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SOCIETY OF DANCE HISTORY SCHOLARS

CONFERENCE PAPERS

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"African Note from Pearl Primus":

Diasporic Subjectivity and Postwar Internationalism

Rebekah J. Kowal

Diasporic choreographic practices are acts of cross-cultural translation through which artists embody the dynamic intertwinings of subjectivity (Wallace 1990; Clark 1994; Kraut 2003; Mercer 2005). From this perspective, the diasporean choreographer is an exemplary cosmopolitan: one who must navigate multiple worlds at once and whose work negotiates various (and sometimes irreconcilable) commitments personal, social, and aesthetic. In light of these ideas, this paper examines some of the cultural meanings of Pearl Primus's trip to Africa in 1949. Awarded a Rosenwald Foundation Fellowship in 1948, Primus traveled to Africa for nearly a year, during which she was enrolled in the doctoral program in Anthropology at Columbia University. The trip was a homecoming of sorts, a chance to "go back where I came from" as she put it (*Ebony* 1950, 56).

This was not the first time Primus had gone tracing her roots. Not parochial when it came to claiming a people or a homeland, Primus, who had emigrated to the U.S. from Trinidad as a young child, spent several months traveling across the American south in 1944. Disguised as a sharecropper, she picked cotton and attended church services and prayer meetings studying the religious practices of rural blacks (*Ebony*, 1951, 56). As she told dance writer Margaret Lloyd, "Not daring to take notes ('It would have meant death')," she learned from her informants by living with them as one of them. She even "tried to work in the fields with them, but on their frugal diet could not stand the long hours of unremitting toil" (1948, 275). "Shocked," "deadened" and "sadden," by what she experienced, she nevertheless believed that the trip was necessary "in order to know my own people where they are suffering most" (Lloyd 1948, 275; *Ebony* 1951, 56).[1] By surprise Primus was given the opportunity to travel again, this time to Africa on the last and largest grant ever given by the Rosenwald Foundation (Lloyd 1948, 275; *Ebony* 1951, 56). She went to Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal, Angola, the Gold Coast, the Belgian Congo, and French Equatorial Africa visiting over 30 tribal groups and employing ethnographic techniques she had learned in her anthropology courses like still photography, motion pictures, line sketches, and written observation (*Time* 1951, 98-102; Perpener 2001, 170). Not content only to observe and document, however, she absorbed herself in her research, and, when allowed, participated in the dances of the tribal groups she visited (Perpener 2001, 170).

In a longer project in which this essay is a part, I elaborate on the significance of this trip, not only for Primus and her work as a choreographer but also as it represented some of the social and political meanings of diaspora for African Americans at mid-century. Limited in scope, this paper nonetheless provides an opportunity for me to think through the significance of letters Primus wrote about her trip and sent to various dance outlets while away. Published as excerpts or in their entirety these appeared in the *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune* and *Dance Observer*. Other accounts, written by Primus and others, appeared in a host of publications on her return including *Dance Observer*, *Dance Magazine*, *Vogue*, *Theatre Arts*, *Time* and *Ebony*. Comprising only a small portion of the published accounts of the trip, the letters nevertheless provide a travelogue of sorts, documenting the general outlines of Primus's journey and detailing some significant experiences along the way. What I hope to accomplish in this paper is a careful and critical reading of the letters as a way of beginning to interpret the meanings of these and other accounts in the context of postwar American culture.

In one sense Primus's letters reveal a process by which she reflected on her diasporic and dialogical subjectivity. At once subject and object, familiar and alien, here and there, she affirmed the contradictory nature of her self-perception in the act of documenting her embodied experiences in Africa. In another sense, Primus used the trip, and by extension press coverage of it, to create a public forum. Having been criticized for the "approximation" of her Africanist choreography prior to her departure, she took the initiative to reshape the critical debate about her own work first through the lens of a reflexive and deeply felt diasporic subjectivity and second by employing a

rhetoric of theatrical efficacy. Moreover the forum also provided an occasion for her to express her thoughts about a longstanding debate in American anthropological circles regarding cultural retention across the diasporic cultural continuum.

