall the Serlio frontispiece previously discussed: it also bears some resemblance to the portrait of Caroso at the age of 74 which appears opposite a preface "To the Reader").[22]

The icons for the noble families of the Farnese (fleurs de lys) and the Aldobrandini (stars) figure in the heraldry of the lunette and the entablature (above the columns). Notice also the keys in the center, indicating a papal connection in the family. Harking back to Caroso's earlier treatise, Il Ballarino (1581), an Orsini family bear is depicted at lower left, licking a cub into perfection.[23] The motto above the bear, "from the imperfect to the perfect, refers to this publication as a corrected work based on perfect theory, or philosophical study. On the lower right side, under the motto "tempo e misure," an architect's compass rests on the cornerstone, the foundation of the building. The hourglass adds a fourth dimension, time, to the standard geometrical three of Euclidean geometry: time. In the text of Nobiltà di Dame, Caroso wrote that the word "regola" was meant to be included in this part of the drawing, but it appears only in the text of the frontispiece.[24]

Attached to the trumpets are softer elements: flags bearing the words "fama" and "volat," meaning that fame is fleeting. Regardless of the ephemeral nature of fame (and dance performance), Caroso no doubt hoped his theories and rules of dance would endure at least as long

as would a well-designed palace, such as the Roman Palazzo Farnese (a masterpiece of Renaissance architecture designed by Antonia da Sangallo the younger).

Throughout Nobiltà di Dame, Caroso ensured that the memory of his patronesses would endure through dance dedications and fulsome poetry dedicated to their virtues. The dance Contrapasso Nuovo, "fatto con vera mathematica" was dedicated to Cornelia Orsina Cesi, and it contains a unique diagram of a floor pattern with rhythmic indications in a rudimentary dance notation. Only for this art dance did Caroso explicitly and implicitly provide a drawing that denotes the Renaissance humanist ideals of symmetry, proportion, time, and number theory combined with heraldic icons in such a way that educated readers or audience members could derive intense intellectual pleasure and well as kinesthetic pleasure (if watching a performance of the Contrapasso Nuovo).

What was so special about this lady? As with most Renaissance women, biographical information is elusive. Pompeo Litta's Familglie celebri Italiane (1847)[25] lists her as the daughter of Virginio Orsino and Giovanni di Bonifazio Gaetani, the latter being a direct link to Caroso because of the Gaetani home in Sermoneta. Cornelia Orsina was married twice, first to Roberto d'Altemps, the duke of Gallese. He was a natural son, later legally recognized, of Marco Sittico, a cleric who became a cardinal of Rome.

In one of Litta's typical gossipy passages, Roberto is depicted as a wild young man, climbing a rope to enter Ortensio Frangipane's home and rape Giulia, the daughter of Muzio de Ferianis, who was staying there. Roberto violently attacked the servants who tried to save Guilia, and took her back to his house where he pretended to marry her so that he could continue to enjoy her. This conduct eventually resulted in his voluntary exile to Avignon, where Roberto led the papal army of Sixtus V until his father interceded and got him a reprieve. Roberto died at the age of twenty and is buried to the left of the altar at Santa Maria in Trastevere, near his father. He and Cornelia had only one child, a son named Giannangelo, who later married one of Olimpia Orsina's daughters.

Cornelia then married that same cousin's half-brother, Andrea Cesi. They had a far happier marriage: seven children were born of their union, of which six were girls. Their son, Francesco Maria, was to become the last duke of Ceri, and the ducal line ended there in 1657. Cornelia died in Rome on December 30, 1643.

It is possible that Cornelia was one of those Renaissance women whose studies and intellectual curiosity remained an important part of her married life. Her first marriage may have been so unhappy that she sought refuge in literature and learning. Her family tree contains at least one composer and her cousin Olimpia's son, Federico Cesi II, later founded the scientific Accademia Lincei, of which Galileo was a member (the Cesi name is retained in

the element Cesium). Possibly Caroso found something extraordinarily attractive about Cornelia's life or personality that inspired him.

The rose pattern is certainly a reference to an Orsini heraldic icon. Sacred to Aphrodite, roses were also the favorite flower for placement on graves in Rome.[26] Coincidentally, taking Cornelia Orsini Cesi's initials, "COC," and turning the last "C" 180 degrees to make it symmetrical to the first "C," then repeating that pattern twice more around the central "O", a six-petalled rose is formed. This would seem farfetched were it not for the research of Mark Franko (1986)[27] for example, describing the popular dance device of spelling out initials during courtly festivities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The game of recognizing the letters formed by bodies and patterns amused onlookers of that era. The six symmetrically arranged dancers, the six petals of the rose, and the six spokes radiating from between the rose petals are all significant from a geometrical point of view, as seen from above with the heavenly perspective implied by the drawing.

In Alberti's De Re Aedificatoria, (1550, Bartoli ed.), the relationship of the hexagon to the circle is depicted as a model for chapel design.[28] Enlarged to match the size of this Contrapasso Nuovo drawing, the relationship between the two is apparent but not yet explicit. Alberti states in his Book IX that the number six was known to Renaissance mathematicians as the arithmetical mean and the geometrical mean, a referential number holding a point of balance in number theory.[29] Alberti also reminded readers that six is the most perfect number, since it can be made up of six combinations of the numbers one through five (3 + 3, 4 + 2, and so on). The spokes that radiate outward from the rose to the circle (or vice-versa), intersect the circle at the starting points of the six dancers. The three males and three females (three couples) thus divide the circle into six equal parts, making angles of 60 degrees each. Imagine Alberti's hexagon sides straightening out the arcs of the circle, and you have six equilateral triangles (60 degrees each angle, with 18 angles total).

Vitruvian and Albertian proportional studies indicate that the number six proportionately relates to nine as a sesquialtera, or diapente (musical fifth), a 3:2 ratio. Doubling that makes for an excellent proportion in Alberti's opinion, the diapason (octave, or 2:1 ratio) of eighteen, also achievable by tripling the number six.[30]

The perfection of the circle symbolized love, concord, and eternity in Renaissance choreography.[31] The Pythagorean habit of thinking of numbers as geometrical shapes relates to Caroso's circle because the number ten (the Decad) and all its multiples represent almighty power. But how is the number ten related to this diagram? Visually, the number ten could be (and was, in Renaissance texts) represented by points arranged equidistantly, as are the ten pins in a bowling alley, with a single pin at the apex. An equilateral triangle is formed. If it is repeated

five more times for a total of six, rotating 60 degrees each time from the center of the rose, a hexagon is formed. Sixty degrees, six times, equal the 360 degrees of a circle, though in actuality a hexagon is formed.

What about the chain passage around the ring, those wavy interlacing lines? They are symbolic of the six hills of the Cesi family icon, for one thing.[32] In other famous dances of that era, such at Balthasar de Beaujoyeulx' *Ballet-comique de la reine*, a chain is a "symbol of concord and unity."[33] Ben Jonson's 1606 *Hymenaei* used a chain to signify "cosmic interdependence and unity, but also hierarchical order, social rank and stability."[34] It was as if the universe were revolving around the fertile center of the Orsini rose, with the Cesi hills surrounding and protecting the flower within.

It remains only to consider the use of measured rhythm in the dance, in relation to Ovid's poetry and the music for the dance. During the sixteenth century, Ovid's poetry attained a phenomenal popularity, especially with painters, poets, and educated readers in general.[35] His use of hexameter (lines of poetry with six heavy stresses, denoting six poetic feet) in De Tristibus and Metamorphoses were especially notable for their energetic verse. Both Ars Amatoria and Amores (the latter describes how to seduce married women, incidentally) contain references to roses. Coincidentally, there are a total of six such references in these two works.

Caroso notes particularly the manner in which the steps follow the scansion of these types of metrical feet: the spondee (long-long, as in the word "heartfelt") and the dactyl (long-short-short, as in the word "finally"). Ovid used dactyls extensively in his hexameters. In describing the dactyl step, Caroso says the term derives from the word "digit," meaning the second finger. That finger, he says, has three joints, one long and two short.[36] Furthermore, the shorter two together equal the length of the longer, just as the notation on the figure for the *Contrapasso Nuovo* shows a semibreve (whole note) followed by two minims (half notes).[37] Many of the steps in the dance echo the poetic metric construction with their long-long-long-short-short rhythmic stresses. This description returns the reader to the humanist connections between the proportions of the human body, mathematics, and music.

On the topic of music, the revised version of the music for this dance has forty numbered measures in it.[38] Alberti would have considered this highly significant because forty is about one ninth of a year (were a year 360 days, like 360 degrees of a circle). Forty is also not only a multiple of ten (a number considered perfect by Aristotelian and Albertian standards, but also the multiple of ten times four, the latter being dedicated to the Deity, as mentioned above). There are also four seasons in the wheel of the year. In Alberti's number theory, forty is the number of the "musical mean," just a six is the number of the arithmetical and geometrical means.[39] All of this adds up to

true mathematics, just as Caroso promises above the drawing.

Havelock Ellis brought this seemingly never-ending effort to raise the status of dance into perspective in The Dance of Life (1923).

> "The dance is the rule of number and of rhythm and of measure and of order, of the controlling influence of form, of the subordination of the parts to the whole. That is what a dance is. And these same properties also make up the classic spirit, not only in life, but, still more clearly and definitely, in the universe itself. We are still strictly correct when we regard not only life but the universe as a dance.... [O]ur world is, even fundamentally, a dance, a single metrical stanza in a poem which will be for ever (sic) hidden from us.... I call this movement of today, as that of the seventeenth century, classico-mathematical. And I regard the dance...as essentially its symbol."[40]

It remains for humanist scholars to interpret those symbols, or icons, and to consider whether dancing and architecture, the "two primary and essential arts" are, as Ellis thought, "the result of the same impulse." Have the art of the dancing human body and the art of building (i.e., "the beginning of all the arts that lie outside the human body")[41] ever been united so closely as they were in Caroso's theory of perfection in dance?

Notes

1. Thanks to a summer stipend grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the initial research for this paper was carried out during 1998 Summer Seminar in Rome under the leadership of Joseph Connors, the renowned Columbia University architectural historian. In addition, for her generous guidance, help, and encouragement, I am sincerely grateful to Barbara Sparti. Thanks also to Julia Sutton for her suggestions and inspiration.
2. Fabritio Caroso, Nobiltà di Dame. (Venice: il Muschio Press, 1600). Vatican Library, Barberini Collection, N. III 39.
3. Fabritio Caroso, Nobiltà di Dame, trans. and ed. Julia Sutton. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1995), 132.
4. Caroso, Nobiltà, Sutton trans., 133.
5. Ibid., 118.
6. Angene Feves, "Fabritio Caroso and the Changing Shape of the Dance, 1550-1600," Dance Chronicle 14, no. 2-3 (1991): 159-174.
7. Barbara Sparti, Antiquity as Inspiration in the Renaissance of Dance: The Classical Connection and Fifteenth-Century Italian Dance," Dance Chronicle, 16, no. 3 (1993): 375.
8. Leone Battista Alberti, The Ten Books on Architecture, (1450), trans. to Italian by Cosimo Bartoli, trans. to English by James Leoni, ed. Joseph Rykwert. (New York: Transatlantic Arts, 1966), Book IX, ch. 5. Compare also another translation of Alberti's work, On the Art of Building in Ten Books, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavenor. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1988).
9. Rudolf Wittkower, Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism. (London: Alec Tiranti, 1962), 21.
10. Vitruvius, The Ten Books on Architecture, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1960), 119.

11. Françoise Carter, "Number Symbolism and Renaissance Choreography," Dance Research, 10, no. 1 (Spring 1992), 22-23.

12. Günther Berghaus, "Neoplatonic and Pythagorean Notions of World Harmony and Unity and Their Influence on Renaissance Dance Theory," Dance Research, 10, no. 2 (Autumn 1992): 46, 50.

13. Wittkower, Architectural Principles, 117.

14. Pomponius Gauricus, De Sculptura (1503), quoted in Wittkower, Architectural Principles, 118.

15. Carter, "Number Symbolism," 22.

16. Wittkower, Architectural Principles, 118.

17. Ibid., 104-106.

18. Ibid., 119.

19. Sebastiano Serlio, The First Book on Architecture. (Paris, 1545), frontispiece.

20. Andrea Palladio, The Four Books on Architecture. (Venice: Dominico de' Franceschi, 1570), frontispiece.

21. Alberti, The Ten Books, Leoni trans., 196.

22. Sutton, Nobiltà, 133, 336.

23. Caroso, Nobiltà, Sutton trans., 86.

24. Ibid., 87. Thanks to Lizbeth Langston for reminding me of this passage of Caroso's in the Sutton translation: "I have therefore imitated the mother bear who, upon giving birth, produces a mass of flesh (a thing other rational or irrational creatures have not done), and who, by much licking of it with her tongue, and by drying it with her furry paws, turns what was imperfect and monstrous into a perfect [creature].

25. Ibid., 132 and note 27.

26. Pompeo Litta, Famiglie Celebri Italiane. (Milan: Paolo Emilio Giuti et al., 1847), Orsini di Roma, Altemps di Roma, and Cesi di Roma.

27. James George Frazer, Fasti of Ovid, Vol. II. (London: MacMillan and Co., 1929), 437.

28. Mark Franko, "Geometrical Dance in French Court Ballet," Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Conference Society of Dance History Scholars (City College, City University of New York, 1986), 13-29.

29. Wittkower, Architectural Principles, 4.

30. Alberti, The Ten Books, Leoni trans., 200.

31. Ibid., 198.

32. Carter, "Number Symbolism," 30.

33. Michael E. Lutz, "Sulla Vita e Opere di M. Fabritio Caroso," (Sermoneta, Italy, August 26, 1997), 5.

34. Carter, "Number Symbolism," 27, 30.

35. Clyde Barnes Cooper, Some Elizabethan Opinions of the Poetry and Character of Ovid, Norwood Edition, 1978. (Menasha, Wisconsin: The Collegiate Press, George Banta Publishing Co., 1914), 2-3.

36. Caroso, Nobiltà, Sutton trans., 130.

37. Ibid., 242.

38. Ibid., 244.

39. Alberti, The Ten Books, Leoni trans., 196.

40. Havelock Ellis, The Dance of Life. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1923), xi-xii.

41. Ibid., 36.

"From Remembrance Came a Dance": The Cultural Meanings of Narrative in Donald McKayle's Early Choreography

Rebekah J. Kowal

In his early career, spanning from the early 1950s to the early 1960s, African American choreographer Donald McKayle stretched the boundaries of what was generally termed "Negro dance." Like his black contemporaries such as Alvin Ailey and Tally Beatty, McKayle created original choreographic hybrids that brought together the vernacular, the ethnographic, and the high modern. While white choreographers of this generation, such as Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor and Alwin Nikolais associated storytelling with the anachronistic aesthetic of the modern dance establishment, McKayle and his colleagues embraced narrative as the mode best suited to portray diverse life experiences and artistic ideas. Like genre paintings, McKayle's works like Games (1951), Her Name Was Harriet (1952), Rainbow' Round My Shoulder (1959), They Called Her Moses (1960), and District Storyville (1962) told stories about lives of African Americans and translated memory into history.

This paper focuses on McKayle's Rainbow' Round My Shoulder, a choreographic lament for "convicts" whose punishment for being black was forced labor. According to McKayle in a video produced for the American Dance Festival, Rainbow represents "punishment [that] does not fit the crime. Sometimes the crime was just being a black man and doing what you weren't supposed to do." While McKayle's heroes are road builders, who break up bedrock with pickaxes in preparation for laying blacktop, it is obvious that this road leads nowhere for them. Thus, theirs is a tale of futile lives, dead-end dreams, and stillborn desires. This narrative is advanced in two ways: while a crooner puts words to the lives of these men with resonant spirituals we also learn about their lot through the interactions of three lead characters (2 women and a man) and the reiterative actions of a chorus (members of a chain gang).

As a lament, the story memorializes the loss of the prisoners' vitality and potential. Yet in its depiction of lives lost for the progress of a civilization whose laws would enslave men on the basis of their color, this story enacts a social critique just as the civil rights movement was starting to gain national ground. Adapting literary scholarship on the uses of narrative in minority fiction, this paper examines the mechanics of the narrative in Rainbow' Round My Shoulder. On this basis, I suggest ways in which McKayle's choreographic choices responded not only to the racial prejudice rife in the culture at large but also to narrow-minded concepts of black concert dance expressed by established critics of modern dance.

According to McKayle, the title of the piece has a double meaning. On one hand, "Rainbow" is the colloquial name for a pick-axe. When swung at certain angles its glint from the sun makes a rainbow image. Thus, referring to the axe, the "rainbow" is an instrument of imprisonment and torture. Yet, as a symbol of treasure or holy grail the rainbow connotes freedom. While the piece premiered in 1959, it was aired on national television in 1960. My desription is taken from this television broadcast performed by the original cast including McKayle, Mary Hinkson, and Alfred Desio as soloists and Leon Bibb as the crooner, and set to music arranged by Robert Corman and Milton Okun.

The first section lays out the main themes of the piece. It begins with the sounds of early morning: a dog barks, a bird crows and the wind howls. A soloist enters to Bibb's voice, which is rich and low as he sings: "Look over yonder . . . I've been wondering if anybody wondered about poor me . . . I've been hammering . . . and I'm almost dead." Flexed with exertion, the soloist's body bends, whips, twists and punches in a mechanistic phrasing. His body is forceful: he is both laborer and instrument. An ensemble of men enters, holding each other's hands as if they are chained together. Their bodies are strong, sculpted, as if they have been hewn by hard labor. In a canon following the phrase set by the soloist, the ensemble moves with single-minded commitment. Each man is a gear in a relentless machine – these potent bodies have no object but this work. The section ends as the men slump to the floor, their energy spent.

As if an apparition in a collective dream, Hinkson enters to the words: "If I had wings, like nobody does, I'd fly up the river to the gal I love . . . Fair you well." She embodies a feminine ideal with her expansive port de bras, sweeping ronds, furtive posés and sinuous torso gestures. As if in a separate world, she dances by herself, not acknowledging the men; and the men, in various positions on the floor, look past her too. Eventually, she disappears off-stage. According to McKayle, Hinkson introduces an element of "cushion" into the narrative of imprisonment; she is a recuperative force, an embodiment of hope and freedom, even if she seems only to exist in the mens' imagination. Yet it is apparent that she is also a sign of the men's sexual impotency and loneliness and the futility of their desire. These aspects of her significance are shown in the portrayals of relationships she has with two of the

men. One of these encounters is expressed through sweeping and swinging gestures in which at times a man literally sweeps Hinkson off her feet or cradles her in his arms. This duet seems both gleeful and sorrowful as the lovers, who dance in an urgent unison, seem not to see each other as if they exist in separate worlds. Their courtship ends abruptly as the woman backs off-stage. In the background, the ensemble amplifies the couples' frustration, their muscles flexing as if trying to burst out of their shackles. Meanwhile, the singer comments: "One of these days. I'm going home . . . My lord, I'm going home."

The ending of the piece reiterates the themes of futility and enslavement foreshadowed with the verses: "Another man done gone, another man done gone. He had a long chain on . . . They killed another man." We hear a gun shot, and one of the members of the ensemble drops to the floor. This ending makes clear McKayle's expressive intention, to portray the men as objects of social anxiety, men literally chained and shacked or hunted down, their every movement anticipated, regulated, their bodies the hapless tools of the powerful. As McKayle has put it, "these human beings seem expendable."

However, Rainbow does more than lament the loss of vitality. Casting the men as laborers for social "progress" without even the promise of human rights, the piece comments on the loss of the black man's potential in a culture that likens his skin color to the commitment of a crime. In "The Pleasures of Babel: The Narrative Turn in Minority Writing," Jay Clayton argues that authors of color often employ what he calls "a vernacular mode" as a means of talking back, or, representing knowledge omitted from dominant narratives of minority culture. He argues that the "the ability to tell a story is as empowering as any image of freedom contained in it." [1] In light of Clayton's idea, McKayle's piece enacts a critical intervention not because it depicts the attainment of dignity and self-determination but because it protests the suppression of its subjects, talking back to a world that would silence their voices. When applied to a consideration of McKayle himself, Clayton's idea illuminates the artist's refusal to censor himself as well as his determination to define not only his subject but also the terms of a debate about the regulation of black men by repressive cultural forces. In effect, then, McKayle's work is risky as it performs the artist's own disobedience.

Literary scholar Kimberly Benston argues that such acts of artistic self-determination are instances of what he calls (un)naming. In "I yam what I am: the topos of un(naming) in Afro-American literature," Benston investigates what he believes to be the primary motivation for black authors: to cast off the names given them by the dominant culture and to reappropriate or change those names to express an identity that is self-chosen. In his words: "For the Afro-American . . . self-creation and reformation of a fragmented familial past are endlessly interwoven: naming is inevitably genealogical revisionism. All of Afro-American literature may be seen as one vast genealogical poem that attempts to restore continuity to the ruptures of discontinuities imposed by the history of black presence in America." [2] The act of self-creation is not one in which a person simply casts off one identity and replaces it with another. Rather it is a process by which the artist identifies himself both in relation and in opposition to past constructions of selfhood. In the black literary tradition, (un)naming occurs in the telling of stories meant to redefine racial identity in the present by reconstructing accounts of the past. Narrative, then, acts as a device through which selfhood is reclaimed through historical revision. In McKayle's case, Benston's insights correspond not only to literary works but also to choreographic ones.

If McKayle used narrative as a way of redefining black racial identity what were some of the dominant narratives of blackness against which the choreographer worked? Although it is possible to think of many dominant and reductive narratives of blackness at mid-century, modern dance criticism presents the most local and relevant source for the purposes of my argument today. Whether unwittingly or not, white critics resorted to such narratives in their evaluation of black concert dance. In a language of value-laden aesthetics, mid-century dance criticism, then, offers a window into a process of white definition of blackness.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, establishment critics of modern dance sought the demonstration of "humanity" in works of choreography. They favored the art of artists who drew upon lived experience for their subject matter. However, critics also expected that choreographers would pursue the universal implications of their subjective experiences, thus enlarging the "human" implications of their choreography. Established white choreographers, like Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Wideman and José Limón usually did this by exploring the psychological or emotional aspects of stories drawn from Western mythology, literature, or the culture of Americana. Yet, as Susan Manning and Jacqueline Shea Murphy have shown in their work on African and Native American dance respectively, when these sources for subjects did not suit their artistic range, white choreographers had license to appropriate freely from any tradition in their expression of human experience. This was not so for black choreographers, who were criticized when they strayed from a typical black subject matter. An anecdote of Donald McKayle offers an illustration: "There was a Russian village dance that Ronnie Aul once performed. John Martin criticized Aul's performance because he was not a Russian Jew and was performing the part. The other dancers were not Russian Jews but were not criticized on this point. They were just white." [3] As McKayle's comment makes clear, often the critical standard for an artist's achievement of humanity depended on that person's race.

For black choreographers, the call to depict human experience was ostensibly a prescription to depict "the African-American experience," thus limiting the black choreographer's palette of subject matter. What is more, critics expected black artists to distinguish their work from that of their white contemporaries through a performance of racial difference. A comment by Lois Balcom published in Dance Observer illustrates: "What chance has the modern, intellectual Negro if she is too close to her race to be a great modern dancer, — and too far removed to be a great Negro dancer? Only as she is truest to herself, and that certainly means as she is 'most Negro,' can she be most modern."[4] Balcom's advice poses a dilemma for those black choreographers who sought to heed it in suggesting that the authenticity of a performance would be determined on the basis of a hazy standard that the representation be neither too close nor too far from the real.

Often, critics' advice to black choreographers was equivocal, like Balcom's, and betrayed their limited or stereotypical notions about black life and history. Consider this excerpt from Walter Terry's 1962 review of McKayle's Legendary Landscape:

> The new piece, "Legendary Landscape," is one of those numbers which all ethnic-minded choreographers seem to find irresistible, that is, the theme of the Chosen One, the Novice, the Initiate engaged singly or collectively in a primitive rite. This one, though far less exciting than many I have seen, is pretty, even elegant . . . Lacking, it seemed to me, was that surging, building freneticism, ending either at an explosion pitch or in a state of catharsis marked by the purity of exhaustion, which one usually finds in primitive rituals, be they African, Afro-Caribbean or purely fictional.[5]

Here Terry characterizes the piece as if it were a number in a stock repertory, finding fault with McKayle's "pretty" and "elegant" interpretation of a subject that the critic expected would be portrayed as explosive, cathartic, frenetic.

When in doubt, critics favored black choreography that depicted black life with an aesthetic of passionate restraint. An excerpt from Doris Hering's 1961 review of Rainbow' Round My Shoulder is a good example: "It would have been easy to make some sort of melodrama out of Rainbow. . . . It would also have been easy to trail in the wake of the powerful choral music used as an accompaniment. Mr. McKayle avoided both pitfalls. He compressed a surge of emotion into a firmly disciplined dance form."[6]

Read as advice, establishment criticism of black dance presented a set of guidelines for choreographers with the intention of directing their creation of choreography that was both "black" and "modern" – the critical equation for the production of successful racial concert dance. Yet for all its good intentions, I would argue that white criticism of black concert dance sought to control art on the levels of both production and representation.

I imagine that McKayle considered mainstream critics' preferences in the process of creating Rainbow' Round My Shoulder. Whether he did or not, Rainbow met Hering's and other critics' standards for the depiction of humanity. Yet, the work did more than offer a compelling picture of African American life. Using narrative as a means of exercising control over his creative process and subject matter, McKayle defied critics' narrow-minded notions of blackness. He did this not only in the manner in which he depicted the prisoners but also in his protest of their silencing. McKayle's courage to speak out should not be underestimated, given its historical timing. During the 1950s and early 1960s, many artists felt the pressure to censor themselves lest their ideas be perceived as culturally subversive. Furthermore, on the eve of a nation-wide mobilization for civil rights, McKayle's Rainbow contributed to the introduction of troubling pictures into the national imaginary (seen especially in television broadcasts of events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-56) or the protests against school desegregation in Little Rock (1957-58). Questioning the veracity of racial stereotypes even as it sometimes appropriated them, Rainbow introduced unauthorized knowledge into a broader cultural discourse, engaging in debates about aesthetic values, black representation, and the social and political circumstances of the day.

Endnotes

1. Jay Clayton, "The Narrative Turn in Minority Writing," The Pleasures of Babel: Contemporary American Literature and Theory (New York: Oxford U.P., 1993) pp. 96 and 97.
2. Kimberly Benston, "I yam what I yam: the topos of un(naming) in Afro-American literature," Black Literature and Literary Theory, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York and London: Methuen, Inc., 1984).
3. Donald McKayle quoted in Richard A. Long, The Black Tradition in American Dance (1989; London and New York: Prion, 1995) pp. 131-132.
4. Lois Balcom, Dance Observer, November 1944.
5. Walter Terry, New York Herald Tribune, 12 October 1962.
6. Doris Hering, "Jacob's Pillow: Fourth and Fifth Week Performances," Dance Magazine, September 1961, p. 26.

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"Pointe of Law": The National Ballet of Canada and Kimberly Glasco Legal Arbitration Case

Allana Lindgren

In 1998, Kimberly Glasco, a principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada was given notice by the company's artistic director, James Kudelka, that her contract for the following year would not be renewed. Glasco hired a team of lawyers and contested the termination, claiming, amongst other things, that she had been dismissed for non-artistic reasons. Specifically, she argued that she had been terminated for questioning, in her capacity as a dancers' representative on the Ballet's Board of Directors, the financial wisdom of Kudelka's proposed new production of *Swan Lake*.

The two sides agreed to utilize private binding arbitration and both sides also agreed to accept Christopher Albertyn as the arbitrator. Pending a full hearing, Glasco requested an interim ruling allowing her to go back to work. The arbitrator took the unusual step of granting Glasco an "interlocutory award" to continue performing with the National Ballet of Canada without prejudice to the final decision. The National Ballet of Canada tried and failed to put aside the arbitrator's interlocutory award. Glasco returned to the Ballet only to find that she was not cast in the company's spring 2000 performances. Five dancers from the National Ballet of Canada then petitioned the arbitrator, claiming that since the casting for the spring season had already been completed their own careers would be damaged if performance opportunities were taken away from them. The arbitrator decided that the National Ballet did not have to assign Glasco roles in the spring season, but would face legal penalty if it did not do so for the fall 2000 performances. The National Ballet sought a review of the arbitrator's temporary reinstatement award, arguing that the arbitrator had exceeded his jurisdiction. The court, however, deemed that the arbitrator had been within his jurisdiction in granting the interlocutory award and, despite the unusual nature of ordering an employee to be reinstated, the award was reasonable and should be upheld. In July 2000, the National Ballet of Canada settled out of court with Glasco by paying her an amount reported to be approximately 1.6 million dollars.[1]

For over a year, Canadians across the country sat down to breakfast and to read the latest headlines in what became a very public and bitter legal battle. Much ink was spilt and much ire raised in the media over the boundaries of an artistic director's authority. In editorials, letters to the editor and columnists' opinion pieces, lines were drawn and sides were taken as words were hurled—some

in defense of the dancer who had been dismissed, others claiming that the authority of the artistic director was unduly under fire. Following the National Ballet's failed attempt to put aside the interlocutory award favouring the temporary reinstatement of Glasco, approximately fifty prominent Canadian artists and artistic directors signed an open letter condemning the judge's decision, specifically claiming that the ruling reflected a lack of "sophisticated understanding of what an artistic director does."[2] Similarly, in an newspaper article written around the same time, entitled "Pointe of Law," members of the arts community claimed that the order to reinstate Glasco temporarily was the death kneel for the concept and practice of artistic discretion in Canada.[3]

In comparing the legal documentation of this case with the attendant public debate, it becomes clear that many members of the arts community were grossly misinformed as to the facts of the *National Ballet of Canada v Glasco* to the point where their statements only functioned to obfuscate the true implications of this controversy for performing arts organizations.[4] Given that so much conjecture was taken as fact, it is important to address some of the misperceptions in hopes of determining what this dispute does and does not mean for the relationship between the law and the performing arts in Canada.

Before it is possible to evaluate the concerns of people working within the performing arts, it is essential to grasp the pertinent facts of this case. Kimberly Glasco had trained at the National Ballet School and had been a member of the National Ballet of Canada for 18 years. James Kudelka had also trained with the National Ballet School and had been a dancer with the Company. After working as a dancer and resident choreographer for Les Grand Ballets Canadiens in Montreal for several years, Kudelka returned to the National Ballet in 1992 as an artist-in-residence before being appointed to the position of artistic director in the spring of 1996. On December 1, 1998, when Glasco was 38 years old, she was given notice by the National Ballet of Canada's artistic director, James Kudelka, that her three-year contract, which would expire at the end of June 1999, would not be renewed.

Glasco maintained that she had been wrongfully dismissed and defamed by the National Ballet. She claimed that her dismissal was an act of retaliation by Kudelka. She alleged that the reasons he gave during the meeting he told her that her contract would not be renewed were that she had not supported his proposed production of

Swan Lake while she was the dancers' representative on the Board of Directors and that she had not supported his appointment as artistic director.[5] He did not refer, she claimed, to any technical or artistic aspect of her abilities as a dancer. Nor had she given any prior indication that her job with the National Ballet was in danger of being terminated.[6]

Kudelka's version of the events during his meeting with Glasco differed from Glasco's. Kudelka asserted that he had told Glasco that he believed there was an artistic incompatibility between them, that the coming season held no repertoire for her to perform,[7] and in particular that she was not well-suited to his new production of *Swan Lake* given that he saw it as a vehicle to promote a new generation of dancers.[8] Kudelka refuted that he had told Glasco she was being let go because he felt that she did not support his production of *Swan Lake*.[9]

The two sides agreed to utilize binding arbitration.[10] Both sides jointly chose Christopher Albertyn to act as the arbitrator. The task put before arbitrator Albertyn was to determine "whether the Ballet acted within its rights when it decided not to renew Ms Glasco's contract."[11] That is, the two sides were asking the arbitrator to determine whether or not Kudelka and the National Ballet acted in bad faith by dismissing Glasco for non-artistic reasons.

The National Ballet told the arbitrator that Kudelka's decision not to renew Glasco's contract was motivated by several factors. According to Kudelka, Glasco was no longer an asset to the Company for several reasons.

> [Glasco was] not being cast by choreographers in works being staged for the Ballet; [Kudelka] believed his relationship with Ms. Glasco was not productive; his coaching staff was apparently frustrated by the number of hours required to help Ms Glasco to achieve an adequate performance level; she could perform a very narrow range of ballets; it no longer made financial sense to keep Ms Glasco. She was being paid a significantly high dancer's salary in circumstances when there were increasing financial strictures on the Ballet and her volume of performances did not justify such expenditure.[12]

To support Kudelka's assertions, the National Ballet produced affidavits, including one deposed by Karen Kain, one of Canada's most celebrated ballet dancers who had recently retired as a principal dancer with the National Ballet and was currently employed by the Ballet as an artist in residence. Kain claimed that Glasco's dancing had declined and the range of repertoire Glasco could dance had diminished. Moreover, Kain stated that Glasco was remedial in her ability to understand, implement and retain corrections, specifically citing that Glasco had been very slow in learning the steps for the ballet, *Musings*.

In her defense, Glasco noted that she had never been notified by anyone at the National Ballet that her abilities had deteriorated. On the contrary, Glasco produced evidence in the form of cards from Karen Kain praising her performances in a variety of roles including *Musings*. Glasco also pointed out that she had performed the leads in technically difficult and stamina-challenging ballets including *La Bayadère* around the time she had been notified that her contract would not be renewed. Moreover, Glasco produced reviews of her performance in *La Bayadère* from Deirdre Kelly of the national daily newspaper, *The Globe and Mail* as well from John Coulbourn of *The Toronto Star*—both testimonials to Glasco's technical brilliance.[13]

In further countering the National Ballet's reasons for her termination, Glasco stated that she was chosen by Kudelka to dance in the "first cast" performances on opening nights, even though other principal dancers were available. She maintained that she performed as often as the other principal dancers and that it was only after she was notified that her contract was not to be renewed that the Artistic Director reduced the number of her performances. Finally, Glasco maintained that she was cast in the entire range of repertoire of the Company—classical, neoclassical and contemporary—for which she rarely received negative reviews for her performances.[14]

Glasco alleged that she was not dismissed for any *bona fide* artistic reason, but as punishment for comments she made while acting as a representative for the dancers. Glasco had been elected as one of two dancers to act as ex officio dancers' representatives at meetings of the Company's Board of Directors. She questioned the wisdom of the National Ballet's "apparently lavish expenditure" on productions such as Kudelka's proposed two million-dollar reinterpretation of *Swan Lake* while simultaneously trying to reduce the number weeks per year that the dancers were under contract, thereby reducing the dancers' income.[15] She queried if there was a misplacement of priorities, specifically mentioning *Swan Lake*.[16] The new production was said to be a personal mission of James Kudelka who, at the October 1998 Board of Directors meeting, threatened to resign as artistic director if his new production of *Swan Lake* were not allowed to go forward.

In short, The National Ballet attributed the non-renewal of Glasco's contract to the following reasons: that her abilities as a dancer had diminished beyond acceptability; she had become incompatible with Kudelka's artistic vision for the Company and that her large salary was too burdensome for the Company.[17] Glasco charged that she had been given notice of the non-renewal of her contract because of improper, retaliatory actions of the artistic director and the Company as a result of her role as the dancers' representative on the Board of Directors directly related to her querying of the Company's fiscal priorities.[18]

These are the specifics arguments of the main action.

However, Glasco requested from the arbitrator an interim ruling for temporary reinstatement, which would allow her to return to work until the arbitrator could hear the main action. In a very unusual decision, the arbitrator granted Glasco her request to continue performing with the National Ballet of Canada without prejudice until the main case was decided.

In determining whether or not to grant a temporary reinstatement order, the arbitrator had to consider several factors including: was there a serious question to be tried in the main action; would Glasco suffer irreparable harm if temporary reinstatement was not granted; and would the damaged suffered by Glasco if she were not reinstated be greater than that suffered by the National Ballet if she were reinstated.

The arbitrator decided that Glasco's charge that her contract had been terminated because she had spoken out at a Board of Directors meeting raised a serious question for determination; that is, the arbitrator was not saying that he already decided to believe Glasco's version of the events, only that her accusation was credible and if true meant that the National Ballet had violated her rights as set out in the *Ontario Labour Relations Act, 1995*.[19] Also of serious consequence were Glasco's allegations that the National Ballet had defamed her. Finally the parties involved had "an interest in having a determination made of the nature and extent of the discretion of the Artistic Director."[20] For, according to the labour law applied in Ontario, if an improper motive comprises any part of a decision to dismiss an employee, then the decision is to be rendered "tainted and improper."[21]

As to the question would Glasco suffer irreparable harm if interlocutory relief was not granted, the arbitrator took into consideration that her case would likely be in the court system for a lengthy amount of time, which would have a negative affect on Glasco abilities as a dancer. Moreover, her lawyers emphasized that the National Ballet's campaign to defame Glasco had made it impossible for her to find work with other companies.

The National Ballet countered that by the end of the year of 1998-1999, the Company's deficit was projected to be $3.8 million and that Glasco's annual salary of $96,000 would be too much of a burden, especially considering that Glasco had been scheduled to perform only eight times during the 1998-1999 season. Glasco, however, rebutted that casting decisions were the providence of the Artistic Director, James Kudelka and that before she had received notice of dismissal she had been scheduled to dance in twenty-five to thirty performances per year of a wide range of repertoire.

The National Ballet also tried to convince the arbitrator that it had to rely on private donations for a significant percentage of its income and that reinstatement of Glasco—even for a limited term—would signal to donors and potential patrons that the National Ballet had been found to have acted inappropriately, thus harming fundraising efforts. Glasco responded that fundraising had been impacted negatively by her dismissal and might therefore be improved by her reinstatement.

In the end, the arbitrator decided to grant Glasco suspension of the notice of "non-renewal of her employment contract pending the outcome of the main action," stating that she was "to be employed by the Ballet pending the outcome of the main action"; and that she was to be "assigned roles and performances in the usual manner pending the outcome of the main action."[22] The arbitrator took great pains to emphasize that his conclusion that Glasco's career would be caused great harm if she were not granted an interlocutory award did "not pre-judge any future outcome of the main application." That "Glasco may fail to establish that the artistic director acted improperly when he terminated her contract. She may fail altogether in the main action. Alternatively she may be partially successful. She may obtain some order for damages, without reinstatement." There was some chance that she may win in her main action. Thus the temporary reinstatement order would not be a waste of the court's time.[23]

The National Ballet of Canada tried and failed to stay (put aside) the arbitrator's reinstatement order. So Glasco returned to the Ballet only to find that she was not cast in any of the company's spring 2000 performances. The next legal pirouette came courtesy five dancers from the National Ballet of Canada who petitioned the arbitrator, claiming that since the casting for the spring season had already been completed, their careers would be damaged if performance opportunities were now taken away from them. The arbitrator, in what is referred to as the Casting Award, decided that the Ballet did not have to assign Glasco roles in the spring season, but would face legal penalty if it did not do so for the fall 2000 performances. What was most important about the Casting Award was that Kudelka had only been required to testify about how and why he had assigned the principal dancers' roles and performances for the Spring season. For whatever reason, however, Kudelka also told the arbitrator that he rather kill himself than cast Glasco[24] and that he did not "intend to cast Ms Glasco in any ballet for which he controlled the casting decisions."[25] He stated that he would not prevent other choreographers from casting her, but that he would not be forced to cast her himself. This defiance directly contravened the earlier reinstatement award where Kudelka had been ordered to treat Glasco as a member of the company. The arbitrator warned Kudelka that noncompliance would garner legal consequences.[26] To prevent Kudelka from instigating resentment toward Glasco by other dancers who would acquire personal interest in specific roles when the casting notice was posted, the arbitrator ruled that if Kudelka did not assign roles to Glasco in the future, he would have to inform Actors' Equity and Glasco of his intentions not less than thirty days prior to assign-

ing roles to any dancer and/or the posting of the casting notice.[27]

The Ballet again went to court, arguing that the arbitrator had exceeded his jurisdiction. The Ontario Superior Court, however, deemed that the arbitrator had been within his jurisdiction in ordering reinstatement despite the unusual nature of such an order. It was soon after the failed judicial review that the National Ballet and Glasco settled out of court, with Glasco receiving an amount reported to be approximately 1.6 million dollars.

What the *National Ballet Of Canada V. Glasco* Wrongful Dismissal and Defamation Case Does Not Mean For the Performing Arts Community

After the National Ballet lost in its request to stay the interlocutory award, there were many cries that the law did not understand the arts. The truth of the matter, however, was that the arts community clearly did not understand the law as an examination of just two of the many misunderstandings on the part of artists, artistic directors, arts administrators and arts journalists demonstrates.

Artistic Discretion

The most widely-held and most often cited misperception held by the arts community was that by ordering Glasco to return to the National Ballet until her case could be heard, the arbitrator undermined the artistic authority and discretion of the Artistic Director, James Kudelka.[28] What the arts community failed to acknowledge, however, was that the National Ballet willingly agreed to the arbitration process and willingly agreed to the specific law to be applied in their dispute which allowed for the type of reinstatement order granted to Glasco. They could have insisted that reinstatement not be included as part of the arbitration process, but they did not. One could argue that the National Ballet had received poor legal advice, but again, the National Ballet willingly chose their own legal council and certainly had larger coffers than did Glasco with which to acquire the services of lawyers.

Furthermore, what many people clearly did not understand was that in granting the temporary reinstatement request, the arbitrator was not deciding whether or not Glasco had been dismissed for non-artistic reasons. That was the question before him in the main action. The reinstatement was based on different questions—none of them related to the issue of artistic discretion. For the reinstatement request, the arbitrator had to decide if there was a serious question to be tried in the main case—that is, if the issue of whether or not Glasco had been dismissed for non-artistic reasons was serious enough to garner the court's attention and if so, was there enough evidence to support Glasco's claim that her case was strong enough to go forward. Finally, the arbitrator had to decide who would suffer the greater harm—the National Ballet if Glasco were reinstated, or Glasco if she were not temporarily reinstated.

The arbitrator decided that that Glasco's evidence suggested that she did have a case and that she would suffer the most harm if she were not reinstated temporarily. This last decision was based on that fact that her case would likely be in the court system for a lengthy amount of time and that Glasco was already thirty-nine years of age by this time. The lengthy amount of time would also have a negative affect on Glasco's ability to maintain her current level of proficiency and make her ability to resume her career uncertain. Most pointedly Glasco's council argued that denying Glasco interlocutory relief would be tantamount to ending her career.

The reinstatement award did not decide the main case between Glasco and the National Ballet, and was *not* decided on the issue of whether or not Kudelka had used his artistic discretion as an excuse to dismiss Glasco for non-artistic reasons. Thus, the reinstatement order did not undermine the artistic authority of the artistic director. Nevertheless, was the *effect* of ordering Glasco back to work the same as undermining the artistic director's authority? Many people including James Kudelka and artistic directors of all disciplines across Canada certainly thought it was. The reinstatement award, however, did not dictate the specifics of casting or choreography. That is, it did not venture into the territory of artistic discretion but only ordered Kudelka to act professionally and to treat Glasco as a member of the company as he would have under normal circumstances.[29] He did not have to go out of his way for her but he did have to treat her as he did the other principle dancers. As Glasco's council had pointed out to the arbitrator, after notice of the termination of her contract, Glasco had continued to perform for the rest of the season with the National Ballet without incident. In particular, she had performed the lead in *Manon* in Montréal in April 1999 to critical acclaim. Thus, her council argued, Glasco had shown that she could maintain her level of professionalism under duress. The arbitrator ruled that Kudelka conduct himself with the same level of professionalism pending the outcome of the main action.

Arts Organizations and the Law

The second major misperception that emerged from the arts community was the assertion that arts organizations are unique and that the law is really not equipped to deal with arts-related disputes. In an impassioned essay, "Someone Must Lead," which was published in the Toronto-based *The Globe and Mail*, Richard Bradshaw, the general director of the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, argued that arts organizations are not democracies—that someone has to make decisions[30] and that by ordering Glasco back to work, the arbitrator had failed to understand how arts organizations really work and was trying to make arts companies run by consensus.[31]

Using the opposite argument to make the same point—that the law does not understand the true nature

of performing arts companies—*The Globe and Mail*'s Ray Conlogue wrote an article entitled, "Pointe of Law," in which he posed the following question:

> Can the law, based on individual rights, understand that theatre and ballet companies are a deeply *collective* enterprise? Should arts disputes be settled through the same labour law which governs hydro workers and tobacco executives...or should there·be specialized law dealing with the arts world? Failing that, should there at least be judges who are familiar with the way that theatre and ballet companies work? [emphasis added][32]

Bradshaw and Conlogue failed to comprehend that the main case of this dispute was about whether or not Glasco had been dismissed for non-artistic reasons. Had she been wrongfully dismissed? And in wrongful dismissal cases, the law, as it stands can be said to be just as effective for performing arts companies as it is for hydro workers unless one believes that dancers' rights are less than those of other people.

Similarly when members of the arts community claimed that the law did not understand the arts and that intervention by the law, as exemplified by the interlocutory award, undermined the Artistic Director's authority, they were really confusing artistic temperament with artistic discretion. They were implying that artistic directors are exempt from the laws that apply to all the other citizens of Canada and therefore should not be expected to comply with legal rulings or even to act professionally in difficult situations.

What the *National Ballet of Canada V. Glasco* Wrongful Dismissal and Defamation Case Does Mean For the Performing Arts Community

If the reinstatement was not about the law superseding artistic discretion, what exactly are its implications for the relationship between an artistic director and a dancer as well as for the relationship between arts organizations and the law? The answer is disappointingly anti-climatic.

First, it is important to realize that this case does not set any new legal standards for employee-employer relations; it only reasserts those that already exist—namely, that an artistic director cannot fire employees for non-artistic reasons. That is, the artistic director cannot dismiss an employee for punitive reasons. An artistic director can no more fire a dancer for speaking out as a dancers' representative at a Board of Directors meeting—if Glasco is to believed—than he or she can discriminate against a dancer because they are of a particular ethnicity. Artistic discretion cannot be used as an excuse to supersede individual rights. In short, although it was never ultimately determined whether Glasco's dismissal had been

an act of bad faith on the part of Kudelka and the National Ballet of Canada, this case is a reminder that artistic directors and the arts are not above the law.

Unfortunately, the merits of this case were never argued because the two sides settled out of court before the main action—the question of whether Glasco was fired for non-artistic reasons—could be heard by the arbitrator. This means that there are important questions that have been left unanswered. For instance, where exactly are the boundaries of artistic discretion as far as the law is concerned? If Kudelka had simply said he could no longer work with Glasco would that have been legally acceptable?

As classical ballet companies struggle to modernize and move beyond the repertoire of the nineteenth century in order to communicate with audiences of the twentieth first century, some also find themselves in the position of archaic autocrats facing workers who wish to assert their basic rights. It is sadly ironic that most dancers still do not appreciate that Glasco's actions have actually benefited them. This particularly applies to women for Kimberly Glasco dared to break the image of the classical ballerina as the epitome of the mute, malleable muse. Similarly, the very unusual remedy of temporary reinstatement has ramifications that will affect a wide variety people regardless of whether they know the difference between a pirouette and a pointe shoe. In the future, people of all professions who believe they have been wrongfully dismissed and who want temporary reinstatement until their case is heard will cite the *National Ballet of Canada v. Glasco* as an important precedent.

Notes

1. Max Wyman, *Revealing Dance* (Toronto: Dance Collection Danse Press/es, 2001): 305.

2. The letter was dated April 13 and distributed to members of the media. Its signatories included Richard Bradshaw, the general director of the Canadian Opera Company; Urjo Kareda, artistic director of the Tarragon Theatre; Christopher Newton, artistic director of the Shaw Festival; Richard Monette, artistic director of the Stratford Festival, among others.

3. Ray Conlogue, "Pointe of Law," *The Globe and Mail* (24 April 2000): R3.

4. Exceptions to this generalization do exist. For instance, Randy Glynn, artistic director of The Randy Glynn Dance Project in Toronto wrote a letter to the editor that was published in the June 2000 issue of the Toronto-based publication, *The Dance Current*. In his letter Glynn took issue with the arts community's open letter, charging that the motivation for writing the arts community's letter was artistic elitism that placed itself above the law. Similarly, after the dispute had been resolved, arts commentator Michael Crabb wrote a column on the issue for the magazine *Dance International*. Crabb noted that when Glasco had been granted the interlocutory award, "[i]t was at this point that the issues, at least in the public debate, became seriously skewed...NBC and its supporters chose to deflect the real issue by spinning the interim award as an end-of-the-world scenario in which the law would in future dictate artistic decisions." See Glynn as noted in Max Wyman, *Revealing Dance* (Toronto: Dance Collection Danse Press/es, 2001): 295-296; Michael Crabb, "Notebook," *Dance International* 28.2 (July/August 2000): 54.

5. The National Ballet stated that Glasco's concerns regarding *Swan*

Lake were misinformed and superfluous because funding for individual productions was not drawn from the Company's operating budget. Thus budgetary expenditures, including the dancers' salaries and the terms of their collective agreement, did not hinge on deficits incurred by individual productions.

6. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 28.

7. Kudelka said he was, however, prepared to stage a farewell performance for Glasco in the title role of Giselle.

8. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 29.

9. On December 19, 1998, only a couple of weeks after he had notified Glasco that her contract would not be renewed, Kudelka was quoted in the two national newspapers, the *National Post* and *The Globe and Mail* acknowledging that he believed Glasco did not support his production of *Swan Lake* and she did not support him as artistic director, though, he claimed, her dismissal had more to do with her performing abilities and his long-term plans for the Company. Specifically, the report printed in the *National Post* stated: "In an interview yesterday, Mr. Kudelka said although there was definitely 'artistic incompatibility' between himself and Ms. Glasco, as well as concerns over the cost of *Swan Lake*, her dismissal had more to do with her ability and his long-range plans for the ballet company." The version of the story printed in *The Globe and Mail* was similar: "Kudelka acknowledges that he and Glasco do not have 'a compatible artistic relationship'. He believes that she did not support his upcoming production of *Swan Lake* and, consequently, that she did not support him as artistic director. But he maintains that her dismissal has more to do with her performing abilities and his belief that she does not fit into his vision for the future of the company." These quotations were submitted to the arbitrator as evidence. See *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 30.

10. Specifically, both sides agreed to private binding arbitration under the *Arbitration Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c. 17.

11. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 8.

12. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 20.

13. Kelly's praise, in particular, was couched in terms of the sublime. "The ballet itself is grand-scale minimalism; every step is a lesson in precision and economy. Glasco wastes nothing in her execution of them. She proceeds assuredly; her balances are long and languid, her feathery arm movements are measured and restrained. Every gesture is clear and radiant. She sparkles, a 24-karat ballerina." Deirdre Kelly, *The Globe and Mail* (27 November 1998): 22. For many members of the arts community, however, Kelly's comments were tainted and made moot by the fact that Jeffrey Sack, the Toronto labour lawyer retained by Glasco was the same council who had advised Kelly when the dance journalist had sought reinstatement in her own wrongful dismissal case against *The Globe and Mail* in 1990.

14. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 22.

15. It should be noted that Glasco, as one of the few well-paid members of the company with an annual salary of almost $100,000/year, was raising these concerns on behalf of most of the other dancers who were in more vulnerable financial positions than herself. Ironically, as the case progressed, most dancers in the National Ballet sided with James Kudelka and claimed that Glasco was using them to save her own job. For example see: Margaret Wente, "The Glasco Fiasco (Act XVII) in which the National Ballet's Belligerent Ballerina Triumphs in Court, but Loses Friends," *The Globe and Mail* (4 July 2000): A15.

16. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 26.

17. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 83.

18. As a curious aside, when Glasco case against the National Ballet became a media event, the National Ballet denied that Glasco had ever raised financial issues at the Board meeting. The Ballet's Executive Director, Valerie Wilder, was quoted on a national radio program and a national news television program as well as in a variety of newspapers as stating that Glasco had never spoken at Board meetings. The issue of whether Glasco spoke up at the Board meetings about the National Ballet's fiscal responsibility is crucial because it gives credence to her assertion that she was dismissed for non-artistic reasons. That is, the National Ballet had a vested interest in denying that Glasco had raised questions about the fiscal propriety of a new production of *Swan Lake*. Regardless of whether Valerie Wilder's claim was borne of a faulty memory or of a willful mischievousness, the minutes of the Board meetings show that Glasco did indeed raise the issue of fiscal responsibility and did indeed query the fiscal wisdom of a new production of *Swan Lake*. However, even after the National Ballet had admitted to the arbitrator that it had erred in claiming that Glasco had never raised financial concerns at the Board meetings, the Company did nothing to correct that misperception still held by the media and the public at large as truth. This omission of public acknowledgment of error on the part of the National Ballet was noted in the judicial review decision by Madame Justice Swinton of the Ontario Court of Justice. See *National Ballet of Canada v Glasco et al*, (2000), 186 *Dominion Law Reports (4th)* 347, Ontario Superior Court of Justice: 361.

19. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 66.

20. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 66.

21. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 67.

22. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 90.

23. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Interlocutory Award*, (2000), 87 *Labour Arbitration Cases (4th)* 1, C. Albertyn Arbitrator: 71.

24. During the hearing on which arbitrator Albertyn made his decision for the Casting Award, Glasco's council, Jeffrey Sack, asked Kudelka if he had "a responsibility to see that this company does not go down the drain." Kudelka replied: "I have been discovering through this whole process me responsibility, my greatest responsibility, is to myself and my own career." Responding to a question by his own council, Will McDowell, Kudelka uttered his now infamous statement that "I'd rather kill myself" that ever cast Glasco in any production for the National Ballet. Elaborating, he continued, stating, "I don't like being made into a martyr over the situation, but it seems that that is the direction this is going." With delicious irony, the sub-headline for this article read "Director's closed-door testimony decries ballerina's 'appalling display of ego'." See Deirdre Kelly, "Kudelka Lashes Out at Glasco," *The Globe and Mail* (19 May 2000): A1.

25. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Casting Award*, 3 May 2000, C. Albertyn Arbitrator, available at www.kim-glasco.com/mayjune2000_casting_award.htm: 11.

26. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Casting Award*, 3 May 2000, C. Albertyn Arbitrator, available at www.kim-glasco.com/mayjune2000_casting_award.htm: 12.

27. *Re National Ballet of Canada and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Casting Award*, 3 May 2000, C. Albertyn Arbitrator, available at www.kim-glasco.com/mayjune2000_casting_award.htm: 12-13.

28. For instance, Richard Bradshaw, the artistic director of the Canadian Opera Company wrote an impassioned essay that was published in the *Globe and Mail* stating that legal intervention into the workings of a performing arts company such as an interlocutory award ordered by "arbitrators, courts or outsiders undermines the entire nature of creativity." See Richard Bradshaw, "Someone Must Lead," *The Globe and Mail* (11 May 2000): A15.

29. Similarly, the order in the Casting Award in which Kudelka was ordered to give thirty days notice to Actors' Equity and Glasco if he intended not to cast her did not venture into the artistic realm, but was intended to keep Kudelka to the terms of the interlocutory award. Thus it did not dictate the specific roles that Glasco was to dance, or when she was to dance; it only stated that she must be cast as a principal dancer as she would have been before the dispute had erupted.

30. "All artistic directors are different…What matters is that the glorious opportunity to fuse the multiple talents of any great theatre, opera, ballet company or symphony orchestra should not be left to the mediocrity that results from mere democratic consensus—or arbitration for that matter—but should be entrusted to someone whom those he or she leads believe can·help them create something extraordinary. It is an awesome responsibility." See Richard Bradshaw, "Someone Must Lead," *The Globe and Mail* (11 May 2000): A15.

31. However, when Bradshaw suggested that arts organizations are unique because they are not democratic and therefore they must be treated differently under the law, he in fact provides an example of how arts organizations are exactly like any other hierarchically-structured company. Moreover, one might be inclined to suggest that is precisely in autocratic directorial/dictatorial situations that law is *most* desperately needed.

32. Ray Conlogue, "Pointe of Law," *The Globe and Mail* (24 April 2000): R3.

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The Erotic and the Exotic in *Swan Lake* as Reconceived by Shakti: Some Difficulties of Interpretation and Evaluation

Vida Midgelow

Is it pole dancing or is it art?

Think Playboy not Bolshoi.

(Stewart, 1999, p.46)

Shakti, a half Indian, half Japanese solo dance artist, presented her version of *Swan Lake* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Scotland, in August 1999.[1] The work left me perplexed and, I admit, somewhat skeptical. How was I to understand this dance? Was I to draw on my knowledge of a 'traditional' *Swan Lake*? Was I seeing a complex piece of dance theatre or was it soft pornography (and can I tell the difference)? Was I seeing a bold demonstration of a woman reclaiming her pleasure in the erotic? Or, was this a flagrantly sexualized display, disguised as dance 'art'? Was I to see this as a deconstruction of ballet or of classical Indian dance? Or, was I totally misreading the dance due to my lack of knowledge of Indian philosophy? As the short quotations above demonstrate I was not alone with these dilemmas. Shakti received controversial and mixed reviews. Whilst Shakti is not unused to mixed reviews the controversy was further heightened because of the subject matter of her dance. For example the press wrote:

> She has ransacked reputable sources such as the Tibetan Book of the Dead and the Kama Sutra in pursuit of her own gyrating G-string spectacles, but never before has she defiled Tchaikovsky.
> (Morris, August 1999)

Through this paper I discuss Shakti's representation of the swan women tracing the multifaceted arguments that unfold when an Indo-Japanese woman appears on stage dressed like a g-string diva from a strip club and proceeds to dance perhaps the most prized roles from the classical ballet repertoire. Her work is, perhaps, refreshingly free of political correctness and feminist doctrine as she enjoys the power and pleasure of her sexuality. However her image of woman may also be dangerously stereotypical and too easily consumable. I present a pendulous position which swings precariously between celebrating with Shakti her new image of the swan woman and questioning the extent to which this new swan woman is in any way 'new' at all - a different object of desire may be, but still an object. For this dance, and Shakti's particular dancing body, I argue, operates as a site of resistance but tenuously.

In trying to make reasonable interpretations and evaluations I attempt to engage with the dance on its own terms as well as reflecting on my own responses and position, acknowledging that I, at times, risk in this dance analysis, misreading signifiers and therefore inappropriately using theory in a universalizing manner. In trying to avoid doing so I bring into focus the intercultural nature of Shakti's dance. I posit that the components of the dance itself, the company's international touring schedule, and Shakti's own background present enough openings to allow for the perspectives that I use to illuminate this dance, without, I hope, de-culturing the work or smothering it in theory.[2] I intend at least to work from a self-reflexive stand-point, to work through my own first responses to reach a position of deeper appreciation.

A Brief Introduction to Shakti

Shakti trained in a range of classical Indian dance forms, yoga and American modern dance. Her training was initially with her mother whom, states Shakti, 'was the first Japanese to bring the true form of Indian dance to Japan' (Shakti, 1999). Her mother is the founder of the VasantaMala Indian Dance Institute in Tokyo and artistic director of the company. Shakti has also studied under various gurus of Indian dance: Guru Elappa (Bharata Natyam), Guru C. Archayalu (Kuchipudi), Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra (Odissi), and Swami Bua (Yoga). She received an M.A. in Indian Philosophy from Columbia University in New York (which is where she studied American modern dance forms). She attempts in her dance to create a new dance form that is a blending of the techniques of classical Indian dance and the breathing (prana) and control of yoga and her dances explore and expand Indian philosophy in movement.

The company repertoire ranges from classical Indian dance pieces to Shakti's own brand of intercultural performance.[3] She has been performing her own work since the early 1980's. As an indication of the subject matter of her work what follows is a list of a few of the performance titles: *Eros of love and destruction*; *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*; *The Woman in the Dunes* and *The Pillow Book* – a dance based on the Kama Sutra. This work will premiere in August of this year. Her dances are structured improvisations and are characterized by their free, energetic quality and unfettered erotic movement.

Reworking Swan *Lake*, Interculturalism and the exotic

Pavis describes intercultural theatre thus:

In the strictest sense, this creates hybrid forms drawing upon more or less conscious and voluntary mixing of performance traditions traceable to distinct cultural areas. The hybridization is very often such that the original forms can no longer be distinguished.

(Pavis, 1996, p.8)

Following this definition all reworkings of existing historical dances can be said to be intercultural as they take something from a distinct past culture and consciously alter it to present it in a new culture creating a hybrid, bi-directional text. Shakti's particular reworking of *Swan Lake* incorporates a series of exchanges of culture. Shakti transforms a nineteenth century Russian dance text into a twentieth century Eastern one, relocating the dance in terms of time and geography. Plus, the movement is intercultural, in that the mix of dance forms evident cannot be placed into a single culture but embody both classical Indian forms and western modern forms. Shakti's work also breaches boundaries between dance as erotic entertainment and traditionally 'high art' forms. These bi-directional foci function so to complicate the thorny questions of interpretation and evaluation. The numerous significa-tion systems, which are founded within a myriad of historical, geographical and artistic contexts, make this dance impossible to singularly locate. The dance requires the viewer to negotiate across normal boundaries and ignore established perimeters.

In order to grasp the form and function of intercul-tural work it is necessary, suggests Pavis, 'to understand their inscription within contexts and cultures and to ap-preciate the cultural production that stems from these unexpected transfers' (Pavis, 1992, p.2). Through the title, the music, and the references to narrative Shakti draws on our knowledge of the traditional *Swan Lake*, locating the viewer in a western, 'high art' context. However the movement, costuming and setting shift our perceptions, engaging the audience in a process of reconceptualization and bringing to the surface social, political and aesthetic issues.

Shakti's *Swan Lake* runs for approximately 45 min-utes and is in seven sections. The dance's structure runs parallel to the traditional ballet libretto and makes use of the most well known sections of the ballet and the music. Using a series of excerpts from the Tchaikovsky score Shakti performs her version of Odette's first appearance and the *Dance of the Little Swans*. Later she presents Odile in the ballroom scene and then departs from the tradi-tional narrative by the addition of a final section and the appearance of a silver clad swan to music by Vanessa Mae.

Shakti's movement is clearly not ballet but neither is it exclusively classical Indian or western modern dance. She uses a mix of forms and crosses boundaries between forms to develop a dance style which has been described by critic Mary Brennan as 'classical Indian dance training allied to a kind of free-form Raks Sharki' (1999). The style could also be described as a post-modern Indian dance or free form Indian dance.

Shakti's classical Indian dance background is evident through her use of features which are typical of classical Indian dance, such as: hand gestures (mudras), facial ex-pressions (abhinaya), rhythmic and beating foot move-ments and her generally earth bound movement quality. However these features are performed in an unfettered manner which suggests a departure or development from classical Indian dance forms. For example the foot rhythms and hand gestures are not developed as a defining ele-ment, as they are in 'traditional' dances, but are only part of a full bodied and sinuous movement form. For ex-ample Shakti begins with a mudra around the face but then throws her hand and arches backwards; her feet mark out a turn but her head swings rapidly in rotation. Shakti's movements are unbound, even messy, in comparison to the codified geometry of classical forms. Also whilst exag-gerated facial expression is a strong feature of Shakti's dance the expressions used are not conventionally stylized.

Shakti also departs from tradition in terms of music, subject matter and in her form of improvisation. Whilst improvisation is not uncommon it is normally only al-lowed within strict codes of prescribed movements. Shakti's whole dance is a structured improvisation. Whilst her concepts, costume changes and musical structure is set the movement is not. Working through her practices in yoga, Shakti starts the dance 'cold'. The body warms from the inside as she begins to perform she says. There-fore the dance starts with more recognizable movement and, as she warms-up (in a mental and physical sense), the dance become less clearly defined. By the final sec-tion Shakti has entered a trance like state. Shakti says:

I start more structured and slowly the structure breaks and there is no structure anymore, you become more free. But you have to have a struc-ture to destroy otherwise you don't get anywhere.

(personal interview, 1999)

The overall structure she uses and ultimately destroys is a western one - the libretto of *Swan Lake*. The use of a westernized dance text as subject matter is outside the norm of subject matter for Classical Indian dance. Tradi-tional dances take religious forms and emphasize the dancer's dedication and love of the deity Krishna. How-ever mythic narratives and personal transformations are not uncommon subjects and whilst the ballet is western its themes have here be translated across cultures. This

translation, or perhaps more suitably, appropriation, of a western dance text is a potentially subversive post colonialist twist. This *Swan Lake* intervenes in the broad trans-national, even globalizing, sweep of the ballet genre and destabilizes the neat categories of the Orient and the Occident.[4]

Shakti's *Swan Lake*, as seen by the predominately western audience at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, is both familiar and foreign, Western and Eastern. Said has made clear that oriental culture and cultural forms, and I would add, Oriental bodies, have been exoticised due to the operation of Orientalism. So whilst the extent to which any Asian woman, whose body has already been exoticised, can create a more mutable identity is questionable, I suggest that this *Swan Lake*, as an intercultural experience, which operates through a plurality of cultural signifiers, functions so to as destabilize such neat power structures. Breaking through the constricting bounds of exoticism, Shakti constructs a mutable identity that reflects the urban societies (in the East and the West) in which she locates herself. For although the Orient, argues Said, can not be discussed as a 'free subject of thought or action' as Orentialism is a western style for 'dominating, reconstructing, and having authority over the Orient' (in Ashcroft *et al*, 1995, p.88) in this work Shakti deconstructs both Eastern and Western forms. Through the stripping of context, alteration of subject matter and transformation of form the performance requires an audience to examine how it recognizes cultural forms and what stereotypes are associated with them.

Reinscribing Gender and the erotic

Brennan writes that she 'will never see *The Dance of the Little Swans* in quite the same light thanks to those pelvic shunts' (1999). Indeed, Shakti's representation of the Swan is less about a mystical creature full of grace, as evident in traditional versions, and more to do with creatures from a natural world who fight and mate. She says of her 'dance of the little swans':

> Do really little swans flitter and flutter around on their toes? No, they are kind of wild. I would think of the 'dance of the little swans' as more of a mating dance ... a savage one...with their webbed feet and strong beaks. The swan is a creature of the wild – it is not tame - they're proud creatures but free.
>
> (personal interview,1999)

The Petita / Ivanov *Swan Lake* is often criticized within feminist dance literature due to its' representation of women as dualistic and disempowered. For example Christy Adair writes that in Odette we have "the woman on a pedestal' of male fantasy' whilst of the other hand, 'Odile provides the other extreme of fantasy as 'a woman

to be used". Both of these roles Adair argues disempower women placing control in the hands of men (1992, p.107). Sally Banes, in her more recent text *Dancing Women*, essentially follows this argument stating:

> So in *Swan Lake* there is a binary division that sorts women into the categories of wicked and good, expressed in oppositions between active and passive, assertive and yielding, strong and gentle.
>
> (Banes, 1998, p.61)

And Banes goes on:

> Yet the monster and the angel are wrapped up in a single woman, for one ballerina dances both roles, suggesting an underlying female dualism.
>
> (Banes, 1998, p.61-62)

Shakti considers that in her version the swan woman surpasses the traditional duality of the good Odette and evil Odile. Shakti's swan is not only performed by one dancer, but is also a single character who transforms as the dance progresses. In this version the white swan evolves through the work into a transcendent, powerful silver swan. This transformation process is marked by a series of costume changes that are variously removed and layered throughout the dance. Shakti starts the dance in a black fur coat and then reveals the white G-string bikini beneath it; the white bikini is later covered by a black lace dress, as she transforms into the Black Swan. The white bikini can still be seen through the black lace. The costuming reinforces the interrelationship between the swans. The black swan and the white swan are presented as containing elements of each other – neither is entirely black or white. The final costume change is into a silver bikini. This costume references back to white bikini but in its glittering fabric and slicker design is clearly a move away from that prior image.

Following the philosophies of yoga, which Shakti practices, the black and white swans are projections of the inner and opposing forces inside all of us. For yoga is based on a philosophy in which everything is viewed as having two aspects. Following the one living divinity (Brahma) who separates Itself into Him (Shiva) and Her (Shakti), opposites are evident in all other aspects of life. Everything has two elements: male and female, now and then, here and there, self and other than self and good and evil. These opposites are in a continuous relationship and are considered essential parts of the divine process.

In the practice of yoga there is an attempt to reach a union and transcendence of these opposites. Shakti's vision of *Swan Lake* therefore can be usefully illuminated by this philosophy. The opposites of good and evil in the

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forms of Odette and Odile are brought together and embodied by the Silver Swan – who transcends them both. This transcendent silver swan woman is neither all purity nor all evil, but is woman who embodies both good and evil. This swan woman is free in her desires and enjoys both aspects of her self in a simmering illusion of silver. Shakti suggests that her Silver Swan has the freedom to be whatever she wants to be and that:

> You could be a virgin *and* a whore. You could be creative *and* destructive. There is no need to deny one side of you, but I think people have the tendency to deny the black or the white... one is bad or one is good.
>
> (personal interview, 1999)

Further Shakti maintains that:

> In a Western context it is a struggle between good and evil. But then in an Eastern context good and evil are one. So what is good and what is evil - you don't have one without the other - which is also true in the western Swan Lake - we just don't have the princes and the romance there because it's all within you.
>
> (personal interview, 1999)

Shakti's Silver Swan is a very desirous and sexualized swan / woman. Her movements are powerful and dynamic, sexual and demonic. Her body writhes and pulsates as she crawls across the floor and rhythmically thrusts her pelvis and flings her hair. She performs with an abandment unusual in western dance and is overt in the sexual nature of her movement images. This overt display of sexuality is at times uncomfortable for the audience and certainly a shift from the carefully hidden and restricted sexuality of the balletic Swan woman.[5]

The ballet swan woman may display her crotch and legs, she may arch backwards in a sensuous pose but we are not supposed to notice. The narrative of *Swan Lake* may well suggest sexual consummation but we are encouraged to politely ignore it. Instead we are to celebrate Odette's a pure, non-sexual love as if sexuality and eroticism would somehow sully the otherwise perfect image. It is Odile who is a sexual temptress and, as Banes has noted, her overt and assertive qualities assign her as evil, as dangerous (1998, p.61). Whilst never actually overtly sexual, Odile in her ability to seduce the Prince is branded wicked. These attitudes towards sexuality are deeply rooted in western culture which 'generally consider sex to be a dangerous, destructive, negative force. Most Christian tradition, following Paul, holds that sex is inherently sinful' (Rubin, 1993, p321).

These views are also evident in some feminist thought as Rubin points out in her insightful essay *Thinking Sex*:

Feminism has always been vitally interested in sex. But there have been two strains of feminist thought on the subject. One tendency has criticized the restrictions on women's sexual behavior and denounced the high costs imposed on women for being sexually active. This tradition of feminist sexual thought has called for a sexual liberation that would work for women as well as for men. The second tendency has considered sexual liberalization to be inherently a mere extension of male privilege. The tradition resonates with conservative, anti-sexual discourse. With the advent of the anti-pornography movement, it achieved temporary hegemony over feminist analysis.

The anti-pornography movement and its texts have been the most extensive expression of this discourse. In addition, proponents of this viewpoint have condemned virtually every variant of sexual expression as anti-feminist.

(Rubin, 1993, p338)

Shakti is well aware of these views and her gleeful disregard for the politically correct and her obvious pleasure in her own body sits uncomfortably with conservative feminist perspectives. In its representation of female eroticism and desire, this work brings to the fore the universalizing, and, in terms of erotica, repressive, tendencies of much feminist theory. She argues that it is the portrayal of

> sexuality and eroticism that people are always trying to suppress, but it is the basis of life and there is no way to deny that and there is nothing wrong with it. And a woman, or even a swan, is a very sexual creature, we give birth.... To portray desire, to be desirous is totally natural.
>
> (personal interview, 1999)

Further she states:

> Everybody is interested in sex.. Everybody has a body and everybody is interested in pleasing he body...sexual pleasures and sexual desire are not to be suppressed.
>
> (personal interview, 1999)

Shakti's Silver Swan / Woman, in her G-string and with her sexualized display in movement, in many ways resembles a night club stripper. The representation of woman that strippers tend to perpetuate, such as woman as object and as a commodity of male desire, I would argue is difficult to support from a conservative feminist perspective. However Forte notes that

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the stripper or entertainer is also offering up her body as an object of exchange for *another's* pleasure, with no reference to her own. Her identity, other than that of the performer, is erased in service of providing pleasure, in keeping with her fetishistic function within society.

(Forte, 1990, p.263).

This fetishistic function is not operating in Shakti's case. In the trance like state she achieves by the end of the performance, Shakti appears to be as much involved in her own fantasy, as she is in offering herself as fantasy for the viewer. Whilst she does display herself, and her body is exposed, her body, whilst clad in the garb of a stripper, is not acted on by the audience in the manner of a stripper. She asserts her own pleasure and sexuality, thereby reclaiming her body through its exposure. The performance space also disrupts the process of fetishization. The audience and the performer occupy the same small space with limited lighting to separate them making it difficult for the audience to safely gaze upon Shakti. Her flesh is all too fleshy, not at all the perfect illusion available through film and to a certain extent through proscenium arch spaces. In this case the performing woman enters into an active interplay with her audience, as she defines her own image and looks back.

One of the final images in the dance of the Silver Swan / Woman is the performance of a ritual behind a bowl of flames. As Shakti sets the flame alight her focus is intense and her face pulls into exaggerated contortions of pain or ecstasy – it is difficult to tell which. The flame light cast onto her face and body flickers creating dark shadows, suggesting some inner demon is present further subverting the audience's perceptions. This silver swan woman is dangerous and may just bite back!

Reading Shakti's work in the light of Indian philosophies, and as a challenge to conservative, anti-sexual discourse, brings to the fore the subversive potential of this dance. However it is also possible that the display of the body and the clearly sexualized movement references such as appear in Shakti's dance may be assimilated into a commercial hegemony. The reviews of Shakti's work in the tabloid press which describe her as 'love Shak', 'Sexy Shakti' and her dances as 'steamy' and 'sizzling' (Anon, 1999) suggest that this is, at least in part, the case. This assimilation may also have been hastened by Shakti's own publicity which emphasizes the titillating aspects of her show via images of Shakti in provocative poses and dressed in revealing clothing such as bikinis and sheer fabrics. In her press releases and interviews she has also repeatedly pointed towards the erotic nature of the work and highlighted the places in which her work has been banned.

The way sex is used as a selling tool places this dance on the borders of dance as art and erotic dancing. Whether this border matters or not in this post modern world is debatable. Following the lead of ethnologists it has become possible to discuss all forms equally: disco alongside ballet, and the nightclub entertainer alongside the postmodern artist. Moreover the most postmodern of artists may well be found the nightclub rather than the traditional performance venue. Given that this is the case Shakti's eroticism is surely no reason to disregard her.

So whilst this performance could be dismissed as simply an erotic display, it is creatively erotic, and operates in such a manner as to challenge the status quo of hegemonic eroticism as it celebrates a woman's sexuality. Further, she is not only presenting an image of a strong sexualized woman but is in control of the whole event – she is the venue manager, the producer, creator and performer of the work. There is no male dominated hierarchy in evidence here! In this context Shakti's sexualized dance can be seen as a exercise in post-modern feminist ideology – as she openly expresses her erotic life and in doing so challenges audiences to examine their preconceptions.

So for Shakti sexual desire is a natural thing that should be allowed to run free and not be restricted by laws and taboos. She states that the ' black swan is the materialist world we live in today – laws, taboos, society, regulations…[you] can't be suppressed by them'. That is why, she says, she became a silver swan; 'a glittering illusion- but you know you are an illusion ..if you can enjoy that illusion and play with it….you know exactly how you glitter and you can enjoy that and have fun with it' (personal interview).

Conclusion

As an intercultural work the *Swan Lake* can not be decoded from one single, legitimate, point of view. The dance gives rise to a number topics as it reinterprets the Petita / Ivanov *Swan Lake* from an Indian perspective creating a work which crosses numerous cultural boundaries. This is a contemporary work that marries Shakti's dance training and philosophical outlook. The dance addresses the here and now and reflects the multi-cultural, post-modern societies in which she lives. Whilst using two historically rooted forms (ballet and Indian dance) the dance deconstructs these sources to focus on today - on the 'stories' of modern life. Also, in its representations of female sexuality and desire, Shakti brings into focus established notions of eroticism. Shakti's message is that we too can operate outside the status quo and follow our pleasures.

Shakti's *Swan Lake* has engaged me in a personal journey. In order to interpret this dance I have had to assess my own expectations and values as the cultural codes and aesthetic principals of established forms are not relevant. At this point the commentary presented is only schematic but indicates some of the traces that are giving rise to rich material. Shakti brings to a new focus *Swan Lake*, Indian dance and erotic performance as the dance shifts my angle and field of vision.

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Endnotes

1. This analysis is based on my memory of this August 1999 performance and a video of a March 1998 performance.

2. Between July and November 1999 Shakti performed in Avignon (France); Edinburgh (Scotland); Tokyo (Japan); and San Francisco, (USA).

3. Whilst not the focus of this paper, this repertoire – from Classical dance pieces to experimental works – demonstrates the two attitudes towards Classical Indian Dance. As a 'reinvented' tradition many artists strive to locate the most 'authentic' form possible, whilst others are trying to free themselves from the perceived ties of tradition and create dances which express a more current sensibility.

4. The ballet genre has been adopted or imposed (as often the case in colonialist situations) in many non-European countries. The implicit values inherent in the aesthetics and technique of ballet travel with it to these new locations. I am arguing therefore that Shakti's ownership and concurrent rejection, or at least ambivalence, towards the ballet form marks this reworking as a political site of post colonialist resistance. Shakti freely makes this European export her own without embodying the inherent history or universalizing aesthetics of the form.

5. Shakti's overt sexuality also departs from the reinvented tradition of Bharata Natyam. For whilst the dance was historically performed by the *devadasis*, the sexual associations of the dance were removed in the 1930's when classical Indian dance was re-created as a modern tradition. See Judith Lynne Hanna (1993) for an interesting discussion of the *devadasis* and the changing status of women in Classical Indian Dance.

Reinterpreting Choreography: Motion Capture Data as Historical Information

Lisa Naugle

Introduction

When Paul Kaiser, Shelley Eshkar and Michael Girard worked with Merce Cunningham on *Hand-Drawn Spaces* (1998) and *Biped* (1999) and then worked with Bill T. Jones on *Ghostcatching* (1999), they used the technique of motion capture to collect and digitize information about the dance. Motion capture is the technique of measuring a subject's position and orientation in three-dimensional space over time and recording that data in a computer. This technique is done "in the moment", as infrared cameras watch performer(s) execute their movement. Through the process of editing the motion capture data; Kaiser, Eshkar and Girard created an interpretation of the original choreographies. While advances in motion capture techniques have facilitated the creation and digital processing of dances by choreographers such as Merce Cunningham, Bill T. Jones, George Balanchine (Kaiser, 1999) William Forsythe, in addition to other choreographers in Europe and the United States, there is no "one method" that is the best and most accurate way of using motion capture data to create an artwork. To my knowledge, there are no dance studies about the process of re-using motion capture data for the purpose of reinterpreting dance information. Here, I present the idea that while motion capture techniques provide "in the moment" information, such techniques also provide historical dance information; historical in that data, (libraries of movement) are immediately available at the time movement is captured and can, therefore, be used later in different ways by different people, for reinterpretation. Furthermore, motion capture techniques are valuable to the dance field not only for collecting or documenting the positions, quality, and style of a dance, but because the motion information may be used by other dance artists and researchers to develop their own sense of articulation and ordering of movement guided by particular readings of the data, kinesthetic awareness and intuitive sense of movement.

My research method was a qualitative approach (interviews and participation in countless motion capture sessions with Paul Kaiser, Shelley Eshkar, Michael Girard, William Forsythe and others between January to May, 2001) to illuminate how existing motion capture data may be used for reinterpretation. I conclude that when dance becomes digital, it becomes historical and generative; challenging conventional notions of single authorship. The words "spawning" and "progenitor" used by Paul Kaiser and Bill T. Jones in the process of making Ghostcatching,

for example, hint at the generative nature of motion captured choreography.

Background

Motion capture is considered part of computer graphics, a field that is relatively young, having started about 40 years ago. More specifically, motion capture is an animation technique that involves creating a complete model of a human being or object in the computer. Since its inception, many computer graphic artists have focused on achieving photorealism in their works. Photorealism is a rendering technique or style. Motion capture data can be visualized by any rendering style, including what I call non-literal styles such as in *Hand-Drawn Space, Biped* and *Ghostcatching*. Motion capture technique, in and of itself, is simply a way of gathering information about movement.

[Show slides of markers and dancers]

What we obtain from a motion capture session is a set of unconnected dots that portray an individual's motion sequence. It is at this point that the first level of interpretation begins, an important aspect of which is detection of manipulative intent. The collection of dots, known, as cloud points must be identified, and in most situations will indicate the joint centers of an individual body. The markers; usually four on the head, four on the hips, two on the front of the torso, three on the back, one on the shoulder, elbow, writs and so on, along with the subsequent cloud of dots visualized on the screen create provides the foundation to create a 3D model. Once sequences of movement are captured, a digital model (which may or may not be an exact representation of the person) is created.

The 3D body can be viewed from any angle, can be positioned relative to imaginary objects and, in general manipulated as if it were a real object, yet it exists only within the computer. The body itself is now a mathematical simulation of a real three-dimensional person. Rendering can be applied to any 3D object and in analyzing 3D animation-based artworks, I think it's important, not only look at the potential of the tools but, to look at the rendering style, the style in which the artists choose to bring forward a particular intention to visualization.

Dance has been a part of computer animation history. In 1983 when Rebecca Allen designed a computerized dancer for Twyla Tharp's video, "The Catherine Wheel", the capabilities of 3D software and the possibility of interaction between live and simulated figures hit home; the virtual dancer made her debut into the world of mod-

ern dance. Fifteen years later, in 1998 *Hand-Drawn Spaces*, by Merce Cunningham, Shelley Eshkar, Paul Kaiser and Michael Girard —came along, following by *Ghostcatching* in 1999 and *Biped* in 2000. In these artworks, modern dance help to inspired the use of non-literal 3D animation rendering styles.

In the spring of 2001, l worked with Paul Kaiser of Riverbed Digital Art ((www.riverbed.com), Shelley Esker, an independent animation artist, and Michael Girard software designer and president of Unreal Picture (www.unrealpictures.com) on their new upcoming installation, Pedestrian, while they were guest artists in residence at University of California, Irvine from April 9 – 20. In working with Michael and learning about his contribution to *Ghostcathing*, l found him to be not only a programmer and software designer but also a visual artist and choreographer, which l will discuss in more depth later in this paper. l had received a grant to bring these artists to UC, Irvine Dance Department as Chancellor's Distinguished Fellows and it was within this context, as faculty / choreographer that l participated in the daily motion capture sessions and discussions regarding the making of Pedestrian. The movements that we captured during those two weeks (approximately 450) are now in the process of having models created and choreography structured through sets of behavioral rules. Behavioral rules consist of IF + Then = statements. An example of a behavioral rule is: IF a figure a has an umbrella, then all figures of a certain height will run under the umbrella. Pedestrian, a multi-site installation will be premiered in New York City, November-December, 2001 (www.eshkar.com)

At the same time, *Ghostcatching*, their existing work was installed for six weeks in the UC, Irvine Beall Center for Art and Technology. The Beall Center for Art and Technology lives as a neighbor to the Motion Capture Studio allowing students, faculty and guests easy passage between the art gallery and the motion capture studio. This provided me with an opportunity to participate in the initial development of Pedestrian while continuing work on my own creative projects in motion capture. Noting the differences between earlier motion capture work (*Ghostcatching*, 1999), the work-in-progress (*Pedestrian*, 2001), and projects with dance students at UC, Irvine, it became clear to me that recent advances in motion capture technology and have opened up new possibilities capable of achieving more subtlety and nuance with virtual figures than ever before with this animation technique.

As a continuation of my ongoing research in motion capture, I sought to answer the following question: How can motion capture data be visualized to highlight the abstract qualities (energy and dynamics) in dance?

Some Initial Observations

In teaching motion capture to graduate dance students at University of California, Irvine this past year I

began by having them capture their own choreography, and animate short (approximately 1 minute) phrases in various ways using currently available animation software such as LifeForms, Poser, 3D Studio Max and Lightwave. We found it is easy to capture a lot of motion in a very short amount of time, and an important question is, "What can you actually do with the choreography once it is in the machine? In other words, how is it useful to dancers and choreographers? In one-to-one sessions with my students, I noticed that some students would freely use the now digitized choreography of each other to practice various parts of the "clean up" process (re-identifying missing markers, connecting lost trajectories, etc.) While other students never considered using another choreographer's files. Some simply wanted to "get good at using the system": it didn't matter what file they used as long as he or she could "see enough of the movement to fill in the rest" of the data. Others seemed to feel that they "owned the movement" and were not likely to allow anyone else to edit their choreography once it was in the machine.

Based on these observations with dance students, I raised the following questions to Paul Kaiser, Shelley Eshkar, Michael Girard and later, Bill T. Jones:

> Could (or may) Ghostcatching (original motion capture data) files be used by another choreographer for reinterpretation of the original movement?

Shelley responded, "Of course you could reuse the files but why would you want to?" Bill T. said, "Hum, no one's ever asked that before, I don't see why not." And Paul Kaiser provided this response:

> "…we used half of all the motion capture files actually taken, and lets say that the rest exist, some are very good but they just did not fit into the idea of the piece, and others did not work well. So it is possible for someone else to reuse the files. But there is sedimentation of captures with Bill T. In 1998 we did captures at Biovision Studios and in 1999 at Future Light Studios and afterward that we did another piece, which was made as the first release premiered in Cooper Union. Then there was the Estate Project for Artists with Aids who funded some studies to see if we could capture complete solos, so Bill performed these at Uprising Studios in New York. The results [at Uprising Studios] were superior and we were disappointed with the previous captures because they were stiff looking for the back. So [finally] we wove new captures [with old captures] into some of the section into the mirror [of Ghostcatching]."

Now, Kaiser, Eshkar and Girard used Jones' movement to render in an abstract way. This process also happened with *Hand-Drawn Spaces*, and *Biped* pieces they worked on with Cunningham, so already we have a situation of reuse and reinterpretation. Furthermore, the way these works were rendered in 1998-99 is different than what can be done today and what we will be able to do five years from now. The act of reusing of motion data means extending the life of dancer's movement, improvisation or choreography.

Based on my conversations with Michael Girard, it's clear that he had and still has specific interests in mind for designing software tools that are useful to choreographers. His software, Character Studio (remember the Dancing Baby) specifically the Motion Flow Editor feature played an important role in representing Jones' movement and that of the Cunningham dancers through computer animation. What follows is a conversation between Kaiser and Girard:

Kaiser:

> ...with the Motion Flow Editor (feature in Character Studio software) you created a...means for controlling and choreographing motion for multiple figures. Can you describe how the motion flow networks operate?

Girard:

> General strategies for the architecture of complexity is to build components first, then combine those components into larger wholes. A major problem in animation systems, and of motion design in general, is that there has been no building block other than the keyframe, which is a single posture of a single element at a point in time. Now we have building blocks or components that are entire motion fragments or motion clips. With the Motion Flow Editor you can construct complex sequences of motions from motion fragments or "clips".

The contribution that Girard's software made to Jones' and Cunningham work is stunning in that it has allowed for creative decision making in terms of structuring movement fragments, and integrating generative possibilities.

It's probably fair to say that most of us think of visual literacy as something to be encouraged and cultivated, and would consider, as a prerequisite of scholarly interpretation, an awareness about these processes by which meaning is created through visual media. Therefore, I provide this excerpt from one of my conversations with Shelley Eshkar about the process of making *Ghostcatching* (April 22, 2001).

Paul and I did the sound (for Ghostcathing) in a sound studio and came up with everything we wanted to hear Bill do (with his voice). Ghostcatching is a film and visual art, and the end is a piece of piece of choreography that is a certain flavor and points to something. We asked Michael Girard to design the phasing and the propagating motion for the last section of Ghostcatching. When Bill was improvising, I identified the sculptor and Bill liked the idea of a being like a pair of calipers .the lines would become an angular skeleton. I would ask Bill to do a particular improvisation, and Bill would do it. He wanted to have a sculptor garden in the end of the piece. Seven of his "identities" as we called them, ended up in the piece though more were identified. Michael and Susan took "sculptor motions" (one of the identifies), and I put bodies on the motions as well as shadows and linked them together. Michael and Susan were visiting me in New York, saw the motions and put lines between the sequences to put the sculptor section together. Michael used phase shifting in the composition. Michael had chosen the camera work, but Paul and I didn't like it. Paul had the final say in the camera work.

Non-literal Animation and Choreography

To begin establishing a connection between creating choreography and non-literal 3D animation, the issue is best introduced through a concrete illustration:

[Play *Ghostcatching* videotape]

Ghostcatching starts with ancestral figures, at first limited and mechanical and then spawns children from itself. The first couples are too weak to assume an existence, but the third is powerful enough to break through and establish a new place. This free figure draws trajectories but they harden; another spawn emerges which is also hardened and eventually one breaks free (dog motion) and then he is suddenly caught in chamber of hardened trajectories when another comes and sees outside and trails down a path, and get to a mirror. This is the most free and dance-like sequence. T hen the figure flips behind mirror seeing a dystopic world of ancestor figures chained together and multiplied and generating more figures and out to infiniity.

On the one hand the section with ancestor figures chained together, multiplied and generating more figures out to infinity may be horrific view but there is also some promise of still more powerful figures evolving.

The motivation to animate something is to push it further from a realistic human. Traditional animation, which I refer to in this paper as literal representation of motion, in America often, mean Disney, which is about telling stories and exaggerating motion to give character.

To some extent, there are a lot of subtle moments in Disney animation but the intent is for the audience to see psychological motivation behind animated characters. When you watch a cartoon, if you pay attention to the story, then symbolic structure takes over. In traditional animation, motion is used as a vehicle for telling a story.

In dance, there is a different focal point that is on the motion itself. Where non-literal animation and choreography achieve unity is in the abstract style of the artwork. Eshkar and Girard were drawn toward a particular style of rendering that is Ghostcatching; their preference (in terms of rendering) was toward non-photorealistic. If on the other hand, Eshkar and Girard would have we rendered Jones' movements in the real-looking, photorealistic style of Toy Story (1993) which is traditional (character) animation; then we would be talking about an entirely different interpretation particularly because of the rendering style. Girard says: "I would like to think that it has to do with the process and when we focus on motion we are not just seeing its form, but the way it's structured, composed and presented whether on stage or in some other venue." One of the most powerful aspects of dance says Girard, "is that it can trigger associations in the mind in a non-linear way and have a broader emotional impact. It wasn't until I had an emotional reaction, that I realized (dance) could have an overwhelming effect precisely because it was abstract and could have repercussions in my mind."