Intertextuality in Primus's Early Work

Prior to examining the letters, however, it is important to place them in the context of Primus's early career and the critical debate that surrounded it to suggest what might have been at stake for Primus when she embarked for Africa. That Primus would receive the attention of such a number of venerable publications during and after the trip attests to her stature as an artist prior to her departure. The first recipient of a New Dance Group school scholarship, Primus made her professional debut in 1943 after only two years of modern dance training. In an evening performance shared with four other choreographers, Primus, according to *New York Times* critic John Martin, "walked away with the lion's share of the honors," in part due to the theatrical "effectiveness" of her material and in part "because she is a remarkably gifted artist" (1943). In a program of solos drawn from a variety of sources spanning the Africanist gamut, from *African Ceremonial* drawn from a Belgian Congolese fertility rite, to *Strange Fruit*, an adaptation of Lewis Allan's poem in which Primus assumed the role of a white onlooker in a lynching, Primus shined in her ability to combine Africanist vernacular and modern dance vocabulary to represent episodes in the Pan-African experience. As Martin proclaimed: "It would be hard to think of a Negro dancer in the field who can match her for technical capacity, compositional skill and something to say in terms that are altogether true to herself both racially and as an individual artist." He continued: "… if ever a young dancer was entitled to a company of her own and the freedom to do what she chooses with it, she is it." Following Martin's lead, other publications like *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Observer*, *Mademoiselle*, *Vogue*, and *Time* paid close attention to her early career, intrigued by, as *Vogue* put it, the ways in which she "fused in her work her whole background" (*Vogue* 1943, 48).

Primus's "intertextual" approach, borrowing a term from Brenda Dixon Gottschild, was typical of black choreographers of the period (Dixon Gottschild 1998, 47). It was the way in which she negotiated the dichotomous and contradictory demands of aesthetic prescriptions for what was then called "Negro dance." According to Susan Manning, as white choreographers deployed "mythic abstraction," a convention that privileged the white body as an unmarked and universal body even in instances in which white dancers impersonated people of color, African American choreographers were encouraged to embrace those subjects that were undeniably black, and therefore could be marked and categorized as such (2004, 118). Along the lines of mythic abstraction, which also allowed dancing bodies to transcend contingencies of time and place, these included rural or urban black life, black spiritual practices, the protest song, and so-called "primitives" – dances drawn from tribal or pre-industrial cultural practices across the African diaspora. As Manning points out, by the early 1940s audience familiarity with the Africanist work of Katherine Dunham made newly "legible" representations of diaspora (2004, 118). Nevertheless, this did not make Primus's work any easier with critics, who had problems with her propensity both to embody the Pan-African experience and to call it modern dance. Adding fuel to the fire was the great public interest in her work. While it put Primus in an admirable position for any modern dancer, it also placed her under a microscope as an exemplar of the "Negro" concert dancer.

Two editorials by Lois Balcom published in *Dance Observer* in 1944 make this clear. Here Primus's race is a double-edged sword – couched in terms of the issues associated with the "negro danc[ing] himself." In the second editorial, for example, she defines modern dance as "pre-eminently individual … [in] that it expresses emotional experience through the medium of movement directly, and, in doing so, that each dance must make its own form" (1944, 123). Then she laments the application of this prescription to black concert dance in its necessitation that the black choreographer make dances about the universal "Negro" experience, including the "primitive." As she reasoned:

> Of course, the African heritage enters into her attitudes, her insights, her ambitions, and her dance movements; nevertheless, what she knows about tribal ceremonies she has learned actually from books. With the trustworthy intuitions of her blood to guide her, her interpretations achieve a closer approximation of authenticity than would those of a white dancer – but they remain approximations (123).

For Balcom, this held Primus back because in striving to stage "authentic" primitives – which she could only "approximate" due to her lack of first-hand knowledge – she was diverted from "the modern dancer's prerogative": "to offer an individualized expression, experimental in form, concerned with the significant aspects of the changing world" (123). Several years after Primus's debut, other critics began commenting in kind, such as in this review published in 1946:

> Of all the primitives *African Ceremonial* still is tops. It is the most unadulterated on the list. As for the rest, what could be beautiful savagery descends to blow by blow repetition … tinged with a theatricality and exhibitionism which rightly do not belong in sincere works of this nature. Miss Primus … faces a problem in avoiding clichés of her own making. Perhaps she should dig deeper into discovery of movement (1946, 76).