Michael Girard choreographed the "garden section", the last section of Ghostcatching beginning with Bill T.'s movements to spawn other virtual bodies, and then used phase shifting to off set the timing of the movement. In considering the use of animation technology, we might view it as an integrated system of programmed structures between human and machine processes, and a more through study of virtual dance must take a close look at the different contributions of all collaborators, including how they embody and project themselves, and the hierarchy of social relations thru technologies. Technology is that which is productive and generative; the notion of a single artist / or choreographer cannot be assumed in virtual dance.

Motion Capture as a Creative Medium

Choreography, created for the virtual world, may or may not have external or real-world references. The person that realizes, merges and composites digital movement into virtual choreography must first read the data, the dots' moving in space, before rendering an animated interpretation. The interpretation process covers several aspects of the meaning of still and moving images, including: the identity of the object(s) depicted in the image; the spatial relationships among these objects, whether in a single image or in a succession of several images; the psychological and dramatic implications of the juxtapositions of images; the nature of narrative flow across image transitions and so forth (Messaris, 1994)). As I suggested earlier, photorealism, an aesthetic model espoused by the computer graphics community because of its exactness is one that was not embraced by Kaiser, Eshkar, Girard, Jones, or Cunningham (or William Forsythe who I had an opportunity to improvise with as our duets were captured). What then is meaningful in a virtual dance when all real world associations and interpretational conventions (face, muscle, skin, sweat, to name a few) are removed? The movement remains. The ability to capture more nuances, (specifically weightiness) has dramatically improved since the making of Biped and Ghostcatching. A new rendering of Bill T.'s original motion capture files could include different textures, skins, light, interactivity, and movement phrase currently waiting to be integrated into a narrative. Such choreography, yet to be discovered, may move beyond both photorealistic and t non-literal rendering styles.

Motion capture is a creative medium and research tool and virtual dance is a part of this. Extrapolating from the literal figure leaves us with an image at the edge of the surreal:

> "Is that me?" asked Bill T. when first seeing his motion-capture dots on the screen. Good question replied Paul Kaiser, Who is that figure that's moving, once the motion is disembodied? Furthermore, I ask is this the work of only one choreographer?

There is a kind of hermeneutic question that arises when we consider the live dancer and his or her computer-mediated counterpart, one that can either be exaggerated or shortchanged by animation. In Philosophical Hermeneutics, Gademer reminds us that "Hermeneutics is comprised of all those situations in which we encounter meanings that are not immediately understandable but require interpretive effort...and has to do with bridging the gap between the familiar world in which we stand and the strange meanings that resist assimilation..."[1] The act of tracing, following, sequencing, recreating, adding, subtracting, or multiplying the trajectories of pre-existing movement phrases that live inside a computer is akin to physical improvisation. The mediated feedback processes between artists (designers, programmers, users) and machines reveals narrative not only shaped by specific historical, political, cultural and personal investments but also slippage between "bugs" and evolution into new kinds of systems and relations.

Personal Reflections

Bill T. Jones has said that he hopes people would be see him in this form...as dots in 2045 and that it could possibly be the best record of his work.

> How could dance historians and other scholars make use of these files to gain a deeper understanding of motion-captured dance?

In talking with Paul Kaiser we discussed the idea of a network. Although preserving the whole corpus would be an exhaustive task, one idea is to sample quintessential movements of a given dancer — standing, running, walking for example and create a huge, extraordinary network that could be blended and take the viewer anywhere. Now that Michael Girard has added the ability to put probability to each clip of movement, this is one area of great interest to particularly because it intersects history with new generations of choreography and social relations.

In closing I want to add that recently Michael Girard taught me how to use the Motion Flow Editor and I've been experimenting with motion capture files from a session I did with William Forsythe on April 17th. Forsythe and I were motion captured while performing four different improvisations. I remember asking Forsythe, What do you want to improvise on?" He replied, "Read my angles," and then we danced, fast, over, under…more on this in my next paper. Later, as we watched the dots swirling, dropping, interacting and flying across the screen we realized that they are the only records that we have of our improvisation and his first motion capture session. The dots are a beginning; interpretations weaving into dance history.

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Seeking Order and Finding Chaos in the Choreography
of William Forsythe

Ann Nugent

The idea of performance implies a highly stable system because it is based on the principle of a relation, which is in theory always calculable.

Lyotard, 1986:55

It is ... up to science to make evident the chaos into which the brain itself, as subject of knowledge, plunges ... Even in a linear model like that of the conditioned reflex, Erwin Straus has shown that it was essential to understand the intermediaries, the hiatuses and gaps. Arborized paradigms give way to rhizomatic figures, acentered systems, networks of finite automatons, chaoid states. No doubt this chaos is hidden by the reinforcement of opinion ...

Deleuze and Guttari, 1994:216

The aim of this paper is to look at William Forsythe's choreography from a critical perspective, questioning what happens in works where order appears to fall apart. My intention is to look appreciatively, in the sense of trying to discover what lies within, rather than judgementally. To those who take issue with this approach to criticism, I would argue that because Forsythe is a choreographer whose work is experimental and breaks rules he is moving away from areas that might be considered normative in both dance and theatre, and therefore to attempt to impose judgement based on past models – or authorities – is not appropriate. His works do not add up to self-defining wholes, but embrace Derridean *differance*. They invite each person who encounters them to experience something 'other' (Norris, 1991).

Admittedly, the processes through which I choose to single out aspects of his work involve tacit judgements. But my concern is not with the short term aim of reviewing - and encouraging readers to attend, or stay away from, a performance - so much as with searching for a perspective that is able to reflect the changing art of dance. I am setting out to look at some specific works by Forsythe, to offer some general pointers about how they might be seen to deviate from the normative, and to identify aspects of what can seem problematic for critics and audiences. My intention is to construct an argument for seeing the works through a creative openness.

The third act of Forsythe's ballet *Eidos:Telos* – which Forsythe created in 1995, in collaboration with his company, the dancers of the Ballett Frankfurt - starts in still-

ness and silence, with eight dancers standing, squatting or lying in a connected group around centre stage. The stilled moment is made palpable by relationships that connect individuals into a group. But no sooner has the image imprinted itself on the watching mind, than two of the dancers begin thrusting into space, reaching out in different directions with arms, legs and bodies. The suddenness of their movement summons the other six to action. A quick phrase of activity begins, with all eight dancers intent on executing different movements. Then the stillness is returned to, but only briefly, for a moment later streams of motion course through thirty-two legs and arms, and the stage turns into a surging sea. Shapes and forms arise and vanish in ways that have no discernible beginnings and endings. If this looks complex, it is but a prelude to the complexity of what will follow when as many as twenty-two dancers are on stage, each pursuing different patterns of movement.

There are times when this labyrinthine network of *Eidos:Telos*'s final act can seem impenetrable, at least on a first viewing. The watching eye is given so few pointers, and is neither directed to climactical moments nor lured by group arrangements that frame soloists at centre stage. Indeed, there is no obvious centre, for Forsythe shares an enthusiasm with Cunningham for deconstructed space. When, on occasion, *Eidos:Telos* momentarily coalesces into discernible group organisation the diversity of the action can feel broken - or disjointed and dislocated. Without discernible order the effect can seem chaotic.

Yet the creative intention may not be aimed at chaos, and there are signs in *Eidos:Telos* (as in every Forsythe work) that the movement is proceeding according to a preconceived plan. For one thing, the dancers never bump into each other, even when their dance is at its fastest and most dynamic. For another, the manner of execution is carefully modulated, and each movement has a precision indicating that it has a measurable relationship with something. What that 'something' represents, what connections are held in the dancers' minds, is not part of what is communicated, and the viewer is not made privy to clues for decoding. But this would not necessarily enhance understanding, for the challenge lies in perceiving what to make of what is seen.

Though seeing and responding critically depends on the cumulative knowledge and experience that can be brought to the art work, a postmodern choreographer such as Forsythe is concerned with using cumulative knowl-

edge to question received ideas about dance's past and break down its givens, or predetermined structures. He is interested in exploring processes that change the spatial order and bring 'art' and the everyday closer. This can produce problems for determinedly preconditioned critics, and over the years many have levied attacks at Forsythe's so-called failures. For example, a critic writing in *Ballet Review* declared *Firstext* (1995) 'staggeringly bad' (Houseal, 1996:7), and in doing so pointed to a dichotomy between creative *differance* and critical expectation.

One of the major assaults on awareness can be Forsythe's refusal to deliver the dance through linear and hierarchical relationships. As already suggested, there is no deference to a superior order: not in terms of how the movement progresses physically towards the climactical moment; not in the organisational involvement of dancers around a central figure or figures, and not in the on-stage spatial arrangement pointing to the importance of active order. The rules adhered to by ballet that are based on the body's musculature organisation, and depend on a sequential order of movement, are ignored.

Ballet is traditionally concerned with conservation, with perpetuating a successive order and reiterating the known. It seems to promote that which is culturally desirous, through principles that conform to an idea of legitimisation (Austin, 1976:35). These notions of ordered 'rightness' permeate classical art and are ingrained in a cultural ideology that helps to determine how seeing functions.

It is when ballet seems to be promised but not delivered that problems arise in the reception of Forsythe's choreography. The name *Ballett* Frankfurt is, after all, highly suggestive. But who is it who can say with any certainty what ballet is and what can be expected from a company with ballet in its title? Not Forsythe who, rather than regarding ballet as something fixed and immutable, sees it as a body of knowledge, a treasure trove ready to be plundered.[1]

Forsythe's ballet questions ideas about the acceptability of the monolithic and the unified and the rules that validate (Lyotard, 1986:54). It relegates the prompting stability of classicism to the shadows, preferring instead to forge some kind of a relationship with the randomness of existence. It argues that the body is no longer compelled to return to centre and symmetry, and that there are other ways of approaching surface, line and volume.

Perhaps ironically, a work such as *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude* (1966), shows that Forsythe is, when he chooses, adept at creating ballet in a style of baroque elegance that is unmistakably classical. Even so, the risky twists and turns of the movement in *Vertiginous* make it also neo-classic, or contemporary. In other works the speed and complexity of unfamiliar forms and their different relationships can be hard to see — for example, the arrangement of the musculature may be unusual and the

direction of the trajectory unexpected. The dance refuses to accumulate in either the mind or senses by falling into that logic of harmony, symmetry and balance identified by Laban as fundamental to dance.[2] It can feel - to borrow a phrase from Lyotard — as if it is 'a game without perfect information' (1986:57). Where 'missing information' is identified, the effect can seem strange or alienating. It can strike the viewer-critic as deviating from the known order and entering into a world that is chaotic.

The task for criticism then becomes one of considering what is meant by chaos, and whether in a dance context it should be seen, as so often, as undesirable. Deleuze and Guattari when they were looking at different conditions between scientific functions and philosophical concepts, found that 'chaos is defined not so much by its disorder as by the infinite speed with which every form taking shape in it vanishes' (1994:118). Forsythe's rapid forms vanish before they can be held in memory, but hint that their construction lies outside the normative laws of dance. There is evidence to suggest that they are drawing from other discourses, from science and philosophy, for example.

Forsythe, of course, is not alone, in looking outwards in this way - and each successive generation of choreographers produces idealists who are concerned to extend what is characterisable as dance, and who may well want to find meeting points between contemporary science and philosophy. But Forsythe creates problems by so often underlining the importance to his choreography of movement founded on balletic principles.

Moreover, he frequently questions the nature of theatre. For example, during the second act of *Artifact* (1984), he keeps slamming down the curtain in the middle of the action, leaving the viewer to ponder on whether or not the dance continues out of sight. In *The Questioning of Robert Scott* (1986) he fills the stage with lines of tables, radically restricting the 'normative' space for dance. In the central act of *Eidos:Telos*, where he seems to be exploring the myth of Persephone and her travels between heaven and earth, lengths of what looks like folded yellow cellophane — actually about 50 yards of lighting gel (Forsythe in Driver, 2000:44) - are scrunched up and 'stuffed' into the frame of a large black lamp. The sound of this 'scrunching' turns into an unearthly roar, and lighting intensifies the colour of the gel so that seems to be like a blazing fire. Given the context, the viewer can look on this assault on the senses as an abstracted moment of hell fire.

Forsythian order and the relationship with ballet

Forsythe's choreography is concerned with processes of abstraction and questioning, and can be divided into different categories and types. Though the oeuvre can generally be pointed to as postmodernist, the boundaries are unstable. There are, for example, works that veer towards narrative, and then break away from the expectation of

logical continuity – hence the receptive suspicion of incompleteness. There are some that seem part of a formalist balletic enquiry, yet reveal strong philosophical undertones, and a deconstructionist's enthusiasm for discovering what lies behind the already known. Some belong in a category that the choreographer names 'ballet ballets'.[3] These are concerned with exploring the character of dance, and specifically with discovering openings, or ways of playing with the strict rules of academic ballet.[3] Other works are constructed as a montage in which the historical mingles with the contemporary, and aspects of expressionism, realism and the vernacular keep emerging. Some point to absurdism or brutalism - indeed, most of twentieth century art's avant-garde 'isms', surface at one point or another.

But again in these different networks, it is the frequency with which the choreography 'hits' perfect classical positioning, then refuses to follow the expected order, that the problems are caused. It can seem as though the inviolable has been violated. It can also inhibit recognition that other mechanising forces have been released in the body to produce a different spatial geometry.

Breaking the rules

What makes it easy to point to Forsythe's work as lacking in logic, and to find that neither concept nor form coheres into a communicable whole, is of course cultural convention. Scientists working on chaos theory made similar discoveries for they recognised, as Gleick points out, 'nonlinear systems generally cannot be solved and cannot be added together … Nonlinearity means that the act of playing the game has a way of changing the rules.' (1998:24). As the scientists recognised, Forsythe's forms are out of harmony 'with the old theory' (1998: 152), because there is new harmony to be discovered.

The body's potential for new harmony was underlined graphically in 'Tight Roaring Circle' (1997) in which Forsythe and colleagues organised a vast sprung surface for members of the public to bounce on. Seeing untrained bodies rising and falling and rising again, the project was a reminder of the body's intrinsic structural system, its way of reorganising itself even when central control is lost.

Yet criticism often focuses on what is unresolved, or pointlessly disrupted, as was suggested in a headline given to a review of a programme featuring Forsythe's *Firstext* (1995) and *Steptext* (1984) that read, 'More butchery than ballet' (Crisp, 1995). The critic attacked *Steptext*'s musical violation, the constant starting and stopping of Bach's *Chaconne in D minor for Solo Violin* and the dance's 'dislocated action'.[4] Another critic, looking for continuity and logic in the same programme, questioned the way the different parts did not 'build up a larger structure of rhythm [or] have a persuasive compositional logic' (Mackrell, 1995:13).

These and other responses are reminders of the long history of so called 'new' ballets that merely reinforce the status quo, agreeing that classicism is part of the 'rightness;' of seeing. If, however, cultural theorists and practitioners in other art forms are looking at the changing place of knowledge, and enquiring into the value of rules that perpetuate stable systems (see, for example, Lyotard,1986), then there is no reason for ballet to remain inherently classical and to regard itself as immune from such interrogation. What postmodernists challenge are notions of resolution and completion and they often do so by pointing to values of randomness and irregularity. If the rigidity of expectation can be shifted from its narrow plinth, a bigger landscape – a landscape of the unexpected – comes into view.

Forsythe and his dancers

A contributory factor to Forsythe's landscape of the unexpected is his constant inclusion of improvisatory passages in his works. This means that the dancers must shift at speed into and out of unstructured and structured movement. While it may not be easy for the viewer to spot the differences between what is planned and what is spontaneous, what improvisation gives the performance is an air of purposefulness, a supercharged energy. The focus of the dancers makes the movement appear to spring from an organic system. Something 'other' is lurking in the choreographic text, something unnameable and unknowable through which different kinds of alignments and relationships may be seen to emerge.

Returning to *Eidos:Telos*, the first and third acts include many movements that seem balletic and then deviate from their expected 'point of arrival'. To take a specific example, there is a frequently repeated movement that from the waist downwards looks like a *pointe tendu*, but its upper body organisation does not conform to expectations of how the completed picture should look, for the arm that is raised is on the same side as the extended leg. The alignment this produces is based not on counterpoint but correspondence. In the context of ballet this can look awkward enough to be read as 'error', which obviates the possibility of seeing, in the Forsythe context, how movement can be activated by other principles.

In *Steptext*, to which I have already referred in the context of critical response, a woman stands at the front of the stage and, with arms bent at the elbows and held at face height, executes a sequence of movements. She swings her arms in front of and away from the face, with an action that seems ritualised, because it is is repetitive and continuous. It is also gestural, as if the intention is to communicate something literal. But evidently what is intended is that the meaning must be looked for in the body's formalised organisation.

This sequence is actually 'plucked' from a 1984 Forsythe work, *Artifact*, in which he presents a corps de ballet whose linear arrangement along three sides of the

stage owes much to the Petipa/Ivanov *Swan Lake. Artifact* 's ensemble dancers are organised to draw attention to the activity of four soloists; they stand upright with feet together and, in perfect unison, execute the same gestural sequence that found its way into the single dancer's movement in *Steptext*. This sense of connecting to ballet's classical history makes the movement ironic, for the massed presence of a group that is not stilled but moving powerfully can pull the watching eye away from the drive and plasticity of the soloists.

The aptly named work *From a classical position* (a duet made for television in 1997) demonstrates how classically based movement can serve as a basis from which to discover new harmonies. Its score, again by Thom Willems, includes passages of Bach-like (Johann Sebastian) music in which the choreography (and filming) supports the classical style in the elegant posing of its two dancers (at least in this particular sequence). Legs then 'shoot' into arabesques, and bodies bend courteously forward, but the movement takes on a changed trajectory and dynamic, and the forms become alien, emphasising not the expected 'turn-out' and finish but 'the underside' of classical positioning. Wrists are flexed and, led by the elbow, caused to revolve inwards. Hips, traditionally minimised by turn-out, are deliberately rounded. What emerges can be likened to the Derridean 'supplement', or discovery of what has been hidden behind historic principles.

There is a sequence in *Enemy in the Figure* (1989) that introduces the idea of the movement of a pendulum. Willems's score establishes the mood with a jauntily syncopated rhythm. The dancers, positioned randomly about the stage, swing their legs from side to side with a pendulum-like action, and with a similarly precise, but different, motion of the arms. Though the dancers' movement is very precise, it is not quite synchronised, and the outward swings acknowledge different beats. Chaos theory finds that the apparently simple order of a pendulum swinging repeatedly will eventually lose its regularity (Gleick, 1998). In *Enemy in the Figure* the slight differences in timing build forcibly on audience excitement.

Seeing dance that is fundamentally changed

In general the forms and images that are seen in dance function, both for the executant and the viewer, by association. A dancer executing an *arabesque* will do so with a particular image in mind that is 'read' through proportional relations. Forsythe's dancers too have specified tasks to carry out, and these are understood both through the body's motorised memory, and an imagery projected into a physical organisation of planes and dimensions. To take one example, the dancers might be asked by Forsythe to envisage an everyday object such as a cylinder, and to indicate its spatial organisation through the shaping of their arms. They might then change the cylindrical shape reducing its size and rotating it through different spatial

planes. This would create a purpose, and project into the movement an edge, or 'thinking' awareness. It would emphasise a play of variables and constants.[5]

Audiences seeing new geometrical organisation in action would not necessarily recognise 'cylinder', but would see the dynamic and quality of spatial arrangement given a particular, but unknowable purpose. They would sense connectives running between the outer and inner, between physical organisation and directional thought. They would see shapes that followed an organic logic, leading on to turbulent changes such as controlled falls or disintegration (as, possibly, the cylindrical dimension was flattened) or arrived at a point somewhere between equilibrium and collapse. Seeing the decentred body moving in decentered space, could cause signals to be picked up about the form's non-arrival.

But the signals can also prove kinaesthetically potent and, just as with classical positioning, the dance can 'hit' the audience with an emotional force. This is the physical-psychical effect of dance that John Martin has labelled 'metakinesis' (1989:14), and it can bring Forsythe's audiences clapping and cheering to their feet. The metakinetic experience does not, of course, affect everyone in this way. There are times when people storm out of performances, angrily dismissive of something that is alien to their expectations.

If the working habits of Forsythe and the dancers of his Ballett Frankfurt are looked at then what is revealed is that their valuing of irregularities has often been inculcated through embracing ideas from mathematics. As one of the dancers, Dana Caspersen, has written, it is through a period of working with algorithms, fractals and isometries that the dancers have built understanding about how these mathematical terms can become translatable to the medium of the body (cited in Driver, 2000:25). They have developed precepts for the processing of algorithms (a rule-based procedure aimed at solving a particular problem); fractals (from the Latin for 'fragment' or 'broken' and taking account of irregular shapes), and isometries (involving transformation of a shape or a size).[6]

These concepts are integral to the dancers' understanding, and embodied in memory as movement strategies. *Eidos:Telos* is an example of a work that has taken these strategies and through improvisation and structured tasks, built up a system known to the dancers as the 'Alphabet'. Though this is not the place to discuss the intricacies of the Alphabet, in which the imagery is coded giving the dancers access to a big and complex collection of movement strategies, with endless potential for variation, what is interesting is the suggestion that the naming of a system as 'Alphabet' points to something profoundly 'other'. A vocabulary has evolved opening out to a language. Thus the change is not superficial, but fundamental.

Conclusion

In looking at aspects of Forsythe's work, I have pointed to various effects that - from the dense activity of *Eidos:Telos* via the break in continuity of *Steptext* to the unexpected descent of *Artifact*'s curtain - might be seen as chaotic. And yet studied over a period of time it begins to dawn on the viewer-critic that there is a kind of organic cohesiveness. With every work, no matter how 'strange' its deviations into the apparently non-connected, there is evidence of conceptual weaving. Where ballet's form continually stressed linear and harmonised connections, Forsythe's forms reveal unexpected shapes, alignments and connections. Increasingly other kinds of connections and relationships, perhaps across different performative elements, begin to reveal themselves.

Spatial otherness is found when attention is drawn to the spaces between limbs and the relationship to the body in its large and small scale structure and structuring. Without hierarchical order, the expectation of conventional linearity has been overtaken by a democratised organisation where the 'undersides' of the joints in the legs and limbs – as seen in *From a Classical Position* – are allowed prominence. At times this can seem revelatory and there are moments when we seem to be looking into and through the body. This transparency (Sulcas, 1995:59) in the dance cannot be precisely defined, for it is an 'other' aspect of the psycho-physical-spiritual, and cultural.

At the start of this paper I included a quotation about the importance of finding what lies beyond the 'reinforcement of opinion' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994:216). What Forsythe does by taking a stand against the past is to invite the viewer-critic to become a co-creator of the dance's meaning. What is unfolded is a landscape of the other where the chaotic and the orderly are interwoven. It is in this landscape that a new order makes itself visible.

Notes

1. Forsythe's interpretation of the term 'ballet' has been written about in many interviews, and from 1997 onwards I have had various discussions with him looking at.
2. Harmony, symmetry and balance were established by Laban as fundamental laws to dance in *Choreutics* (written 1939, published posthumously in 1966, edited by Lisa Ullman, Macdonald & Evans, London).
3. Among the 'ballet ballets' are: *Steptext*, *In the middle, somewhat elevated*; *Herman Scherman*, *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude*.
4. Headlines are usually provided by a sub-editor rather than by the writer of the piece. The programme under review was given by the Royal Ballet in May 1995, with *Firstext* receiving its premiere, and *Steptext* - which Forsythe created in 1984 for the Italian companay Aterballeto (and which has subsequently been danced by other companies including the Ballett Frankfurt) - being given in the UK for the first time. *Firstext* was a collaborative creation between Forsythe, Dana Caspersen and Antony Rizzi.
5. For discussion of variables and constants and the testing of 'necessary relations' in a philosophical context see Deleuze and Guattari, 1994:215.
6. For discussion of how these terms are worked into the company's modus operandi, see Caspersen in Driver (1999:25-39).

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Introducing Rosalia Chladek

Gunhild Oberzaucher – Schüller

During the summer of 1932, John Martin, then dance critic of the New York Times, went to Europe to report from the International Choreographic contest in Paris.[1] After the event, he wanted to get into touch with the prize-winning choreographers and groups. While he had no luck with Kurt Jooss and his ensemble, who had been awarded first prize for *The Green Table*, because Jooss was not in Essen but on tour, Martin did meet with Rosalia Chladek in Laxenburg near Vienna (Austria). Chladek had been awarded second prize with her work *Les Contrastes*, with herself having danced the solo part, supported by the dance group Hellerau-Laxenburg, the head of which she had been for two years then.

Both must have been very interested in meeting. To Martin, the influential speaker of modern dance, Rosalia Chladek was a further representative of the central European version of modern dancing, while for Chladek the opinions of a real connaisseur of modern dance must have been of utmost interest. Martin, even more than his German colleagues, would be able to analyze and discuss her means of dancing and composition and compare them with the American variant of free dance.

"Dance in Austria", Martin's review, appeared on September 25th, 1932.

"Though she is obviously young", Martin wrote, "there is, nevertheless, an unmistakable distinction about her, even at first sight. One realizes at once why she is hailed in certain quarters as an outstanding figure among the younger generation of dancers."[2]

Miss Chladek, according to Martin's extensive analysis of her contribution to the Paris competition, clearly belonged to a "neoclassical" school of modern dancing, not to a "neoromantic". Although not explaining what exactly he understood as "neoclassical" or "neoromantic", Martin thought that the most outstanding feature of Chladek's dance was her extraordinary feeling for form, which he especially admired in Haendel's *Alcina Suite*, the first part of the group work *Les Contrastes*. With relief he noticed the lack of a dramatic statement, this was pure form in itself, the clarity of the musical form with all its subtly counterpoints had found correspondence in the · choreographic form. This - so Martins first conclusion - was an eminently classical approach, whereby he, of course, implied the artistic approach to the ouevre, but not the technique used. The second part of *Les Contrastes*,

Magic Suite to music by Prokofiev, shows the musical themes and their development through masterly choreography. This was even more evident when danced - as in Laxenburg - all by Chladek herself. In retrospect of the contest, Martin resumes that, had Chladek herself performed the whole *Contrastes*, this piece might easily have endangered the first place of *The Green Table*.

Martin then discusses Chladek the dancer, comparing her to Harald Kreutzberg, who, next to Mary Wigman, was one of the few dancers of Ausdruckstanz to guest in the USA repeatedly, and highly successfully too.

"She is in many respects a feminine Kreutzberg. She has this type of vigour, his electrical dynamism. When she does her peasent-like bacchanale to music of Dvorak,[3] one can hear the same rounds of applause which always punctuate Kreutzberg's Russian Dance. Except for the · fact that she is unusually tall she would make a superb team-mate for him."[4]

After her analytical performance of *Contrastes*, Chladek in Laxenburg danced half a dozen of her solo-creations. Martin is astonished by her virtuosity as well as by her stylistic diversity:

"Muscular virtuosity is not, of course, her only claim to distinction as a dancer. Indeed, in the half dozen dances, which she exhibited in addition to her analysis-performance of *Contrastes*, she showed many sides of her art. As Petrushka in one of a group of three characterizations from the Stravinsky ballet she presented an exciting piece of dramatic psychology."

Like no other critical reviewer, Martin finally stresses Chladek's most outstanding gift, her musicality. He understands and distinguishes the subtleties of Chladek's ways of composing dances:

"Though she is essentially musical in her approach, Miss Chladek is not exclusively so. When in a suite of *The Elements*[5] she chooses to present *Earth* without music, it is actually built without music and not only danced without audible accompaniment. In whatever she does, there is clarity, precision, finish."[6]

In the summer Chladek met Martin she was 27 years old and had already experienced seven years of teaching, an extremely successful career as soloist and two successful years at the theatre in Basel, Switzerland.

Born 1905 in Brno (north of Vienna, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy), Chladek received her schooling in Hellerau, which always retained an aura of magic for her. Even if she had not been there at the great times of Hellerau, that is the years between 1910 and 1914, she felt completely anchored in the garden-town, esthetically as well as artistically.

"Hellerau was luminescent"- thus the famous statement of Thomas Mann about "luminescent Munich" could be used for Hellerau too, because on the one hand Hellerau really was known even outside Germany for its lighting installations, which had been designed for the auditorium of the "Institute for Applied Rhythm Émile Jaques-Dalcroze", and on the other hand the garden town near Dresden, with the building of Heinrich von Tessenow in its centre, also in a figurative sense had an illuminating effect, since the recognition to connect musical rhythm in realiter with the body was illuminating the new century.

Originally, it had been Jaques-Dalcroze's aim to impart musical schooling by means of the body, and he not only tried to make aware of the relation between movement, time, space and energy, but he also developed a method - originally called "rhythmic gymnastics"[7] ("Rhytmische Gymnastik") with which to bodily express these relations. With a concept of body and movement thus available, Rhythmische Gymnastik more by chance than by intent became one of the basics of Ausdruckstanz. Rhytmische Gymnastik was moreover of extreme historic importance since it became the means to help realize the manifold endeavours of reforms of the time, be it in daily use or in the artistic realm as well as in the pedagogic field. The rhythmic movement also helped to abandon the masks of the 19th century, that is, the uniforms, the corsets, and, in its wake, the masks of social conventions too. Through the "rhythmic movement" also the costumes which had enveloped the performers on stage, the actors, singers and dancers, even the stage itself, for centuries, were abandoned. Rhythmische Gymnastik finally helped to make visible the theories of avantgarde which had been postulated in writing only, through the body. Even more: it became the basis for that "Culture of movement" which was to became a signature mark of the first three decades of the 20th century. To be part of that movement was the aim not only of artists, dancers and theatre persons, but also the concern of cultural politics of the time.

Hellerau and the Institutes following it, that is Hellerau II (where Rosalia Chladek was studying) and Hellerau-Laxenburg, where she was teaching, aimed at the "entirety" ("Totalität") of the human being, that is, at the unity of body, soul and spirit. Since the Swiss Jaques-Dalcroze, when teaching in Germany, approached the entirety of a human being and not the nationality, his ideas were valid generally and supraregionally, Hellerau such was a quasi "exterritorial" region, often equated with "Europe". Hellerau II also held onto being an international institution, and it does not surprise that this openmindedness soon got into conflict with national mentality, the first of these conflicts had already arisen as early as 1914, the last in 1939. The first resulted in Jaques-Dalcroze being driven from Germany, the last in the closure of Hellerau-Laxenburg.

For Rosalia Chladek Hellerau and Hellerau-Laxenburg, the esthetics of which she had determined profoundly, remained artistic, professional and private home. After Hellerau-Laxenburg had been closed down in 1939, Chladek at a later point founded successor institutions with the dance department at the Vienna Conservatory and at the Viennese Academy of Music and Performing Arts. Both breathed the original spirit of Hellerau.

Even after the end of World War 1 a magic power seemed to emanate from Hellerau. The attraction which Jaques-Dalcroze had managed to build before the war, was still effective.

In 1921, when Rosalia Chladek started studying there, the institute was headed by 3 leading personalities: Christine Baer-Frissell[8], Ernst Ferand and Valeria Kratina. All three had graduated from the original "Institute for Applied Rhythm Jaques-Dalcroze", and when, in 1919 they ventured a new beginning of the Institute, they now renamed the famous former educational institution "New School of Hellerau".

From the start on, the board of three modified the former aim of education in Hellerau: Ferand put down in writing the new guidelines of the school:

> "In Hellerau, we aim at expanding the basis which Jaques-Dalcroze has created. His basic ideas have proved successful, but in practice did not remain free of one-sidedness and exaggeration. This one-sidedness resulted from an exclusive dependency of bodily rhythm and movement from the music, and we are trying to circumvent that by taking up two points simultaneously: musical perception and body feeling."[9]

Even if Jaques-Dalcroze had always remained sceptical towards dance (he considered the representatives of the New School Hellerau as deserters), the enlarged offer of the Institute, which could now also be considered as instructing for a possible career in dancing, put some sort of order into the scene of Ausdruckstanz.

In 1921 Rosalia Chladek already found herself embedded in a clearly defined world, where pedagogic work, its esthetic foundation and also the artistic perception had their unshakeable places. First of all, the fight for the independence of the new dance had been already won, for

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solo performance as well as for group works; secondly the "creator-interpreter" ("Schöpfer-Interpret") had prevailed; thirdly performance space was found, fourthly the "male gaze" of the preceding century had been eliminated, or, if not completely so, had been forced off to the realm of simple entertainment. The new female audiences, growing steadily, showed the mutual influence in the relationship between theatre and social structure. The female audience, coming from all walks of society, above all from Jewish bourgeousie but also from working class, was lapping it up and absorbing it.

The specialty of the instruction in Hellerau was the structure of the schooling based on improvisation, which was understood to be "the immediate realization of free invention"[10]. This, according originally to Jaques-Dalcroze, served to improve the individual creative power. Furthermore, and rather unusual, the individual studies thus created were constantly subjected to criticism, whereby criticism from the teacher was expected, criticism from the classmate was demanded. Moreover, all students were expected to also teach her classmates, again with the classmates assessing each other reciprocally. Students also had to take over musical accompaniment, either on the piano or with rhythmic instruments. This typus of musician was to become an indispensable collaborator of the creator-performer. It was he who improvised while accompanying, starting from a dramaturgical structure, together with the dancer created a new dance in an improvised process. One of these musicians was Arthur Kleiner, till 1938 constant musical companion of Rosalia Chladek; other typical examples are Will Goetze, Hanns Hasting, Fritz Cohen, who had accompanied Mary Wigman and Kurt Jooss respectively. Louis Horst, Martha Graham's pianist, who studied in Vienna in 1925, is another one. (In this context, let me refer to Gertrude Shurr, who in an interview spoke about Horst's stay in Vienna. "[...] Louis played for Martha's classes, her rehearsals, her dance concerts, beginning his close association with her whole career as mentor in music, art, literature, with all the music, paintings, and books brought back from Germany and Austria."[11] Let me also refer to a peculiarity in dance history. Again and again it is musicians who are decisive at important points of its development. Let me just name Emile Jaques-Dalcorze, then Louis Horst, lateron John Cage, in the sixties Robert Dunn.).

Early in 1924, Rosalia Chladek gave her debut as solo performer in Dresden. The critics immediately realized Chladek's outstanding talent. Already that same year Chladek was appointed to the staff of the school.

In 1925 the school was forced to move for economic reasons, one of them being the - geographical - proximity to Mary Wigman's school in Dresden. A new home was found in Laxenburg near Vienna. Central to the studies now clearly was the "creative acquisition of body consciousness, feeling for movement and music", an aim which explicitely had in view the training to be a creative dancer. Chladek herself phrased it thus:

"At that time, creativity was the general direction of education, the new wave. Not the school was in the foreground, but instruction, independency, the creative process [...] to deal with independent work, be it thematically, literary or musical, was inherent to the teaching process."[12]

To Chladek, the musical approach was obligatory for her artistic concept, it was not only determinative for the kind and character of the choreography, but also for the course of dances, even the dramaturgy of the evening. This became a valid model for the first phase of Chladek's career as a dancer, which can be dated till the early thirties.

That period also can be considered as the start of Chladek's work on a "system" of "body instruction" ("Körperbildung" not "technique"), which is being taught today all over the world. In an essay, published in "Publications of the School of Hellerau-Laxenburg" (No. 2, Vienna, without date), Chladek's collaborator, Marianne Pontan writes:

"Body instruction shall not be the only means to form a healthy body and to move it sensibely, it moreover strives to educate the body to become a free means of expression of artistic ideas".

Hellerau-Laxenburg was endeavouring to create a new "culture of movement" ("Körperkultur") based on the functions of the human body. It would have to exclude "any superficial mechanical movement originating from imitation", since "that was lacking any inner necessity and therefore would make it impossible to create a culture of movement".

The phrase "body intelligence" ("Körperintelligenz") was coined, meaning a body moving in an "intellectual" way. Such "body intelligence" was only to be reached through psyche. Therefore, movement had to be experienced, the education of the body had to happen consciously. The next step to be reached in "body education" was the "theory of movement" ("Bewegungslehre"), the final step in the methodological structure. That alone was dealing with the individual movement "in regard to the continuing and unifying movements and formation of movements from individual to groups and space as preparation for a dance".

The unbalanced interaction of physique and psyche, which begins to show in a disturbance of movement, became starting point for the thesis written by Edwin Denby in German in Hellerau-Laxenburg[13]. (Denby studied there between 1926 and 1928, and it is fascinating to notice how he later on applied the methods learned in Laxenburg in his critical notes).

The first performance of *Marienleben* (Music: 14.-16.th century-music, arr. by Arthur Kleiner) in Basel in Novem-

ber 1934 marked a fundamental change in Chladek's solo ouevre. This change came about as reaction to a double pressure: on the one side from the critics, on the other side, even graver, from politics. Chladek had withstood to the pressure from the critics for a long time. Now, after ten years of solo dancing, the three-part *Marienleben* was the first extensive answer to the criticism: that Chladek's dance, although always clearly and sternly structured, often seemed too formal, that is without a real theme, and moreover, was lacking sensual aura. Chladek at first had ignored those opinions, but was acknowledging them now with growing insecurity. With the establishment of the Ständestaat in Austria and the seizure of power through the Nationalsocialists in Germany, a country where Chladek could not appear any more[14], this was even more emphasized since the genre Chladek had practised up to now was unwelcome altogether. The aim now was to glorify a nation, to cultivate national traditions, and all of that did not have to stem from music, intellect or formal structures, but only, as was due to a female dancer, from the gender and the role modelling associated with it traditionally.

Already in the twenties Chladek in her programmes had gone from purely stringing together solo pieces to cyclically connected dances or to dance suites, which could last up to half an hour. Keeping to that, Chladek now turned to a species new to her. She portrayed a concrete figure, and thus found opportunity to trace stations in the life of that figure and also to lift her to a higher, abstract level, quasi as portraits of general conditions or of "everlasting" themes.

On the same evening as *Marienleben*, Chladek's second great dramatic solo creation, *Jeanne d'Arc* (Music: Arthur Kleiner), had its first performance. During the twenties, this historical, even more so heroical figure had been put on stage in interpretations which were exemplary as well as highly stylised. Although the two characters were on first sight not similar, Chladek had a similar concept for both *Jeanne d'Arc* and *Marienleben*. Portraying the stations of their lifes, to be seen as flashbacks - the country girl, the prisoner, the transfiguration - again accompanied by Arthur Kleiner, again with a subtle conception of space, and again realized with the sparsest means, they again serve as an opportunity for abstraction, the solo again ending in surrender and transfiguration. A structural scheme had been varied here, which would be used in further great solo pieces and should reach its climax in *Ein romantisches Liebesschicksal - Die Kameliendame* (Music: Chopin) created in Dresden in 1943.

The scheme is as follows: Starting point usually is the "normal situation", showing the everyday life of Maria, Jeanne, of the Kameliendame. This portrayal is followed by the first step of development, the act of being chosen by a higher authority: Maria is chosen to become mother of Jesus, Jeanne is bestowed a power which enables the simple country girl to become leader of her people, the Kameliendame, the courtisan finally, is given the power of love. The act of being chosen is followed by the achievement which the chosen one, now being in a state of grace, is able to fulfil: the greatness to become mother of God, to fight, the unshakeable will to live for love only. Then the higher authority intercepts again and calls the figure back to normality. Although each of the characters is conscious of their extraordinary powers, they submit without arguing, giving in and surrendering completely to the higher authority. While Maria is transfigured in death, Jeanne submits to God's will and the Dame aux camélias dies in the knowledge that through her pure love she has come nearer to the higher authority. This structure is supplemented with subtle drawings of sexuality which finally are waived in favour of religious feelings.

This dramaturgy which Chladek actually varied only marginally from piece to piece was valid not only through the whole of her solo career, it could even be seen as an interpretation of her own character, even more so, it is the key to her artistic as well as her private being: Chladek herself is the chosen one, due to her potential and her intellect, she herself feels in the state of grace, lifting her up above the others. This grace gives her the power and the right to guide others, at the same time this grace is seen as a burden, heavy to carry. Chladek perceives herself as high up in the hierarchy, but feels herself committed to a higher, religious or political power, or, reversely, is willing to submit to higher authorities. Next to her creativity as creator-performer, it is the development of her system of movement which she considers her great achievement, accomplished by her by virtue of her being chosen. The suffering she has to endure is the limitations put upon her by the politics of totalitarian regimes, in which she, according to her opinion, has been forced to live. An even greater sorrow for her is the fact that she, formerly internationally celebrated, after 1945 has fallen into oblivion - a fact she seems to accept without protest, like a fate she has to endure. It did not occur to her to have her own creative work recreated by others. Fate decreed that the ouevre would die with the creator-performer, because, as Chladek said in 1985: "We were of the opinion that such an individual creative act could not be transferred." Choreography, she insisted, was a private domain. Chladek and the dancers of Ausdruckstanz felt themselves dead before they had actually died. The farewell from stage was equal to a farewell from the own ouevre, since stage personality and private person were one, not to be divided. Looking back, Chladek said: "I have seen myself dying. Although I am still living, I am not alive any more. My body is alive, but I have no function." When the great Dore Hoyer guested in Vienna in 1967, she performed in a theatre only half filled; many thought her suicide that same year was a consequent step following the diminished understanding for that line of dance.

If one considers the eminent role of Ausdruckstanz in Central Europe before the seizure of power trough the Nationalsocialists, the complete decline of this dance movement after Word War II seems very strange indeed. How could that have happened?

In 1945, at a time now considered to be a new starting point, the cultural scene was not at all wasteland without any features, but, quite contrary, a highly complicated, multi-layered construction. This complexity on the one hand resulted from the wish to simply eliminate the time of occupation, a wish which was not easy to substantiate, since those who had been active in the Viennese cultural scene during the occupation (but also in Germany) still were so now. On the other hand, there was the cultural policies of the occupying forces (Soviet Union, England, France, and USA) who also tried to let bygone be bygone and wanted the make the losers appreciate their own esthetics. Since the victors in regard to dance nearly exclusively were ballet-minded, each of the occupying forces oriented stylistically different, this sphere of influence was extremely diverse. And thus, in the years to follow, again a multifarious dance scene developed, enhanced by guest tours of the most important international classical companies. The Sadler's Wells Ballet in 1946 was followed by Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris in 1948, then twice, in 1950 and 1952, by the Ballet of the Paris Opera, by the American Ballet Theatre in 1953, and finally the New York City Ballet in 1956. Each of these tours left their imprints on the classically oriented ballet at the Opera House, at the same time each of these tours further ousted the free dance scene that was still active. Disoriented and insecure, they had withdrawn to working for dramatic theatre (direction of movement, interpolated dance scenes, but also drama direction) and thus had taken up a field which they had already once conquered with lasting success in the twenties.

While the Ballet of the Vienna State Opera, consequential to the guest tours, started to produced the classics, Rosalia Chladek, after a visit to the Unites States in 1950, with her group tried to react to the example of the Americans.

But Chladek was disoriented even more by yet another development: the victory of the American modern dance. Originally evolved in America as parallel movement to Free Dance in Europe, was now considered in Europe as the valid expression of modernism. What had grown in Central Europe was discarded in favour of a stylistic orientation which had in principle relied on the same ideas and concepts which were now considered "new".

Finally Chladek, after intensely deliberating with herself, decided to reconstruct some of her works. The essential phase of reconstruction of Chladek's works took place in her last ten years. Chladek died 1995.

Starting with *Luzifer* (without music, forming together with *Michael Erzengel-Suite* 1938), followed, upon commission of the Vienna State Opera, 1986 by a reconstruction of *Jeanne d'Arc*, two years later the Vienna Festival Tanz'88 devoted a whole programme to reconstructions, first of all the dramatic solo pieces created between 1934 and 1943, where complex proceedings are projected into a figure, and the inner processes and conditions are portrayed. These were *Jeanne d'Arc*, *Kameliendame*, and characters from the *Erzengel-Suite*. The programme opened with *Intrade* (Music: Liszt, 1929) and closed with *Slawischer Tanz*. In 1990, the landscape of Austrian dance of the thirties was reconstructed by showing works of Chladek together with works of Austrian representatives of Ausdruckstanz, Gertrud Bodenwieser and Gertrud Kraus. For her 85th birthday, finally, the Vienna State Opera invited to an all Chladek-programme which brought in addition a reconstruction of *Narcissus* (Music: Kleiner, 1936) as an example from her *Mythologische Suite*.

Chladek thus was the only representative of Ausdruckstanz to be granted the opportunity to enjoy the renaissance of her own creations.

Notes

1. The competition took place at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées in Paris. Although invited, there were no American participants, neither solo-dancers nor groups.
2. The New York Times, 25. September 1932.
3. *Slawischer Tanz* (Music: Dvorak, 1923).
4. The New York Times, 25. September 1932.
5. *Elemente-Zyklus* (Music: flute and sound-accompaniment, 1930); the cycle consists of: *Feuer*, *Sturm* und *Erde*, the last being without music.
6. The New York Times, 25. September 1932.
7. As an English translation of "Rhythmische Gymnastik" the word "eurhythmics" was used.
8. Half American, half German, Frissell (1886-1932) was responsible for the music-pedagogigal side of the schooling. Ernst Ferand (also Ferrand and Ferand-Freund, 1887-1972) was teaching music-theory, Valeria Kratina (1892-1983) was responsible for all matters concerning body and movement. Kratina also was head and only choreographer of the dance-group Hellerau, which was formed in 1922.
9. School-brochure 1925/26.
10. Ibid.
11. *Louis Horst: A centennial Compendium*, edited by David Sears, in: Ballet Review, 12:2, Summer 1984, S. 80-81.
12. Alfred Oberzaucher and Gunhild Schüller, *Eine Frau ohne Alter. Fragen an Rosalia Chladek, die 1985 achtzig geworden ist*, in: Ballett 1985. Chronik und Bilanz des Ballettjahres, edited by Hartmut Regitz and Horst Koegler, Zürich 1985, S. 56.
13. "Über seelische Rückwirkung der Gymnastik", published in: Zeitschrift für psychoanalytische Pädagogik, Vienna, April 1929, S. 222-228. Translated into English by J. Michael Whitman and George Jackson, in: Ballet Review, 13:1, Spring 1985, S. 44-50.
14. As members of the board of directors of Hellerau-Laxenburg were of Jewish origin, Chladek could not dance in Germany.

Autographs. Early Works of Boris Eifman

Tate Osten

Becoming a Choreographer

In the late 1960s, Leonid Brezhnev was the Premier of the Soviet Union, the Berlin Wall was almost a decade old and the Iron Curtain was more impenetrable than ever. In this closed and monolithic society, Russian ballet was creative and stretched the limitations imposed by the Soviet regime. During this period, the primary control of Soviet ballet resided in the state controlled Academic Theaters where classical ballet flourished at an unprecedentedly high level of skill and training. Choreographers including Oleg Vinogradov [1. Vinogradov, Oleg Mikhailovich (b. 1.8.1937, Leningrad), Soviet Balletmaster; 1957- completed Vaganova Academy, class of A.I Puskin; from 1962 - balletmaster; 1964 - *Cinderella*, Novosibirsk; 1965 - *Romeo and Julliet*, Novosibirsk; 1967 - *Asell*, Bolshoi Theater, Moscow; 1968 - *Mountain Maid*, Kirov Theater, Leningrad; 1969 - *Alexander Nevsky*, Bolshoi Theater, Moscow], Mai Murdmaa [2. Murdmaa, Mai-Ester Oskarovna (b. 31.3.1933, Tallinn), Soviet Balletmaster; 1956 - Tallinn Choreographic School; 1965 - GITIS (State Theater Institute), class of R.V.Zakharov; 1963 - *Ballet-Symphony*, Theater "Estonia", Tallinn; 1965-1973 - Artistic Director of the Theater "Estonia", Tallinn; 1966 - *Dapnis et Chloe*; 1967 - *Koppelia*; 1968 - *Miraculous Mandarin*], Natalia Kasatkina 3. Kasatkina, Natalia Dmitrievna, b. 7.6.1934, Moscow, Soviet Balletmaster; 1953 - Moscow Choreographic School; 1954-1976 - character dancer in Bolshoi Theater, Moscow; in 1960s worked together with V.Vasiliov as choreographer and librettist; 1962 - *Vanina Vanini*; 1964 - *Geologists*; 1965 - *Rite of Spring*; 1967 - *Bach's Prelude* and *Tristan and Isolda*; all in Bolshoi Theater, Moscow] and Vladimir Vasiliov [4. Vasiliov, Vladimir Udich (b. 8.2.1931, Moscow), Soviet dancer and choreographer; 1949-1970 - in Bolshoi Theater; in 1960s works as a choreographer and a librettist with Natalia Kasatkina], Nikolai Boyarchikov [5. Boyarchikov, Nikolai Nikolaevich (b. 27.9.1935, Leningrad), Soviet Balletmaster; 1954 - Vaganova Academy, class of B.V.Shavrov; 1964 - *Three Musketeers*, Maly Theater, Leningrad; 1966 - *Wooden Prince*, Maly Theater; 1968 - *Three Cards*, Leningrad Chamber Ballet] and Georgii Aleksidze [6. Alekcidze, Georgi Dmitrievich (b. 7.1.1941, Tbilisi), Soviet Balletmaster; 1960 - Moscow Choreographic School, class of A.M.Messerer; 1966 - Leningrad Conservatory, Department of Choreography, class of F.V.Lopoukhov; 1967-19178 - Professor there; 1968 - *Orestea*, Kirov Theater; 1966-1968 - Aphorisms; *Suite of the Centuries XVI, XVII, XVIII*; *Metamorphosis*; *Gallant India*; *Sarabanda and Fanta-* *sia*; and many others, all in Chamber Ballet, Leningrad], Igor Chernyshov [7. Chernyshov, Igor Alexandrovich (b. 15.9.1937, Leningrad), Soviet Balletmaster; 1956 - Vaganova Academy, class of F.I.Balabina; 1968 - *Antoni and Cleopatra*, Maly Theater, Leningrad; 1970-1975 - Artistic Director, Odessa Theater of Opera and Ballet] and Dmitri Briantsev [8. Briantsev, Dmitri Alexandrovich (b. 18.2.1947, Leningrad); Soviet dancer and Balletmaster; 1966 - Vaganova Academy, class of I.B.Zubkovskaia; 1966-1977 -Ensemble Classical Ballet, Moscow; 1977 - Choreographic Etudes, Kirov Theater, Leningrad; *Galatea*, TV ballet; 1978 - *Old-fashioned Tango*; choreograghy for the opera *Dead Souls*, Bolshoi Theater Moscow], and many others were active and their work was viewed by public and critics. Boris Eifman was one of these choreographers.

Boris Eifman says that he was born to be a choreographer. He always dreamed of becoming a ballet master and he wanted to create dance performances since childhood. Eifman completed a course of study in Kishinev Ballet School (Moldova) [9. Music School named after Niaga prepared folk dancers in 1952-1965; since 1964 - ballet division in the Music School named after Coca prepared ballet dancers], then moved on to study choreography at the Leningrad Conservatory [10. Department of Choreography was founded in 1962 by F.V.Lopoukhov]. While at the Conservatory, for four years Eifman studied theory of music, analysis of musical forms and analysis of ballet scores, classical heritage, character dance heritage, and Soviet innovative choreography. In his third year at the Conservatory Eifman took a course called: "Analysis of Choreographer's Notations". The course was five semesters with weekly one on tutorials. Among Eifman's teachers were P.A.Gusev [11. Gusev, Piotr Andreevich - Soviet Balletmaster and Professor of Dance; 1922 - Petrograd Choreograpphic School (later Vaganova Academy), class of A.V.Shiriaev; 1923 - one of the founders of the group Young Ballet; 1922-1935 - in Theater of Opera and Ballet (later Kirov Theater); 1935-1945 - in Bolshoi Theater; 1945-1950 - Artistic Director of Kirov Theater; 1958-1960 - lead courses of choreography in China; taught in Leningrad Theater Institute, Leningrad Ballet School, Moscow ballet School, Maly Theater of Opera and Ballet, Leningrad, Novosibirsk Theater of Opera and Ballet; since 1966 was a Professor in Leningrad Conservatory, Department of Choreography], K.M.Sergeev [12. Sergeev, Konstantin Mikhailovich - 1930-1961 - principal dancer in Kirov Theater; from 1946 - balletmaster there, 1951-1955 and 1960-1970 - Artistic Director there; in 1938-

1940 and from 1973 - Artistic Director of Vaganova Academy] and L.V.Yakobson [13. Yakobson, Leonid Veniaminovich - Soviet Balletmaster; 1926-1933 - soloist in Leningrad Theater of Opera and Ballet (Kirov), 1942-150 and 1956-1975 - balletmaster in Kirov Theater; 1933-1942 - soloist and balletmaster in Bolshoi Theater, Moscow; innovative choreographer who exceled at the form of choreographic miniature; 1969 - founded a ballet troupe Choreographic Miniatures where created such works as *Taglioni's Flight, Medieval Dance With Kisses, Pas De Trois Rossini, Pas De Quatre Bellini, Paolo and Francesca, Excersis XX, Surprise, Brilliant Divertissement, The Bed Bug*, and many others; he also created many full length ballets for theaters in Leningrad and Moscow].

Yakobson, the Artistic Director of the troupe "Choreographic Miniatures", was the one who Eifman consideres to have influenced him the most. Yakobson had created his own theater and his own ballet style just like Eifman did later in the future. Yakobson's productions were spectacular in their richness and boundless fantasy; the same characteristics, one can say now, Eifman inherited from his teacher. Eifman always knew he was a creator and he could not stage ballets the ordinary way, repeting the learned combinations from various classical pieces. But before he sensed he needed a new form, he had started off with the good old classical school. In 1968, at the age of twenty two, Eifman authored a short ballet to the music of Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky called *Rococo Variations*. The ballet was shown on Russian television. It might be described as a picture, reminiscent of Antoine Watteau whose paintings had very theatrical qualities. This televised ballet was, perhaps, the beginning of Eifman's interst to composing ballets to unexpected combinations of genres and musical styles from different periods.

Performers - Elena Evteeva [14. Evteeva, Elena Viktorovna (b. 14.3.1947, Leningrad), 1966 - Vaganova Academy, class of L.M.Tiuntina, principal dancer with Kirov Theater in 1960s-1970s] and Anatoli Sidorov [15. Sidorov, Anatoli Makarovich (b.22.12.1942, Vologda), 1962 - Vaganova Academy, class of K.V.Shatilov; principal dancer in Maly Theater, Leningrad, Professor in Vaganova Academy] of the Academic Theater were perfect for the decorative, seemingly free, symmetric variations, based on regular lines, curves and counter curves, in light rhythms of a world of dream. This was a perfect fit in the context of the Soviet era where the traditional view of ballet seemed to be an effort to preserve classical heritage of the nineteenth century.

Still being a student of the balletmaster department of the Leningrad Conservatory, Boris Eifman was invited to choreograph a graduation performance in the Choreographic School [16. Vaganova Academy was founded as Dance School in Saint Petersburg in 1738 by J.-B.Lande; in 1779 was transformed into the Theater School; in 1918 was re-organized into Petrograd Theater and Ballet School;

1924 - Leningrad State Choreographic School; A.Ya.Vaganova began teaching here in 1921 and established new methodology of teaching classical technique; in 1957 the School was named after Vaganova and in 1961 given a status of Academy] named after Agrippina Vaganova (Vaganova Aacdemy) [17. Vaganova, Agrippina Yakovlevna - (1879-1951); from 1897 was a soloist in Mariinsky Theater (Kirov) where received a nickname "tsarina of variations"; taught classical ballet in Petrograd-Leningrad Choreographic School since 1921; the school was named after her to honor the methodology of teaching classical ballet Vaganova described in her 1934 book "Basics of Classical Ballet"] where he became an official balletmaster in 1970. Something predicted then an unsubtle choreographer with the strength of not ordinary gift, and Artistic Director of the Academy Feona Ivanovna Balabina favoured him and helped him to receive the position of choreographer to the students. Eifman was an upcoming star, even though held his opinions to himself and had subborn personality, but mildly negative sentiments from the Communist authorities only secured his position as promising talent resisting government bureaucrats in the near future.

In 1970 Eifman staged a school ballet to the music of Dmitri Kabalevsky [18. Kabalevsky, Dmitri Borisovich (1904-1987), Soviet composer] Concerto no.3 for Piano and Orchestra [Concerto for Piano and Orchestra no.3 in D major, Op.50 ("Youth"), 1954]. The ballet was titled *Life Forward!* One should understand the official language of theater criticism in Soviet Russia, under the Communist regime, when everything was to be optimistic ...or else. Lev Entelis, eminent Soviet music critic, wrote particularly about Kabalevsky: "The one who heard on the radio at least once Dmitri Kabalevsky, knew his special, distinguished manner, lexicon, and easiness of communication with the audience, and would understand the immense love of Kabalevsky of youth, children, and every expression of the enlightened mind and soul. These images and feelings engulf the music of the Concerto no.3 " [19. Lev Entelis, "Youth of Ballet", *Leningradskaya Pravda* (19 June, 1970)].

Critics emphasized Boris Eifman's "understanding of the structure of every musical phrase, every instrumental hue, and sometimes one would wonder how it was possible that a young choreographer resolved so many diffisible that a young choreographer resolved so many difficult tasks" [20. Lev Entelis, "Youth of Ballet", *Leningradskaya Pravda* (19 June, 1970)]. In the short ballet *Life Forward!* Eifman easily followed the "material" he had to work with, sixteen-seventeen-year-old ballet students and their natural enthusiasm. *Arabesques* and *grand jetes* looked sheer and airborne, naturally breathing with youth and joy as opposed to slightly stiff academic canon of the class. Tatiana Terekhova [21. Terekhova, Tatiana - Soviet ballet dancer; 1970 - Vaganova Academy, class of E.I.Shiripina; Principal with Kirov Theater; 1975 -

title role in *Firebird* by Boris Eifman] was dancing the main role of The Girl, her partners were Sergey Berezhnoi [22. Berezhnoi, Sergey - soloist in Kirov Theater and husband of T.Terekhova] and Nikolai Kovmir [23. Kovmir, Nikolai - soloist in Kirov Theatre in the 1970s. 1970 was his fisrt year in Kirov]; they drew attention of the critics at the graduation.

Year 1971 was the year of the *Brilliant Divertissement* (composer M.M.Glinka) [24. Glinka, Mikhail Ivanovich (1804-1857), Russian composer, educated in Saint Petersburg]. This work was a perfect occasion to showcase new talents graduating from the Vaganova Academy. Soviet ballet theater did not like the form of divertissement as it was considiered to be too entertaining and ideologically colorless. V.Gaevski [25. Gaevsky, Vadim Moiseevich - Soviet ballet critic, author of books and articles on ballet] wrote: "In vain we made the old honored word from the theater vocabulary a curse word. In old times they used to call Divertissement a brilliant celebration of talent" [26. Vadim Gaevsky, *Divertissement* (Moscow, 1981), 7]. Many brilliant young dancers were showcased that year, Ludmila Semeniaka [27. Semeniaka, Ludmila Ivanovna (b.1952, Leningrad); 1970 - Vaganova Academy, class of N.V.Belikova; from1972 - principal with Bolshoi, Moscow; receipient of major awards at many International Ballet Competitions: Moscow (1969), Varna (1972), Tokio (1976), Paris (1976)] and Galina Mezentseva [28. Mezentseva, Galina Sergeyevna (b.1952, Toliatti); 1970 - Vaganova Academy, class of N.V.Belikova; from 1970 - principal with Kirov Theater] among them.

This performance was saved in the school repertory for several years later; it was also recreated for television version in 1973. A part of the graduation performance in 1971 was another Eifman's composition - *Meetings* to the music of R.Schedrin [29. Schedrin, Rodion Konstantinovich - Soviet composer, author of many operas, symphonies, concertos and ballets: *Hunchback Little Horse* (1960), *Carmen Suite* (1967), *Anna Karenina* (1972), *Seagull* (1980), all staged in Bolshoi Theater, Moscow]. Once again, Eifman proved that the classical dance vocabulary was a base for expressing his deeply felt reactions to both classical and contemporary music.

Eifman graduated from the Conservatory in 1972, class of Georgi Dmitrievich Aleksidze who was only five years older than his student. Aleksidze himself, studied under Feodor Feodorovich Lopoukhov [30. Lopoukhov, Feodor Vasilievich (1886-1973) - Soviet Balletmaster and dance teacher; 1905-1909 and 1911-1922 - soloist with Mariinsky Theater (Kirov); 1922-1930, 1944-1945, 1951-1956 - Artistic Director of Kirov Theater; 1931-1935 - founder and Director of the ballet troupe in the Maly Theater, Leningrad; innovative choreographer in 1920s: 1923 - *Tanz-Symphonia* to the Beethoven's *Symphony no.4*; used elements of circus, theater buff, eccentric acrobatics in combination with classical ballet] in the same Conserva-

tory (class of 1966); before that, Aleksidze had graduated from Moscow Ballet School [31. Moscow Ballet School - founded in Moscow in 1773, turned into Moscow Theater School; in 1920 it officially became the School of Bolshoi Theater] (class of Asaf Messerer [32. Messerer, Asaf Mikhailovich - Soviet Balletmaster and dance teacher; trained in Moscow Ballet School (class of A.A.Gorsky); 1921-1954 - principal with Bolshoi Theater; author of many Soviet ballets and books on methodology of teaching classical ballet], 1960). Such was genealogy tree of Eifman's ballet education. Besides, Eifman was already noticed by Yakobson and Sergeev. Well, Eifman had a solid background in traditional training and great prerequisites for a successful career of choreographer .

Eifman's Diploma was ballet *Gayaneh*, composer Aram Ilyich Khachaturian [33. Khachaturian, Aram Ilyich (1903-1978) - Soviet Armenian composer; among his ballets are *Happiness* (1939), *Gayaneh* (1942), *Spartacus* (1954)], on stage of the Maly Theater and Ballet in Leningrad. This ballet has extensive history in the twentieth century Russian theater. The original *Gayaneh* in choreography of N.A.Anissimova [34. Anisimova, Nina Alexandrovna (1909-1979) - Soviet dancer, balletmaster, teacher; 1926 - Leningrad Choreographic School, class of A.Ya.Vaganova; 1927-1958 - principal character dancer with Kirov Theater; created ballets *Spanish Suite* (1935), *Gayaneh* (1942), *Scheherazada* (1950), *Legend of Lake* (1962) and others] was performed for the first time in Kirov Theater when it was evacuated to Perm during the World War II, in 1942. V.V.Vainonen [35. Vainonen, Vasili Ivanovich (1901-1964) - Soviet balletmaster; 1919 - Petrograd Theater School, class of V.I.Ponomarev; 1919-1938 - dancer and choreographer with Kirov theater; 1946-1950 and 1954-1958 - with Bolshoi; created ballets *Golden Age* (1930), *Flame of Paris* (1932), *Militsa* (1947); re-created classical version of the *Nutcracker* (1934), *Raimonda* (1938), *Harlequinade* (1947), and others.36. Martirosian, Maxim Saakovich (b.1931) - Soviet dancer, balletmaster, teacher; created ballets for Moscow choreographic School: *Class-Concert* (1972), *Choreographic Fantasies* (1974), *Dedication* (1975); 1959-1971 - Artistic Director of the Erevan Ballet School, from 1971 - Artistic Director of the Moscow Ballet School] created another version in 1957 in Bolshoi Theater in Moscow; M.Martirosian showed his *Gayaneh* in Erevan (Armenia) in 1971. Every time libretto was changed and common opinion in media was that "it is difficult to gain any choreographic achievments under such subject plot re-shufle" [37. Victor Vanslov, "New Features of the Music and Choreography in Contemporary Ballets," in *Music and Choreography of Contemporary Ballet*, vol.3 (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1979), 15]. Nonetheless, there were achievements and choreographers kept returning back to the Khachaturian ballet score richly flavored with national motifs, full of energy and optimism. Brightness and colorful palette of *Gayaneh* score was usually associated with

the images of Arménian artist Martiros Sarian [38. Sarian, Martiros Sergeevich (1880-1972), founder of modern Armenian painting. Saryan's color is full of light. The contrasting yet harmonious combination of three or four main colors was used to create an expressive sense of the burning light of the sun, which seems to radiate from within the canvas].

Eifman made this choice because it was favorable to his sense of theatrical dance and musical expressiveness; also, it was a relatively easy way to get approval of official censors and receive an official (Academic) stage for presenting his Diploma work. Libretto was written in verses, by V.Dreer, specifically for this work. It was a drama of two young people from different social levels (Gayaneh and Ghiko) who were opposed by Mazak unintentionally killing his son Ghiko. Twenty-six-year-old choreographer "was captivated by the dramatic conflict of the elements, psychological motivation in actions of the main characters. Adventurous spirit collided with social drama which took place shortly after the Revolution" [39. Lev Entelis, "Gayaneh," *Pravda* (7 January 1973)]. Among obvious Eifman's weak spots, there were lyrical duets and characters; he was a success creating characters of Gayaneh and Mazak (T.Fesenko [40. Fesenko, Tatiana Ivanovna (b.1948); 1967 - Vaganova Academy, class of E.V.Shiripina; then principal dancer with Maly Theater of Opera and Ballet, Leningrad] and G.Zamuel [41. Zamuel, German Raphailovich (b.1941); 1960 - Vaganova Academy, class of A.L.Kumysnikov; 1967 - Department of Choreography in Leningrad Conservatory, class of F.V.Lopoukhov; created ballets ; *Countess Volkonskaya* (1969), *Shostackovich Concerto no.2 for Piano and Orchestra* (1969), *Carmen Suite* (1972), *Don Juan, or Love to Geometry* (1973), *Bravo, Figaro!* (1976)], because they were the strongest in the story; he failed in the soft and lyrical episodes. Memorable duet of Karen and Nuneh was deleted in Eifman's version; female dancing was added to the famous *Dance With Swords* which weakened the original bravura style of the all-male dance.

To the contrary of the official Soviet opinion, Eifman believed he was respecting the history of Russian ballet tradition. Particularly, in *Gayaneh* he was not breaking from traditions, but rather insisting on following one of the best - connection between ballet and drama. He closely studied Armenian choreographic folklore and created a true atmosphere of folk drama in the language of colorful and expressive character dance which was calling for theatrical extravaganza of his late works. The stage set was designed by the experienced and recognized artist Z.Arshakuni [42. Arshakuni, Zaven (b.13 May, 1932, Leningrad), 1954-1961 - he studied at the Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture; he was also a member of the famous "Group of Eleven" in 1972; has been participating in events organized by "The Sergey Diaghilev Art Center"; stage-designer for nine productions in Leningrad; Arshakuni has participated in nearly two hundred exhibitions]. Dramatic and festive colors and shapes responded well to the grand score and ballet was officially praised and set off to life. In 1975 Eifman was invited to stage *Gayaneh* in Lodz (Poland) and in 1976 - in Riga (Latvia).

In Vaganova Academy in 1975 Eifman created a short ballet *Dancefloor* to the music of R.Schedrin. It was contemporary style ballet, employing juxtapositions of classical and contemporary styles. In 1975 K.M.Sergeev who was at the same time the Artistic Director of the ballet troupe in Kirov Theater, commissioned to Eifman a new version of *The Firebird* (I.Stravinsky [43. Stravinsky, Igor Fyodorovich (1882-1971) - Russian-born composer particularly renowned for his ballet scores *The Firebird* (performed 1910), *Petrushka* (1911), *The Rite of Spring* (1913), and *Orpheus* (1947)]). "Intricate patterns and colorful palette of instrumental ornament - that is what attracts listener hearing *Firebird* for the first time, - wrote B.V.Asafiev, Soviet musical critic and composer. - This impression (general but without a doubt very bright, as the idea and its performance carry on all the freshness and refined wit) remains the same yet under a closer and detailed thought inculcation into the sphere of soundgraphy of this composition." [44. Boris Asafiev, *About Ballet* (Leningrad, 1974), 57-58] What Eifman did working with the score, was "detailed inculcation of the thought into the sphere of soundgraphy of this composition." [ibid.]

As usual, critics did not have agreeable opinion on this work of the young choreographer. Some said that Eifman "made up a tragic *denouement* and thus started a destructive argument with the music of Stravinsky" [45. Arsen Degen, "In the Genre of Rock-Ballet," *Smena* (1 August 1979)]; others expressed interest: "There is clearly shown fairy-tale genre, but the ballet master remains true to his theme of youth" [46. Nikolai Eliash, "Poetry of Dance", *Pravda* (10 October, 1978)]. And indeed, all the characters Eifman showed exaggeratedly young, the only exaggeratedly old character was Kastchei opposed to the youth; thus Eifman interpreted the struggle between the good and the evil.

In very well described and known in Russia version of the *Firebird* staged by F.V.Lopoukhov, the title character was "a mighty bird - with jumps- *jetes* of all kinds, up to *jete fondu* reminding gliding jump in flight, and huge steps- *battements*, and balancing movements" [47. Feodor Lopoukhov, *Sixty Years in Ballet* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1972), 238]. Eifman's Bird was more of a young woman, still naive and fearless as a child. In the Introduction Eifman followed the music which has a quality of constant moving in motionless state; dancers' legs were completely frozen while bodies and arms were bending and moving. The scene with Firebird and Prince Ivan was contrast to the Kastchei Kingdom and Russian folk theme;

Russian theme was a whimsical fantasy like in Eifman's earlier work *Russian Symphony* (composer V.Kalinnikov [48. Kalinnikov, Vassily (1866-1901), Russian composer; *Russian Symphony* is a highly melodious and beautifully written symphony has acquired a place of importance in the symphonic repertoiry and has succeeded in keeping Kalinnikov's name alive]); the duet was based on pure classical technique, but demonstrated non-traditional approach of the choreographer·to the visual solution of the theme, blending ballet line and gymnastic contortions.

As to "a tragic *denouement*" in this new *Firebird,* for Eifman it was his way of bringing fairy-tale genre to reality full of painful recognition of the unfairness of life. For the first time Eifman announced here his permanent emphasis on dramatism of love relationships in all of his future ballets. Such interpretation among other objections from officials did not allow this ballet to stay in the repertory of Kirov, but it became an organic part of the repertory in Eifman's own theater when he revived the *Firebird* as a vividly theatrical ballet in 1978. Eifman strongly used narrative ballet's mime along with contrived elegance, mystery and contemporary aesthetics of dance, to indicate his own style of theatrical dance.

Defining the Company's Style

Two years later, in 1977, creating the repertory for his own theater, Eifman demostrated the same understanding of the essence of the art of choreography: *Dvukhgolosie* (TwoVoices) was a ballet that reflected Eifman's experimental language of dance in the production where story was based on first encounters with life and death, characters were people whose love was embodied in his vision of sculpted duets; the dancers embodied characters that were larger than their experiences. Immediate love for Pink Floyd's music moved Eifman to composing a rock-ballet based on philosophical subject of the unity of the male and female beginnings. Passion, drama, love, hatred – everything was in this music for Eifman. Exactly then Eifman's choreography appeared to contain the combination of intuitive rhythm element and sensuality element. *Dvukhgolosie* was filled with the endless variety of emotions and movements beyond classical dance forms.

Eifman's early ballets in the Ensemble became primarily about a man and a woman; they were always about passion and dramatic tension of intimate relationships; thus, his technique involved a lot of horisontal compositions, dancers often were lying on the floor while performing their duets, and critics tagged such choreography as sexually exposed. Eifman's choreography was not sexually exposed, it was speaking about sexuality as of a primary force in a man-woman relationship, and this choreographic language carried major appeal to the younger audiences in Russia as well as audiences worldwide these days, when Eifman's ballets have matured and became enriched with historical settings.

In 1976 Eifman produced another ballet for television called: *Three Compositions,* to the music of Dmitri Kabalevsky. Perhaps, it was an on-going process and a prove that the young choreographer was noted, trusted and had many opportunities to work. Though, Soviet critics tried to place young Eifman in a certain socialist-heroic, optimistic plane; such placement did not reflect realistically his choreographic style, but essentially allowed him to stay safely in the field of official ballet world.

When critics said that Eifman's works were developing "toward the emphasized civilian-heroic themes, identifying social, philosophical, moral issues in determination to explore human psyche" [48a. E.Bonch-Osmolovskaya, "Way of Search and Experiment" , *Vecherny Leningrad* (25 July 1978)], they first of all meant ballet *Song Interrupted* to the music of the Latvian contemporary composer A.Kalnynsh [49. Kalnynsh, Alfred Ianovich (1879-1951) - Soviet Latvian composer, studied in Saint Petersburg Conservatory, author of simphonies, operas and ballet music], they first of all meant his very popular ballet *Song Interrupted.* Premiere of this ballet was shown at the Vaganova graduation performance in 1976. The theme of the Forth Symphony by Kalnynsh is related to the poetry of Pablo Neruda. Only the first part of the Symphony was used for the ballet. Music and theme of the ballet were dedicated to the story the Chilean artist Victor Hara, which was suggested to Eifman by the director of the school at that time - Janina Lushina, music professional and connoisseur.

In 1977 this ballet became a part of the repertory of the newly formed Leningrad Ballet Ensemble (now Saint Petersburg Theater of Contemporary Ballet) under the artistic direction of Boris Eifman. *Song Interrupted* was changed for profesional stage; in whole, ballet looked more like a political slogan; Eifman gave a definition of genre to the 1977 version – ballet-requiem. Main characters were Song and Poet; their duets were staged as a passionate dance of lovers. The Song helped the Poet in his struggle, the Song lead him to his heroic death; their relationship not only was resolved in political and lyrical planes, but also indicated Eifman's future theme of Creator and his Creation (whether the hero was Dostoevsky, Tchaikovsky, Olga Spessivtseva or Moliere, etc.) In this early ballet, one of the main features of Eifman style clearly stated itself – emphasis on theatrical side of dance; dancing in *Song Interrupted* was significantly more graphic and expressive than other contemporary attempts of Soviet choreographers to stage politically charged ballets.

In 1978 Eifman added another short ballet to the repertory of his Ensemle: *Only Love,* to the music of Rodion Schedrin, was a ballet based on the previously staged work in Vaganova school, few years before, when it was named *Dancefloor.* Critics did not like the new version. They called it "a cheaper "re-issue" of the work in Vaganova school few years before" [50. Arsen Degen, "In the Genre

of Rock-Ballet," *Smena* (1 August 1979)]. The irritation of some critics was understandable, because in its more mature version, the formerly "school ballet" appeared carrying familiar by then, Eifman's "passion for passion".

Upon launching his company in 1977, Eifman started establishing his signature style among the evocations of theatre dance styles from Fokine and Graham to Bejart. Often, in his early ballets Eifman looked inward, favoring plotless dances that explored the intrinsic rhythms of the human body, especially the cadence of passion. During its first seasons, the new theater created by Boris Eifman presented premiers several times a year. "It was during those years that the choreographer used to "hide" in the rehearsal hall, immersing himself in his work, turning his back on life's adversities and sometimes even scaping them from direct threats. In retrospect one must admire his courage" [51. Valeria Uralskaya, "Boris Eifman: The Flame of Joyous Self-Combustion," (*http://www.aha.ru/vladmo/Eifman.html*)]. His courage seems now to be more of creative nature, when the choreographer was protecting his own style and was building his own, very unique theater. It was for the first and the last time in the history of his theater, when Eifman allowed two invited choreographers to include their works in the season. It was practically and politically correct, under the circumstances when "academic theaters" looked skeptically upon his group of experimental ballet.

One choreographer was invited from Democratic Republic of Germany (as far abroad as Russian contacts could go at that time), Ditmar Zeifert who staged ballet titled *Temptation* to the music of R.Wakeman. Another guest was choreographer from Estonia (closest to Leningrad geographically and favourably one of the most western republics of the Soviet Union), Mai Murdmaa; she showed ballet *Under the Cover of Night* to the music of Bela Bartok [52. Bartok, Bela (1881-1945), ... returned to creative activity with the String Quartet no.2 (1917) and the fairytale ballet *The Wooden Prince*; next year *Bluebeard's Castle* was staged and he began a second ballet, *The Miraculous Mandarin*, which was not performed until 1926 (there were problems over the subject, the thwarting and consummation of sexual passion). Rich and graphic in invention, the score is practically an opera without words. While composing *The Mandarin* Bartók came under the influence of Stravinsky and Schönberg, and produced some of his most complex music in the two violin sonatas of 1921-1922] *A Csodálatos Mandarin* (The Miraculous Mandarin). Both works were created for two principal dancers Alla Osipenko [53. Osipenko, Alla Evgenievna (b.1932) - one of the last students of Agrippina Vaganova (graduated in 1950). For twenty years she danced principal roles in Kirov Theater; left the theater in 1971 to join ballet troupe "Choreographic Miniatures" under Leonid Yakobson. Later danced with LenConcert, a contract and booking organization in Leningrad. Her

dramatic talent opened blooming in contemporary ballets, where many of the characters were created specifically for her; such roles as Mehmene-Banu (*Legend Of Love* by A.Melikov - Yu.Grigorovich), Cleopatra (*Antoni and Cleopatra* by E.Lazarev - I.Chernyshov in Maly Theatre of Opera and Ballet), Beloved (*Coast of Hope* by A.Petrov - I.Belsky) led Alla Osipenko to the next level of expressionism in ballet form - main roles in Eifman's Theater of Contemporary Ballet] and John Markovsky [54. Markovsky, John Ianovich (b.1944) - 1964 - Riga Ballet School; 1965-1971 - principal roles in Kirov Theater; 1971-1973 - with the ballet troupe "Choreographic Miniatures" under Leonid Yakobson. From 1977 danced all major roles in Eifman's Theater of Contemporary Ballet].

Osipenko was the one who really helped Eifman to establish his name as a serious modern choreographer. She drew her characters on her own life and created on stage the illusion of long, passionate, dramatic montages, and individual close-ups that are usually seen only in cinematography. John Markovsky created main roles in Eifman's ballets *Firebird, Idiot, Song Interrupted, Two-Voices*, as well as many titles of classical repertory on television and in Kirov Theater.

Meanwhile, Eifman was busy with the Vaganova Academy productions: in 1977 he presented a transitional composition *Of Soul Beautiful Intentions*, R.Schedrin, devoted to the signicant episod from Russian history, "Decembrists" movement in 1825 [55. Decembrists - membersof secret revolutionary societies whose activities led to the uprising of December,1825, against Czar Nicholas I. Formed after the Napoleonic Wars, the groups comprised officers who had been influenced by Western liberal ideals. They advocated the establishment of representative democracy but disagreed on the form it should take; some favored a constitutional monarchy, while others supported a democratic republic. Their poorly organized rebellion was precipitated by the confusion surrounding the succession to the throne on the death of Alexander I. The rebels marched to Senate Square and were crushed by artillery fire. Five of their leaders were later executed. The Decembrists' insurrection made a profound impression on Russia. It led both to the increasing police terrorism of the czarist government and to the spread of revolutionary activity among the educated classes]; verses of K.Ryleev [56. Ryleev, Kondratiy - Russian poet of the first quarter of the 19th century who was protecting Decembrists' ideals and became one of the Decembrists] accompanied dancing. Piotr Gusev wrote: "Dance does not stand lengthiness. It is shorter and more intense than music. This contradiction was perceived by many composers. Those who did not get it timely, failed. Their music went through the balletmaster's "scissors" on stage"[57. Piotr Gusev, "The New Nutcracker", *Soviet Music*, (July, 1966), 76]. Music of Rodion Schedrin was perfect choice for Eifman's work, it is as intense as

choreographer's compositions.

Short ballets seemed the only choice for Eifman at that time; ballet miniatures were more affordable in terms of cost of production, experimental dance language and the number of dancers who had worked with him in the beginning (seven or eight). In particular, small choreographic forms were very favourable for resolution of the contemporary sujet, exploring specifics of the modern and contemporary movement; small ballet forms "allowed for preparation and study leading to the creation of the full length ballets on today's topics" [58. Victor Vanslov, *Ballets of Grigorovich and the Problems of Choreography*, (Moscow, 1971), 75].

Some die-hard fans of classical ballet in Russia were saying that Eifman's work was too contemporary. Not ordinarily appealing, Eifman's aggressively angular choreography seemed appropriate in only two or three years, in his dramatic works that explored deep human emotions while showcasing some of Russia's most talented dancers with sleek bodies and stretched limbs and who were able to express any emotion in Eifman's style.

One-act ballet *Bumerang* after Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* [59. Brecht, Bertolt (1898-1956), German poet, playwright, and theatrical reformer, he wrote the satirical, successful ballad opera *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1928; The Threepenny Opera); in the 1920s he developed his theory of "epic theatre" and an austere form of irregular verse; he also became a Marxist. Brecht believed that "To think, or write, or produce a play also means to transform society, to transform the state, to subject ideologies, to close scrutiny"] to the music of John McLaughlin (Love Devotion Surrender; 1972) [60. McLaughlin, John - like many of his generation, he was inspired by the blues. By the time he was 14 years old, he had developed an interest in flamenco - the technical guitarist's most testing genre - and later started listening to jazz. His *Mahavishnu Orchestra* broke new boundaries in jazz in terms of volume, brash virtuosity and multifaceted complexity. 1972-1976 the *Mahavishnu Orchestra* played a leading part in the creation of jazz/rock fusion music] was staged in 1979; Eifman's choreography appeared out-of-standard in its intense physical language and dance as theater; he stated a boldly theatrical vision already in this early ballet. Like curved trajectory of a bumerang, sharp and presise, movement of the mass scenes was built on the imitation of the martial arts moves (*Enmity; Orgy; Catastrophe*); legs, arms, knees and elbows. Eifman wanted to see each dancer's unique qualities, to challenge and accentuate them. He alternated turned-out legs with parallel ones, creating slithering movements and contractions *en pointe*, while twisting and curving around her lover in absolutely beautiful and erotic lovemaking - sensuousness that was shocking for the stage. This performance gave such possibilities to express so many deep emotions, that technically appeared sometimes overly busy; out of each five-minute piece of

ballet, there could have been another act created (which becomes later a signature feature of Eifman's choreography).

His ballets are not literature or biography - they are theater and also dance. In technical aspect of the choreography, his ballets based on classical technique are more modern, it is his style. In fact, he uses many techniques and when creating, he became absolutely free. In 1979 *Eternal Movement* was born, a ballet inspired by the Finale of the Khachaturian's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. In this piece Eifman was creating the dance forms for the pure joy of creating them. The language of movement cannot be translated into words; Eifman wanted it to be sensed in the muscles. His dancers demonstrated that muscle sense can carried them through technically very difficult and most unusual combinations. *Eternal Movement* looked like spontaneous creation of exhilarating movements; it was not a preparation for some dance which would be performed in the future. There were different techniques that he used mixing modern and traditional. He was breaking the system. Each time he created a ballet, the use of music was different, it was not enough for him to hear - he wanted audience to see the music, when he put different music together to dance, it had a new effect. Like a contemporary shaman, Eifman was trying to send his emotions into others. He called it using channels of energy.

By 1980 Eifman had passionately committed dance company. In September they showed first relatively large production (50 minutes long) based on F.M.Dostoyevsky's novel *Idiot* to the music of Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, his Symphony no.6. The audience was stunned - no one before had staged deeply psycological works of Dostoyevsky in ballet. Critics responded with sarcastic notes: "It is hard to imagine dancing Nastassia Philipovna throwing money into the fire, or epileptic dancing Myshkin" [61. Evgeniy Evtushenko, "Dancing Myshkin", *Soviet Culture*, (2 September, 1980)]. But audience accepted and understood. Tchaikovsky's Symphony no.6 was a wonderful choice for Dostoyevsky sujet; ballet itself became a symphony of dance with clearly indicated program. Choreographer took four main leads out of the novel - Myshkin, Nastassia Philipovna, Rogozhin and Aglaia, as correspondence with the original was only a part of the artistic task; success of production depended on methods of the resolution of the central conflict.

Ballet started with final scene of the novel: Prince Myshkin and Rogozhin were sitting on the floor and Prince was trying comfort desperate Rogozhin who then disappeared in the shadow leaving Myshkin in the bright spot of light. Entire action was built as a reminiscense of the past; that gave Eifman freedom of contemporary translation of the writer's themes. Life of each character was taken and exposed at its crucial moment; the music of the Sixth Symphony exactly suited these emotionally charged,

dramatic movements. Four parts of the Symphony reflected four parts of the ballet united by the monologue of Prince Myshkin (V.Mikhailovsky). In his every move there was torment; he was growing torpid, his hallucinations become visible to the audience, though only one person is on stage. In the fog of - what? Saint Petersburg? or memory? - there came out the images of Nastassia Philipovna (A.Osipenko) and Aglaia (V.Morozova). All three of them were just thrown into life, into this literary dance-drama.

The choreography of the *Idiot* was primarily alternating between mass effects scenes of the noble society and duets designed so that their angular movements were mirrored and repeted by the corps. Within the scenes of Prince meeting Aglaia, departure of Nastassia Philipovna and Rogozhin, engagement of Nastassia Philipovna and the Prince, the tragic triangle (Nastassia Philipovna, Myshkin and Aglaia) was shaping up and parodized in accelerated participation of the society in their personal lives (mass scenes in Petersburg and Pavlovsk). The glowing joy of the duet Myshkin - Aglaia was overshadowed by the appearance of Rogozhin who represented the ill fate for Myshkin. Rogozhin was danced by V.Mikhailovski and M.Liepa [62. Liepa, Maris-Rudolf Eduardovich (1936-1989), was principal dancer with the Bolshoi Ballet (1960-81). From 1963 he also taught in the Moscow Choreographic School. Liepa danced the romantic leading roles in such classical ballets as *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote*, and *Giselle*, as well as in his own 1967 revival of *Le Spectre de la Rose*. He was admired for his portrayal of the evil Crassus in a 1968 production of Aram Khachaturian's *Spartacus*, and for dancing with such young choreographers as Eifman was. Liepa appeared on television and film, wrote several books on dance].

Besides the four main characters, Eifman showed in this production that his ensemble did not have in fact *corps de ballet*; all the dancers in mass scenes were of techically extremly high level and artistically of high dramatic intensity - V.Mikhailovsky, V.Galdikas, N.Kuznetsova, K.Matveev, S.Fokin, N.Gruzdeva, V.Morozova, N.Golubtsova, V.Mukhamedov and others. Nonetheless, the *Idiot* would not have been such a success if it was not for Alla Osipenko who had mentioned in many interviews her personal inner connection to Dostoyevsky's philo-sophical, psychological and ultimately, spiritual ideas and his female personages. Role of Nastassia Philipovna was particularly colse for Osipenko; the dancing with Eifman troupe became almost incidental for her - merely a vehicle for emphasizing personal experiences and character details. In the outstretched positions she was perfectly revealing the emotional substructure of the ideas in this highly theatrical exploration of the literary masterpiece.

Majestic Scherzzo of the Symphony sounded at the wedding of Aglaia and Myshkin. And again, the intimate dance of the two accentuated and overlaped by the crowd;

explorations of the soul slamed into extreme and landed heavily on the mock excersize of the crowd. In the end of the performance there was a lonely child on stage with a candle in his hand. Eifman brought here a symbol of soli-tude and purity of a human soul which gets destroyed in course of life; Myshkin tragically retained this quality, but all the rest went through the "destruction of harmony" [63. Galina Dobrovolskaya, "In Symphony of Dance", *Vecherniy Leningrad* (30 March, 1981)]. In *Idiot* Boris Eifman's choreographic "signature" appeared fully formed; this "autograph" read that Eifman created a new style which might be defined as a synthesis of classical and modern dancing, philosophy, and dramatic art.

The next production premiered in 1981 and was titled *Autographs*. One could interpret this title on multiple levels; there were autographs of the Master in three original miniatures of the program; they were dedicated to Alla Osipenko and based on her personal story - youth, love and creative career. Later, when another miniature was added to the performance, critics saw the four creative portraits of the four dancers - N.Kuznetsova, V.Galdikas, V.Mikhailovsky and A.Osipenko.

Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra of A.Vivaldi was used for the first part of the *Autographs* and resolved in the form of light, simplified barocco. It was all about youth, and first love, and first disappoinments. Light and color played significant role in this piece; for example, red was translated as a dawn of life and a warning about coming challenges of life. Artists N.Filimonova, B.Koroteev, A.Kruchkov, O.Averianov, light designer I.Buslaev helped the choreographer to empower the audience to forget ev-erything once the ballet began and to go inside their own emotional area. Three girls and three boys jumping and twirling sharply in a joyous round dance were dressed up in carnival costumes, somewhat reminding those of Commedia Del'Arte: tight tricot in bright rombus print, tall harlequine hats, short puffy skirts and huge bows. One boy looked different and separated from the group. Fur-ther lyrical duet followed as the boy found his first love; the duet was technically very difficult, with many acro-batic lifts and combinations; harmony of love did not last, intervention of joyous colorful ghosts pulled lovers away from each other. The end of the piece magnificently pic-tured eternal love, when the girl danced so close to the boy that was becoming one whole body with him and then was becoming his heartbeat.

All the plasticism and angular extensions to the maxi-mum, provocative, sensuous partnering, all Eifman's style autographs were present there. The second piece was danced to the music of Fourth and Fifth parts of Alfred Schnitke's *Concerto Grosso* [64. Schnitke, Alfred (1934-1998) - Soviet composer, heavily influenced by German and Russian composers of Classical, and post- Romantic periods (Mozart, Haydn, Schoenberg, Shostakovich); *Laby-rinths* (1971), ballet in five episodes for chamber orches-

tra; *Der gelbe Klang* (1974), scenic composition for pantomime, instrumental ensemble, soprano, mixed chorus; *Sketches* (1985), ballet in one act; *Peer Gynt* (1986), ballet in three acts; *Life with an Idiot* (1990), opera in three acts; *Gesualdo* (1994), opera in seven scenes, prologue and epilogue; *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (1994), opera in three acts]. This miniature was about adult relationships, unescapable complexities of ties like joy and suffering, love and hate, trust and deceiving. World appeared here upside down, partners often held each other upside down; happy possession turned into inevitable loss of love, but background was lit with heavenly green color of young grass... This work among many other Eifman's ballets emphasized the human body as a kind of living sculpture, was labeled "pornography", where in fact the choreography was dealing explicitly not with a body but with the affair of the heart.

Third part was staged to the music of the Second part of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*. Choreographic reminiscense of the past could be a definition for this piece. Dancing was challenging the audience to acknowledge their own sensuality; Eifman used again and again the new means of interpreting of classical forms, raising to exquisite expressionism. The last part of the *Autographs* was created to the *Adagio* T.Albinoni [65. Albinoni, Tomaso 1671-1750); The *Albinoni Adagio* is based on a fragment of manuscript discovered in the Dresden State Library after the Second World War by Remo Giazotto, a Milanese musicologist who was at that time completing his biography of Albinoni and his listing of Albinoni's music. Only the bass line and six bars of melody had survived, possibly from the slow movement of a Trio Sonata. Giazotto "reconstructed" the now-famous Adagio in about 1945, based on the surviving fragment].