John Perpener and Susan Manning cite Balcom's editorials as illuminating essentialist contradictions within dance modernism as they circumscribed the artistic practices of black dancers. For example, while Manning credits Balcom, and her subject Primus, with "rescripting white-critics' expectations for Negro dance, she notes that she put the black dancer in a tenuous position" (2004, 177). "No longer caught in the conundrum of natural performer versus derivative artist, the African-American concert dancer now became caught in a new contradiction between representing the race and articulating an individual vision" (175). Granted, if we assume that Balcom's editorials had any impact on Primus, they made it difficult for her to do what she wanted to do as an artist and still call what she did modern dance. Yet we must not overlook the efforts that Primus made, clearly evident in her accounts of her trip to Africa, to address these and other narrow conceptions about her work.

Reading Primus's Letters

When interviewed by *Time* magazine in 1947, Primus stated:

> What I try to express in my dancing is the culture of the Negro people. … I am not preaching a 'back to Africa' movement. I am simply trying to show the Negro his African heritage and make him see that his culture had a dignity and strength and cleanliness. … I don't know yet what I have to say about my own life or place in my own land. But some day I hope to be able to say, 'This is my expression, this is what I have to say' (*Time* 1947, 44).

A few years prior to her trip, Primus was clear about her artistic mission; in embodying diaspora she hoped to make the past useable for African Americans by substantiating through physical practice its "dignity, strength and cleanliness" (44). Where she stood within this history was less clear, yet, in many ways, her experiences in Africa and her written reflections about them provided some answers.

In excerpts of the first two letters she wrote, one to Walter Terry and published in the *New York Herald Tribune* and the other to John Martin of the *New York Times*, Primus writes of her mission as primarily ethnographic. However as much as she thought she was there to authenticate her own adaptations, she soon learned that in order to do so the dances she wished to study needed to be reconstructed first. "Dance in Nigeria is in a deplorable state," she wrote to Terry. "People are ashamed to dance their native dances, jitterbugging and ballroom dance have swept the country. But I have witnessed dances which will perish with the dancer. I have seen ceremonies which will not be done again. It is my duty the to preserve their flavor, to reproduce them for the Western mind, to bring beauty into our narrow world" (1949). Nevertheless she cultivates a remove from her hosts, revealed in a tone one might expect of a foreign tourist: "Nigeria was quite an experience," she reflected. "My memory will never let go the happiness, the misery, the laughter, the tears, the illness, the dancing, the friends – the filth, dirt, disease ... I did not stay in any mansion but in homes where water was unboiled, fruit unwashed, where there were insects and dust, but I survived" (1949).

Excerpts of the second letter written to Martin reveal a deepening consciousness about her position as outsider. "What strange adventures lie ahead are as unpredictable as those I have already had," she mused. "I have passed through all the stages from hysteria to near death, but the people loved me with a fierce, possessive love. They spoiled me in their own strange way, they dropped to their knees before me, they named me into their tribes, and when they saw me dance, they swore I was juju woman indeed." Primus is treated as a stranger by her Nigerian hosts, but they

also accept her as one of their own. "I found the people from whom came the 'Shouters of Sobo,' and when I danced with them no one knew who was American, who African," she remarked (1949). Most ironic to Primus is that the Nigerians think that *she* is the authentic mover. "Their dancing is losing the freshness which they claim my dancing has. They compare me to the thunder and lighting and many feared me when I moved."

Yet, from an artistic standpoint, Primus realizes she has much to learn from the Nigerians, in her words: "from them I learned the inner conversation of muscles and the enjoyment of subtle movements." Still clear about her intentions, her sense of her own relationship to her research is changing first as a result of her increasing personal investment and second because what she is discovering both about African dance practices and herself are different than expected. "Dance," she wrote, "except in certain societies, is generally looked upon as a good-for-nothing-hobby. There are no professional dancers as before, and when people dance in most instances there is no emphasis on perfection." She reiterates that in order to get material for herself she must help her hosts preserve their own dance history. "I am fortunate to be able to salvage the still existent gems of dance before they, too, fade into general decadence. In many places I started movements to make the dance again important. Ancient costumes were dragged out, old men and women – toothless but beautiful with age – came forth to show me the dances which will die with them" (1949).