Valery Mikhailovsky was performing that mastery of the soul which known as characteristic feature of mature Eifman's ballet style. Soloist drew fully on a rare and raw sexuality and passion, but at the same time choreographic design would challenge even the most advanced dancer because it called forth maximum skill and classical training. Mikhailovsky's passionate performance excelled in such solo pieces. ...In the highly charged play with fabric, the dancer freed himself out to life as if from the caccoon of the Universe's womb. There was a naked man on naked Earth, only a single butterfly shared his solitude. Nine figures dressed as monks presented people, or society, or humankind surrounding the naked man during his lonely brief journey of life. This short masterpiece was later performed separately from the *Autographs* and received a different title - *Cognition*.

Cognition was one of Eifman's early ballets which did not draw on Russian literature, mentality and character, but was in essence universal reflection on circle of life and philosophical statement of the choreographer himself. His cognition of history, literature, art, and life goes on. The artistic output of Boris Eifman is without any doubt traditional in the best sense of the word. He utilized his professional knowledge of the classical school but only as a base. To this he added hard-edged dancing for a personal dance lexicon, which sprouted from the nature of the piece, from its characters and, of course, from his inner "self". In any work of Eifman, his personal tenet is expressed to the fullest. It appears emotionally frenzied, in his youth artless to the point of confessional purity, and forever dramatically sharp, conflictive and harsh. From here the extremes of the genres Eifman chooses: tragedy and comic farce, *The Idiot* of Dostoyevsky and *The Crazy Day* (*Le Mariage de Figaro*) of Beaumarchais.

Brilliant gift in the genre of comedy ballet Eifman demonstrated in his ballet-buff *The Crazy Day* and in a miniature *Randevous* (composer O.Nikolaii). Comedy is a difficult genre. In the Soviet ballet in 1930s there was an intention to have an entire theater for production of ballet comedies: ballet troupe of the Maly Theater in Leningrad was created in 1933 as a theater of lyrical and satiric comedy. Most successful in comedy genre, much later, became Leonid Yakobson with his miniatures sparkling with humor or stinging with satire. Ballet *Galatea* was one of the popular examples of lyrical comedy in ballet (produced by D.Briantsev to the musical *My Fair Lady* by F.Loewe [66. *My Fair Lady* (Music: Frederick Loewe)- came into being only after Hungarian film producer Gabriel Pascal devoted the last two years of his life to finding writers who would adapt George Bernard Shaw's 1914 play *Pygmalion* into a musical. In the myth of Pygmalion the statue's name was Galatea] in free interpretation by Leningrad composer Timur Kogan). Another ballet of Briantsev was composed by the same Timur Kogan (*Old-fashioned Tango*). Kogan was commissioned to make an interpretation of the Gioacchino Rossini's music (*Il Barbiere di Seviglia*) for the next Eifman's ballet. "Dancing *en pointe* is double-edged form of art", particularly in ballet comedy [67. Feodor Lopoukhov, *Sixty Years in Ballet* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1966), 301].

In *The Crazy Day, en pointe* technique was an organic part of the stylistic image of the show, whether Countess Almaviva was jumping on a bed in her ballet shoes, or Suzanna was sweeping the floor while making *tours* and *fouettes*, classical dance was fused with grotesque and pantomime; it was hard to separate dance from miming or tell where exactly the action was moved by the dance itself, or half-dance, or a quarter-dance, or just miming. The pantomime scenes Eifman held on the very border of dancing, like in the scenes of curing Marceline's tooth, or Count Almaviva seducing Suzanne, or Marceline flirting with Cherubin and many other sharply rhythmisized scenes. Some of the roles were choreographed according to the rules of amplois - Suzanne was a typical engenue-comique, Count Almaviva - caricature prince, Marceline - pantomime grotesque personage; other roles were created

specifically for the individual dancers, like, for example, part of Cherubin for Kirill Matveev, outstanding dancer, very light, fragile built, but with extremely strong and high jumps; or part of the Countess - for Victoria Galdikas, tall, lean, with elongated limbs and very bendy.

Altogether *The Crazy Day* was irresistably comic action which caused continuous laughter in the audience, it left the aftertaste of fireworks and festive celebration of theatrical dance: "*The Crazy Day* is a joyous, mischievous, sometimes eccentric *a la cirque*" [68. Natalia Sheremetevskaya, "By the Plasticism of Dance", *Pravda*, (15 February, 1982)]. *Randevous* that appeared two years later did not repeat but extended eccentrics of what was found in *The Crazy Day* . Light and bright, danceable music of O.Nikolaii allowed to show a brilliant duet of two lovers. The plot was simple: the Governess takes the Girl out for a walk; suspected that the Girl was planning to slip away, the Governess ties up her wrist to the Girl's hand with a thick rope. The Girl managed to escape to the date with the Cavalier she had anticipated so impatiently. Cavalier happend to be a very sensitive person, so he fainted as soon as he so a piece of rope on his beloved's hand. After a number of quick and sparkling tricks and dances, the Cavalier managed to charm and fool the Governess so that she finally blessed his relationship with the Girl. The bravura dance repeats, now for all three of them. That is it. Nothing more, trivial plot, but blissfully choreographed and danced. One more role was created for Kirill Matveev - Cavalier, jumping of excitement, of amazement, of thrill. The Governess's character came straight from Marceline, same grotesque and the performer was a male dancer; it was not a copy of the original, the character of the Governess was sooner resembling the English governess from the Chekhov's story - the more comic her jumps were, when she threw her legs forward, looked like against her own will, with the perpendicularly bent feet. Marceline was much simpler in that sense and did nothing against her will.

In this last of his early ballets, Eifman was able to connect a chain of dance and pantomime movements with clear virtuosity. He became a master of plasticism and rhythmic etude. "Every production of the young ensemble is a persuasive search for new and unlimited possibilities in ballet art" [69. Igor Stupnikov, "Theater of Contemporary Ballet", *Leningradskaya Pravda* (6 November 1983)]. Indeed, by the beginning of the 1980's on the bill of the ensemble, there were ballet-buff, ballet-symphony, ballet-parable which proved Eifman's protean genius.

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Choreographic Structure in the Dances of Claude Balon

Ken Pierce

Introduction

In his "recueil" of dances for the year 1712, the dancing master Dezais published two ballroom dances by Claude Balon, renowned dancer of the Paris Opera and future dancing master to Louis XV.[1] In his introduction, Dezais cited "the enthusiasm that the public had always expressed for the works of M. Balon."[2] These two dances, la Silvie and la Dombe, were the first of eighteen dances by Balon that Dezais would publish in the ten years that followed.

In addition to these published dances, there are six dances by Balon that have survived in manuscript. Three, the Entrée, the Menuet, and the Gigue, are male solos; the other three are couple dances. All of the extant dances by Balon are listed in Table 1.[3]

As a choreographer, Balon is notable for his astute use of repeated step sequences that correspond to musical repeats. There are several possibilities for repeating a given step sequence.[4] The sequence can be repeated exactly, on the same foot and with the same floor pattern, or it can be repeated on the opposite foot, with the floor pattern mirrored. A sequence involving two dancers can be repeated with the same floor pattern but with the partners having exchanged places. The sequence of steps can also be repeated with the floor pattern altered: a familiar example of this sort of repetition is the opening of Pécour's Bourrée d'Achille. This afternoon I will discuss some of the ways in which Balon uses repeated step sequences in relation to musical repeats.

I will also point to uses of question-and-answer in Balon's work. In question-and-answer passages, one dancer waits, typically for a measure or two, while the other moves; then roles are exchanged, with the first doing the steps the second had done while the second waits in turn.[5] Though they do not necessarily correspond to musical repeats, question-and-answer passages offer yet another way to repeat material in the dance. Over half of Balon's couple dances involve at least one instance of question-and-answer (see Table 1).

Question-and-answer might be considered a primitive form of canon for two dancers. Balon also uses canon in slightly more developed form. Two of his dances, la Gavotte du Roi and la Lorraine, include short sections of canon—six bars in la Gavotte du Roi, eight bars in la Lorraine. A third dance, la Czarienne, involves an eight-bar section that can be thought of as a sort of canon/question-and-answer hybrid.

Dance examples

Let us look now at specific instances of repeated step sequences that correspond to musical repeats. In the first dance we will show, the Paspie Princesa, the very opening involves a repeat: on the first strain, the dancers loop outwards, then move apart and together. On the repeat of the strain, the dancers do the same steps but looping inwards rather than outwards.

This passepied is to binary form music (AABB); since the music is played through four times rather than just once, there is the possibility of a sort of "interrupted" repeat, with a step sequence repeating not immediately, but when the strain to which it corresponds reoccurs. In fact, Balon employs such an interrupted repeat in the Paspie: the second and third times through the music, the steps and figure for the B strain and its repeat are identical, but with the man and woman having exchanged places. In this figure, the dancers begin on a diagonal, loop towards one another and take both hands, and circle around until they are side by side; then one dancer leads the other in a circular crack-the-whip figure typical of passepieds. (Carol Marsh will no doubt discuss this figure in her presentation tomorrow).

The fourth time through the music, there is another repeated step sequence, this time for the A strain and its repeat. The dancers do a balancé, move apart, and then approach and change places, whereupon the sequence is repeated.

[DEMONSTRATE: figures 1 & 2, 6 & 7, and 11 of Paspie Princesa, followed by entire dance]

Our next dance, la Silvie, is a multipartite choreography; that is, the music has sections in different meters or of different dance types, in this case a slow triple meter section followed by a passepied and bourrée in alternation. Looking at the musical structure of la Silvie, we can imagine the possibilities for corresponding repeated step sequences: an immediate repeat at the repeat of the first strain, or an interrupted repeat at the repeat of either the passepied or bourrée, or both. At the repeat of the first strain, Balon uses a two-bar plus two-bar question-and-answer; he does not repeat the opening sequence. But he does use a lengthy repeat of both the passepied and the bourrée, yet again with the dancers having exchanged places. (In the final three bars of the repeat, the steps and path are modified, moving the dancers into place for the end of the dance.)

[DEMONSTRATE la Silvie]

Two other dances by Balon—*la Dombe* and *la Modene*—have musical structures similar to *la Silvie*, but different choreographic repeat structures. In *la Dombe*, published in the same recueil as *la Silvie*, the choreographic approach is the inverse of that in *la Silvie*: the step sequence of the first strain is repeated, with spatial changes,[6] at the musical repeat, but the remainder of the dance is through-composed. In *la Modene*, Balon combines the two approaches: the opening step sequence is repeated, with altered spatial pattern, at the musical repeat, and the step sequences for the bourrée and passepied sections also repeat. But there is a choreographic problem with *la Modene*: the first bourrée section is notated with the woman beginning and ending on the left, the man on the right, but the first passepied section shows them beginning on opposite sides. This presumably is a typographical error; but given what follows, this instantaneous change of places is in fact necessary in order for the dancers to end as they began the dance, with the man on the woman's left. In the passepied they change sides, in the repeat of the bourrée they remain on the same sides, and in the repeat of the passepied they change sides again; so at the opening of the first time through the passepied, they must be on the sides of the stage where they wish to finish.[7] Apparently Balon or Dezais neglected to proofread this dance carefully enough before it was published, and we are left to wonder how dancers and their dancing masters dealt with this flawed notation.

The music for the next dance we will show, *la Melanie*, has a triple-meter rondeau section followed by a duple meter section in binary form. The refrain of the rondeau repeats at the beginning, but Balon does not repeat the opening step sequence immediately. He does repeat it at each subsequent return of the refrain.[8] He also uses repeated step sequences in the duple section of the dance. The first strain has a parallel structure of four bars repeated, and the choreography for each playing of this strain uses a four-bar step sequence repeated with changed floor pattern or direction. Balon uses question-and-answer twice in the duple section of *la Melanie*, once at the beginning of the second strain and then again near the end of the dance.

[DEMONSTRATE *la Melanie*]

Our next dance, *la Gavotte de Seaux*, also has music in rondeau form, with the refrain having a parallel structure of four bars repeated. The refrain is played twice at the beginning and at the end of the dance. Rather than using the same step sequence for different occurrences of the refrain, as in *la Melanie*, Balon has here taken a different and less strictly repetitive approach. The steps of the first four bars, but not the entire strain, are repeated at the first repeat of the refrain, before the first couplet. This opening sequence is contretemps, coupé battu, contretemps, assemblé. The next occurrence of the refrain begins with a somewhat different, but arguably related, four-bar step sequence: contretemps, coupé ouvert, contretemps, coupé (for the man) or coupé ouvert (for the woman). A different

four-bar step sequence begins the refrain that follows the second couplet, and this time the dancers repeat the sequence—two pas de sissone, pas de bourrée, coupé[9]—on the other foot. The final occurrence of the refrain begins with a four-bar step sequence—contretemps, coupé to first, pas de rigaudon—that seems clearly related, though not identical, to the sequence that began the dance.

[DEMONSTRATE *la Gavotte de Seaux*]

The first section of *la Clermont* is also a rondeau, both musically and choreographically.[10] Balon uses the same sequence of steps, with altered floor pattern, for all three occurrences of the refrain. (The refrain is not repeated before the first couplet or after the last.) He employs question-and-answer for the first four bars of the refrain, the dancers alternating the same step for one measure each. The second, binary, section of *la Clermont* has a repeated step sequence, with space and final step altered, at the repeat of the first strain: two chassés, a pas de bourrée, a contretemps, and then either a contretemps or an assemblé.

[DEMONSTRATE *la Clermont*]

In addition to *la Melanie*, *la Gavotte de Seaux*, and *la Clermont*, four other dances by Balon use music in rondeau form: *la Poitevine*, *la Transilvanie*, *la Brissac*, and, with an abbreviated rondeau form (ABA), *la Czarienne*. For all of these, Balon uses an opening step sequence that is repeated at least once during the dance. The repeat structures of *la Transilvanie* and *la Brissac* are similar to the rondeau section of *la Melanie*, in that the opening step sequence is repeated after the first couplet and again after the second. In *la Brissac*, the spatial pattern is the same for each repeat. In *la Czarienne*, the spatial pattern is retained but with the dancers having exchanged places. In *la Transilvanie*, the direction and path differ for each repeat: the first time, the dancers head downstage; the second time, upstage; and the third time along L-shaped paths. (I'll discuss *la Poitevine* shortly.)

The music for *la Lorraine*, our next dance, is in binary form. For the repeat of the first strain, Balon uses a repeat of the opening step sequence, mostly on the opposite foot and with the path altered.[11] At the close of the second strain, the first time through, Balon includes the eight-bar canon that I alluded to earlier. The step sequence used for the canon, with a pas de rigaudon at the beginning and the end, has the effect of an of elaborated question-and-answer sequence, with the dancers performing pas de rigaudon in alternation. [DEMONSTRATE eight-bar canon.]

[DEMONSTRATE *la Lorraine*]

Our final dance, *la Poitevine*, opens with an intriguing variant on question-and-answer. The woman dances alone for two bars, and then is joined by the man for two bars. The sequence is then repeated, but with the man beginning and the woman joining him. Another sequence of question-and-answer occurs at the refrain following the

Table 1. Extant dances by Balone. (dances to be demonstrated marked with an asterisk)

	Dance (LMC #; FL #)[14]	Musical type, time signature, and structure (pr = "petite reprise")	Includes step-sequence repeats corresponding to musical repeats?	Includes any question-and-answer or canon?	Year[15]
	Entrée (3000, Ms05.1/04)	[loure] (6/4): AABACpr	no	no	
	Menuet (5700, Ms17.1/36)	menuet (3): AABB	no	no	
	Gigue[16] (—, Ms06.1)	gigue (6/4): AABCCpr			
	The Mattelott (5440, Ms13.1/06)	[marche] (6/8): AAB	no	no	
	la Gaillarde (4840, Ms17.1/35)	gaillarde (¢): AABB x 2	no	yes	
*	*Paspie Princesa* (6460, Ms19.1/04)	passepied (3/8): AABB x 4	yes	no	
*	*la Silvie* (8060, 1712.1/01)	gravement (3): AA passepied (6/8): B bourrée (¢): C passepied (6/8): B bourrée (¢): C	yes	yes	1712
	la Dombe (2500, 1712.1/02)	courante ([3/2]): AA [bourrée] (2): B [passepied] (3/8): C [bourrée] (2): B [passepied] (3/8): C	yes	no	1712
*	*la Melanie* (5480, 1713.1/01)	(3): AABACA (2): DDEE	yes	yes	1713
*	*la Gavotte de Seaux* (4880, Ms08.1/01)	gavotte (2): AABACAA	yes	no	1714
	Rigaudon (7360, Ms08.1/02)	rigaudon (2): AABBCCD	yes*	yes	1714
	la Transilvanie (8140, 1715.1/01)	[branle] (2): AABACAA	yes	no	1715
	la Gavotte du Roi (4920, 1716.1/01)	gavotte (2): AABprBpr	yes**	yes	1716
	la Bouree Nouvelle (1540, 1716.1/02)	bourrée (2): AABBCCDD	no	yes	1716
*	*la Clermont* (2100, 1717.1/01)	(6/8): ABACADDEE[17]	yes	yes	1717
	la de Bergue (2440, 1717.1/02)	[bourrée] (2): AABB	no	yes?***	1717
	la Brissac (1640, Ms11.1/01)	[branle] (2): AABACAA	yes	yes	1718
	la Czarienne (2420, Ms11.1/02)	lentement (3): ABA rigaudon (2): CD	yes	yes	1718
	la Montpensier (6100, 1718.2/01)	gavotte (2): AABB 2e gavotte (2): CCDD	no	yes	1719
*	*la Lorraine* (5220, 1718.2/02)	rigaudon (2): AABB	yes	yes	1719
*	*la Poitevine* (6860, 1720.1/01)	(6/4): AABACA	yes	yes	1720
	la Modene (6060, 1720.1/02)	(3): AA bourrée (2) passepied ([6/8]) bourrée (2) passepied ([6/8])	yes****	no	1720
	la Villeroy (8400, 1722.1/03)	(2): AABB	yes	yes	1722
	la Bouflers (1440, 1722.1/04)	gavotte (¢): AABCCDDA	yes	yes	1722

*But not much: first half of A = first half of A'.
**The same two-measure step throughout.
***Both dancers have a rest at the same measure—presumably a copying error.
****But there is a problem with repeats as written: the dancers cannot get to the correct positions. See discussion in text, and note 7.

first couplet: three different steps performed alternately for a total of six measures, followed by two measures in unison. At the final refrain, the opening sequence is repeated, with adjustments in the last two measures to move the dancers back to place for the close of the dance.

[DEMONSTRATE *la Poitevine*]

Conclusion

This afternoon we have shown seven of Balon's dances, almost one third of those that have survived. We have focused on some of the ways he employed repeated step sequences that correspond to repeats in the music, and we have noticed his frequent use of question-and-answer. Both of these devices, repeated step sequences and question-and-answer, offer a choreographer ways of reusing material within a dance, and we may wonder whether Balon was exceptionally efficient as a choreographer, or merely lazy. Certainly his dances reflect a keen sense of musical structure; and I believe they display real cleverness at times. But there's also some evidence of arbitrariness or inattention, as in the case of *la Modene*, which cannot be danced as published.

Though I haven't said anything about it, you will have seen that in many of his dances, Balon's step-vocabulary is noticeably constrained. This afternoon you have seen the same two- or four-bar step sequences—two glissés and a coupé ouvert, a pas de rigaudon followed by a pas de gavotte, and so on—several times over. I'm inclined to believe that the limited vocabulary has more to do with Balon's or Dezais's estimation of his clientele than with laziness or ineptness. It is also possible that some of Balon's choreographies reflect the preferences or learning abilities of his young student, king Louis XV.

As I've said elsewhere, it may be that Balon's choreographic approach also reflects changing tastes in the ballroom, a movement away from the through-composed style of Pécour to a style more closely dependent upon the structure of the music, and more repetitive.[12] But with so small a sample of dances, skewed so heavily toward ballroom dances that were marketed as, and that were hoped to be, popular, it's impossible to draw any firm conclusions. In any case, we should be wary of the notion that the typical baroque dance is through-composed,[13] and take note of the repetitive, and well-made, choreographies of Claude Balon.

Notes

1. Many authors give Dezais's first name as "Jacques", but "Joseph" may be more likely: Michael Barnard and Mary Hunter note that "Campardon identified Jacques Deshayes with Joseph Dezais (fl 1710-22), a choreographer at the Opéra who taught dancing and published collections of dances, but this claim has never been proved." *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Stanley Sadie, ed., 2nd ed. (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 2001), 7:237. For more on Balon (also spelled Ballon), see Régine Astier, "Ballon, Claude," in Selma Jeanne Cohen et al., eds., *International Encyclopedia of Dance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1:355-6.

2. Dezais, *X. Recüeil de Danses pour l'Année 1712...* (Paris, 1712). A year later, in the *Recüeil* for 1713, Dezais introduced another dance by Balon with the note that the merit and beauty of Balon's dances had attracted applause from "connoisseurs and persons of taste". Dezais no longer had the right to publish dances by Pecour: see Meredith Ellis Little and Carol G. Marsh, *La Danse Noble: An inventory of dances and sources* (Williamstown: Broude Brothers Limited, 1992), 112-13.

3. For detailed information about these dances and their sources, see Little and Marsh, *La Danse Noble...*, and Francine Lancelot, *La Belle Dance* (Paris: Van Dieren, 1996).

4. I discuss these at greater length in Ken Pierce, "Repeated step-sequences in early eighteenth century choreographies," in *Structures and Metaphors in Baroque Dance: Proceedings of the Conference at the University of Surrey Roehampton, March 31, 2001* (Centre for Dance Research, University of Surrey, Roehampton: 2001), 52-59.

5. The best-known example of question-and-answer in baroque dance is surely in Pécour's *Aimable Vainqueur*, when first the woman and then the man does a turning contretemp followed by a coupé ouvert. This is followed by what might be termed a "double question-and-answer"; see discussion in Pierce, "Repeated step-sequences...", 54-55.

6. The woman's part is rotated 90_ clockwise, the man's is mirrored and rotated 90_ counterclockwise.

7. Both the passepied and the bourrée begin and end with the dancers equidistant from, and on opposite sides of, the center line. Any combination in which each of these sections occurs an even number of times will necessarily return the dancers to the sides where they began, whether or not they exchange places in a given figure. Balon has made not merely a typographical, but a theoretical, error.

8. There's a minor difference in the final measure of the woman's part in the refrain following the first couplet. Presumably this is a typographical error, since as written it leaves the woman with the wrong foot free.

9. On the repeat, the woman does another pas de bourrée instead of a coupé.

10. Lancelot, *La Belle Dance*, appears to be mistaken in treating the second section of the dance as part of the rondeau.

11. The pas de rigaudon for the man, meas. 5-6, and the pas de gavotte, meas. 7-8, are on the opposite foot from what might have been expected.

12. Pierce, "Repeated step-sequences...", 58.

13. For other counterexamples see Pierce, "Repeated step-sequences...".

14. Numbers give references to entries in Little and Marsh, *La Danse Noble...* (LMC) and Lancelot, *La Belle Dance* (FL).

15. Year of the *Recüeil* in which the dance was published.

16. Not listed in LMC. I have been unable to obtain a copy of this dance in time for publication, so I have left columns three and four blank.

17. See note 10.

Populism, Avant-Gardism, and Hanya Holm:
An Analysis of *Dance of Work and Play* (1938)

Tresa Randall

Hanya Holm's *Dance of Work and Play* celebrates human movement in its everyday forms. The way Holm blended this populist content with a formalist aesthetic makes the work a curious blend of avant-gardism and modernism. In this paper I explore how *Dance of Work and Play* drew on certain aspects of Weimar culture, especially the worldview of Expressionism and German body culture, to present an avant-garde vision of a future in which the barriers between work and leisure, individual and community, art and society have been broken down.

My understanding of the avant-garde is based primarily on the paradigms developed by Peter Bürger and Renato Poggioli. They both assert that the avant-garde consisted of a number of movements in the early twentieth century, each with its own worldview, who all fought for a new cultural order. The avant-garde envisioned a radical reformulation of past and future, and posited themselves as the front lines marching toward a time when a new kind of community would emerge and art would be central to life. Susan Manning has argued that Bürger's distinction between modernism as self-reflexive art and avant-gardism as art that breaks down the barriers between art and life does not apply neatly to the work of German dance artists like Mary Wigman and Rudolf Laban.[1] I concur that this is also true for Hanya Holm, Wigman's best-known disciple in America; certain aspects of her theories and choreography were avant-garde, while others were modernist. However, for the purposes of this paper, I isolate a few specific avant-garde tendencies in order to highlight contours of Holm's work that have not been examined as fully in the past as have her modernist credentials.

The postwar rise of Greenbergian modernism in American modern dance has particularly been a stumbling block in our understanding of German immigrant Hanya Holm. For example, one of the problems Holm encountered in the 1930s was that many in the American modern dance community felt she did not make a strong enough statement separating herself from Mary Wigman, who had remained in Germany during National Socialism. Even though Holm changed the name of her school from the New York Wigman School to the Hanya Holm Studio in 1936, she repeatedly asserted, "there is no room for politics in art."[2] This statement seems incongruous with the content of works such as *Trend* (1937) and *Tragic Exodus* (1939). However, Holm's position that there was an important distinction between political art and art

which critiqued society had strong precedent in the worldview of the avant-garde. Avant-garde artists sought to transform the role of art in society, but they felt alienated from society at the same time and usually avoided overt political action.

Other aspects of Holm's career, especially her later choreography for Broadway musicals, are consistent with the avant-garde tendency toward populism and a fascination with the masses but have often been seen as antithetical to the principles of modernist art. Holm loved folk dance, taught choric dance classes for 'laymen,' and spent much of her time bringing dance to everyday people through her famous lecture-demonstrations. I propose that an examination of Holm's work in the context of the avant-garde allows it to take on deeper meanings than it does when looked at from the perspective of high modernism. The spirit of *Dance of Work and Play* belongs to an era in which artists, viewing modernity with a simultaneous fascination and horror, envisioned a future in which bodies and minds would escape the ill-effects of industrialization and become whole again.

Dance of Work and Play premiered at Bennington College in 1938, the summer after her most famous modern dance work *Trend*, a monumental Expressionist work for thirty-three dancers. In comparison with *Trend*, *Dance of Work and Play* is on a smaller scale, with only nine dancers, and a predominantly lighthearted mood. The theme—"that when we play we work, when we work we play"[3] —is clearly presented through movement phrases abstracted from actions such as digging and lifting. *Dance of Work and Play* is about the extraordinariness of our everyday lives: the joy of reaching and twisting and jumping, finding moments of quiet by ourselves or finding solidarity with others. Poet Ben Belitt describes: "*Dance of Work and Play* had to do with very naïve things brought into the range of quotidian experience—her version of man's "day on earth." Things that were not exceptional, that anyone would recognize: you could be lyrical and you could be ludic (sic), you could celebrate the need to work and to play in the name of the good life. One glimpsed the humanism behind the machine."[4]

Since this work was not notated and has not been reconstructed, the following analysis is based on a few photographs, several descriptive critiques, and an understanding of Holm's overall approach to movement and choreography. The subtitles for each section help to give us a sense of the structure of the work. Each of the six

sections begins with a solo by Holm in which she introduces a movement theme, has the group develop it, then concludes with another solo. The first section, "Origin," introduces young people working for the first time, "The Empty-Handed" shows people who receive nothing for their work, and "The Solitary" shows a hermit who works alone. The fourth section, "Driven," makes a statement about the dehumanizing effect of modernity. Holm uses an interesting theatrical device in this section by having three dancers stand like pillars downstage, between the audience and the moving dancers. These bodies create a design element and underscore the sense of alienation Holm perceives in modern life. Behind them, the other dancers move with frenzied, mechanical and rigid gestures.[5] In the last two sections, Holm finds comfort in community life. The entire group works together in "Communal," then concludes with "Synthesis," executing a series of falls in unison. The program note for the final section states that it demonstrates "a mature satisfaction and pleasure in work."[6]

An original score composed by Norman Lloyd for two pianos and percussion accompanied the dance. The original costumes by Elizabeth Beebe were made of a rough fabric and a simple design—long-sleeved blouses cropped at the ribcage and full, paneled skirts—suggesting working clothes. Critical reception to the work was largely positive. John Martin felt that Dance of Work and Play was eloquent, logical, and of the same high caliber as Trend.[7] Margaret Lloyd felt that the dance "hit the heart and reached understanding without program notes and only a hasty glance at subtitles. It was organic, eloquent—design irradiated by idea."[8] Cecil Smith of the Chicago Daily Tribune asserted, "Dance of Work and Play brought forth half an hour of some of the most affecting movement the contemporary dance stage knows."[9]

According to her own description, Holm follows a roughly linear progression in this dance from a young person's first exposure to work to a mature understanding of the role of work in life. Simultaneously, I argue, she also presents a vision of the progression of society: "Origin" shows a cohesive pre-industrial, agrarian community where the dances are related to work cycles; "The Empty-Handed," "The Solitary," and "Driven" all show a modern, industrial society where some people are without work, some work alone, and some work in factories, where their movement has become mechanical. I interpret the final sections, "Communal" and "Synthesis," to be a portrait of the utopian vision shared by many radical artists of the 1920s. Holm sees the future as a new kind of community life, in which work is shared, and the individual and the community share a symbiotic relationship. As I stated earlier, all avant-garde artists saw themselves as leading the way to a radical re-invention of society, and dance artists were no exception. Ramsay Burt observes, "For some radical dance artists and their audiences in France and

Germany during the 1920s, the hope still existed that dance could develop into an emancipatory mass culture through the elimination of artificial barriers between work and leisure, production and culture."[10]

One of the first questions this raises for me is exactly what kind of "mass culture" Holm envisioned. Certainly, mass dance works with ideological ties across a broad political spectrum were prevalent in the 1930s, from the work of American "revolutionary" dancers with ties to the American Communist party[11] to the mass dance spectacles used by the Nazi party. I propose that Dance of Work and Play made a socialist statement in the ideological sense, even though Holm insisted her work was not political, in the same way that avant-garde artists saw themselves as outside the realm of actual political action. This interpretation is supported by Holm's friendship with exiled German theologian Paul Tillich, the most influential theorist of the Religious Socialism movement in post-World War I Germany. Holm had discussed her ideas for Trend with Tillich in 1937, and he helped her clarify the theme of society falling apart in a mechanized age.[12] Trend, like Dance of Work and Play, envisions the future as a utopian community, a statement that could be read as socialist. Dance of Work and Play develops this theme by applying it more directly to the influence of mechanized work on the bodies and minds of workers. Certainly, the "Driven" section seems to be a Marxist portrait of the worker as a slave to the machine, and "The Empty-Handed" is an unmistakable reference to unemployment during the Great Depression.

However, Holm's concern with the effects of modern life on the body had other origins in Weimar culture as well. In fact, it would be hard to overestimate the enormous interest in Weimar Germany with questions about the body, nudity, movement, dance, nature, the community, and the individual. Karl Toepfer's book Empire of Ecstasy shows the wide range of ideas about the relationship between modernity and the body.[13] One manifestation of this interest was Nachtkultur, or nude culture, sometimes called Freikorperkultur, or free body culture, a movement that encouraged families and people of all ages to practice nudity, commune with nature, and dance nude in communal movement choirs. Industrial development had brought homogeneous leisure time, and people sought activities that had an immediacy and physicality to counteract their mechanized lives. Retreats in the country such as Monte Verita, a mountain near Ascona, Switzerland where Laban and Wigman worked before and during the First World War, attracted people who were sick and exhausted by city life as well as those in search of freedom and vitality. For many Weimar intellectuals and artists, the body symbolized the irrationality and instability of modern life.

In Dance of Work and Play, Holm is concerned specifically with the relationship between the body and the work

it does. What constitutes healthy work, and what kind of work is damaging? A variety of theories about industrialization and the modern body had arisen in Weimar Germany. As Ramsay Burt discusses in his book *Alien Bodies*, the ideas of F. W. Taylor about how to make bodies more efficient in industrial production "had considerable social and political consequences when they became widely known in Europe" in the 1920s.[14] Siegfried Kracauer saw the regimented kick lines of groups like the Tiller Girls as indicative of Taylor's approach to controlling the body, creating what he termed the "mass ornament." Similarly, in 1925 Fritz Geise argued that capitalism had produced "decadent, vulgar attitudes toward dance and the body," symbolized by the American-style chorus line girls.[15]

Holm's use of improvisation in her creative process resisted the regimentation of industrial production and allowed the expression of the dancers to be more authentic, which was a key tenet in the Expressionist worldview. Augustinus Dierick writes, "the positively phrased early Enlightenment view of man as machine (*La Mettrie*) [was] countered by Expressionism's view that man and machine are irreconcilable enemies. Man, after all, represents 'life,' the machine dead matter. In this view technology stands in violent contrast to all those values which Expressionism claims as absolute: spontaneity, soul, freedom, expansion, mystery, substance."[16] Hanya Holm celebrated spontaneity and freedom in every piece she choreographed and in every class she taught. Even as her classes became more structured over the years, she never abandoned her belief in the importance of improvisation for expanding the creative range of the dancer. She often told her students that you must be fully alive to dance. In linking the physical practices of work and play, Holm exalts the unity of body and spirit.

Critic Henry Gilfond described *Dance of Work and Play* as a "plea . . .for a recapturing of what was once the joyousness of work."[17] This description is reminiscent of the objective of Rudolf Laban's 'Dance-Farms' in Ascona and Zurich from 1913 to 1917. At these retreats, he required his students to "do a healthy job, preferably farming [or] gardening," believing that "artistic work must grow out of the community."[18] Laban spent much of his life trying to combat the negative effects of machines on the bodies and souls of his contemporaries, believing that machines feed on the soul. John Hodgson and Valerie Preston-Dunlop note that as a young man, Laban had taken note of areas of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where people performed folk dances that were related to their occupations.[19] Many times as an adult he attempted to set up communities where work and play could be related.

For both Laban and Holm, then, we can see how dance, community, and work are all interwoven. Holm begins and ends her dance with group movement that may have been reminiscent of folk dances performed af-

ter the harvest or at other significant times in the working calendar of an agrarian community. She may have been familiar with the writing of Karl Bücher, whose 1896 book *Work and Rhythm* was widely read in Germany. The book was an ethnographic study of the work songs of ancient societies in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Bücher analyzed them in relation to the work performed, such as hammering, scrubbing, carrying, plucking, lifting, digging, and spinning. He concluded that there was an underlying unity in the way that "labor, play, and art blended into each other" and that rhythm was a "unifying economic principle that controlled the relation between body and production."[20] Machine-driven labor was different, however, because "the tempo and duration of the labor is detached from the worker's will."[21] This distinction between organic labor and machine labor can also be seen in the contrast between the "Origin" and "Driven" sections of *Dance of Work and Play*.

Several other Weimar intellectuals hypothesized about the nature of rhythm and the body working. In 1928, Rudolf Lämmel wrote, "freedom, movement toward ecstasy . . . is not a release from metronomic rhythm or ballet-type regulation of the body; on the contrary, freedom entails the capacity of the body to synchronize itself with mathematical laws governing the structure of music and movement."[22] This view is also reminiscent of the work of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, whose method Hanya Holm studied, first in Frankfort, and later at the Institute in Hellerau.[23] The aim of Dalcroze's method of rhythmic gymnastics was "to create a heightened condition of individual freedom as well as a stronger sense of social unity." In his exercises, students moved different body parts to different rhythms, moved in canon, mirrored each other's rhythms, and added their own movement to create "rhythmic dialogues" within the group. Toepfer notes that, by linking movement with rhythmic patterns, Dalcroze freed the body by making movement rational.[24]

Even though the German body culture craze of the 1920s contradicted much of Dalcroze's work by stressing the instinctual inner impulses of the body, it is Dalcroze's view of the rational, joyous working body to which Holm returns in *Dance of Work and Play*. The dance lacks the mystical content of Wigman's work, and shows the beginning of the logical approach to dance for which Holm would become known in America. It may not have been a coincidence that Holm chose to present such a rational, clear (yet still radical) treatise about the human experience at this point in her career, soon after she had dodged so many concerns about her connection to Wigman and therefore to National Socialism. Holm's presentation of the body in *Dance of Work and Play* was avant-garde in its appropriation of images of a 'primitive' way of life for the purposes of a radical overhaul of modern society. But it also may have been a way of moving beyond the irrational, instinctual aesthetic most American dancers associ-

ated with Wigman in 1938.

Holm's view of the rational body was linked to the mathematical patterns of rhythm, but it was also rooted in the problem-solving skills of the dancers themselves. She freed her dancers by giving them power over their own expression. The full-bodied, almost athletic movement style of the group sections of *Dance of Work and Play* made this approach evident. Even though as a dancer Holm tended to be contained and delicate, as a choreographer she embraced all qualities of movement, from lyrical, to bound, to strong, and derived her movements from the theme of the work, not from a codified vocabulary of steps. In 1938, Walter Terry highly praised Holm by commenting, "Hanya Holm must be a great teacher, for the members of the group actually dance." He felt that he could "Ask most modern dancers to get up and dance for the sheer love of movement; they look a bit blank and ask you to state a theme or tell what kind of movement you want." However, Terry argued, "it is a safe bet to say that Hanya Holm's girls would be able to dance at a moment's notice, for their teacher has taught them more than the mechanics of movement—she has taught them the essence and the spirit of dancing."[25]

Holm's dancers were able to "dance at a moment's notice" since they had been trained using improvisation and exploration of movement. Her classes were built around themes—turns, falls, swings, oppositional pull, etc. Holm encouraged her dancers to experiment with various tempos, initiations in the body, and levels in space. Through these kinds of explorations, students discovered for themselves how their bodies worked in relation to weight, space, shape, and time, thus giving them the tools for creating their own movement. Holm did not shy away from the lyrical, as other modern dancers tended to do at that time, but rather used all qualities of movement. Above all else, the women in *Dance of Work and Play* were human, and they portrayed all aspects of human movements. They performed movements abstracted from manual labor such as digging; they jumped, reached, turned, and fell to the floor; they were fluid; they were strong.

The way this piece dances in my mind's eye is more similar to Paul Taylor's *Esplanade* (1975) or Mark Morris' *Gloria* (1981) than it is to its contemporaries, such as Doris Humphrey's *New Dance* (1935) or Martha Graham's *Chronicle* (1936). This sense is based on the way the photographs show the dancers in the midst of full-bodied movement, in unison yet not in unison. One photo of the work shows seven dancers with their right arms lifted up, carving the space in a rounded, three-dimensional way. The movement in their skirts shows that they are not standing still, but are in the midst of an action—probably running or turning. They are all doing the same movement, but each in her own way. Three smiling dancers kneel on the floor in another photo, reaching forward to their partners, who hop vigorously toward them. In yet another photo, four dancers scoop their arms up in front of them, leaning fully into the gesture as if they are tossing something. Since each dancer performs the movement uniquely, collectively they look more like real women working than like dancers in a chorus line with precise lines and exact shapes, Kracauer's mass ornament.

In contrast, the full-bodied, individuated movement in *Dance of Work and Play* presents a vision of healthy, spontaneous bodies—Holm's vision of a utopian community in which work is done communally but without regimentation, where the individual attains self-realization through the group, not in spite of it. I read this vision as populist because Holm makes her dance accessible to all audiences by glorifying everyday experience. Poggioli points out that avant-garde movements often had a paradoxical reaction to the masses: they were concerned with spreading their gospel to the masses in order to recruit followers, but avant-garde art was almost never popular. Their activism often took the form of avant-garde journals, which were certainly prevalent in Weimar dance culture, from *Schrifttanz* to *Der Tanz*. The attempt to involve laypeople in dance through movement choirs also derived from an activist impulse, and especially in the early 1930s Holm had offered choric classes specifically for laypeople at her New York Studio. In fact, many of the dancers who formed the New Dance Group and became active in the revolutionary dance movement had studied mass dance techniques with Holm. I believe that Holm's often-repeated edict that "anyone can dance" also belongs to this populist impulse. She was the first American modern dancer to tour the "gym circuit" of colleges and high schools across the country in the 1930s in an attempt to bring dance to the people.

Ben Belitt was evidently very moved by the way Holm made *Dance of Work and Play* populist by "filling a stage with a pageantry of bodies and having them enact in ritualized ways what people do in lackadaisical ways, disclosing the passions and significance of what they often do routinely."[26] Similarly, George Beiswanger picked up on the folk dance quality of the work. He writes, "Hanya Holm has caught the American folk in its moments of pure excitement, exuberance and animal joy. Her dance is master of the mode of the 'sheer': sheer pleasure, sheer good spirits, sheer dread, sheer anything you might choose to mention, provided it is all simple and direct and naïve."[27] Beiswanger's description reminds us of the populist appeal in these works. The theme is straightforward, and through kinesthetic empathy, members of the audience can easily identify with the everyday actions performed by the dancers.

Dance of Work and Play belonged to an era in which artists sought to integrate art into the everyday lives of everyday people, not for the purposes of political propaganda, but to create a whole new way of living. The American environment in which Holm found herself in 1938 was vastly different from Weimar Germany, and perhaps

it was a failing of her choreography that most of the critics saw *Dance of Work and Play* in largely formalist terms, and described the content as "naïve." However, I believe that the perspective from which Holm approached the subject of the body working and playing was not naïve, but was, in fact radical. The Expressionist imperative to return to emotion and instinct in order to express inner experience was part of the larger avant-garde desire to transform the relationship between art and life. Dierick writes, "No other movement in art has so strongly felt that decisions were to be made not only of artistic but of historic and social significance. Heralding apocalypse and rebirth, the Expressionists attempted to deny two hundred years of 'enlightenment,' secularization, science, and technology for the sake of spirit and soul."[28]

Karl Toepfer notes that German body culture questioned, but never fully dissolved, the tension between innocence and modernity.[29] For many body culture enthusiasts, modernity was symbolized by the naked body, while for many dancers, movement symbolized modernity, because movement revealed inner energies, desires, and impulses. Both perspectives shared a view of the body as 'primitive,' or at least natural, and therefore more vital. The tendency to conflate modern experience with 'primitive' experience was an important aspect of Weimar culture, and, I feel, another reason why Holm's vision of the communal, natural body is not 'naïve,' but part of a larger discourse about the modern body. Holm loved dualities, and she continually highlighted oppositions: between work and play, abstraction and emotion, individual and group, self and other, organic and mechanical, fragmentation and unity. Just as she saw work and play as two aspects of the same physical experience, so the body was at once primitive and modern. Similarly, Laban saw dance as "a mode of action that transcended . . . conventional distinctions between nature and civilization."[30] Dance had emancipatory power—you could be transformed, renewed, and freed by your experience of the body.

In *Dance of Work and Play*, Holm freed herself and her dancers from the categories that bound them. Ancient wisdom could inform modern life, the self could become whole by sharing in the community, and the body—everyone's body—could become more fully alive by moving.

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Notes

1. Susan Manning, *Ecstasy and the Demon: Feminism and Nationalism in the Dances of Mary Wigman* (Berkeley: University of California

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2. Walter Sorell, *Hanya Holm: The Biography of an Artist* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), 45.

3. Sorell, 81.

4. Ben Belitt, "An Interview/Memoir on the Bennington School of the Dance: Words for Dancers, Perhaps," *Ballet Review* 8.2-3 (1980): 225-226.

5. Sorell, 80.

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9. Cecil Smith, "News Makers Satirized by Clever Dance," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 24 October 1938.

10. Ramsay Burt, *Alien Bodies: Representations of modernity, 'race,' and nation in early modern dance* (London: Routledge, 1998), 23.

11. Stacey Prickett notes that relatively few participants in the revolutionary dance movement actually joined the Communist Party. (Stacey Prickett, "'The People:' Issues of Identity within the Revolutionary Dance," *Of, By, and For the People: Dancing on the Left in the 1930s*. Edited by Lynn Garafola. Studies in Dance History, vol. 5, no. 1. (Spring 1994): 15.) However, many revolutionary dance events happened at union rallies and other venues associated directly or indirectly with the American Communist Party. See Ellen Graff, *Stepping Left: Dance and Politics in New York City, 1928-1942* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997).

12. Hanya Holm, interview by Billy Nichols, National Educational Television Network, 1965.

13. Karl Toepfer, *Empire of Ecstasy: Nudity and Movement in German Body Culture, 1910-1935* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

14. Burt, 98.

15. Toepfer, 79.

16. Augustinus Dierick, *German Expressionist Prose: Theory and Practice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 65.

17. Henry Gilfond, "Bennington Festival," *Dance Observer* (August/ September 1938): 101.

18. John Hodgson and Valerie Preston-Dunlop, *Rudolf Laban: An Introduction to his Work & Influence* (Northcote House, 1990), 35.

19. Ibid., 51.

20. Toepfer, 14-15.

21. Ibid., 14.

22. Ibid., 79.

23. Walter Sorell's biography is unclear about whether Holm had studied directly with Dalcroze (Sorell, *Hanya Holm*, 7, 12), but Holm told Selma Odom later in her life that she studied with Gustav Guldenstein in Frankfort, then at the Institute of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze in Hellerau after Dalcroze had left. I thank Selma Odom for sharing this information with me.