In a letter published in *Dance Observer* six months later, Primus reveals the deepening stakes of her visit as she is literally transformed by her experiences. The letter begins as follows: "I am indeed fortunate. Tonight I write by the light of a tiny lantern and a sputtering twig dipped in palm oil. The village is Kahnplay [Liberia] – hamlet of Paramount chief Mongrue. He has adopted me as his daughter and to use his own words 'Whatever I have is yours for you are my child – you call me father'" (DO, Dec. 1949). She continues: "Now I am being prepared for initiation into the *Sande*, one of the most powerful of the female cults in Africa. The members are marked down the back and over the shoulder down the front to the pubic region. I shall plead for fewer cuts – though the design is beautiful I don't think I could endure all. Unfortunately I am sworn to secrecy and therefore cannot tell you too much" (DO, Dec. 1949). Absorbed in her research, and literally adopted by her hosts, her dancing has taken on new meaning as she finds new reasons to move. As she put it: "This is a new life for me. … I have been amazed and overjoyed, for when the spirit entered me the reason for the dance became the reason to move. I danced as I have never danced on the stages of America. Myself was transformed; yet underneath all this a deep process of analysis was taking place" (1949).

Clearly the letters are evidence of Primus's commitment to documentation and analysis. She writes to record what she has seen, done and learned not only for her own purposes but also for those of her hosts, whose feelings about dance appear to her to be in transition through the disintegration of colonial rule on the one hand and the westernization of various areas of the continent on the other. Yet the fact that she sent letters to various dance critics and dance and general interest publications highlights something else about Primus, which is her sense of her public profile as artist and intellectual. The first person narrative voice becomes a lens through which she can convey to readers the details her experiences and their bearing on their lives. What seems most pressing to communicate is the irony that Primus herself, an American, whose broader culture brought the Nigerians the jitterbug (the anglo-ization of the Lindy Hop) – a symbol of the demise of their dancing practices – is also the person who can make the past usable again for her African hosts. Paradoxically this account by Primus of her own responsibility undercut the perception shared by some American anthropologists and the public alike that the diaspora illustrated a cultural continuum in which African practices were the most authentic and African American ones the least (Dunham 2005; Ramsey 2000). By example, she puts forth the idea that diaspora is not a one-way route; rather its exchange is fluid and multidirectional (see also Gilroy 1993). "Coming home" to Africa is not what she expected, as she assumes responsibility for doing what she imagined Africans could do for her, validate dance practices. Yet her homecoming seems to accomplish something else. Not only does the recognition of her abilities and adoption into various and sometimes highly differentiated groups give her a deep sense of belonging. It also allows her to work through her complicated diasporic subjectivity. What was once a more cerebral understanding of her position within an African cultural continuum becomes basic to her conception of self.

Finding A Theater of Efficacy

As much as she testifies to having been changed by these experiences she nevertheless continues to mine them for information about her work as a dancer and choreographer. Namely her observations about African dance practices provide an opportunity for her to rethink "the primitive," to examine the dramaturgical nature of tribal theater. To begin with, she takes back her use of "primitive" to categorize African dance forms replacing it with the term "basic." Here form and function are intricately related and dependent on one another. As she put it: "This is a course in choreography. The basic patterns of life – the circle which is the embryo – the force of the straight forward line which is birth – the spiral, the Xing, the jagged line which denote growth and struggle – the return of the circle again – the shrinking of the circle to a tiny speck and the dropping of that speck into the vastness of eternity which is death" (*Dance Observer* 1949). Rather than view African dances as crude or even unsophisticated she now sees them as seminal and therefore generative in her thinking about choreography. Second she makes another realization; that she might characterize what she has witnessed as a theater of efficacy in which intensity comes in the pursuit and achievement of a desired and verifiable result. "For those of us who are performers," she considered, "this is really one of the greatest classrooms, for the true dance aims at effect – the rapid movement is suddenly halted – the spinning dancer suddenly stops still before the chief, and the woman in the trance suddenly screams through the stillness. … No theatre has produced anything like those of Mushenge or Benin – designed for effectiveness!" (*Dance Observer* 1949, 147). In this way, Primus reconsidered the dominant theory of dance modernism through the lens of African dance practices in ways that underlined dance's functional side. By doing so, she countered the arguments made by Balcom and others that in adapting African dance forms for performance she was holding herself back from becoming a good choreographer of modern dance or making a cliché of her own work. To her mind, the study of African forms could lead her and dance modernism in new aesthetic and theatrical directions by complicating notions about choreographic efficacy.