24. Toepfer, 18.

25. Walter Terry, "Importance of Hanya Holm: A Great Teacher," *Boston Herald*, 9 January 1938.

26. Belitt, 224.

27. George Beiswanger, "New Theatre Dance," *Theatre Arts Monthly* 23, no .1 (January 1939), 51.

28. Dierick, 73.

29. Toepfer, 4.

30. Ibid., 100.

Collaborations Between Dance and Technology as a History of the Present

Val Rimmer

In this paper Deleuzian philosophical ideas will be used to rethink some issues relating to the collaboration between dance and technology as they are raised in Cunningham's work with technology since the 1980's. In order to maintain a focus the paper will refer to the collaboration between dance and technology as it is articulated in the different media of dance film and dance and digital technology. This is not to produce a definitive account of these types of collaboration but to focus on *Beach Birds For Camera* and *Biped* as two events that express differently sets of related concerns. What Deleuzian thought enables is an engagement between the specifics of each collaboration whilst detaching a reading of these works from simple historical or contextualist determinations. Moreover to consider them as a complex of becomings that are performative in the ways that they create new connections and alignments prevents these works from being read as a receptacle of modernist/postmodernist truths, or as a site where information about the choreographer, his creative process etc., can be recovered, or as work that is selected and identified in terms of the ways in which it reflects/modifies or challenges the hegemonic values of the dance historical canon.

In the juxtaposition between these two art works and Deleuzian philosophy, the paper achieves two things. First, it raises questions regarding the reliance of much interpretative writing on a semiotically based model of textuality whilst maintaining an emphasis on the specific materiality of *Beach Birds For Camera* and *Biped*. And secondly, it conceptualises dance/technology texts as assemblages and this provides a framework for reconsidering the relationship between dance and the concept of history.

Deleuze treats art and philosophy as different kinds of related activities by arguing that art is able to invent and concretise philosophical problems in a non-philosophical way. In addition philosophy assumes this understanding and is in part addressed to it. Consequently together the two practices produce resonances and interferences that are unified by thought and thus although art and philosophy are different enterprises, Deleuze presupposes that artists and philosophers are essentially thinkers within the specificities of their own practices. From this perspective Deleuze makes a differentiation between thinking about art works as autonomous, self contained expressions of interiority and thinking about texts as intensities and flows that confront the identities, concepts and realities with which we are familiar. This then releases thinking about dance from its usual locations and familiar structures that constrain it to what is known whilst treating dance events as singularities that mix with other political, technological and cultural events.

For the purposes of this conference which topicalises Dance History as *In the Moment* Deleuzian thought raises issues regarding conventional and familiar ways of thinking and doing dance in the context of contemporary society. An example would be that dance and technology are thought conventionally in terms of dance as a form of intrinsic content that is differentiated from its extrinsic, technological support. Consequently, a work such as *Beach Birds For Camera* tends not to be discussed as if it was an equal collaboration between dance and film, but as a dance work that is still predominantly referred to as Cunningham's *Beach Birds For Camera*. The creative engagement with Kaplan is then set aside within a framework that legitimates two familiar positions. The first is that the details of the work can be explained in relation to what is familiar - Cunningham's ideas about what he wants to do with dance when working with a different media. This locates the work as an expression of interiority. And secondly, accounts of this work will then focus on finding a meet between Cunningham and the work via the details of the work (and often its relation to previous Cunningham choreographies) which are offered as evidence and confirmation of point of view. The consequence is that history is treated archaeologically as a form of recovery whereby discussions of dance texts are maintained within a series of essentialising determinations. But by examining from a Deleuzian perspective the convergence between philosophy and dance performance events and the ways in which they produce cultural strategies for imaging and imagining the world, it is possible to consider how an historical way of thinking can develop from that convergence.

All art works create images and signs the conceptualisation of which revitalises thought. For Deleuze the artistic image which has the capacity to create ruptures and divergences is more than a representation or an impression of an *a priori*. And the image which is a collection of sensations - a sign - cannot be encountered or explained simply in terms of conventions, rituals or habits. The reason being that the relationship between sign and image produces a structure of vibration between what can be imagined and what can be thought and as such it forces its receivers to think and thus prevents a retreat to a transcendent origin or category. Consequently from the

Deleuzian perspective the work of art is a machine that is constructed for the purpose of producing and interpreting signs that mobilise the differential forces that make thinking possible. This means that the dance event has the potential to produce images that conceptualise the merging of thought and image on a virtual plane.

Deleuze argues that history is an enterprise that stakes out its origins and anticipates conclusions, the result of which is a chronology that is legitimated and organised according to an organic model. History therefore, like other discourses, produces its own story that is naturalised as the story of an *a priori*. In this respect their relation to their objects is underpinned by a logocentric system of representation. The effect is that conventional dichotomies between origin/representation, intrinsic/extrinsic, mind/body, real/virtual are legitimated and maintained and the creative potential constituted in the collaborative work between dance and technology is left largely unaddressed. What Deleuze attempts to do, following Foucault, is to produce a cartography that constructs a relation of determination between what is sayable and visible.

In this paper the dance events identified in the context of the processes of global capitalism that characterise postmodernity offer a medium in which to identify and grasp the fluctuations between the sayable and the visible from a Deleuzian perspective without slipping into the trap of determinism.

Consequently to map the images and signs of this culture as they are manifest in the dance/technology collaboration is to understand the way that the forces of the work, that are conceptualised by Deleuze as maps of intensity, are invested in the formations that condition contemporary audio-visual culture. This produces ways of articulating disjunctions between conventional and traditional determinations that underpin and legitimate thinking about the relationship between dance and technology. Furthermore, following Deleuze's argument this paper conceptualises Cunningham's collaborations with technology as becomings that refer to a zone of indiscernibility that exists between the multiplicities of dance and technology, and precedes their respective boundarisations and differentiations. Thus disturbing the authority of intrinsic content and its accompanying notions of determinate milieu.

Beach Birds For Camera is a filmed dance work that locates relations between space, time and movement within a process of regulation that links images together along a chain of determination according to a logic of causality. Effectively time is located as the movement in, or the traversal of space and, dance and film are located in a relation of determination whereby dance is privileged as the legitimate content and film its technological support. The consequence is that although Cunningham might articulate choreographically concerns to express the energy of life, or dancing itself movement in this work is constructed

in the decomposition and recomposition of rational intervals between frames. This facilitates the illusion of movement as underwritten by the co-ordinates of action. This takes place on a number of levels in the work but to focus the argument I will limit this discussion to the moment of transition in the work between black and white and colour film.

The transition links a group of dancers to a duet. Prior to the moment of transition the image given is a held long shot of the company dancing which is then juxtaposed with a held medium shot of four dancers in a circle into and out of which dancers move. The next shot is a long shot which contains the relationship between company and group. After several seconds a male dancers moves towards the top right hand side of the frame and as the transition between black and white and colour takes place this dancer enters the frame from the left. The sequence of long/medium/long/medium(colour) shot creates a unity of action between company, quartet and duet and preserves a temporal continuity that is spatialised according to the co-ordinates of dance action.

The conjunction between dance and film is linked by movement. The movement of bodies - in the disaffining movement relations between parts of the body that characterise Cunningham's choreographic style, and the movement between bodies as a means of spatialising time. The movement of technology in the editing of shots that creates the illusion of danced movement as an origin. And the movement between dance and technology that stresses content as performative. The result is a unity of dance/technology action that is legitimated by the logic of Cunningham's style.

Thus, *Beach Birds For Camera* produces an organic model of movement relations that speaks a relation between parts and whole that is underpinned and unified by the normal functioning of action. For example, the relation between the performance of *Beach Birds* and the work *Beach Birds For Camera* could be read as an organic story of choreographic progression. In respect of this my argument would be that the choreographic content of the work precludes a reading that allows this relationship to be posited unproblematically because it is here that Cunningham is experimenting with the boundaries of what is sayable and visible in dance. The problem in respect of this position is that the filming of the work functions according to the demands of dance action and by submitting it to a normative causal perspective is in tension with the potential of the dancing. The result is that film technology in this example functions to reterritorialise the potential choreographic deterritorialisation.

As has been shown montage in *Beach Birds For Camera* functions as a form of continuity editing, whereas in *Biped* it could be argued that the relationship between the real and virtual image that is constructed in the juxtaposition between the frames of scrim and stage space, pro-

duces an interrogation of the dance medium that does not relegate the image produced to an indirect representation of time. Instead there is an irrational interval between media whereby the relation between them is incommensurable. Consequently time is no longer subordinated to motion as was the case in *Beach Birds For Camera* but realises the possibility of an autotemporalisation of the image.

In *Beach Birds For Camera* contiguities of montage that articulate the basic constituents of film in the movement between frame, shot, and editing, produce in the process of de/recomposition of frames the illusion of movement as a chronological unfolding of contiguous frames that determine time as succession in space. In contrast in *Biped* immediate or real movement exists as an image of duration simultaneously with the process of virtual projection. The effect is that the image appears for the spectator without conditions appearing between spaces. (This would include the space of scrim/stage space, the space of virtual body/space of material body, the space of movement/the space of motion as it is captured by technology.) Thus, although there are still privileged instants - such as the transition from black and white to colour in *Beach Birds For Camera* - these exist within a flow of material sections to which each instant is contrasted and this allows an immediate movement between virtual and material bodies that articulates a movement of becoming between the livable and the lived.

Although works such as *Beach Birds For Camera* and *Biped* do not express the logic of capitalism in their function, they do in their form. This can be situated in terms of the ways in which the processes of globalisation are reflexively engaged with the ever faster accumulation of capital, and in terms of how rapid increases in technological innovation and development produce new aesthetic media that are for Deleuze, a training ground for collective perceptual habits. If we accept this position then it is possible to argue that aesthetic collaborations with technology draw attention to the juxtaposition between the material limits and abilities of the body and the desire for new and different figurations that embody and articulate this desire. *Biped* is interesting in this respect because it still maintains the relation between the work and the darkened confines of the theatre preserving the notion of spectacle and, it maintains a sense of modernist concern with a unity of form and function. Yet in the juxtaposition between digitalised dance images and the dancing bodies, it emphasises new ways of thinking about dance and technology collaborations.

This can be illustrated in the danced interaction between live dancer and virtual dancing image which casts a new light on ways in which body, movement, space and time are conventionally constituted. This juxtaposition introduces into the familiar dance environment a historical way of thinking. It spectacularises the dance event as an assemblage of various compositional elements, as a multiplicity of relations between things and bodies, as well as bodies and bodies, and draws attention to the ways in which familiar conventions regarding the organisation and patterning of movement, space, time depend on a model of an organic whole that is not immutable but contingent and available to ideological coding.

However, to adopt Deleuze's ideas to think about Cunningham's work with technology prevents it being subsumed within a historical model committed to linear, progression and instead conceives of it as a succession of different modes of dealing with the uncoded flow of desire which, Deleuze and Guattari argue, is inimical to civil society and must be coded to be properly managed.

What they mean by this is that the social formation of global capitalism to facilitate its perpetuation needs to codify, inscribe and regulate flows of desire thereby producing diverse imaginary and symbolic territorialities as a means of rechanneling and containing ideas, values and different ways of thinking about and experiencing the world. As such, *Beach Birds For Camera* and *Biped* are works that are made within the production process in that at the moment of their production they are consumption and as consumption they either express what has been expressed elsewhere or introduce new ideas and juxtapositions that force their way into production. For Deleuze the idea of limit is maintained in the process of creativity's engagement with it. What he means by this is that to merely encounter and go beyond limits is to preserve the idea of limit but to put into flight connections and alignments that break into and free the images in the work from the subordinating powers of representation is to establish zones of indetermination that only art can infiltrate and understand in its enterprise of co-creation. This possibility releases art to dissolve known forms and impose a zone of indistinction in which its syntactical or plastic methods and materials make their limits strange. Thus it can be argued that what is reterritorialised in the limits of the dance/film encounter - movement as it is expressed in the encounter between the real and the reproduced - is protesting its visibility in *Biped*.

Both *Beach Birds For Camera* and *Biped* have as their topic the dancing body and each work situates it as an in-between; in-between dancing and the eye of the spectator, in-between the 'I' (eye) of the choreographer and the work, in-between movement and its image. This location assumes that the body has both a known and knowable form, and can be placed in evidence as a reference point. In *Beach Birds For Camera* the body is located as the privileged container of expression, it is the site where the illusion of movement is mobilised visualised within the apparatus of perception - the eye of the camera. Whereas in *Biped* the body is situated as an in-between two different forms of image. It is located as a reference point for the digitalised and animated dancing images and as a repre-

sentational form within the parameters of Cunningham's style, as the embodiment of dancing itself. Furthermore the in-betweenness of the body in each case engages with the ways in which capitalism separates the body from its abilities and attributes turning it into a source of labour, a surface to be ornamented and displayed, and as a problem to be solved - how to capture the motion of the body, how to engage with the concreteness of its limitations? In asking how does the body work in these contexts from a Deleuzian perspective this paper also historicises the experiences that the both *Beach Birds For Camera* and *Biped* make available as a history of the present. Consequently, although they set aside their connections to global capitalism both these works, as Buchanan argues, in their own ways bring to mind the enormity of capital.

In *Biped* in the opposition between live dancing bodies and the virtual projections neither the images of the virtual body or the dancing body remain because both have begun to fragment. An effect is that unformed matter conforming to formed type is put at issue because both the dancing body and these dancing bodies are made indistinct by this contiguity. The traditional privileging of the formed and disciplined dancing body over the spontaneous and unknown movements of the natural body is replaced in a new type of relation between real and virtual, live and reproduced, which is not one of filiation but one of alliance. This is what Deleuze would identify as the moment of becoming because the alliance confronts the need to release the work from what he terms 'ownership'. A position exemplified in the above discussion of the relationship between *Beach Birds* and *Beach Birds For Camera*. Similarly in respect of *Biped* many accounts of the work refer to the relationship between the virtual and the live body but retreat to discuss this collaboration in terms of its essence - the dancing body. Effectively the virtual image and the dancing bodies are treated as if they are both of the same nature but imagined under opposite circumstances thereby maintaining the opposition between dance and technology. But the relation between the two needs addressing because it is in this relation that a 'zone of indistinction' is produced as the live becomes virtual (through the techniques of motion capture and animation), and the virtual becomes live (in the relations of juxtaposition between the two media).

For Deleuze, becoming is first a psychotic procedure and secondly, a device that is capable of inducing an effect in an audience. The first procedure refers to the stylistic devices and techniques that the choreographer delineates in order for the work to draw attention to itself. How procedures then turn into devices Deleuze discusses in terms of the concept of stuttering which he argues is a mode of composition and affect. The combination between form of expression and form of content, which can have different levels of intensity, causes both aspects to open out in ways that are not always intelligible, into a zone of indiscernibility.

The form of expression that characterises *Biped* is the relation between virtual projections and live dance which in their juxtaposition demand that the audience make connections between devices and techniques that have seemed independent such as, motion/movement, and technologically produced movement/ danced movement. These are procedures that draw attention to the work itself. Consequently the juxtaposition between virtual images that dance and dance images that become virtual produce a quality in the work that dances.

Inevitably dance as a body of techniques and a body of works has certain means at its disposal to draw attention to itself and in Cunningham's works these include style of movement, motion capture, life forms, and aleatory choreographic devices. All are contextualised in their development by other choreographers, artists, works, art forms etc. But to enable the dancing body to become this dancing body, and for dance to become this dance work a series of decompositions need to take place. This is precisely a point that Kaiser stresses when discussing the making of *Biped* whereby techniques of motion capture and animation effect a series of decompositions that render the dancing body a virtual dancing image. What happens in this process is that form is maintained as structuring (the form of the biped, the form of Cunningham's style of movement, the form of the virtual and the real) but this doesn't have to depotentiate the other changes in the work that may take place in respect of them. Therefore, although issues being explored and the ways that they are explored relate to the specific needs of the choreographer and the motion capture and animation technicians, they also relate to the needs of dance and society as a whole.

For Deleuze art is a collective expression that is always indirect, it is always mediated, it needs the compositional and inflectional markers that, in this case, subject the movements of the body to intrinsic determinations. But as I have argued previously dance is also conditioned by external determinations - aesthetic, historical, political etc. Consequently all art must always imply collective assemblages and as such cannot be reduced to individuated statements or determined subjects.

Moreover Deleuze argues that the radical potential of art is that through the agency of certain procedures it can move beyond the limits of both generality and particularity to an order of becoming thereby confronting fixed limits of thinking that sustain an addiction to conventionally prescribed views of what dancing is within postmodernity. The artist then has a choice of three paths to follow. They can cling on to old ways of thinking or produce an alternative but fail to confront the underlying sustaining logic. In both cases the artist would be staying safely within the known. Or they could break open the system of representation into a broader expanse. A question that must be asked in relation to *Biped* is does this work merely broaden

the limits of what constitutes dance and thus remain firmly within the limits that are prescribed by our culture, or does it break open the familiar as a response to the specific conditions of contemporary society?

From this perspective the compositional procedures of *Biped* that juxtapose the real and the virtual can be read as questioning the strategic representational relation between certain conditions - the hierarchical and oppositional relationship between art/science, between nature and culture. The work then becomes an expression of these conditions as a response to the specific conditions of global capitalism. However, the Deleuzian concept of stuttering breaks the culturally legitimated connection between concepts, images, and sequences of images and in so doing problematizes the relations between them. By drawing attention to the limits of both the general and the particular - of dance and this dance, of technology and this use of technology, of the material body and this use of the material body - the act of stuttering makes strange the relation between them. Thus <u>Biped</u> could be seen to be stuttering because it estranges the familiar, not to broaden its boundaries but to let its structuring relations move beyond a zone of indistinction to a world of becoming. In this respect it could be seen as performative in that it actualises in the body and through the images and signs of live dance and virtual dance images a means whereby the conventional and the familiar in respect of both exist in a zone of disequilibrium. The consequence being that in *Biped* in the juxtaposition between dance and technology familiar and conventional ideas that are legitimated about both from within in the dominant systems of representation are set in motion to challenge, if not transform, political, cultural and epistemological schemas. Thus to discuss *Biped* from a Deleuzian perspective gives to the work a global scope because stuttering is an effect that is produced at the level of systems of thought and at the level of their aesthetic usage. In this sense by disrupting various conventions *Biped* constructs a view of the collaboration between dance and technology as an environment that consists of diverse constitutive relationships that correspond to contemporaneous ways of thinking about movement, space and time. Thus it articulates a history of the present.

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"Marketable Radicalness" and the Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in Examples of American Post-Modern Dance

(or How Subversiveness Sells and Those Without Sneakers Pay for It)

Jane Scott-Barrett

In recent years there has been a growing body of writing that is critical of post-modernism. This paper adopts some of these perspectives in a review of aspects of post-modern dance.

The paper attempts to identify ways in which post-modern dance may be aligned to the capitalist production of desire. The paper proposes a concept of "Marketable Radicalness" i.e. that subversiveness in post-modern dance sells and is sold. The paper addresses how this process maybe viewed as utilising an exploitative manipulation of dance identities, framing those not radical as defunct, and articulates this process as racially inflected. Finally the paper moves to consider the dichotomy that post-modernism rejects teleology and difference whilst being defined and validated in relation to it. The paper will consider how the post-modern use of time and plurality might manifest in a forgetting and over writing of histories and difference in a way that forwards America as the proper guardian of the world's cultures, and as part of a system of economic Imperialism. In this way the paper offers some perimeters for some of the claims of post-modern dance as, for instance, plural, democratic, anti-capitalist and so on.

The intention of the paper is to offer possible and contingent perspectives on post-modern dance, which seem under represented within the discourse, and not to overwrite or repudiate post-modern dance. Indeed, the celebratory tone of much writing on post-modern dance may be borne of a perspective that it occupies a marginal position in the arts and thus requires advocacy. However, given the growing body of writing, which is critical of post-modernism, to not address this might, in the end, fuel marginalisation. The paper focuses on the work of Sally Banes, whose contribution to writing on dance, and post-modern dance especially, is outstanding, and seems driven by a deep egalitarianism. Some limits are suggested for this egalitarianism, but the intention is not to denigrate Banes' contribution. Such specific examples are not offered as definitive, but they may be abstracted and applied to other examples by readers and, in this, the scope of usefulness (or otherwise) of the ideas may be tested.

On, then, to the arguments for and against post-modernism.

In Tim Woods (1999) book entitled *Beginning Postmodernism* and Peter Barry's (1995) book *Beginning Theory* the authors outline the debates re: post-modernism as a broad cultural condition and set of artistic concerns, and as radical and/or neo-conservative.

They state that, for fans of postmodernism, such as Charles Jenks, Jean Baudrillard, Jean-Francois Lyotard and so on, the death of the master narratives of the Enlightenment and modernity *as reality* opens up a creative space for new existences. If gender is a construct then it follows it may be deconstructed and reconstructed anew and similarly for race, class, history, morality and so on.

For those who challenge post-modernism such as, for instance, Frederic Jameson, Jurgen Habermas, Christopher Norris, the basic concerns are that, in the absence of the validity of the notion of any "good", such reconstructions are meaningless and possibly even dangerous. Whilst the white supremacist patriarchal agenda of the Enlightenment project and modernity have been exposed and trashed by post-modernism, so the associated project's of egalitarianism have also been undermined. Whilst weapons of oppression in the form of, for example, universal truths, the binary etc. have been exposed as impossible, so have resistance movements also been disarmed. If truth, progress and unity have gone, it follows it is not possible to unite to fight badness in the world. For many of these critics, the amoral relativism and political cynicism of post-modernism aid and abet the rise of market capitalism which is a badness in the world. For critics, such as Frederic Jameson, the enemy was never modernism but capitalism.

Susan Bordo in her (1993) book entitled *Unbearable Weight: feminism, western culture and the body*, states post-modernity in academia has resulted in a pre-requisite of plurality. This, she states, goes beyond the realms of human experience, to a transcendental "view from everywhere" that shares a complexion with the Enlightenment fantasy of objectivity, "a view from nowhere", especially when in the hands of largely white male academics. This is a plurality that is possessed by the few. She calls for the situated voices of the Others in academia and the reinstatement of duality if it is useful in exposing power (ibid. pp. 215-243). A dualistic world is created in this paper to this end.

So then, how might post-modern dance be read as aiding and abetting capitalism? In order to consider this, it may first be helpful to attempt to understand consumerism.

In his 1997 book entitled *The Consuming Body* author Pasi Falk develops a profile of twentieth century individualism as axiomatic with consumerism. Falk presents the modern identity as based in an individualism that simultaneously creates a desire for a utopian collective self, a completion - a separateness that longs for a deep consummation with sameness, in an environment in which separateness (individualism) is prioritised. Consuming thus oscillates between expressions of difference and sameness in an irresolvable dichotomy. This is how the modern self may be seen as capable of limitless desire, how consumerism might be viewed as a meaningful response to individualism, and the search for completion understood as the driving force of capitalism.

Falk states that advertising attempts, over and over again, representations of the unrepresentable utopia, the completion, the good, that the individual lacks and thus desires, whether this is the good to be imitated, the good to be individuated by, the now as lack or the future as utopia.

Whilst Falk draws, in part, upon the theories of Lacan, and the above may seem over familiar, he offers this model of the self as a product of modernity and draws upon anthropological sources to indicate pre-modern and alternative identities based in a group or collective self. He, incidentally, eschews associations such language might have to notions of civilised/uncivilised societies.

So does post-modern dance generate lack and desire? In order to consider this it may be useful to examine how washing powder products are typically produced and sold utilising lack and desire, and compare this with examples of post-modern dance practice and discourse.

This production of desire might be said to begin with the creation of products that have an "oppositionality" to current products. For example, most soap powders may be poured into a compartment in the machine away from the drum. A new product may be designed and marketed in response to this by being formed into blocks which, are placed inside the drum. Thus the new product is made in order to be different from the old. In this process the identity of the old product is often, it seems, *reduced* to those features the new product is, or wishes to be, in opposition to. In the washing powder example, adverts for the new product may *define* the old product in terms of its conventional route to the wash. Any other features the old product may possess, such as being biodegradable and/or effective in lifting stains, might be removed from the frame or "forgotten".

Similarly, *Trio A* was formed (systematically) to create difference from existing modes of dance and visual art production. A range of writings on post-modern dance share common explanations of post-modern dance as in opposition to ballet and modern dance. For instance, Banes' (1980) (1994) Burt's (2000) and Johnston (1971/ 1998). In these accounts, ballet and modern dance are identified as product orientated utilising hierarchical working structures, highly trained bodies and pursuing status as high art, which in turn includes formal purification. Post-modern dance is then identified as different to this in that it utilises collaborative and improvisatory processes of dance making, foreground's process over product, crosses high/low and art form boundaries and includes non-dancers.

However, this, it seems, is a constructed difference, which relies on reductive definitions of ballet and modern dance. Considering examples of ballet and modern dance, which use collaborative processes, improvisation structures, foreground process over product and so on, may illuminate this point. For example, Jane Pritchard's paper (2000) entitled *"Collaborative Creations for the Alhambra and Empire"*, focuses on the collaborative working methods in the production of ballets for these London theatres in the nineteenth century. Pritchard also explains the popular art status of the works and their multidisciplinary nature. In Valerie Preston Dunlop's (1998) book entitled *Laban: an extraordinary life*, Dunlop outlines Laban's *Bewegungskunst*, a philosophy and practice of improvising for the sole purpose of experiencing movement, with no connotative and/or performance purpose, and designed for and practised by dancers and non-dancers alike.

Back to the soap powder parallel and the production of desire. This reductive, constructed, difference must be articulated as one in which the features of the old product are framed as "lack" so that the new product may be perceived as in opposition to "lack" and therefore "desirable" i.e. the new product must be constructed as "new and improved". For instance, advertising accompanying the new washing powder product might suggest that it is *better* to put powder into the drum. In *Terpsichore in Sneakers*, Banes (1980) suggests that, as post-modern dance reveals the artefact to us, we may refuse to be seduced by mere skill (ibid. p.17). Similarly, release work may be "sold" as "good for you" more successfully, if "traditional techniques" can be framed as "bad for you".

For the production of desire to be profitable this process must be repeated, turned over. This belief in the "new and improved" must be momentary, able to shift to the next "new and improved". This must be rationalised to be sustained which, is possible if located within the notion of progress/development - in the "new" new and improved. In the case of washing powders, this developmental scenario is often framed by the concept of technological advancement, that the "lack" is scientifically proven and so is the effect of the "new and improved". Post-modern dance too, is often explained and endorsed with teleology. For instance *Terpsichore* begins with "to Americans today, modern art already seems old fashioned" (Banes) (1980. p.1). In *Writing Dancing in the Age of Post-modernism*, (1994) Banes explains that, though post-modern dance once de-

clared an oppositional stance to ballet, it now includes ballet. She explains this as the newest developments in post-modern dance and redefines the previous (oppositional) version as modern. Banes articulates this seeming discontinuity as exemplification of progress in post-modern dance's inherent democracy, in the form of an ever-increasing inclusiveness manifest in aesthetic eclecticism. Aesthetic eclecticism becomes the "new" new and improved (see for instance pp 301-310).

This turn over may be further enhanced and desire increased if the product is seen to be *significant* to progress, as revolutionary, radical. This revolutionary status, implying a paradigm shift, is interdependent with the notion of a "status quo". Therefore the very idea of "hegemony" and "other" may also assist the production of desire. Washing powder "developments" may be described as revolutionary new concepts in cleaning. Similarly, Banes describes *Trio A* in *Terpsichore* as "Violating nearly every canon of classic dance conventions (both ballet and modern)....to create an entirely new mode of dance." (1980 p.44). The hegemonies may be ambiguous in their actual status as dominant. Their hierarchical, developmental status, in the imagination of the consumer, is, however, helpful in this production of desire. For many Americans in the 1960's *The Mashed Potato* may have been a more influential dance form than ballet or Graham. The illusion of these canons as perpetuated in the above quote, however, upholds the teleology on which such post-modern dance discourse depends for its status as significant.

So in this way post-modern dance may be seen to be framing the post-modern as desirable and other dance forms as lacking in ways that are parallel to the production and selling of washing powder. Post-modern dance discourse and practice may thus be viewed as operating as an art supplement-generator, creating art excess for consumers, developing a status as "radical" as marketable, and creating exploitative and reductive identities for ballet and modern dance in the process – "Marketable Radicalness". But how may this be racially inflected?

bell hooks in her (1990) book entitled *Yearning: race, gender and cultural politics*, is ambivalent about post-modernism, seeing its dangers and potentials. On the positive side she sees its potential to disrupt essentialist notions of identity, on the negative she identifies post-modernism in academia as policed by white "gatekeepers" (ibid. pp. 129) in the form of censors and publishers.

hooks also states:

"Folks who are concerned with preserving stereotypical identities can be most vicious in their condemnation of someone as not "black". Still, confronting these stereotypical forces.....is not nearly as frustrating as confrontation with the white avant-garde in politically charged cultural contexts in which they seek to appropriate and

usurp radical efforts to subvert static notions of identity. Such appropriation ...... takes the form of constructing African-American culture as though it exists solely to suggest new aesthetic and political directions white folks might move in."

(ibid. p21)

"Current trends in avant-garde cultural production by white people which presume to challenge the status quo regarding race and gender are ethically and politically problematic. While it is exciting to witness a pluralism that enables everyone to have access to the use of certain imagery, we must not ignore the consequences when images are manipulated to appear "different" while reinforcing stereotypes and oppressive structures of domination......White avant-garde artists must be willing to openly interrogate work which they or critics cast as liberatory or oppositional. That means they must consider the role whiteness plays in the construction of their identity and aesthetic visions, as well as the way it determines reception of their work."

(ibid. pp. 171)

Examples of how post-modern dance discourse correlates to the above quotes may be revealed by examining examples of post-modern dance's relationship to social, popular and commercial forms of dance, and again with reference to Banes.

Banes excludes Twyla Tharp from *Terpsichore* on the grounds that her work with popular dance forms is not within an "avant-garde context" (1980 p.19). In Chapter 2 of *Writing Dancing...*(1994) Banes responds to a criticism levelled at "early post-modern" dance (the work of Judson in 1970's, which Banes redefines, in later chapters, as modern) by Monroe Beardsley. In the defence of "early post-modern" dance Banes delineates it from social dance and concretises her argument by claiming a shared "genealogy" with modern visual art (ibid. p. 13). There is an egalitarian trace in Banes' call, she wants to de-mystify modern art, but in this, she is still concerned for the work to gain art status and as distinct from social, popular or commercial dance. Similarly to forward post-modern dance as revolutionary in its use of improvisation and collaboration, as Banes (1980) (1994), Burt (2000) and Johnstone (1971/98) have done, requires removal from the frame of discourse, the communal jamming of social dances such as the Lindy Hop. So it would seem that while the emergence of aesthetic eclecticism might be constructed as democratic it operates as distinct from popular, commercial and social dance, and as validated by its connections with high art modernism. It follows that, if the values of high art modernism have been "outed" as a

white supremacist patriarchal agenda, Banes is happier for post-modern dance to be associated to it than to popular forms. This racially inflects the discourse.

Writing Dancing (Banes) (1994) includes a series of chapters on break dancing. Here Banes goes into the Bronx to "discover" the dancing within hip hop that even the young kids doing it fail to appreciate as important. Banes relays how her "find" launched the Rock Steady Crew to stardom, and then bemoans the resultant "denigration" of the form into a commercialised version that loses its authenticity and meaning (ibid. pp. 121-159).

In another chapter Banes identifies ethnography as offering access to the dances of non-Euro-American cultures and these as offering rejuvantive potential for a flagging avant-garde (bid. pp. 16-24). Loosing the authenticity of breaking, it would seem, for these purposes would not be a problem.

It is debatable, when viewed from this perspective, whether Trio A in Tap Shoes broke high/low art divides as Burt (2000) suggests, or entrenched them at the expense of Tap for the advancement of post-modernism. From this perspective it would seem, that post-modern dance eclecticism operates an appearance of plurality while deliberately retaining high/low art divides. It would be a questionable plurality that is first shaped by the concerns of post-modern dances' production of itself as desirable. In these conditions it seems that the very existence of a distinguishable post-modern dance movement may indicate a lack of plurality, stand as an emblem of dominance, a dance version of Custer's last stand guarding the fortress of high art culture. Any lack of plurality is not offset by representing the dances of those excluded by this system, if those dances are then evaluated from the perspective of a white post-modern aesthetic predatory. There is also an irony in drawing distinctions between post-modern and commercial dance when post-modern dance operates a "Marketable Radicalness". In the above examples, Banes could be said to be operating as a white gatekeeper, promoting a plurality owned by the few.

How does this relate to American Imperialism?

Zaiuddin Sardar in his (1999) book Postmodernism and the Other: The New Imperialism of Western Culture brings a global perspective to the issue. He articulates how post-modernism supports Western Economic Imperialism but identifies American Economic Imperialism as the most developed and pervasive. He identifies that linear developmental models of time operate to place the West, and in this America especially, at the forefront of time and everyone else in a non-time (ibid. see for instance p. 198). I note that, whilst post-modernism might have claimed the end of time, post-modern discourse uses teleology, so it would seem the end of time is not applicable to post-modernism - but for any one else's use of time. The effect is not merely the end of time, it would seem, but to place post-modernism permanently at the front of time pulling the ladder up behind it.

Sardar articulates eclecticism as an eradication of Otherness, which, when combined with the forgetting and overwriting of history and placement of America at the forefront of a developmental time model, constructs a Pax Americana – a dreamscape of America as the proper guardian of the world's cultures, their pasts and futures, as the only true location of freedom and democracy.

In order to illuminate his point he demonstrates how the method of over writing the history of Matoaka (Pocahontas) by British colonisers, and the emblems used, are recycled and reoriented in Disney's cartoon film version of the myth but to the same end.

Sardar explains how the British wrote the myth of Pocahontas, her love of Christianity and her colonisers, in order to perpetuate a sense of rightness in colonising. Sardar refers to historical documents written by Captain John Smith and his contemporaries to delineate between this over writing of this history and the reality of colonisation. Pocahontas was actually married to a colonist John Rolfe following a policy of settlement laid down by the Virginia Company to expand Jamestown by "securing" a number of Indian children for Christian Education. Pocahontas was already married but forcibly removed from her tribe as part of this settlement policy after a number of her people had been killed and their homes burned by John Dale, one of John Smith's contemporaries, and his men. Much of early European iconography depicted America as a nubile woman with long tresses in languorous and wanton repose, ready, states Sardar, to be husbanded by Europe.

In the Disney version both Indians and colonisers are equally bad in their use of racial stereotypes. Thus the term savage, argues Sardar, becomes a universal term and dominance a matter of chance. The love story is maintained and Pocahontas is updated as active in her desires for John Smith, recycling the images of wanton America perpetuated by British Imperialism. Sardar comments this is the equivalent of portraying the young Anne Frank as in love with an SS officer. The act of love, in which Pocahontas lays down her head for the life of John Smith, is reciprocated in the Disney version, by him jumping in front of a flying bullet to protect her. John Smith stands in opposition to another character in the film, John Ratcliffe. Ratcliffe is greedy for gold, he stakes the Union Flag, he is fat and effete – he is Europe. John Smith is by contrast rebellious to Ratcliffe's authority, acquires an understanding of the indigenous culture, and intervenes to protect their interests. John Smith represents, in this film, the new and just future of the America to come, under the good coloniser.

Sardar points out that in both the British and American colonial over writings of Pocahontas, the voices of Matoaka and her people are nowhere to be found. They are lost forgotten, appropriated, distorted, as part of a

project of colonial self- aggrandisement (ibid. pp. 87-110).

But, again, how does this relate to American Economic Imperialism?

Naomi Klein in her (2000) book entitled *No Logo* maps the expansion of American corporate monopolies and their accompanying advertising techniques. Corporations have shifted from product promotion to branding. This involves the creation of a utopian concept which is then projected onto a range of products which are synergised so as to make it possible to conduct a totally branded life style, the ultimate of which might be said to be the Disney town of Celebration in Florida. This, she states, represents a branding of all space, internal and external, a serfdom under feudal "brandlords" (ibid. p. 149).

Klein articulates how, in 1992 market researchers realised that for the first time since 1975 the youth population had increased. They shifted their attention accordingly and away from their previous target group of baby boomers. Youth culture was to be branded and the utopia to be sold was "cool". This exploited the deep economic and racial divisions of America. It appropriated black style to sell to white kids fantasising about black style. It added white affluence to poor black style in order to sell it back to black kids fantasising about white affluence. This process of branding youth culture could appropriate youth politics, which included oppositional or radical stances, the positive representation of diversity both racial and sexual, and preservation of the ecology. This happened to correspond with market research, which identified the global teen.

The global teen represented the global scale of the triumph of market capitalism. The research revealed that, whether in China, America or Italy, teens wear Nike, eat McDonalds and smell of CK One (or if they do not, they want to). Thus advertising images incorporating images of cultural (and sexual) diversity in collage form offered a utopian concept for the youth market and the opportunity to sell one product globally through one image (increasing profitability). Roll on the Benetton, Gap, Nike and CK One adverts, the camp of Diesel ads, and Starbucks eco-feel.

Again, the images present a *Pax Americana* in which the voices of the Others have been eradicated and their experiences overwritten and appropriated for colonial self-aggrandisement disguised as plurality. This masks the destructive forces of corporate capitalism on many people's lives. The whole world should be glad to welcome Starbucks, McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken into their towns as emblems of a happy new process under the good coloniser. They should ignore the contribution such places make in the form of poor food, excessive rubbish, lousy pay and the death of local businesses that may offer alternatives. And the whole world can trust that American corporations will not exploit Philippino factory workers, after all Nike and Tiger Woods are one and the same.

Merely demanding fair representations of diversity or focusing on the personal as political, states Klein, is no longer a sufficiently political act. Sardar (1999) states that post-modernism's celebration of itself as promoting the possibility for fluid identities is a narcissism that ignores that for some in the world there is not even the chance to decide whether or not to live at all (ibid. p 20). He states that the creation of fluid identities actually requires equivalence between the parties involved (ibid. p. 38).

In this context it would seem that "blanket" claims of post-modern dance as plural, democratic and anti-commodity, need to be reviewed. Perhaps ending and over writing history, killing reality, and declaring improvisation and aesthetic eclecticism is revolutionary and plural, might be tempered by consideration of whether this constitutes a free promotion of *Pax Americana*, consuming the very souls of those who are not represented on their own terms in the discourse. Perhaps there is a need within dance criticism and practice to attempt to move to a more careful consideration of the politics being perpetuated, to delineate between politically meaningful and politically cynical work, to identify who is scripting the discourse and on what terms. A similar call seems to be emerging, in part, in Alan Murdoch's (2000) *Criticisms Deficit: The Misapplication of Modernism and Post-modernism in American Dance*, and Colin Counsell's (1996) *Signs of Performance: an introduction to twentieth century theatre*, (ibid. pp 207-231). If Jenks, Lyotard and Baudrillard declare egalitarianism as modernist nonsense, perhaps the status of "postmodern" is not a desirable one to pursue anymore.

Both Sardar (1999) and hooks (1990) constantly call for a sense of history, place, and community identity as sites and means of resistance to postmodernism's destructive forces. Such a call seems strengthened by Falk's topology of the modern self as consuming as axiomatic with individualism and his identification of alternatives in group-self identities. Perhaps here there is some hope.

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Matrons and Patrons: Behind the Scenes in Three Canadian Ballet Companies

Cheryl Smith

Over the last twenty years, dance scholarship has just exploded into all kinds of new areas, with dance historians looking much more carefully at our heroes and icons, at the relationship between nationalism and dance, and at the role of gender and sexual preference in dance. One approach that particularly intrigued me was that of Lynn Garafola in her monograph, Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, in which Garafola pays as much attention to the business and the audience of the Ballets Russes as she does to its art.[1] What emerges is a much fuller portrait of an artistic enterprise, a sense of its financial precariousness and its changing audience and how these two factors shaped what went on stage.

I felt a similar kind of research could be done for three of Canada's most influential professional ballet companies. Taking a broad, social approach, I investigated the founding of the companies in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal. Who was behind them, and why did they get involved? Why were all the founders women? And was there, I wondered, some kind of model for starting up a cultural institution in the new world? With these questions in mind, I will be discussing the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. I want to leave you with the stories of the key people. But I also want to leave you with a sense of context, an understanding of the way these organizations were built in a certain social setting, a time and a place. Then I will conclude with some observations about building cultural organizations in Canada.

The founders of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet were Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally, two English dance teachers who came to Canada in 1938. Gweneth Lloyd was born in 1901, and from the beginning she loved to dance. She took "fancy dancing" lessons from local teachers through her childhood, but her family did not consider dance to be a respectable profession, so she became a physical education teacher, one of the more promising careers available to women at the time.[2] Lloyd grew up during an exciting time for young women—the fight for the vote was won in 1918; women were being accepted into the universities and professions; and 19th century corsets and long skirts were giving way to more practical, comfortable clothing.

After a few years as a gym teacher, Lloyd became interested in Ruby Ginner's Revived Greek Dancing and returned to London to study dance (of all types) more seriously. She opened a dance school in Leeds in 1927. The school thrived, but ten years later Lloyd was looking for a new challenge. Along with one of her fellow teachers, Betty Farrally, she set out for the prairie city at the center of Canada—Winnipeg.

The two women came to Winnipeg to establish a dance school like the one in Leeds—and indeed they did—but they formed a small amateur performing group as well. It was called the Winnipeg Ballet Club. The Club's early in-studio performances brought together a small group of Winnipeggers who would quite quickly produce professional quality work, and continue to do so at no charge, for the next ten years. The members of this group were the young dancers, who came to the studio each evening after school or work; John Russell, a youthful professor of architecture at the university who went on to design and build most of the early sets; David Yeddeau, a multi-talented theatre man, who did design, publicity, tour management, make-up, and ticket sales; Constance Sinden, an expert seamstress and wardrobe mistress; and finally, Lady Margaret Tupper and Mrs. Muriel Richardson, two art lovers who gave money and used their social connections. These people were the core of the Winnipeg Ballet organization through the early years.

The level of voluntary work was quite remarkable. Lloyd and Farrally's salaries were paid through their school; Russell designed sets on his own time and had them constructed by his students for class credit; costumes were cut and sewn by volunteer seamstresses; dancers were rewarded only with a chance to perform and an order of Chinese food if the rehearsals went especially late. This remarkable web of volunteers was held together by the great charm of Lloyd and Farrally, the friendship between many of the collaborators, and by the desire for a fun, challenging, creative outlet.

And what did this team produce? All the early choreography was by Gweneth Lloyd, and the programmes were accessible mixed repertoire. Throughout the 1940s, the group created short comedy/dramas, white ballets, and modern works for their performances. Lloyd and the group made 32 original ballets over 15 years.

Beyond Winnipeg, another Canadian company was being formed during the late 1940s and early 1950s. The National Ballet of Canada gave its inaugural performance in Toronto in 1951, in the wake of two great historical waves: the first was a growing interest in ballet throughout the English-speaking world. The Red Shoes movie had been released in 1948 to great acclaim; Broadway and

Hollywood musicals were in their golden years and most used ballet-trained dancers. The Sadler's Wells did a series of hugely successful tours in North America in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Dozens of ballet books were published. Even the fashions of the time were influenced by ballet—the silhouette of that period's dresses was very much like a long tutu, and ballet slipper-type shoes were popular footwear. During the late 1940s, touring ballet companies were selling out two weeks of shows at the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, where only ten years earlier, they had been hard pressed to sell two or three nights; only New York and Chicago supported longer runs.[3] The Canadian Ballet Festivals were surprisingly successful too. These amateur Festivals had begun in Winnipeg in 1948, and welcomed dancers from across Canada. In its second year, the Festival sold out two weeks of performances at a premier Toronto theatre.

The second great wave was the growth of Canadian cultural nationalism. After the Second World War, Canadians felt they could be one of the world's great nations, economically, politically, and culturally. Many national cultural organizations, including the Canada Council, were established during the 1950s. The National Ballet's founders were a part of this larger movement to national institutions.

The time was ripe for a professional company in Toronto, but surprisingly, the founders were not choreographers or dance teachers; they were three well-to-do Toronto clubwomen. Aileen Woods, Pearl Whitehead, and Sydney Mulqueen began planning a national company after the great success of the 1949 Canadian Ballet Festival. They were further motivated by the excitement over the Sadler's Wells' performances in Toronto later that year, and at that time they went to see Ninette de Valois, the director of the Sadler's Wells. In time, de Valois recommended a young English dancer named Celia Franca, whom she described as, "probably the best dramatic dancer the Wells has ever had."[4]

Celia Franca was born in 1921 in London, England. She began dancing at the age of four, eventually winning scholarships in both dance and music which permitted her to attend the best possible schools. Franca began working professionally at 14, and went on to dance with Ballet Rambert, Sadler's Wells, and Ballet Jooss, among others. By all accounts, she had tremendous talent, a combination of a "perfect choreographic memory," a thorough understanding of music, and a genius for anything dramatic. She was a petite, charming and yet formidable young woman in 1950 when she accepted an invitation to come to the 3rd Canadian Ballet Festival. Although she was disappointed in the technical level of the dancers, she saw potential and agreed to return to Canada. In November 1951, the National Ballet gave its opening performance, less than a year after Franca's return to Canada.

From the outset, Franca's policy was to have a repertoire based on the classics, "recognized masterpieces, works by which audience and critics could judge you."[5] She rejected a repertoire that was tailored to suit the present facilities and skills. In the first few years, the company danced classical excerpts and full company classics like Coppelia, Les Sylphides, Giselle, and Nutcracker, as well as new, short Canadian ballets, and the works of contemporary English choreographers.

From the earliest months, the National Ballet's community side was strong. The Board of Directors worked for months before the arrival of Franca or the dancers, writing to potential sponsors and government bodies. Still, they had little to show for their efforts, and the needs became urgent: a company of this size was expensive, especially since all the dancers and staff were to be professional from the outset. As a national company, they needed to have supporters across Canada, not just in and around Toronto. To address both these needs, the women began setting up Guilds in every major Canadian city; these Guilds raised funds and provided a "soft landing" for the company when it visited, often handling accommodations, publicity, ticket sales, and receptions. In their own communities, these Guild members used their existing corporate and philanthropic connections on behalf of the National Ballet. They provided the company with regular infusions of cash and did much of the administrative work during the early years, when all available funds had to be put toward the art.

If cultural nationalism was critical in the founding and survival of the National Ballet, it was also important in the founding of Montreal's Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. However, rather than Canadian cultural nationalism, this was a case of French-Canadian cultural nationalism, a great social movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s which is now called Quebec's Quiet Revolution. The history of LGBC is tied to this social movement.

Let's begin with a little background on French Canada. Montreal had a fairly healthy dance scene during the 1940s – there were a number of very good teachers whose students went on to dance in New York and elsewhere. There were some very interesting modern dancers. Professional ballet groups sometimes came through Montreal, but the leading local ballet group had folded in the early 1950s after losing its best dancers to Celia Franca's new Toronto company.

The province of Quebec, where Montreal is located, was a conservative place in the 1930s and 1940s. The provincial government and the Roman Catholic church played powerful roles in the society. However, a great social revolution was underway, the first shot of which was fired in 1948 in a manifesto called the "Refus Global" (Total Refusal). Written by the painter Paul Emile Borduas and signed by a number of other artists, the manifesto protested against the "suffocating" strictures of church and

state in Quebec. The Refus Global did not seem to have a huge impact at that moment, but it was a harbinger of the social unrest during the 1950s and the changes of the 1960s.

In late 1951, Ludmilla Chiriaeff arrived in Montreal. She was born in Latvia in 1924 into an aristocratic family who had had to flee Russia during the Revolution of 1917. She grew up in Berlin in a community of expatriate Russians, surrounded by musicians, writers, dancers, and even the choreographer Michel Fokine. She danced and taught professionally for several years in Berlin and Geneva and finally decided to immigrate to Canada. She arrived in Montreal in the depths of winter, with her husband, two young children, and nine months pregnant with her third.

After a chance encounter with a young television producer, Chiriaeff began performing and choreographing for a small group of dancers on CBC television under the name Les Ballets Chiriaeff. CBC TV was in its infancy then, and Chiriaeff's group adapted itself to find work on children's, variety, and highbrow musical concert shows. They danced elegant classic works to the music of great composers, and at other times, story ballets using well-known French Canadian folk heroes, or commedia dell arte; it was eclectic, but its roots were in European folk culture. The company thereby developed a unique character, with many of its ballets closely allied to French Canada.

This focus was not an accident. One of Chiriaeff's key producers at CBC was Pierre Mercure, an avant-garde composer and musician. Like many of his fellow producers at the French CBC television, Mercure did not have a producing background; he was an artist. He enjoyed bringing artists of various disciplines together to collaborate on works of art for the live Montreal scene, and this was just what he did in his new position at CBC too. He had significant connections to the artists who had signed the Refus Global manifesto, and he believed passionately that artists had a role to play in the transformation of their society. Mercure introduced Chiriaeff to a whole host of Quebec designers, musicians, dancers, storytellers, painters, and composers, and Chiriaeff became enthralled by and deeply devoted to the French Canadian culture of her adopted society.

In Winnipeg, Lloyd and Farrally had gathered a group of friends and collaborators and slowly built up; in Toronto, a network of well-placed citizens hustled for the ballet; in Montreal, Ludmilla Chiriaeff had no equal group of "practical patrons." The Montreal company was founded in a more European, institutional mold. Chiriaeff's administrative structure was the French CBC itself – they gave her a budget, built her sets, supplied collaborators, decided on the space and the musical accompaniment. It was a good start for someone with few resources. She tried to speak to, and take inspiration

from, French Canada, but because of her circumstances at CBC, she had comparatively little of the community/volunteer groups that the other two companies did. Rather, Chiriaeff's company was founded under the wing of a large government-funded institution. Later on, her associations with other government institutions would be significant again.

Around the mid-1950s, Chiriaeff did a couple of live performances with her troupe, and much to her surprise, the media and others exclaimed at how pleased they were to have a ballet company that they didn't even know they had! Television in those days was not so omnipresent as it is today, and at first many people refused to get a TV because it was considered too lowbrow. So the highbrow audience, the audience that would actually come out and pay for a live performance—many hadn't even heard of her. In any case, she was becoming exhausted with the demands of producing so much choreography for television, so she decided to launch a live performing company, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. Outside the CBC, she slowly built up the administrative and community side of her organization, but she still relied a great deal on CBC work, on grants from the city and provincial government, and eventually on federal assistance. She continued working with many of the collaborators she had encountered at the CBC, and placed great emphasis on representing French Canada.

In Canada, little has been written about the patrons, those who stood behind the founders of the country's three largest ballet companies. Canadian ballet lovers had to establish their organizations and keep them running without the help of large-scale government funding, sometimes for just a few years, but in one case for nearly twenty years before the founding of a national arts funding body, the Canada Council. Yet for all the volunteer work and money that was given by those behind the scenes, surprisingly little was known about who was involved, what they did, and why they did it.

The "practical patronage" model found in English Canada was, in time, overtaken by the professional model for arts organizations, with a clear separation between artists, managers, and patrons. The Canadian government became the arts' largest patron, using an arms-length model, and supporting existing organizations rather than founding and shaping its own. Only after the arts groups were well established was state support offered. Arts organizations had to have a foothold in their communities and that was what the practical patrons provided; it was an intermediate solution on the way to fully professional groups. The groups that waited for public money did not survive; the ones that took an entrepreneurial, "plunge ahead" approach were the ones who were in place when government funding began to flow.

I now have some general observations about the founding of these Canadian cultural organizations.

"Free Trade"

One unexpected finding was the role of U.S. "patronage" in Canadian organizations. This was not patronage from wealthy individuals. I would argue that the whole concept of patronage must be stretched to include the supporting infrastructures which the Canadian companies found in the North American marketplace. Canadian dancers could "stay" in Canada, because U.S. agents booked the Canadian companies on long American tours. At the time, Canada had few suitable theatres and the companies could not afford to travel the long distances between the Canadian cities. Then, when the Canadian companies _did_ have to lay off their dancers for a few months every year, the dancers often went and made their living, again, by dancing in the U.S.. U.S. foundations sponsored new Canadian ballets during the 1950s, and leading U.S. dance organizations such as the New York City Ballet gave the Canadian groups new ballets and sometimes access to great teachers. Influential U.S. critics gave Canadian groups objective, mostly encouraging reviews. American volunteer women were well organized, and at least one of the key Canadian women, Pearl Whitehead, had attended conferences of women volunteers in the U.S. to learn about fund raising techniques. These associations, although hardly a ripple in the U.S., were a great help to young Canadian groups.

The Canadian groups also benefited from changes in U.S. touring patterns. During the 1950s and 1960s, newly constructed theatres and touring circuits were bringing the arts to a mass audience. The key to this mass audience was the college campus impresario, who booked arts programs for students and staff. The Canadian companies, and particularly the National Ballet, did long tours every season of these college towns. Of course, performers still went to New York and Chicago, but there was a whole second tier of venues and audiences offered by college towns.

A Model for Cultural Organizations

One of the goals of this research has been to develop a model of how professional cultural institutions were established in Canada, using ballet as a case study. Accordingly, the key elements of this model are: dynamic, experienced immigrant artists, helpful infrastructures and circumstances in the community (practical patrons, volunteer/charitable groups, groundwork by other teachers, proximity to U.S.), a mix of old world and new world artistic influences, and a degree of identification with local or regional interests.

A few additional observations may be useful. First, the women were well suited to their new roles. All of the founders had had some experience running a similar ven-

ture before coming to Canada. Secondly, some of the preliminary work (training dancers) had been done by the time the founders arrived, so the four women were able to put their energies into raising the level of performance immediately upon arriving. They went public quickly, using the spark of interest, the cachet of the worldly newcomer, rather than frittering it away with ten years of quiet work. Large-scale government patronage was a great help to the companies, but they were already well established by the time public money started to flow. In Canada, government money confirmed rather than shaped the ballet scene. The schools which the women established, and which fed the companies from the beginning were also a critical element, because a successful dance institution rested on a quality school. The schools helped the women attract the best students from their region, shape dancers in the right style for the companies, and on a practical level provided a salary for the women when the ballet company often could not.

The imperial connections of the four founding women were also a great help. Foreign accents and credentials gave the women added glamour, the added legitimacy which helped supersede other dance teachers and performers. It would take some time before Canadians warmed up to the idea of ballet as a Canadian art, and the dancing was more palatable if it was served up by someone with an extra helping of authority, either the imperial authority of Lloyd, Farrally, and Franca, or the Russian exoticism of Chiriaeff. The company's stars, too, were often foreign born in the early years or at the very least trained by foreign teachers. It is ironic that nationalism—fundamentally a celebration of identity—was so much a part of the effort behind the early companies, because immigrants who had only barely arrived in Canada were defining and serving up these identities.

Ballet and the Sexes

All of the Canadian ballet founders were women, but female dominance of ballet as a whole is an illusion. Between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, the most powerful positions in the international ballet world have usually been held by the men behind the scenes, and the pattern was only briefly different in Canada.

An exception to the rule of male control over ballet occurred in England. There, de Valois and Rambert began ballet groups in which they played the roles of dancers, choreographers and managers. As Lynn Garafola has pointed out, the founding of these two ballet institutions had much in common with the modern dance groups of the time; de Valois and Rambert formed "alternative, unofficial, female-headed organizations," rather than presenting themselves as representative organizations (i.e. with "national" or "London" in their company names).[6] Like the modern dance pioneers, they presented serious art dancing in a commercial marketplace. As these organiza-

tions grew, they gradually became more traditional, publicly funded, and ironically, predominantly male-run.

Very much the same pattern occurred in Canada: small-scale, unofficial organizations headed by women, which existed in the commercial marketplace but were not quite popular, and which became more traditional organizations with public funding and male leadership. At first glance, the leadership of women on the artistic and patronage sides in the Canadian ballet companies appears to be a great triumph; Canadians seem to have been extraordinarily welcoming to women as leaders in the ballet field. If this was truly so, though, these leading female artists and patrons should have been succeeded by other women, and, for the most part, they were not. These artistic directors were trying to build successful organizations, and if they had felt their company or their board of directors would benefit from an all-male membership, they would have made it happen. With the possible exception of Lloyd, none of the women seem to have had any broad interest in mentoring other women as leaders, or presenting a distinctively female point of view. They had found a field they loved, where they could achieve, and they assumed other women could do likewise.

On the organizational side of the Canadian companies, the initial perception is of the great dominance and power of women in founding, fund raising and running the organizations. Indeed, volunteer women did play powerful roles, especially in Winnipeg and Toronto. However, on closer examination, it is clear that there was a class hierarchy at work as well. The ballet organizations offered powerful roles to women (and men) who already had power, usually through family money. The women who sat on the RWB and NB Boards of directors, the ones who led the women's committees and guilds, were wealthy or had good social connections. Of course they were there because they liked ballet and had some energy for community work too, but they were not the "worker bees". While middle class volunteers in their thousands formed the core of the workers, the decision makers and risk takers were the women and men who already had some wealth and social position. Women with less money tended to do more of the busy work, trying to earn their way in, while those with more money could write cheques or roll up their sleeves, as they wished.

Conclusion

What does the history of professional ballet in Canada tell us? It tells us that social class plays a key role in who leads and who follows. Proximity to the U.S. was important as our organizations found their feet. It reveals the dynamism of individual immigrants and their quick acceptance as experts in the arts. We see the importance of volunteer work, a strange grey area which people seem to agree is important but about which little is known. Finally, it tells us about the hidden networks of sex, ethnicity, class and race and how they are at once exclusive and productive elements in society.

In the past, the history of Canada's ballet companies has been written with the artistic directors in the spotlight and the patrons somewhere behind the scenes. Now it must be seen as a partnership. It was indeed a partnership, a waltz involving a dance visionary who could skillfully execute the steps, but was new to the scene otherwise. The other partner, the patron, was not quite as comfortable in the spotlight, but was nonetheless pleased to pay the artist's way into the event, introduce her around the room and provide her with the space to do her work. Sometimes the artist led, and sometimes the patron had control, depending on the circumstances. Like any true partnership, power was shared, and the results were powerful.

Notes

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3. June Callwood, "Ballet Rally," Maclean's, 1 March 1949, 16-17.
4. Ninette de Valois, quoted by Herbert Whittaker, Canada's National Ballet, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), 16.
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6. Garafola quoted in Sally Banes, Dancing Women. Female Bodies on Stage, (London: Routledge, 1998), 255.

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Of Names and Things: Image Makeovers in Some Montreal Dance Institutions

Iro Valaskakis Tembeck

What's in a name? a great deal of unexpected information which can serve as indicators of cultural preferences, changing identities and socio-political positionings. I propose an unorthodox route of inquiry and take my cue from Foucault's unusual ways of stripping facts to allow hidden meanings and interpretations to surface. I will focus on the chosen titles or names of Canadian dance companies and the individuals who have headed them over the past several decades. As I interpret the public images that arise from such namings several social patterns and trends emerge to illustrate specific cultural practices.

To name is to define. A name - or a logo - is meant to define succinctly that which it represents. In the business world marketing strategies make use of the expertise of social psychologists to create logos and brand names and they evaluate the inevitable mental associations that derive from the final naming of a company product. The dance world also works with symbols and metaphors to publicly represent a company or dance event. Choosing emblems to represent you is an essential component of imagecrafting and this provides cultural historians not only with a specific source of information but also an additional tool for investigation. Though the trends and emerging patterns here examined are by no means unique to Canada, they are here discussed as identity markers.

A look at official titles of Canadian dance troupes provides a suitable point of entry and allows me to focus on the public badge or insignia displayed - or bestowed - on companies. A loose and brief chronology reveals that in 1938 Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farally founded what was to become the Royal Winnipeg Ballet ; Celia Franca and Betty Oliphant, in turn, formed the National Ballet of Canada in 1951 ; finally Ludmilla Chiriaeff created Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in 1958. All three major classical companies share a common desire to feature their geographic location and aesthetic preferences in their chosen titles. The Winnipeg company received its royal epithet shortly following a 1951 command performance given in front of visiting Commonwealth monarch Queen Elizabeth II ; to this day this remains as a relic of cultural colonialism.

The National Ballet of Canada on the other hand was founded by Celia Franca after the success of the early Canadian Ballet Festivals of 1948-1951. A group of dance enthusiasts from Toronto, dazzled by Sadlers Wells' North American tour in 1949 and by the glamour arising from

The Red Shoes movie, wished to create a similar company right in their home town. They asked Ninette de Valois for advice and she suggested Celia Franca. Franca was duly brought over from Britain to survey the state of Canadian dance and assess whether there was sufficient potential talent to create a company of national scale. At that time, however, the Winnipeg Ballet was the most accomplished and oldest Canadian troupe. Yet the founding board of businessmen and dance patrons ignored Gweneth Lloyd and offered the job to newcomer Franca and helped her build this new "national" company. A long standing rivalry between these 2 institutions now started and when the third one was created in Montreal the power struggle increased even more.

There was much flak over the use of the word "national" : national according to whom ? the government or private citizens ? In fact, in those early days before the creation of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1957 the troupe was named The Canadian National Ballet which could lead to confusion with the Canadian National, a railway that brought great pride to citizens of Canada as it stoked the fires of patriotism. Its creation had been, after all, instrumental in glueing the country together " from sea to shining sea".

Meanwhile , the youngest of these major classical companies was also sneered at for its chosen signature: Les Grands Ballets Canadiens had, at its inception in 1957-1958 , a mere 18 dancers, not exactly matching the grand ambitions emerging from its title. In 1958 moreover, the term *"Canadiens"* - as opposed to Canadian - referred in those days to French Canadians, ie. to the original settlers who had been defeated by the British conquest in 1759 and these very "conquerors" would be spoken of as "*Les Anglais*" in Quebec's collective psyche, .(Just refer to the famous Montreal hockey team *Les Canadiens* or *The Habs* which is the shorter version for the habitants or early settlers).

But at that time also, the term ballet held a prominent, all encompassing role in Western theatre dance. Modern dance pieces were still referred to, here and elsewhere, as "ballets" for a very long time. Which might explain why German expressionist dancer-choreographer Ruth Sorel alternately billed her Montreal company either as *Les Ballets Ruth Sorel* or as *The Ruth Sorel Modern Dance Company* . This not only displayed a shift in aesthetic allegiance but also knowingly transgressed linguistic trenches by using one or the other official language of

Canada when presenting her company . Let us recall too that Sorel was, in fact, known internationally as Ruth Abramowitz or Abramovitsch. She had danced for several years in Wigman's Dresden troupe and at the Berlin Municipal Opera before fleeing the Nazi regime's anti-semitic regulations. In Canada where she settled after the war she was only known as Ruth Sorel, her Jewish origins never stated.

In Quebec some stage names sought to emulate the Ballets Russes . Montrealer Maurice Lacasse, a dancer and choreographer followed a widespread trend of that time and adopted the Russian sounding stage name of Morenoff. Ironically, years later when the nationalist Parti Québecois won the elections in 1976 the government investigated the artistic landscape and found that Les Grands Ballets had an insufficient number of dyed-in-the-wool French Canadian dancers within its ranks. Whereby founder Ludmilla Chiriaeff astutely instigated name changes for some dancers. Thus Roseline Fairstein became Roseline Forestier, Sylvia Kinal was transformed into Sylvie Chevalier and Sasha Belinsky was now to be known as Alexandre Belin. Cultural colonialism was thus used to camouflage the troupe's real demographics.

Other trends emerged meanwhile in the realm of experimentation. Le Groupe de la Place Royale founded in 1966 by Jeanne Renaud was the first modern dance corporation of Quebec and took its name from the square in old Montreal where its studios were located. The other contemporary troupe was Groupe Nouvelle Aire founded in 1968 by Martine Epoque and others. Notice the emphasis on the word groupe , well reflecting those hippy days of collective endeavours and creations. Note also that the word dance is noticeably absent in both cases. As though the desire was to expand the dance picture so that it would become part of a larger cultural framework. Nouvelle Aire – meaning new area in French – brings associations of futuristic trends, of the New World, and also of a new breath of air. The name Place Royale underlines, on the other hand, that both the company and the square that inspired its name were the proclaimed elders in their respective milieus since the geographical site of Place Royale marked the first founding of the city of Montreal.

The rise of independent dancemakers in the city who hailed from either of these parent companies literally took the stage starting in the late 70's. It was to displace Nouvelle Aire which officially closed its doors in 1982. By then Place Royale had already relocated in the nation's capital in Ottawa.

This new generation of free lance choreographers was to put Montreal on the world map of dance experimentation. They sought to emulate the groundbreaking artists of the 1948 *Regus Global* manifesto, whose aesthetic rebellion had led Québeckers towards much needed modernity after several decades of Premier Duplessis' arch

conservatist rule. By the late 70's these emerging Montreal dancemakers settled for originality and individuality and created their troupes no longer as a collective but around the sole personality at the artistic helm. The going trend now became a question of placing the artistic director's name in the official title namely **Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault; Fortier Danse Création, Marie Chouinard danse, Le ballet de Montréal Eddy Toussaint** etc. Even **La La La Human Steps'** first incarnation was as Lockdanseurs before it took the more whimsical name that gave it international fame. There again labelling was meaningful. Associations with the rock and dance circuit would spring up at the mention of that name and the " human steps" was an ironic statement since the experimentation was daringly hyperphysical and pushed the performers into mastering "Oh la la superhuman steps."

Such an out-and-out aesthetic allegiance to originality and individuality brought symbolic changes in terminology. If the Judson Church crowd had wished to strip dance's elitism by using everyday movement and presented themselves simply as dancemakers, this new crop of Québec choreographers elevated the task to that of creation rather than choreography and called themselves cre-ators. Furthermore, their performers who were also using everyday movement (and quite often, non dance gestures), were billed as interpreters. This also came from the fact that devices borrowed from theatre greatly inspired the production so that the shift to the term "interpreter" placed dance into a larger artistic sphere of influence. In Quebec this approach worked well and became a status symbol. To be "in" one had to produce "new dance" pieces of neo-expressionistic leaning that mainly drew their inspiration from Bausch's *tanztheater*.

Montreal's new dancemakers refused to endorse conventional company models with salaried dancers working on an annual basis. They made use instead of what Foster (1997) calls "the hired body". They started to call themselves - and be called - *"les chorégraphes independants"* which brought inevitable political associations with the rise to power of the separatist Parti Québécois. It is well known that French Canadian artists and intellectuals backed the idea of the distinctiveness of Québec society, particularly stressing the "French fact" and the need for independence from the Canadian federation. And these new wave Montreal dancemakers who adopted this term all happened to be either francophones or native Quebeckers.

Pursuing this particular socio-political critical interpretation let us remember that much importance was placed on the precarious future of the French language in North America. Laws were enacted enshrining the prominence of French in all public places . To soothe feminists qualms new terms arose and other neologisms abounded : professeure stood for a female professor, messal for electronic voice box message, and courriel for e-mail are but

some examples but which of course the stodgier Parisian *Academie française* did not adhere to. Quebec's *Office de la langue française*, the provincial linguistic watchdog, also emphasized grammatical rules which require titles to be lower cased in French with only the first word being capitalised. This brought about an ironic double entendre .*The National Ballet of Canada* was now written in French as *Le Ballet national du Canada* and the official company logo of *Les Grands Ballets Canadiens* was written in the press as *Les Grands ballets canadiens or Les Grands Ballets canadiens*. Notice the lower case on the word <u>national</u> which also happens to correspond to a specific separatist *mentalité* and a symbolic demotion of its importance. Québécois nationalists use the term <u>national</u> for what is legally <u>provincial</u> and occurring in Quebec ; when they speak of a Canadian event they refer to it as <u>federal.</u> Notice, too, that in writing Les Grands Ballets that particular way the innuendo that arises from lower casing "canadiens" - is significant since nowadays the term no longer applies to identify French Canadians who now present themselves as Québécois.

Recently, other changes occurred in the public image of Montreal's dance companies. During Lawrence Rhodes' artistic tenure in the 90's the company had opted for modesty and downplayed the words "Les Grands" yet emphasized the words Ballets and Canadiens ie: <u>les grands Ballets Canadiens.</u> In 1999 Lawrence Rhodes stepped down from his 10 year artistic directorship of LGBC and was replaced by Gradimir Pankov. Soon after the company's name was altered to become *Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal.*

Much speculation has arisen as to what this new christening signifies. One would have thought they would have dropped the politically sensitive word <u>canadiens</u>, or even <u>Grands</u> since the company was streamlining if not downsizing. But the board decided on adding <u>de Montréal</u>. The addition of "de Montréal" makes the official title even more belabored. According to critic Michael Crabb (2000) this might be a ploy to let Montreal's dance fame and the international exposure of its new dance choreographers spill onto the more established company which, like them, would be acknowledged as the city's cultural ambassador. Crabb also states that this will bring more confusion since Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, felt the need to add the "de Montréal" because of their own extensive world touring. To confuse matters even further, Eddy Toussaint's now defunct company had also undergone a name change years ago to become Le Ballet de Montréal Eddy Toussaint. What ensues now is a triangular discussion of Toussaint's old company, and the paradoxes and echoes found in Les Ballets Jazz and Les Grands Ballets.

Toussaint was one of the co-founders of Les Ballets Jazz but very quickly severed ties to open his own troupe which also promoted jazz dance. It was then called La compagnie de danse Eddy Toussaint. He later decided to shift towards ballet thus explaining the new name Le Ballet de Montréal to reflect the changing aesthetics and bestow a new public image. Another reason stemmed from the fact that at that time government grants were only awarded to applicants in either classical ballet or modern dance ; other choreographic genres such as folk dance, jazz etc. were therefore not eligible. Toussaint's company name change was an ingenious way to try and get more public funding. Yet this was also seen as an indirect way of being associated - or confused with - Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal which enjoyed a solid reputation world-wide. Ideally Toussaint saw his troupe as a small scale counterpart to Les Grands Ballets. Accordingly he delivered a mixed bag of pointe work and acrobatic partnering performed to music by Quebec's popular singers and this attracted a wide following. In terms of movement vocabulary his works could be labelled as neoclassical or modern ballet.

The other significant change occurred when Les Ballets Jazz troupe welcomed Louis Robitaille as its new artistic director in 1998. Robitaille, a well known dancer, had become one of the public's darlings right from his days as a soloist with Eddy Toussaint's company. When that company was to fold he went on to become a soloist with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. Having reached his forties he then left Les Grands and was given the directorship of Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal.

As a company Les Ballets Jazz has always travelled, performing on all of the five continents where they garnered rave reviews for their popular shows. Over time the changing *mentalité* in their home town and the emphasis on more intellectual and innovative works caused the ballet-jazz idiom to be viewed locally as *passé.* In the heydays of the 60's and 70's however, that style had greatly contributed in demystifying dance for the public at large and had in fact become an important general reference point for audiences.

Robitaille's challenge in accepting to head Les Ballets Jazz in 1998 was how to manage the delicate balancing act of restoring the reputation and renewing the acceptance of the company within its home base. Putting his own thumbprint Robitaille decided to open up the Ballets Jazz repertoire to more dominant local influences and steer it more towards a " new dance" orientation. But in an interview (Brody 2000) he stated he wished to retain the sensuality , physical appeal and passion that were Ballets Jazz' trademark and not dwell on somber and intellectual dance (implying perhaps that other Montreal companies were doing so).

In all fairness, during the past decade it had been increasingly difficult to define what particular style this company favoured. A succession of artistic directors who were mainly former dancers rather than choreographers did not help matters. They were all hard put to justify their definition of jazz and finally opted to explain it as

simply using jazz music. But there again it was hard to define what constituted jazz music. By the time Robitaille took over he decided to present a hybrid product influenced by all current styles. By calling the show *With Soul* in English and *A fleur de peau* in French he stressed, in both languages, the performers' love of dancing. To reflect these changes the publicity material was carefully crafted. The poster and flyer used the colours red, charcoal grey and white. In bold white were the letters Les Ballets de Montréal with the word jazz stuck in between these words in red. The visual effect of these contrasting hues was to allow the ballet image to be foregrounded and the jazz word, being reddened, thus became muted and somewhat ancillary, as it subtly demoted that particular style from the company's public image. In other words, through this new suggested image Robitaille was slowly pointing towards an aesthetic shift.

But Robitaille's clever innuendo was also meant to draw associations with his own career as lead dancer of Toussaint 's Le Ballet de Montréal and hopefully rally once more his faithful fans. In order to gradually resculpt the company image he offered a stylisticly varied programme of 5 pieces. Only the finale by Mia Michaels retained the trademark jazz flavour.

By the 2001 spring performance, the company advertised a new logo which graphically reinforced the intended shift in preferences. Les Ballets de Montréal was written horizontally and "jazz" was squeezed vertically next to the ballet term. The metaphor was clear : jazz was being literally dropped from the picture like the hot potato it was seen to be. The company's electronic address was likewise Les Ballets de Montreal thus placing jazz on the sure path of disappearing acts.

Many ironies arise however in the new programme entitled *Light, Time, Open Space*. It was presented as a "neoclassical" endeavour placing Robitaille's company in an aesthetic niche between Les Grands Ballets and experimental new dance - exactly what Toussaint had wanted to do a decade before. The appropriation of the term neoclassical however is just as dated as that of ballet-jazz which adds to the irony. Yet the strategy seemed to work. Critics lauded and praised the company speaking of a veritable "renaissance" (Martin (a) (b) 2001). But a close reading of the choreographic offering showed that if the word jazz had been near-eliminated, the new pieces still displayed the same past qualities of : seductive elements, exuberant physicality, highly technical performers and non-narrative content- in short, accessible entertainment All of which had earned much criticism on the homefront in the past. It would seem then that Robitaille was actually creating a cosmetic camouflage concerning the supposed aesthetic shift so as to steer Montreal's critical public to accept the company's refurbished look. A final point regarding this artistic shift is that company dancers have been taking their daily training in balle for quite a while,

jazz technique not being deemed sufficiently important.

Both Les Grands Ballets and Les Ballets Jazz wish to present new directions but the sustained impact of their stylistic transformations within Québec's cultural landscape will have to be redefined at a later moment. As columnist Leslie (2000) says the jazz company's image makeover makes it lean towards more contemporary pieces though still retaining its crowd-pleasing mandate. As for Les Grands, despite its classical, long-winded, newly-minted title it, too, is moving more and more towards the contemporary idiom. Despite new labels and reshuffled logos Les Grands' current director offers an eclectic repertoire of contemporary ballet which follows the footsteps of his predecessor, Lawrence Rhodes. As for Robitaille he, too, is entering a path formerly taken by Toussaint, years ago.

The question now arises : do such name alterations really reflect significant changes and new directions ? These examples tread the thin line between image makeovers and cosmetic mirage manipulated for product marketing. Tracing the origin and evolution of brand names and their mutating connotations provides us in this case with a significant tool, revealing Foucault's underlying cultural practices and the social forces which map out events and direct them in a particular way. This allows us to take the measure of things as we examine logos meant as symbols stating artistic claims. However, beyond this obvious statement there lie the innuendos derived from such namings. These point to perceptions, both self-perceptions and self-deceptions and those of others. Such positionings reveal mind frames and changing values; they also reflect the personal signature and social cachet of those who are at the helm of these enterprises that are being named and renamed.

As we learn to decipher the hidden texts behind these nominal image buildings and craftings we discover *mentalités* that arise from this tailor-made fitting of the desired image and the subliminal influences that come with it. Are we witnessing real image changes or is it a case of revamped looks, more a mirage than a real image transformation. Are the new labels actual dog tags ? Do they sway perception, define or confine? How are they metaphors for the "supposed" new spirit that is being forged around that labelling ? Each case needs to be examined separately and interpreted accordingly.

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Narration for the Video of the Lost Dances of Ted Shawn

Sharry Traver Underwood

Ted Shawn we call our Father of American Modern Dance. Good grief! Can there be anything more to know about the man? I was as surprised as you are when in conversation with Norton Owen, Director of Preservation at Jacob's Pillow, I became aware that I possessed the notes and music to many dances of Ted Shawn that had not been seen or heard of for many, many years. Try fifty. After being awarded a Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Work Commission, I began to reconstruct these 27 dances.

27! Don't be frightened. These are not the twenty minute dances you are used to seeing. Here the longest is five minutes.

In 1943, I was a scholarship student at Jacob's Pillow. America was in the middle of WWII and doing badly. Bennington College closed its summer American Dance Festival but Shawn defiantly carried on his Jacob's Pillow University of the Dance. He held performances at 5:00 PM to allow people to reach home before the nightly black-outs. As important, Shawn did a great deal of the teaching himself, sharing his vast repertory with us. There were dances from early Denishawn vaudeville days, from choreography for Ted Shawn's Male Dancers, theatrical versions of ethnic dances learned on the famous tour of the Orient and his Fundamental Training Exercises. Some of these we performed that season on the stage of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Theatre, .now the Ted Shawn DanceTheatre.

My <u>Dansarte</u>´ dancers had never seen any of these dances. The magic of The Word as a symbol for action was impressed upon the dancers as we began to turn Shawn's notes into action. Shawn had made his dance notes available to his students on mimeographed sheets for a quarter. I had saved them all. However, had I not learned these dances from Shawn himself, these notes would have been quite confusing. Shawn wrote the steps out in paragraph form with a variety of punctuations that affected the tempo and phrasing. Luckily, then I had added stick figures in the margins of my notes for clarification. With these, my muscle memory with the music and my unbiased dancers questioning, we brought the dances back full form.

None of these dances are treated in Jane Sherman's book, <u>The Drama of Denishawn</u>,. Barton Mumaw's <u>Barton Mumaw, Dancer</u> provided insight into his solos <u>French Sailor</u> and <u>Osage Pawnee.</u> Most of these dances are solos. However in reviving them for performance today, I made minor modifications such as changing a minuet solo back into a duet and having the dancers wear dance shoes in-stead of going barefoot. There were no costumes for women at The Pillow in 1943. The program shows the handmade white Grecian chitons we wore in each dance then. Now the dancers wear colorful shifts in peach, tangerine and burgundy in the 16 Dances in 16 Rhythms and particular costumes for the other dances. This is theatre dance. I believe Papa Shawn would approve. (There was no sudden thunder clap during performance at The Pillow last summer.)

For the program, <u>Lost Dances of Ted Shawn</u>, the dances are divided into three sections. The first echoes Denishawn, the second Shawn's theatrical vinyettes of the basic dance and music rhythms and the third is a variety of early modern and theatre dance. All choreography is by Ted Shawn.

Part One

<u>Lal, A Stick Nautch</u> Music by Lily Strickland Danced by Maris Wolff.

The dancer wears typical East Indian nautch skirt, midriff, jewelry and ankle bells. She has a cast mark. She carries a multi-colored painted dowel in each hand which she beats rhythmically together during the dance.

Osage-Pawnee Dance of Greeting   Music by Homer Grunn   Danced by Neth Urkiel-Taylor

The dancer wears costume fashioned after picture of Barton Mumaw in his book, <u>Barton Mumaw, Dancer:</u> a long, patterned leather loin cloth and arm bracelets plus a head ruff. He carries a feathered gourd rattle in each hand and dances barefoot..This was previously danced as a quartet. the New York Public Library Dance Collection has a very frail film of four men from Shawn's Male Dancers performing it.

<u>Frohsinn.</u>   Music by Paul Lincke   Danced by Genevieve Pellman and Eve Shell

The dancers wear short, white balletic costumes, a rose at the hip and white ballet slippers. This dance is classic ballet vocabulary mixed up with Shawn's early modern innovations, including his signature Denishawn <u>pas de basque</u>, off-center turns and little folk steps. The title is a pun, referring to the habit of practicing this dance in order to warm up in the *frozen* barn studio at The Pillow.

<u>Barcarolle</u> Music by Jess Meeker Danced by Maris Wolff.

Jess Meeker was accompanist and composer for <u>Ted Shawn's Male Dancers</u>. He also composed music for Shawn's <u>Fundamental Training Exercises</u> and many solos.

The dancer wears spaghetti strap, backless black chiffon gown with handkerchief hem.

Shawn loved this 6/8 rhythm and set this dance for himself, performing it in a white, long-sleeved leotard. It is a lyric dance with flourishes, an unusual dance for such a big man but Shawn gave it nobility.

Viva Faroan   Music by de Torres   Danced by Jean-Marie Mellichamp

The dancer wears one-shoulder Spanish costume, with red shawl as bodice with long, full, colorful skirt. Shawn taught this as a solo for either woman of man, performing it often himself. He studied flamenco dance intently in Spain, staying the night in the gypsy cabarets. . Famous Spanish dancers have regularly been invited to The Pillow to teach and perform.

Line Study #2   Music by Jess Meeker   Danced by Eva Shell

Strictly speaking this dance is a part of Shawn's Fundamental Training Exercises which we also reconstructed. However, it is an example of early minimal modern dance, demonstrating Shawn's exploration into the basic factor of line in dance. It includes off-center line.

Part Two

12 Dance Vignettes from 16 Dances in 16 Rhythms Music by Jess Meeker Danced by *Dansarte* dancers

One of Shawn's major contributions to dance was his eclectic philosophy that defended any and every kind of dance as having its integrity and its own reason for being. True, tap dance was not his favorite. However flamenco dancing with its heels beats was. Shawn honored folk dance as "that dance from which all other dance has sprung". In 1943 we did not want to hear that. We were all excited about Agnes deMille's choreography in *Oklahoma!*, little realizing that Agnes used folk dance vocabulary as well as dramatic modern ballet.

This set of sixteen dances was designed by Shawn to teach the fundamental dance and music rhythms to his students. Basically they are what was called folk or character dance and is now called cultural or ethnic dance. Teaching, he introduced each with a touch of historical background. He used traditional steps and characteristic style in his versions. However, Shawn designed these dances for performance as well and so many of these dances have been theatricalized. For example, the schottische is a Swedish folk dance with a run-run-step-hop, run-run-step-hop then four step hops basic pattern. Here Shawn used the basic rhythm and changed the style into a can-can.

For this program we have used Ann Hutchinson's notations for the *16 Dances in 16 Rhythms*.Today we are presenting twelve of the sixteen, leaving out the polonaise, the two-step, the galop and the gavotte. As the dances flow from one to another, I shall identify each in turn, beginning with the March. (Followed by: schottische,

waltz, mazurka, varsovienne, minuet, bolero, polka, tango, tarantella, barcarolle, and jota.)

Part Three

Amethyst   Music by Jess Meeker   Danced by Maris Wolff

The dancer wears flowing lavender gown with drape opened to side. Both costume and choreography are suggestive of Art Nouveau style with flourishes of the hands and sentimental poses.

When Shawn taught this dance in '43, all the girls fell in love with it. More than *steps,* it was the first dance with an emotional theme that appealed to young women. It could be a wistful or romantic dance, depending on individual interpretation. We had been promised a chance to perform in the Jacob's Pillow Dance Theatre "sometime" . Would one of us have a chance to dance *Amethyst?* No. Natasha Krassovska, our ballet teacher, .had learned *Amethyst* with us and also fell in love with the dance. Surely Shawn would see Natasha was too balletic. Would you believe Shawn gave the performance to her? Did we care that he needed a famous ballerina on stage?

French Sailor   Music by Darius Milhaud   Danced by Neth Urkiel-Taylor

The dancer wears a French sailor's striped jersey, dark trousers and beret.This dance was one of Barton Mumaw's favorite solos. Originally it was set by Shawn in a mini-ballet, Kankakee at Cannes. Mumaw calls it one of his "most strenuous dances". The choreography has bravura combinations and mime fashioned after a sailor's horn pipe. There is also a tricky change in time signature that inserts a lyric phrase mid-way.

Romance   Music by Peter Illich Tchaikovsky   Danced by Genevieve Pellman

The dancer is barefoot, wearing a simple, knee length gingham dress with gingham rope sash.This is the first time this dance has been performed since 1943 when...again! Shawn gave it to Krassovska to perform in the theatre. There was more student resentment for this was *our dance.* But who could stay mad at darling Natasha, so eager to learn Western dance!

Shawn wanted to teach us to choreograph and what better way than to choose some music and go at it. Mary Campbell played many piano pieces for us as we sat around her in the studio. We chose Tchaikovsky's *Romance # 5* as one with enough changes in dynamics to inspire us. Together we created a contemporary dance significant of our war- torn lives. For us, there was no melodrama in it; it was all very true for those of us with boyfriends and husbands away in the war.

The scenario: a wife/lover dances out her anxiety about her husband/lover who has gone to war. In the center section she reminisces about their time together. When the trumpets of war sound again she dances out her allegiance in martial steps, ending with a courageous, open

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arm stance. The choreography (which Shawn could not resist leading) is dramatic modern dance. For us young women this dance did what modern dance was supposed to do: speak for our hearts and minds through the form of original dance.

Shawn never wrote out the notes and mine were in pencil...some of them in shorthand, which I had to chase down again. The score helped immensely.

Romance is what it is: historical dramatic modern dance.

El Jaleo   Music by Fabian Redfield Dancer Jean-Marie Mellichamp

The dancer wears a white Spanish dress with ruffled train, black silk shawl and Spanish flamenco shoes. The train embellishes the dancing. It is managed with a quick, low rondejambe that flicks the train aside.

Anything...a picture, a book, a quotation , a garment, a song, occasion or an urge was enough to set Shawn choreographing. Here he was inspired by his love of Spanish flamenco dancing and John Singer Sargent's famous painting El Jaleo.

This is a highly melodramatic dance with a scenario that demands acting as well as Spanish technique. Surprisingly, Shawn did not choose the Spanish guitar for the music. Then again, guitarists were not always available. Meeker could play this piano piece on tour. No tape recorders then, remember.

The scenario: a flamenco dancer is performing in a cafe, flirting with her imaginary lover seated downstage right. She shows off for him, then notices that he has another woman on his lap. First she pretends not to care, then turning away, pulls a dagger from beneath her garter. Turning back, she marches toward him, hurling the dagger at him. When it strikes him, she laughs. Then, seeing she has killed him, she collapses to the stage. Sincerity is required.

Gypsy-Rondo-Bout-Town.   Music by Jess Meeker after Haydn Dancers Genevieve Pellman & Neth Urkiel-Taylor

The girl wears green taffeta dress with 3/4 sleeves, v-neck fitted bodice and knee length full skirt and character shoes. The boy wears full, white romantic ballet shirt and garnet breeches with white hose and ballroom dance shoes.

This dance is a surprise.. It was set for Barton and Lisa Parnova to provide a light- hearted theatre dance. In 1943, Shawn asked me to be his partner in a revival for performance in the Jacob's Pillow Dance Theatre. Suffice it to say the experience was terrifying in rehearsals but absolutely glorious in performance. We got an encore. Shawn kissed me on stage and I thought I could die happy right there. What more could there be!

The scenario: As the music begins with a phrase of Haydn's rondo, both dancers enter dancing in high balletic form. As the musical phrase is repeated, it finishes with a jazzy slur, the dancers hip to hip. From then on the rhythms are varied to suggest ballroom dance, oriental, Spanish, folk and jitterbug dancing as the two flirt and romance each other.

To our great joy, Barton Mumaw came to see our performance at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival last summer and approved enthusiastically. I hope you have too.

Narration for the Video of Ted Shawn's Fundamental Training Exercises

When I started the video a the New York Public Library Dance Collection, I had to laugh. There was Bartom Mumaw rippling his arms and asking the students of Suny-Purchase how they would like to move their arms "like Miss Ruth St. Denis." That is the same way Ted Shawn began teaching us his Fundamental Training Exercises at Jacob's Pillow in 1943. Good. Then my company Dansarté would not have to reconstruct them. Norton Owen, preservationist at Jacob's Pillow, wished otherwise. I had the notes and the music. Oh yes, these around-the -body exercises had original music composed for them by Jess Meeker. Today many modern dancers eshew music in warm-ups or in class. The by word has been "release, release" slowly in your own timing. Come along and see what we found reconstructing these exercies from 1939. You are in for some surprises.

As you watch, you can see that the dancers begin to stretch on their own, that the first set of general exercises is indeed designed to relax ...to release each part of the body. As these exercies progress you will see the odd oriental or balletic accent as well as early modern dance movements. As we reconstructed these I found exercises I did in Charles's classes or then Hanya's. Oh I want to set something straight here. They expected us to use their first names. Martha, Doris, Louis...we all did. Bronislava Nijinska we called madame. Of course, it was Papa Shawn

I shall name each section as it occurs. General stretching Exercises . In silence, the exercises begin with each dancer stretching in a prescribed way but taking his/her own timing.

Tension and Relaxation: There are four sets:

A. individual exercises
B. tension and relaxzation here is set for an
     ensemble and becomes a minimal early
     modern dance. Shawn experiments with
     choreography again and again.
C. floor exercises
D. three jumps

Walking, running, leaping.
Balance Exercise...pure ballet!

Next is Single arm swing and development, an exploration that again results in early modern minimal dance. The dancers became very fond of it. It has a lovely feeling of unity.

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Here are Delsarte falls. One is the standard modern dance back fall. The others I do not consider successful. Particularly the spiral fall. Both Charles and Hanya used much faster spiral falls.

The last part of these <u>Fundamental Exercises</u> is <u>Line Study #2.</u> It is one of those pat- your -head- rub- your-tummy exercises that take conscious coordination. <u>Line Study #2</u> was irascible to recover. Again it proved to be another minimal modern dance and so delightful we included it in our performance of <u>Lost Dances of Ted Shawn</u>

Fokine's Forgotten Puppet

Cynthia J. Williams

Petrushka, presented by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in Paris at the Théâtre du Châtelet on June 13, 1911 with choreography by Michel Fokine, set and costume design by Alexandre Benois, and music composed by Igor Stravinsky, was instantly declared a masterpiece. Audiences thrilled to the poignant tale of the Russian puppet and the exotic and colorful setting in which his story was told. Critics especially applauded the magnificent Vaslav Nijinsky in the title role, which according to Fokine in his later memoirs, "became one of his best" (Fokine, 194).

The ballet is set in St. Petersburg, Russia in the 1830s during the "Butter Week Fair," the pre-Lenten carnival. A Showman (played by Enrico Cecchetti) reveals his puppet theater containing three puppets: The Ballerina (Tamara Karsavina), Petrushka (Vaslav Nijinsky) and The Moor (Alexandre Orlov). The Showman commands the puppets to dance, and they do so, first in their stand, and then in front of the Showman's booth. The potential for a disastrous love triangle is introduced in the first scene: the Ballerina has two admirers, the introverted, gangly, and somewhat pathetic Petrushka, and the extroverted, confident Moor.

The second and third tableaux take place in Petrouchka's room and the Moor's room, respectively. From the dark and oppressive design of Petrushka's room, his introverted movements, and his inability to impress the Ballerina, we learn that he is suffering from unrequited love, hates and is fearful of the Showman, and is in despair over his lack of freedom. In contrast to the bleak cell of Petrushka, with its haunting portrait of the Showman, the Moor's room has warm, vivid colors, a comfortable divan, and a sense of opulent splendor. The Moor is seen playing idly with a coconut until the Ballerina enters; they dance a curious pas de deux which is interrupted by the appearance of Petrushka. A chase ensues, Petrushka is kicked out the door by the Moor who resumes his position on the divan with the Ballerina on his lap.