Finally, I would like to suggest that in concentrating on the politics of dance modernism at mid-century we must not look past the larger political and cultural significance of Primus's embodiments of diaspora Primus, who had worked as a telephone operator in order to help put herself through college, whose applications to become a laboratory technician had been rejected on the basis of race, and whose artistic beginnings were nurtured by members of the radicalized New Dance Group, aligned herself with the left-wing which saw its artistic practices as accomplishing political work (Graff 1997). In kind, Primus's dances commented on the social and cultural issues of the day as they defined the lives of African Americans. When seen in the context of the radical left, whose politics became increasingly internationalized in the late 1930s and early 1940s (Denning 1997), Primus's embodiments of diaspora take on a political cast. As Penny Von Eschen has shown, in this political context, racial prejudice was both a civil-rights and a class issue. To evoke diaspora through dance, therefore, was more than a way to refer to the physical, cultural and psychological effects of African dispersal and migration. It also highlighted the "common interest" that African Americans and colonized peoples shared with other laboring classes across the world (1997, 42). Conversely, fighting for democracy in Africa globalized the American civil rights issue (42). In Primus's case, dancing the diaspora embodied a condition in which the racial, the economic, the political, and the geographic met in the body of the dancer, often Primus herself.

Yet by the time she traveled to Africa, the political landscape had changed in the context of the simmering cold war. Truman had thrown down the gauntlet in his issuance of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, and by many accounts many of those who had formerly pledged their allegiance to the radicalized internationalism of the left wing were now rallying around the American flag. In an environment not unlike the one we live in today, political dissent was seen as the subversion of democratic principles that formed a bulwark against, in this case, the spread of communism. According to Von Eschen, even black radicals fell into step: "The embrace of the Truman Doctrine by many African American leaders reshaped black American political and rhetorical strategies and fundamentally altered the terms of anticolonialism. … Moreover, as the Cold War escalated, the affirmation by many black leaders that 'Negroes are Americans' left no room for the claim of commonality with Africans and other oppressed peoples" (97). Seen in this light, Primus's accounts of her trip, including the letters, are conspicuously devoid of over references to class or other politics of anti-colonialism. Might her

writings have contributed to a changing discourse about diasporic pan-Africanism – one independent of class or even race – that formed the basis of the nascent struggle for civil rights at home? And what impact if any did her blacklisting in the early 1950s have on her expression of such views? These are some questions that remain that must still be pursued.

Endnotes

1 This experience led to the creation of dances such as *Motherless Child* and *Slave Market* (both 1944) set to African American spirituals.

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Sublime or Ridiculous?: Some Thoughts on Marie Leyton's Electrical Serpentine Dance of the 1890s

Jody Sperling

> There was a time when the phrase "danseuse electrique" denoted a young woman whose terpsichorean efforts were supposed to have an electric or magnetic effect upon the spectators. Now it has a distinctly practical significance. An electric dancer is really an electric dancer—one who carries about her person volts, amperes, Watts, ohms and other things, all of which are familiar to the electrician, but rather mystifying to the general public.[1]

When Loie Fuller fashioned the "Serpentine Dance" in late 1891—adjusting the popular music-hall skirt dance by adding more fabric to her costume and swirling its folds to catch colorful displays of light—she inspired scores of imitators. Serpentine dancing became as much a staple of music hall stage performance in the 1890s, as skirt dancing had been the decade before. The "electrical serpentine" was a special, short-lived variation of the Fuller-inspired genre. The novelty was two-fold: first, that the dancer *triggered* the illumination of lights with her own movements; and secondly, that these lamps were placed *on her person* within her costume. The result was that the dancer herself became blindingly radiant. And, also, that she illuminated, at close contact and at her own will, selected parts of her body. *The New York Times* described the performance in the following way:

> a startling effect produced by the bursting into a blaze of many colored electric lights, which shine through the blue gauze covering the breast, arms, and limbs of the dancer.[2]

Interestingly, the techniques of the "electric" dancer, as hinted at above, anticipated the inter-active methods employed by avant-garde performance artists a century later. In every era, the introduction of new technologies creates new possibilities for performance. While there has been a fair amount of recognition given, say, to the use of computerized digital imaging in the 21st century, or to the use magnetic tape for experimental music in the 1960s, relatively little notice has been taken of certain far-out uses of the stage-electricity, a new technology in the 1890s.

For the purposes of this essay, I'm going to concentrate two very different responses to the particular performances of a Miss Marie Leyton at the Tivoli Music Hall in London in late 1892, one published in *The New York World*, and the other in the British *Pick-Me-Up,* a men's leisure magazine.[3]

The New York World review quoted earlier is quite extensive and puts Leyton's performance into a context of continued experimentation. It offers a conjectural summary of various methods that performers have used to control their own illumination. Here is the basic principle it describes:

> if two metal plates are put on a stage and connected by separate wires with the electric lighting system of the theatre, and if the dancer wears shoes with metal heels and these heels are connected by insulated wires with electric lamps arranged artistically about the body, it is easy enough to understand that if one stands upon the plates the lamps will burn.[4]

Well, it's not exactly easy to understand, but here's what the text seems to be saying: that the performer wore metal taps on her shoes and somehow formed a bridge for the current between two metal conductive plates on the floor *with her body*. Presumably, she had wires running up her tights which were connected to the instruments in her costume. The danger inherent in this procedure is invoked, and lightly mocked:

> Few persons who have seen such a dancer realize just how the electric effect is brought about or exactly what risks the dancer runs . . . If ten or twenty lamps were placed about the dancer's person, a big flash of electricity would come from under her feet every time the contact was made or broken. Then, if there

> were any electricians in the audience, they would realize that twenty lamps needed fully two horsepower of electric current to make them burn, and they would applaud loudly in admiration of a woman who would suffer such an amount of current to be conducted about her body.[5]

So here we see that, for a woman, simply serving as a conduit for electricity is a performance in-and-of-itself—and that this performance is worthy of applause. Certainly, there are many ramifications (to be probed in more depth in a fuller version of this paper) with regard to performance of hypnosis and hysteria, electric and magnetic treatments, and contemporary infatuations with the occult. The idea of the electric woman is also one that has tremendous currency at this time, with electrified stage femmes playing starring roles in contemporary novels, including Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *L'Eve future* and Jules Verne's *Le Chateau des Carpathes.*[6]

The real-life electric dancer who tried the metal plate and shoe-tap method described by *The World* encountered some technical limitations that the fictionalized characters did not:

> Its chief drawback lay in the difficulty of dancing with both feet constantly on the floor. The moment the dancer raised her foot the current was cut off and the lights extinguished. Nothing but posing could be indulged in when the lamps were aglow.[7]

So basically the dancer was stuck with her feet on the ground and could only wave her arms around. For a serpentine dancer this wasn't a total loss, since the dance involved the manipulation of draperies with the upper body and de-emphasized fancy footwork and leg-kicking.

According to *The World* this idea had been "tried out" in Paris the year before and in New York the previous summer. It's quite likely that the writer refers to the appearances of a Mlle. Nada Reyval, known as "la Chanteuse electrique" who performed at Koster and Bial's Music Hall in July of 1892. A singer may have had an easier time than a dancer keeping both feet on the ground and limiting her movement to mere posing. The *Times* reports that "as [Reyval] sang the lights went out and suddenly a hundred little electric bulbs scattered all over her dress glowed brightly in various colors."[8] From this description one conjures up an image of the "chanteuse" as something like a singing Christmas tree.

The World article continues by detailing how some performers tried to address the problem of lack of mobility. An American, it says, devised the idea of creating portable storage battery that could be hidden in a dancer's bustle. This was turned out not to be a great solution, however:

> [It] worked fairly well for giving headlights to fairy queens and top rigging to Amazonian spears, bustles are not always in style. Moreover, a storage battery powerful enough to light twenty good-sized lamps needs several cubic feet of space and weighs a few hundred pounds. Therefore unless some museum giantess could be engaged to do the dance this rig could only be used for small effects.[9]

Interestingly, we know that Reyval wore a large headdress for her Koster and Bial's performances. *The New York Times* described it's appearance as "like the gauze-wire sails of a fly windmill arranged fan-wise upon her head."[10] Clearly, this head-gear was rather cumbersome and possibly it housed a battery device of some sort.

Throughout *The World* article humor is employed to convey the sense of awkwardness in adapting technology to do things that it can't really do yet. There's an odd disconnect between the luminous, weightless effects being aspired to and the downright clunkiness of the mechanisms available to produce them—how can a dancer move gracefully when she can't lift her feet or has to carry a huge battery on her head. *The World* writer creates a narrative emphasizing the unfailing ingenuity, the plucky adventurous sprit, of these would-be fairies. From a historical perspective it's interesting to notice how often the technology ends up advancing in order to suit the whimsy of the artist. Clearly, here, the engineering is inadequate to the task, but with each successive try the mechanisms become more refined.