The fourth scene returns us to Admiralty Square, but later in the day. Fairgoers dance, celebrate and admire the various carnival attractions until Petrushka dashes out of the Showman's booth, pursued by the Moor, scimitar in hand. To the horror of the crowd, the Moor kills Petrushka with the scimitar. A policeman is called over, but the Showman intervenes by picking up the lifeless body, reassuring everyone that Petrushka was merely a puppet. The crowd disperses, the Showman begins to walk away dragging the puppet when suddenly Petrushka's "ghost" appears above the booth, gesturing angrily at the Showman who cowers and runs away.

As this synopsis of the plot shows, there are four main characters in the ballet. While much critical attention has been focused on the title character, Petrushka, and to a lesser degree, the Ballerina, almost none has been focused on that of the Moor. Who is this character? Where did he come from? What does he represent? Why haven't we looked more closely at him? It is these central questions I wish to address in my paper, with the intention of suggesting that 1) the myopia of Orientalism affected not only the ballet's original creators and audience, but continues to limit our critical observations today, and 2) that Fokine deliberately subverted a monolithic understanding of the Moor through his choreography, which at once *presented* the stereotypes while simultaneously *undermining* them.

In order to address these questions, it is necessary to begin with the creators of the ballet's libretto: Alexandre Benois and Igor Stravinsky. (Fokine was not involved at all in the creation of the libretto; his work began when score, libretto, and design were nearly completely finished.) In the first chapter of his excellent book, *Petrushka: Sources and Contexts,* Andrew Wachtel examines various sources for *Petrushka's* libretto: the Russian glove-puppet plays which share its name, nineteenth century ballet and opera plots, Russian symbolist theater and explorations of commedia dell'arte, and popular culture. He notes that

> *Petrushka* points to a number of sources and meanings simultaneously, and each one of these creates what could be called a field of expectations for the spectator...[these] expectational fields tend to be drawn from both sides of what are normally seen as mutually exclusive binary oppositions such as high culture/popular culture, comedy/tragedy, realism/grotesquerie, serious drama/parody. By invoking both sides of the opposition simultaneously, *Petrushka* aims to question the very nature of such binary oppositions (13).

Clearly, one of the binary oppositions that *Petrushka* evokes is a view of the Moor as the cultural "Other." As the only non-white, non-European character, the Moor is readily identifiable as the Other for the Parisian audience. This position is enhanced by his setting in a Russian bal-

let, because for European audiences Russian culture was sufficiently "other" as to be considered exotic. Thus, the Moor becomes a doubly-coded symbol of cultural otherness, an exotic within an exotic context.

Where did *Petrushka's* Moor come from? His existence in the ballet cannot be definitively traced to a single source. Benois, who claimed credit for the inclusion of the Moor in his memoirs (a fact clearly disputed by the evidence) states that the Moor "was based on blackamoors who appeared during the intermezzos at some street performances of Petrushka plays" (cited in Wachtel, 25). Benois in his *Reminiscences* notes that the "gorgeous Blackamoor would serve as the embodiment of everything senselessly attractive, powerfully masculine and undeservedly triumphant" (cited in Wachtel, 26). Stravinsky, in his first letter to Benois (November 3, 1910) that discusses the scenario for the proposed ballet <u>names</u> the four characters, but does not provide any detail about their character, appearance, or actions. Stravinsky wrote at great length then and later about the Petrushka character, but remained silent about the Moor.

Fokine's description of the Moor differs in subtle ways from Benois's. In his memoirs Fokine states: "The Moor is the personification of the stupid self-satisfaction of the extrovert, the happy-go-lucky pet of fortune...This self-satisfied Moor, an extrovert, completely turns himself out..." (185). Fokine goes on to elaborate on the difference between the Moor's character and Petrushka's by saying "We often see a self-assured man who sits in a chair with widely spread legs, feet turned out, hands resting on his knees or hips, holding his head high and his chest out. There is another type: he will be sitting on the very edge of the chair, knees together, feet turned in, with his back hunched, head hanging down, and arms like drooping branches. *We can immediately conclude that this one has had little success in life*" [Italics mine] (192). Fokine's description of the Moor emphasizes the almost bourgeois traits of the character: he is confident, satisfied, out-going. Benois's description however, focuses primarily on the sexual attributes of the Moor, denigrating him as "senselessly attractive, powerfully masculine." When followed by the phrase, "and undeservedly triumphant," Benois's description suggests there is something reprehensible about success based on the Moor's good looks. One wonders whether Benois considered all "senselessly attractive" and "powerfully masculine" characters undeserving of triumph, or only the foreign Moor.

A third contemporaneous description of the Moor is from Prince Peter Lieven, a great admirer of Benois and a member of Diaghilev's ex-patriot supporters. Lieven accords Benois credit for most of the scenario (including the Moor) and offers his own description of the Moor :

> The Blackamoor, played by Orlov, was also splendid. His dark-skinned, gaudy figure, surmounted with glittering plumes, was primitively terrify-

ing. Of course, this part was an easier one than the other two. The greater part of the impression was created by the glittering costume and the brutal and exotic appearance. But Orlov, both in dancing and dramatic power, was equal to his partners (147).

Lieven's description emphasizes the threatening aspects of the Moor's figure: "terrifying" and "brutal," the Moor is a source of danger. From Lieven as well as Benois an image of the Moor as the exotic "Other" emerges, one that seems at odds in subtle ways from Fokine's smug and contented bourgeois gentleman.

One thread that emerges from these varying descriptions is that much of the Moor's identification as brutish, exotic, and virile depends *entirely upon context: his costume, props, and image*. Within the context of *Petrushka* as an early twentieth century ballet, and (to borrow Wachtel's phrase) the various "field of expectations" referenced in *Petrushka*, it is easy to see the Moor as the "Other." Once relegated to this position as "Other" the Moor becomes a symbol, allowing the audience to make assumptions about his actions, character, and intentions.

These assumptions, embedded in the cultural and intellectual climate of much of the western world in the early twentieth century, are still with us today. The following are typical descriptions of the Moor by contemporary authors: "Moor, a medieval wild man, an instinctive, savage bully" (Kirstein 194); "A stupid, blundering brute, impressive only for the exotic way he brandishes his scimitar and capable only of worshiping a coconut" (Foster 260); and "the opulent Moor...this prisoner shows himself quite content to lie about playing with his coconut and accepting the Ballerina's admiration" (Horwitz 31). In descriptions of the ballet, when the Moor is mentioned at all, he is labeled "virile," "strong, yet stupid," "exotic," and "flamboyant." Are these descriptions warranted by the choreography and scenario? Or has Fokine taken this stereotyped image and subverted it, creating a character who on the surface satisfies what Susan Foster calls "ballet's use of exotic and lavish trappings from otherworldly places to activate desire" (260), while simultaneously creating a subtext that refutes this reading?

Certainly ballet history is replete with references to exotic cultures and characters. Noverre's *Les Fêtes Chinoises* (1754), Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes* (1758), and countless Romantic-Era ballets capitalized on the public's fascination with what they perceived to be exotic locales, practices, and costumes. Petipa's Imperial Russian Ballet featured "exotic" ballets as well, including *La Fille de Pharaon* (1862), *La Bayadère* (1877) and the Chinese and Arabian dances from *The Nutcracker* (1892). Deborah Jowitt, in *Time and the Dancing Image*, notes the changing function of Orientalist display, from the nineteenth century view of the East offering

visions of unspoiled nature, of vital, sensual temperaments free of the constraints of Western civilization. In the wildness, the wilfulness, the strangeness, the cruelty of what they saw or read about, they recognized the contours of their own interior landscapes and, in turn, projected onto it their inchoate longings. As Raymond Schwab has written, "The more superficial used the Orient primarily for costumes, the more profound as fancy dress for the soul." (50)

to "a new style of Orientalism in ballet" that Fokine and the Ballets Russes introduced. Jowitt argues that Fokine's Orientalist ballets liberated him from ballet's academic canon (113) and that "The exotic look and sounds of the worlds that Fokine peopled was in tune with fashions in art and literature." (115) Although Jowitt does not classify Petrushka as an Orientalist ballet, it seems obvious that the Moor serves precisely the same function: to provide exotic color and become a projection of "inchoate longings."

Since Fokine cannot be credited with the creation of Petrushka's Moor, what traditions and contexts did Benois and Stravinsky draw upon? Wachtel traces a possible lineage from Russian theater productions of 1910 (director Meyerhold's production of Calderon's *Adoration of the Cross*, and his version of Schnitzler's *Columbine's Scarf*) both which included blackamoors. (25) Wachtel finds within nineteenth century ballet precedents for the theme of a doll or puppet coming to life, and the inclusion of a sorcerer who imprisons men or women in non-human bodies, but curiously does not look to ballet history to provide the basis for the Moor's appearance.

Catriona Kelly, in her book *Petrushka: The Russian Carnival Puppet Theatre*, points out (as Wachtel does) differences between the Russian traditional glove puppet theater and the scenario of the ballet *Petrushka*. Kelly lists an Arab (or Arap) as one of a dozen or so minor characters who may be included in Petrushka's tale, but these tended to appear infrequently, and, in the case of the Arab, represent "members of non-Russian racial groups (a Jew, an Arab, a Tartar, a Chinaman)"(65). Kelly points out

> In Benois' version, the Moor is no closer in character to the traditional street prototype than the hero is. In fact, the relationship is exactly opposite to that in the fairground *Petrushka*. In some traditional variants of *Petrushka* the hero torments and beats a Moor, offering to teach him 'a Russian dance', encouraging him to sing and then mocking him. The Moor is portrayed as a fool, who can sing only in nonsense language. At the end of the scene, Petrushka kills the Moor. In *Petrouchka*, on the other hand, the Moor competes successfully with Petrouchka for the affec-

tions of the Doll, and in the end murders his pathetic rival. (168)

Kelly credits Benois's reshaping of the *Petrushka* text with his Symbolist tendencies (169) which Wachtel claims were not shared by Fokine (28). Both scholars point out how little similarity exists between the scenario of Petrushka glove puppet theater and the Ballets Russes *Petrushka*. Both agree that the character of the Moor *could* have come from various sources, and list the street fair *intermezzi*, Russian symbolist theater, and the *commedia dell'arte* traditions as the most likely sources. Neither look to ballet and dance history, with its "Morescos", "Morris Dances" and Blackamoors as potential sources, and yet this interpretation is not invalidated by their research: Medieval and Renaissance dance forms found their way into the *commedia dell'arte*, creating stock characters that are shared across dance and theater history. Rather than posing ballet and dance history sources for the Moor as antithetical to Wachtel and Kelly's suppositions, I suggest that such a possibility enhances their theories.

One of the difficult problems in making statements about what the Moor represents is that these representations change depending upon what "expectational field" the Moor occupies. The Arab or Arap figure in the Petrushka puppet theater productions was one of many 'foreigners.' The character of the particular Arab, Chinaman, Jew, or Turk was not important, it was his identity as non-Russian that was significant. Similarly, in the Russian theater productions that featured *commedia dell'arte* characters, the particular racial identity of the "other" was less important than the plot twists or allegorical symbols they provided.

Another possibility that Wachtel raises is that the ballet's love triangle derives from *commedia dell'arte* plots and that the Moor could represent the *commedia dell'arte* character Harlequin. Wachtel notes the *commedia dell'arte* harlequinades Benois remembered from the carnivals of his youth had "some points of similarity with the ballet...The Harlequin, after his transformation, seems to be one of the ancestors of the handsome and sumptuously dressed Moor, with whom the Ballerina (like Columbine in the pantomime) is in love" (20-21). Wachtel is quick to point out that none of the ballet's characters are taken directly from harlequinades; however, if we "see" the Moor as Harlequin in disguise, we see something very different than the "Arab" of the Petrushka plays. The act of re-creating Harlequin as a black Moor seems much more subversive than Benois and Stravinsky indicate they intended.

Naomi Ritter, in her book *Art as Spectacle: Images of the Entertainer since Romanticism* devotes a chapter to *Petrushka*. She, like Kelly and Wachtel, traces the origins of the Petrushka character back to the Petrushka puppet shows and *commedia dell'arte* productions. Her descrip-

tion of the Moor is one who is "brutish and evil" (187) and she spends most of the chapter establishing links between Pierrot and Petrushka, attributing the ballet's plot deviations to contemporaneous theater productions. Ritter states emphatically that "The Moor in the ballet corresponds to Harlequin in Meyerhold and Arlecchino in Schnitzler" (207). She finds Harlequin's origins as a "haunting devil" who "came to symbolize the force of life–specifically, fertility" convincing enough to explain his transformation "from a mere rival to a gaudy savage" in Benois's libretto. (207) Ritter mentions Benois's description of the blackamoor figures in the intermezzo for the Petrushka plays, calling it a "traditional" feature of the intermezzo, but other scholars do not support such an understanding.

A final explanation for the inclusion of the Moor offered by Ritter is that he "offers an early example of the primal quality in Modernism" (208). Citing the choreography for the Moor as that which "exemplifies the contact with the floor that characterizes modern dance," Ritter does not take into account the fact that the Moor's movement exaggerates ballet positions and vocabulary, and that the choreography contains none of the references to "tribal art" she claims for it.

Whatever origins and representations we acknowledge for the Moor, he clearly demonstrates the principle of the "Other," a symbolic figure who stands for that which is not "us." Edward Said, in his groundbreaking work *Orientalism*, exposes the inter-connected tangle of prejudice, misinformation, and inaccurate assumptions about the Orient, and provides historical context for the prevalence of such attitudes today. In explaining the popularity of non-Western images in art Said notes that:

> the Orient is the stage on which the whole East is confined. On this stage will appear figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate. The Orient then seems to be, not an unlimited extension beyond the familiar European world, but rather a closed field, a theatrical stage affixed to Europe...The European imagination was nourished extensively from this repertoire...[which] drew on the Orient's riches for their productions...(63)

Pointing to the myriad assumptions which underlie an understanding of any "Other," Said writes: "I have begun with the assumption that the Orient is not an inert fact of nature. It is not merely *there*, just as the Occident itself is not just *there* either" (4). If we begin with an acceptance of the Moor as just *there*, we fall into the trap of Orientalism: seeing the other only as a construction of our own cultural myopia, a kind of critical racial profiling. The Moor isn't just *there*: Fokine's choreography for him subverts his easy dismissal, even though little critical attention has been paid to him.

It is instructive to read Said's history of Orientalism, especially as he makes references to British politicians at roughly the same time as *Petrushka's* genesis. Said quotes Arthur James Balfour (British Member of Parliament) and Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer (England's representative in Egypt, 1882-1907) on the nature of the Oriental: "The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, "different"; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, "normal" (40). Additionally, (still quoting Cromer) "Orientals or Arabs are thereafter shown to be gullible, 'devoid of energy and initiative,' and much given to 'fulsome flattery,' intrigue, cunning and unkindness to animals" (38). It is uncanny how completely these nineteenth-century descriptions are echoed by late twentieth-century critics and historians. Again, the central question rises: does Fokine's choreography for the Moor reinforce this stereotype, or subvert it?

I begin my analysis of Fokine's choreography for the Moor in the ballet's third tableaux, which takes place in the Moor's room.[1] The Moor is seen lying on a divan, tossing a coconut up into the air, catching it, passing it through his upraised feet, and occasionally shaking it. This introduction confirms our understanding of the Moor as lazy, childish, and sexy. In contrast to Petrushka's despair at his imprisonment, the Moor seems quite content in his room, described by Shearer as "a vacation to a happy room where he has luxury at his fingertips" (3). Is this because the 'dumb savage' doesn't know any better, and needs to be governed, or because his status is actually superior to Petrushka's?

The shaking of the coconut causes the Moor to roll off the divan, and he ends up center stage in a cross-legged sitting position. He shakes the coconut again, and jumps up in frustration because he cannot open it. His repeated parallel jumps signal frustration here: however, they are used almost exactly in Nijinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* two years later in the Chosen Maiden's sacrificial dance. Coincidence? Parallel movement in the frontal plane was read as simultaneously "modernist" and "archaic" in Nijinsky's 1911 *L'Apres Midi d'un Faun*–Nijinsky claimed "Je ferai l'arte cubiste" and yet in *Petrushka* we understand it as "primitive" and "savage." After his "primitive" and "savage" temper tantrum, the Moor tiptoes away from the coconut, in an exaggerated slow-motion manner. Interestingly, the same movement is repeated in the fourth tableaux by the Moor, right after he kills Petrushka. We are to understand that the same pantomimic movement in one context "means" awe, and in another "guilt." Could this be a subtle joke of Fokine's against the ridiculously stylized vocabulary of ballet pantomime?

Fokine argues against the conventions of ballet which he considered inexpressive. The formulaic sign language of traditional ballet pantomime in particular received his condemnation. In his famous "Letter to the Times" (July 6, 1914) Fokine stated:

According to the old method of producing a ballet, the ballet master composed his dances by combining certain well-established movements and poses, and for his mimetic scenes he used a conventional system of gesticulation, and endeavored by gestures of the dancers' hands according to established rules to convey the plot of the ballet to the spectator.

What Fokine was attempting was a "multiform expression of the entire self" (Fokine, 123). The Moor's choreography, with its whole body approach to movement expressiveness, can be viewed simultaneously as Fokine's critique of the "conventional system of gesticulation" and as a demonstration of his principles of reform. In his Memoirs, Fokine later wrote "One could also classify "Petrouchka" as a Fokine production which was one of the most complete demonstrations of his application of ballet reforms" (Fokine, 183).

The Moor returns to the coconut and begins praying to it, as "primitive" and "non-rational" human beings were thought to do. (Lord Cromer, writing in his two-volume work Modern Egypt states: "Although the ancient Arabs acquired in a somewhat higher degree the science of dialectics, their descendants are singularly deficient in the logical faculty" cited in Said, 38.) Fokine alerts us to the irrationality of the Moor, presenting him as someone so stupid as to not be able to distinguish a coconut from a fetish. Petrushka, on the other hand, adores and "worships" the Ballerina, a empty headed non-human doll. Which choice displays rational intelligence?

Following this, the Showman places the Ballerina inside the Moor's room. (No one of course questions whether the Ballerina has a room or not—it's assumed her room, if she has one, is of no interest or importance.) She prances in with a trumpet, en pointe, and circles the room. The Moor doesn't seem too interested in her, and she barely glances at him. She stops abruptly as if she has wound down; the Moor performs a chassé tour which carries him further away from her.

As a waltz tune starts, Fokine's parody of Petipa's formulaic pas de deux begins in earnest. The Moor looks at the coconut, tosses it up in the air and away, and then starts a series of promenades by himself, turning away from the Ballerina. Each promenade emphasizes the horizontal plane of his actions, in comparison to the Ballerina's verticality. He takes up space and displays himself in slow, controlled actions which are traditionally the ballerina's, and punctuates the gliding promenades with big "unballetic" galloping steps in between. After a waddling, second position walk that demonstrates all the artificiality of ballet, the Moor "promenades" the Ballerina awkwardly: both are in second position, she on a tilt, he hunched over. This promenade ignores all the conventions of ballet and literally inverts them: instead of being a noble consort, dis-

playing his ballerina, the Moor is a squat, troll-like figure attempting to turn an up-ended object. Fokine in his Memoirs describes the artificiality of ballet that he abhorred:

> The most natural and beautiful of human movements is the forward one. But the ballet had been developing sideways movements, hence the abundance of "second positions" most hated by me. (123)

Fokine positions the Moor almost entirely in second position. What better way to mock ballet's conventions than to give the Moor all the artifice of ballet's prince consorts?

In addition to usurping the ballerina's traditional promenades, and utilizing second position to the point of caricature, Fokine also parodies the reverent attitude of the male partner by having the Moor nibble on the Ballerina's waist. In describing Fokine's choreography for Firebird, Lynn Garafola remarks, "Where Fokine did use the waist to any extent, as in Firebird, he made it a locus of manipulation and entrapment...In juxtaposing the old partnering and the new, Fokine reveals here the ideological premise of both" (36). In Petrushka, Fokine simultaneously liberates the pas de deux partnering from its traditional "pretend-that-you-do-not-notice-his-hands-at-her-waist" and makes fun of the high seriousness normally associated with that contact point. In this moment, Fokine pre-dates the irony and parody of postmodern dance by nearly sixty years. By combining pedestrian gestures with the elite vocabulary of ballet, Fokine creates a pastiche that appears equally postmodern decades before the term is even used.

After nibbling her waist, the Moor abruptly tosses the Ballerina aside and sits down in his cross-legged position. He demonstrates no sexual interest in her at all—in fact, we understand that she is not to his "taste." The Moor at once begins a kind of monkey-banging-cymbals-together action, as if he were a wind-up toy responding to some unknown stimulus. During this "dance" the Moor pays no attention to the peripatetic wanderings of the Ballerina—he does not look at her at all. Coming closer to the Moor, she falls into his lap and the Moor obligingly nibbles her waist again, but finds it no tastier than the first time. He levers her back to a vertical stance, and then abruptly stands up and goes into a tantrum, backing away from her, still in second position, waggling his fingers. While these actions may demonstrate the mercurial emotions of the Moor, thus reinforcing his status as irrational Other, they certainly don't reinforce a reading of the Moor as attracted to the Ballerina, or "potent," and "primitively terrifying." By de-sexualizing the Moor and making him a comedic figure, Fokine destabilized the stereotype, and encouraged the audience to laugh at ballet's pretensions and at their own affectations.

As the earlier waltz music repeats, the Moor suddenly

changes again, advancing toward his partner in a series of stiff *attitude* hops. His body alternates facing front and back while maintaining a slightly tilted *bas relief attitude* pose. (This seems remarkably similar to the *bas relief* poses that Nijinsky employed in his 1911 *L'Apres Midi d'un Faun.*) After these curious hops, the Moor repeats his solo *promenades*, weaving stage left, right, and left again. The repetition reinforces the mechanical nature of the puppets' actions, but seems at odds with an interpretation of the puppets as beings with desires and feelings. The ambiguity persists as the Moor waddles toward the Ballerina, settles down in his second position, and entraps her waist with his arms. Instead of nibbling her waist again, they back up together and stop to perform a coy head-bobbing (false pecking?) right-left-right feinting, a stylized "yes-no-yes" courtship ritual. This action, interspersed with backing up steps, is repeated three times, until they arrive at the Moor's divan and they land on it in a sitting position–the Moor, legs wide, the Ballerina demurely perched on his knee. Their arrival at the divan does not appear preplanned, nor is their ending pose particularly lascivious. This position actually inverts the typical seduction pose of woman's legs spread wide, under her male partner.

The "Petrouchka" chord announces the imminent arrival of Petrushka. The Moor and the Ballerina mime listening with upraised hands near their ears, palms facing out. This gesture is followed by reaching forward, and then a vertical plane alternating action, as if beating an imaginary drum or washing their hands of Petrushka. They pantomime listening again, and then Petrushka enters the Moor's room, propelled in by the Showman. The Ballerina jumps off the Moor's lap, the Moor jumps up from the divan, and Petrushka bolts for the door as the Showman closes it, trapping him inside.

The Moor *chassés* toward Petrushka, preventing him from entering the room further. Petrushka dodges side to side in a subservient, cringing manner and they trace a circular pattern around the room, the Moor galloping sideways in his second position, remaining wide and grounded, Petrushka scurrying nervously. Petrushka's path takes him across the divan in a somersault, the Moor does the same. The Ballerina, who has been wringing her hands and fluttering about trips and sprawls across the divan, ending awkwardly upside down. The Moor remains in his bilaterally symmetrical pose, rather like a ginger-bread man, and Petrushka continues his hapless flight, head down, arms dangling, legs turned in. Petrushka reverses direction and trips over the Moor's outstretched foot, effectively ending the "Keystone Kops" chase scene. With this maneuver, the Moor has demonstrated superior intelligence: instead of blindly chasing Petrushka around in circles, he stops and suavely "sets up" Petrushka's fall. In this, we have further evidence of Fokine's subversion: the Moor is not the clumsy one, not the stupid one, and not the "wild savage."

Next the Moor picks up Petrushka by the belt and collar and bobs him up and down three times, like dunking malodorous laundry. He tosses him to the floor and Petrushka log rolls side to side, as if avoiding kicks, arms awkwardly long and behind his back. The Moor picks him up and dunks him a few more times, and then kicks him toward the door (which conveniently opens.) The Moor pretends to brandish a sword at him, parrying and thrusting with an "en-garde" flourish as the door closes. (Many of the positions of ballet, including the diagonal *écarté*, have their origins in fencing. Is Fokine battling with ballet's history?) The Moor does a victory dance, a trite rendering of the "savage-ape-beating-his-chest" and stomps around in his second position stance, pointing to himself gleefully. While this is on the surface an obvious image of "primitive display," consider again Fokine's description of the Moor:

> Has this been borrowed from life? Most certainly...We often see a self-assured man who sits in a chair with widely spread legs, feet turned out, hands resting on his knees or hips, holding his head high and his chest out.

Fokine's words describe the Moor's confident stance perfectly, and yet call to mind a portly bourgeois official, more than they do a savage wild man. The juxtaposition of this Tarzan-like movement with the elegant opulence of the Moor, coupled with Fokine's description of smug self-satisfaction create an image of deliberate ironic ambiguity.

The Moor returns to the divan, grabs the Ballerina and sits down with her, one arm around her waist, the other over her right breast. They freeze in this position, the Ballerina looking away from the Moor as a drum roll announces the end of the scene.

In his choreography for the Moor, Fokine presents us with multiple ambiguities. Rather than offering a monolithic view of the Moor, Fokine juxtaposes pedestrian and sometimes comic movement with the elite vocabulary of ballet, gives us evidence of intelligence and discrimination, and provides an ambiguous collage of fantasy/reality, audience/performer, and animate/inanimate. In writing about *carnival* and *carnivalization* as he defines it, the linguist and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin notes the following:

> Carnival is a pageant without footlights and without division into performers and spectators. In carnival everyone is an active participant... Carnival is the place for working out, in a concretely sensuous, half-real and half-play-acted form, a *new mode of interrelationship between individuals*, counterposed to the all-powerful socio-hierarchical relationships of non-carnival life...Carnival

brings together, unifies, weds, and combines the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid.(123)

The setting of *Petrushka* at carnival time, with characters and entertainments found among what Bakhtin labels "the free and familiar contact among people" (123) reinforces the subversive and destabilizing nature of the ritual. Carnival reverses and inverts mundane reality; it subverts and parodies the norms of culture, much the way Fokine subverts and parodies ballet and the audience's expectations. Indeed, Bahktin's description of the ambivalent nature of carnival images corresponds well to the images of the Moor Fokine presents. Bakhtin writes:

All the images of carnival are dualistic; they unite within themselves both poles of change and crisis: birth and death...blessing and curse,...praise and abuse, youth and old age, top and bottom, face and backside, stupidity and wisdom. Very characteristic of carnival thinking is paired images, chosen for their contrast (high/low, fat/thin, etc.) or for their similarity...Also characteristic is the utilization of things in reverse: putting clothes on inside out (or wrong side out), trousers on the head, dishes in place of headgear, the use of household utensils as weapons, and so forth. This is a special instance of the carnival category of *eccentricity*, the violation of the usual and the generally accepted...(126)

Dualistic images of the Moor abound, formed by the disjunction between his actions and movement and the stereotyped image his costuming presents. He is a paired image chosen for contrast to Petrushka, a dark rival. Even Bakhtin's carnival category of eccentricity can be found in the Moor's utilization of the coconut as a fetish to be feared, revered, and discarded.

A final connection to Bakhtin's analysis of carnival can be found in Fokine's use of parody. Bakhtin states:

Parody...is an integral element in Menippean satire and in all carnivalized genres in general...parody is ambivalent...In carnival, parodying was employed very widely, in diverse forms and degrees: various images (for example, carnival pairs of various sorts) parodied one another variously and from various points of view; it was like an entire system of crooked mirrors, elongating, diminishing, distorting in various directions and to various degrees. (127)

The elements of carnival that Bakhtin distinguishes are present throughout *Petrushka*, from the binary oppo-

sitions it portrays to the ambiguity of its plot and characters. Benois's setting, the sense of a play within a play that distorts the boundaries between audience members and performers, Fokine's use of parody and juxtaposition, and Stravinsky's fusion of folk culture and high culture, combine to form a complicated and mysterious hall of mirrors, a spectacle for the senses.

Many sources point to the difficulty Stravinsky and Benois had in agreeing upon an ending for the ballet. According to Wachtel

Benois, however, had some ideas of his own concerning the finale. In his conception it was not the Moor who kills Petrushka but the other way around, in the tradition of the pantomime of which he was so fond... "The Moor kills Petrushka rather than Petrushka the Moor. The last thing is not so important, though I prefer the image of Petrushka, tortured by jealousy and coquetry, finally breaking out, and as a result, freeing himself from the Magician's depraved spells. But it's really not important." (21)

While the ballet's ending has been traced to multiple sources of inspiration (contemporary theater, *commedia dell'arte*, the Petrushka puppet plays, and ballet and opera plots) the decision to have the Moor kill Petrushka poses some interesting questions: why does the Moor alone have the power to affect Petrushka's death? If we are to feel, as Garafola suggests, "the precariousness of freedom and the tragedy of its loss" (29) in response to Petrushka's plight, why we do assume that only Petrushka has a dual existence as "real" and "puppet"? On one hand we are to believe that Petrushka suffers and lives and dies, even though he is a puppet, and on the other we are to ignore the incongruity this poses in relationship to the reality of the other two puppets.

In his chapter on the ballet's libretto, Wachtel discusses the "ways in which the libretto manipulates the audience's fields of expectation" (36). The juxtaposition between perceiving the three puppets as having real emotions and internal lives, with their doll-like behavior and single-planar motion, creates a complicated set of intersecting worlds. Lincoln Kirstein points out the ways in which the choreography highlighted this juxtaposition: "By limiting movement and gesture to a flat and rigid plane, he [Fokine] proposed mechanical, semi-automatic regularity, in contrast to the semi-accidental haphazard naturalism in his conglomerate vignetted *corps*" (195). By limiting the Moor to primarily frontal-plane movement (using width and horizontal symmetry) Fokine emphasizes the cookie-cutter one dimensionality of the Moor even further. How astonishing it is then to realize that the Moor (as the only one of the three puppets) 1) has the power to attract the opposite sex (virility); 2) has luxurious accom-

modations (status); and 3) has the power to kill (agency). Even given that the ballet's creators meant to call into question the intersections between reality and fantasy, it seems quite curious that the character with these traits is the foreign Moor. Fokine's choreography deepens the ambiguity that exists in the multiple levels of discourse presented.

It is also interesting to note that the only time the choreography for the Moor eschews the horizontal width of the frontal plane is when the Moor strikes Petrushka in the fourth tableau, causing his death. In a strong sagittal movement, the Moor raises the scimitar and slashes vertically down, and Petrushka crumples. Strong weight, the anathema of ballet's lightness, in urgent quickness, reverses the ascendent path of ballet's evolution. While it is not possible to know for sure whether this use of the vertical axis was a deliberate choreographic choice of Fokine's, it seems likely that it was.

In creating choreography for the Moor which presented the Moor as multi-dimensional, Fokine clearly subverted and undermined a stereotypic reading of the character. When we today accept a uni-dimensional reading of the Moor, thinking of him (if at all) as "just there," we fall victim to a monolithic view of the Orient, the assumption that we 'know' the Other and can define him. Said writes:

> Rather than listing all the figures of speech associated with the Orient– its strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth—we can generalize about them as they were handed down through the Renaissance. They are all declarative and self-evident; the tense they employ is the timeless eternal...they are always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent...Rhetorically speaking, Orientalism is absolutely anatomical and enumerative: to use its vocabulary is to engage in the particularizing and dividing of things into manageable parts. (72)

When we dismiss the Moor with declarative and general language, rather than looking critically at him, we lose the opportunity to appreciate the multiple layers of discourse present in the ballet. By recognizing the panoply of images, their fascinating and overlapping contextual origins, and the marvelous ambiguity present, we can begin to truly appreciate the complex genius of *Petrushka* and Fokine's incomparable choreographic contributions.

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Video sources

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Note

1. This analysis is based on the Paris Opera Ballet's "Paris Dances Diaghilev" version of *Petrouchka*, restaged by Nicholas Beriosoff, 1991.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SDHS Conference 2001

Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland
June 21 – 24

Thursday, June 21

3:00 – 8:00p.m.
Sheraton Baltimore North
REGISTRATION

12:00 – 5:00
Goucher College Sports and Rec classroom
BOOK DISPLAY

6:30 – 8:30
Sheraton Baltimore North, Warfields
OPENING RECEPTION

8:00 – 9:00
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
WORKING GROUP
Ethnicity and Dance
Anita Gonzalez, convenor

Friday, June 22

Friday, 8:00 – 3:00p.m.
Goucher College Sports and Rec Lobby
ON-SITE REGISTRATION

Friday, 8:00 – 5:00
Goucher College Sports and Rec classroom
BOOK DISPLAY

Friday, 9:00 – 3:00
Sports and Rec Lobby
Van Meter Lounge Area
REFRESHMENTS

Friday, 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
WORKING GROUP
Early Dance
Pat Rader, convener

Friday, 8:45 – 10:05
Merrick Hall
Ann Daly (chair)
Sharry Traver Underwood, **"Lost Dances of Ted Shawn"** (video presentation)

Friday, 8:45 – 10:05
Van Meter B10
"Choreographing Politics I"
Thomas DeFrantz (chair)

Moe Meyer, "Mapping the Body Politic: Embodying Political Geography in Irish Dance"

Jens Richard Giersdorf, "Choreographing Socialist Identity: Dance and Politics in East
Germany"

Friday, 8:45 – 10:05
Van Meter G07
"Recovering Meaning: Documents and Interpretation"
Chrystelle Bond (chair)

Lynn Matluck Brooks, "Dance History Documentation: Working from the Inside Out"

Barbara Sparti, "An Eighteenth-century Venetian *Moresca*: Popular Dance or Regulated Competition?"

Friday, 8:45 – 10:05
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
Purnima Shah (chair)
Sreyashi Dey, **"Migration and Transformation of Choreographic Identity"** (lecture-demonstration)

Friday, 10:30 – 12:30
Merrick Hall
Roundtable, "Popular Balanchine"
Claude Conyers (chair)
George Dorris, Lynn Garafola, Beth Genné, Constance Valis Hill, Monica Moseley, Nancy Reynolds, Janice Ross

Friday, 10:30 – 12:30
Van Meter B10
"American Theatre Dance from the Red Decade to the Red Scare"
Ellen Graff (chair)

Elizabeth Cooper, "Dances about Spain: *Guns & Castanets* and *Adelante*"

Jenifer Pahkowski Craig, "A Redacted Past: Bella Lewitzky Encounters the U.S. Government"

Catherine Gunther Kodat, "The Figure in the Carpet: George Balanchine and the Cold War"

Friday, 10:30 – 12:30
Van Meter G07
"The Local and the Global I"
Valerie Briginshaw (chair)

Iro Valaskakis Tembeck, "Of Names and Things: Image Makeovers in Some Montreal Dance Institutions"

Allana Lindgren, "'Pointe of law': The National Ballet of Canada and Kimberly Glasco Legal Arbitration Case"

Karen Schaffman, "The Globalization of Contact Improvisation: Negotiating the Commodification of Touch"

Friday, 10:30 – 12:30
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
Workshop
"Late Sixteenth Century Fencing—the Art of the Rapier," Patri Pugliese, Paul Kenworthy, and Rachelle Palnick Tsachor

Friday, 12:30 – 2:00

LUNCH, on your own

Friday, 2:00 – 4:00
Merrick Hall
"The Danced Gothic: Ballet Blancs, AIDS-Gothic Performance, and Jawole Zollar's *Bones and Ash*"
Tricia Henry Young (chair)

Joellen A. Meglin, "The Body Dismembered, Diseased, and Damned: Reading the *Ballet Blanc* vis-à-vis *Conte Brun* in France, 1831-1841"

David Gere, "Queer Acts: Choreographing Corpses and Ghosts in the Age of AIDS"

Ananya Chatterjea, "Creating Alternative Communities: The Rewriting of the Gothic in Jawole Willa Jo Zollar's *Bones & Ash*"
Friday, 2:00 – 4:00
Van Meter B10
"Ballet and Popular Culture"
Janice Ross (chair)

Karen Eliot, "A Fierce Resolve, A Steely Strength and a Fragile, Porcelain Beauty: Constructing the Moira Shearer Myth"

Holly Williams, "Raising the Barn: Choreographer Michael Kidd and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*"

Virginia Taylor, "The Comic Corrective: Interrogations of Ballet in Popular Culture"

Friday, 2:00 – 4:00
Van Meter G07
"Americans At Home and Abroad"
Dawn Lille Horwitz (chair)

Angela Kane, "American Dreams: New Frontiers in 21st Century Dance"

Mary Barres Riggs and Robert Riggs, "John Neumeier's Contribution to the History of Symphonic Ballet"

Ann Nugent, "Seeking Order and Finding Chaos in the Choreography of William Forsythe"

Friday, 4:30 – 5:45
Merrick Hall
Plenary Panel, "Dance Studies, Gay and Lesbian Studies, and Queer Theory,"
Susan Manning (chair)
Valerie Briginshaw, Susan C. Cook, Ann Daly, and Thomas DeFrantz

Friday, 6:00- 7:00
New Studio, Todd Dance Studio
Working Group
Dance History Teachers
Tricia Young, convener

Friday, 6:00 – 7:00
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
Working Group
Reconstruction
Betsy Fischer, convener

Friday, 7:00 – 8:00
New Studio, Todd Dance Studio
Working Group
Students in SDHS I
Karen Silen, convener

Saturday, June 23

Saturday, 8:00 – 3:00p.m.
Goucher College Sports and Rec Lobby
ON-SITE REGISTRATION

Saturday, 8:00 – 5:00
Goucher College Sports and Rec classroom
BOOK DISPLAY

Saturday, 9:00 – 3:00
Sports and Rec Lobby
Van Meter Lounge Area
REFRESHMENTS

Saturday, 8:15 – 10:15
Merrick Hall
"Surrounding Dance: Costume, Gesture, and Aroma"
André Lepecki (chair)

Judith Chazin-Bennahum, "A Longing for Perfection: Neoclassic Fashion and Ballet 1780-1815"

Giannandrea Poesio, "The Literature of the Legs and the Poetry of Gesture: Reflections on Narrative and Expressive Mime in Ballet"

Sally Banes, "The Scent of a Dance"

Saturday, 8:15 – 10:15
Van Meter B10
"Bridging the Present: Historical Connections in Fragmented Dance"
Ramon Rivera-Servera (chair and respondent)

Susan Tenneriello, "Repeating Dance, Repeating History, Repeating Ruth St. Denis: Making a Legacy Stick"

Jennifer Parker-Starbuck, "How to Define a Tech(no)body? Cathy Weis's Interactive Internet Experiments"

Joshua Abrams, "Did You See What I Saw? Did You Hear What I Heard? Documenting Cie Felix Ruckert's *Hautnah*"

Saturday, 8:15 – 10:15
Van Meter G07
"Interculturalism and the Canon I"
Amy Koritz (chair)

Cynthia J. Williams, "The Moor: Fokine's Forgotten Puppet"

Jacqueline Shea Murphy, "Imagining 'Blood Memories': Absent Indians in Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring*"

Vida Midgelow, "The Erotic and the Exotic in *Swan Lake* as Reconceived by Shakti"

Saturday, 10:40 – 12:40
Merrick Hall
"Dancing Around the Vernacular"
Sally Sommer (chair)

Renée Camus, "Cancan: Blurring the Line Between Social Dance and Stage Performance"

Anthea Kraut, "Zora Neale Hurston, the Bahamian Fire Dance, and the Circulation of the Vernacular in American Dance History"

Jonathan David Jackson [SJC Award Winner], "Gender Representation in the Latest Form of the Black/Latino(a) Dance Form Called Voguing"

Saturday, 10:40 – 12:40
Van Meter B10
"The Local and The Global II"
Iro Valaskakis Tembeck (chair)

Cheryl Smith, "Matrons and Patrons: The Untold Story Behind Three Canadian Ballet Companies"

Jane Scott-Barrett, "'Marketable Radicalness' and the Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in Examples of American Post-Modern Dance"

Tate Osten, "Autographs of Boris Eifman (early works)"

Saturday, 10:40 – 12:40
Van Meter G07
"Technology, Virtual Reality and Dancing Bodies I"
Lisa Naugle (chair)

Naomi M. Jackson, "Re-Thinking Humanness: The Place of Automata, Puppets and Cyborgs in Dance"

Suzanne M. Jaeger, "Dancing in a Virtual Moment: 'Look Mom, No Flesh'"

Valarie Mockabee, "Documenting the Process of Bebe Miller's Work *Prey*"

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND AWARDS LUNCH
12:40 – 2:00

Saturday 2:15 – 4:15
Van Meter B10
"The Occult, the Utopian, and the Everyday"
Jens Richard Giersdorf (chair)

Carol-Lynne Moore, "Rudolf Laban as 'Rosicrucian Thinker'"

Michelle Ferranti, "A Different Expression: Recognizing the Work of Oskar Schlemmer"

Tresa Randall, "Populism, Avant-Gardism and Hanya Holm: An Analysis of *Dance of Work and Play* (1938)"

Saturday 2:15 – 4:15
Van Meter G07
"Interculturalism and the Canon II"
Kate Ramsey (chair)

Rebecca Rossen, "Dancing Jewesses: Jewish-American Female Choreographers and the Performance of Gender and Ethnicity"

Karen W. Hubbard, "Uncle Tom's Cabin with a Siamese Twist"

Yutian Wong, "Bi-Racial Bargirls and Other Fantasies: Race, Gender, and War in Maura Nguyen Donohue/In Mixed Company's *SKINning the SurFACE* and *Lotus Blossom Itch*"

Saturday 2:15 – 4:15
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
"Romantic Ballet Lost and Found"
Rebecca Harris-Warrick (chair)

Alexander Bennett and Marian Smith, "*La Sylphide* Lost and Found" (paper)

Sandra Noll Hammond and Elizabeth Aldrich, "The 'Quadrille des douze Dames' from *Cendrillon*, 1823" (lecture-demonstration)

Saturday, 4:30 – 5:50
Van Meter B10
"Thinking about Thinking about Dance"
Jim LaVita (chair)

Robert P. Crease, "Origins of Jazz Dance: A Case Study for Exploring Different Dimensions of
Dance Research"

Alexandra Carter, "Changing Views: A Critical History of Second-Wave Feminist and Post-
Feminist Debate and its Manifestation in Writings on Ballet"

Saturday, 4:30 – 5:50
Van Meter G07
"Choreographing Politics II"
Paul Scolieri (chair)

Priya Srinivasan, "Performing Brownface in America: Where Have All the South Asian Women
Gone?"

Toni Shapiro-Phim, "From Karl Marx to William Shakespeare at Cambodia's Court"

Multi-purpose Room: Ken Pierce, "Choreographic Structure in the Dances of Claude Balon"
(lecture-demonstration; please note that this session will end at 5:15)

Saturday, 6:00-7:00
New Studio, Todd Dance Building
Working Group
Students in SDHS II
Karen Silen, convener

Saturday, 6:00-7:00
Multi-Purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
Working Group
Strategies for Doctoral Education
Joellen Meglin, convener

Saturday, 7:15 –9:00
Sheraton Baltimore North, Warfields
Banquet

Sunday, June 24

Sunday, 8:30 – 11:00a.m.
Goucher College Sports and Rec Lobby
ON-SITE REGISTRATION

Sunday, 9:00 – Noon
Sports and Rec Lobby
Van Meter Eli Velder Lounge
REFRESHMENTS

Sunday, 8:45 – 10:45
Van Meter B10
"Technology, Virtual Reality and Dancing Bodies II"
Madeleine Nichols (chair)

Lisa Naugle, "Reinterpreting Choreography: Using Motion Capture Data as Historical Information"

Roger Copeland, "Dancing for the Digital Age: Merce Cunningham's *Biped*"

Val Rimmer, "Merce Cunningham and Technology: a History of the Present"

Sunday, 8:45 – 10:45
Van Meter G07
"Ragime, Roller Derbys, and the Return to Swing"
Susan C. Cook (chair)

Danielle Robinson, "From the Turkey Trot to the One Step: The Cultural Politics of American Ragtime Dancing"

Louis Scheeder, "The Dancing Derby"

Eric Martin Usner, "Living in the Present, Dancing in the Past: Nostalgia and Race in Neo-Swing Dance Culture"

Sunday, 8:45 – 10:45
Multi-purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
Workshop
Edmund Fairfax, "The Attitude of Eighteenth-Century Theatrical Dance"

Sunday, 11:00 – 1:00
Van Meter B10
"Revisioning Renaissance and Baroque Court Dance"
Linda Tomko (chair)

Nancy Kane, "Architecture and Icon in Caroso's *Nobiltà di Dame*"

Peter Bohlin, "A Fight for Women's Rights: A Moment from Stockholm, 1650, and the Coronation Festivities of Queen Christina of Sweden"

Carol G. Marsh, "In Search of the Passepied"

Sunday, 11:00 – 1:00
Van Meter G07
"Narrative, Performativity, History"
Nadine George (chair)

Rebekah Kowal, "'From Remembrance Came a Dance': The Cultural Meanings of Narrative in Donald McKayle's Early Choreography"

Anita Gonzalez, "Urban Bush Women and the Continuum of Black Performativity"

Veta Goler, "Big-Legged Women: Modern Dance, Popular Culture, and New Notions of Black Women's Identity"

Sunday, 11:00 – 1:00
Multi-purpose Room, Sports and Rec Building
"Rosalia Chladek: Protagonist of Ausdruckstanz,"
Shelley C. Berg (chair)
Gunhild Oberzaucher-Schuller, Betsy Fisher, and Ingrid Giel (lecture-demonstration and workshop)

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