All of this until now in *The World* article is by way of setting up for the novelty and finesse of Leyton's London performances. Here is a description of what could be considered the "climax" of the *danse electrique*:

> A girl, and a very pretty one, ran upon the stage dressed in a costume somewhat like that worn in the serpentine dance, and about her

> dress and among the folds of her skirts flashed sparks and lights of all colors. She danced and kicked, twisted and turned, while the lights continued to flash. Revolving wheels, fountains and prisms of light played about her, appearing and disappearing, and changing with every smile and step. Imagine a handsome woman dancing in a rainbow while it turns about her, casting its different colors alternately upon her face and figure, and vivid flashes like miniature lightning playing about all.[11]

Clearly, the writer was impressed by the spectacle. The description makes Leyton's performance seem like a human fire-works display, something truly mesmerizing. It's worth pausing here to remind ourselves of the purported genesis of Loie Fuller's original "Serpentine Dance." As Fuller recalls in her autobiography, the serpentine began as a hypnotized act in a play called *Quack, M.D.*. By waving her gauzy skirts around, Fuller endeavored to make herself "as light as possible" and to indicate that she was subject to the doctor's every command.[12] It was the illumination of her skirts with colored lights that made the work "hypnotic." While Fuller may have begun her art portraying the hypnotized subject, it was audiences who became "hypnotized" by Fuller's light-and-motion spectacles.

Felicia McCarren discusses this duplicity and inversion of hypnotic roles in her essay, "The Symptomatic Act circa 1900: Hysteria, Hypnosis, Electricity, Dance." So although Fuller assumed the aspect of the hypnotized subject or patient in this performance—and may have seemed entranced—it was through the "agency of technology" that she assumed, in another sense, the role of hypnotist or doctor. In McCarren's words:

> Fuller's electric spectacle established her as, not only a hypnotic performer, but also as a technical wizard, as the operator within or behind her performance. Fuller's use of electricity . . . allows her to control the production of her own image.[13]

Marie Leyton, and the other electric performers, took Fuller's work to a literal extreme. Leyton *literally* controlled in what light she was seen. Through her motions, she could focus the illumination on various parts of the body. The rainbows that appeared about her body changed "with every smile and step." Leyton also created the impression of an effulgent body—one that didn't merely reflect, but actually emanated light. Interestingly, McCarren explicitly attributes part Fuller's agency to the fact that, unlike the hysteric patients in Charcot's Salpetriere, electricity never actually contacted her body directly.[14] So while Fuller's costumes reflected electric beams angled from all around, and under, the stage into incandescent imagery, she herself is never penetrated by the subtle fluid.

The body of the "electric serpentine" dancer, in contrast, becomes fully conductive—Leyton is a live wire, a kind of human lightning bug. While Fuller's costumes create a moving screen for the luminous projections, but she refrained from becoming herself the source of illumination—although she created that illusion. Fuller's art consisted, in the words of one contemporary writer, the "transformations of tissues of living light."[15] That lovely phrase encapsulates the visceral, diaphanous and morphic quality of her presence.

There is an analogy here between Fuller and Leyton's work and the difference between film and video. Visual illusion in film (and Fuller's dances) depends on the patterned projection of light rays onto a white surface (i.e. a static film screen or Fuller's moving silks). Video, and Leyton's performances, on the other hand, produce a visual sensation with light-emitting technologies.

The fact that Fuller favored light-reflection over light-emission in performance makes complete sense on both an aesthetic and technical level. Given the era's technological limitations, "reflected" light offered infinitely more sophisticated and iridescent possibilities, while posing none of the inherent awkwardness involved with trying to carry bulky electrical equipment and dance at the same time in a graceful and fairy-like manner. *The World* surmises that Leyton must have performed with vacuum tubes fastened inside her costume:

> These [tubes] were fed by an induction coil giving a long spark, which when discharged through the vacuums gave out the intense and varying lights at will. The tubes were made in various forms, and the dancer wore an India rubber dress to protect her from the discharges.[16]

So the rubber garment insulates Leyton's body from electric shocks. It enables her to kick, twist and turn her way through a veritable lightning storm. Mentioning this protective layer is like revealing the magician's sleight of hand. It shields her, and us, from the impression that she might be a genuinely electrified being, or for that matter a genuine hysteric in need of electrical stimulation.

Although certain questions as to her methods are left unanswered—for instance, how and where the wires were placed on her body—*The World* does manage to paint an amazingly detailed picture of Leyton's act, which was perceived quite differently in the *Pick-Me-Up.* Here's the other viewpoint:

> Miss Leyton interrupted her graceful dancing every now and then while she quietly placed her foot on a battery arrangement in the floor. As a consequence, about fifty little arc lamps broke out in a blaze all over her. She had them on her head and body, and they were visible through her diaphanous robe all the way along her shapely limbs. The effect was meant to be impressively sublime, no doubt, but I really haven't seen anything so superlatively ridiculous for a long while. It was positively funny.[17]

So for the *Pick-Me-Up* the mechanics are too obvious and disruptive. Note, the graceful dancing is "interrupted" by movements of the feet controlling the current, a fact which *The World* review either ignores or belies referring to the dancer's kicking among other movements. The writer concludes with a condemnation—instead of sublime (as *The World* sees it), the performance is derided as "ridiculous" and "positively funny." He (and the writer is almost certainly a man) believed that Leyton failed—the contrast between the ethereal effects sought and her labored efforts produced comic results.

However, aside from what might have been valid criticisms, the author does reveal his prejudices. In a previous article, the *Pick-Me-Up* (and it is clearly the same writer) expresses two gripes with the serpentine dance of a Miss Estrella Sylvia: one, it relies too much on lighting and not enough on dancing for its success; and two, the costume is not sufficiently revealing. He says,

> The Serpentine Skirt Dance is pretty and effective enough, but I fancy there's a good deal of limelight and gas—especially the later—in the secret of its success.[18]

Substitute electricity and you have his views on Leyton. But the writer's real gripe with the "old" serpentine is the lack of leg, which he takes the liberty of expressing in verse:

> I've always been told that the
> masher who goes
> To a hall likes it best when
> he sees
> The girls—not with dresses
> that reach to their toes.
> But with those that stop
> short at the knees.
> He favours the dancer who's
> pretty and pert,
> And if he for a novelty
> begs,
> It's mostly for less of the
> Serpentine Skirt
> And for more of the Ser-
> pentine -------
> [leave blank space here please, Mr. Printer.][19]

The *Pick-Me-Up* writer may have complained about the lack of leg in the "old" serpentine, but he can't really condemn the "new" serpentine for its lack of suggestiveness. Leyton's performance was, without doubt, sexually charged. Her "shapely" limbs are specially illuminated and visible through her transparent garments. Flashes and sparks exposed tantalizing glimpses of flesh beneath the drapery. *The New York Times* remarked that Leyton's act "proved a great attraction to masherdom" and that Tivoli was "filled nightly with *fin de siècle* youths."[20] I think we can understand the author's derisive reaction to the performance as partly defensive, as arising from a discomfiture with a kind of "electrified" eroticism in which the woman controls the means of her exposure. Again, we could consider that Leyton, after Fuller, through the medium of electricity, assumed the dual roles of hypnotist and hypnotized subject, and that she did so to an uncomfortably literal, perhaps unbearably comic, extreme. By controlling the lights "at will," it's almost as if she self-administers hypno-electric treatment. At the same time, she uses flashes of light and exposure of limbs, to disorient and entrance the audience. Her body becomes integrated with a

dazzling incandescent spectacle, but also remains material.

The way that Leyton flashed the lights on and off her body may have created illusory freeze-frame or strobic effects. It makes one think of the photographic experiments being done at the time, by Muybridge and others, that led to early cinema. There are some very close connections between Loie Fuller and serpentine dancing to the development of motion pictures. Annabelle Moore, a Fuller imitator, was one of Edison's first subjects. Moreover, Fuller's work, and that of her imitators, was in-and-of-itself "proto-cinematic"—that is her huge costumes served as mobile screens, catching illumination and projections to form "moving pictures."

While the serpentine dancers—electric and otherwise—aspired to, and often achieved, a pre-filmic phantom quality, the projected movie image itself was inherently even more immaterial. The first public exhibit of the vitascope in Los Angeles in 1896 included both a real-life serpentine dance, performed by Papinta, and also a screening of Annabelle's serpentine "sun" dance. What is fascinating is that one contemporary account describes the film as reproducing, with "startling reality" all of the floating qualities of the dance "except that now and then one could see swift electric sparks."[21] Now, clearly, what the writer perceives as sparks must have been flashes of light caused by scratches in the negative, or blips in the projection process itself. But it's interesting that these flashes were perceived as static-electric shocks that "broke" the reality of the film.

The sparks that Leyton produced in live performances created a similar rupture in perception. While *The New York World* read these sparks as novel, and their production the result of ingenuity, the *Pick-Me-Up* viewed them as "shocks" disruptive to the flow of dancing, and to the easy enjoyment of feminine grace and form. Leyton's performance itself was a brief spark that fizzled after its initial attraction and has been rarely imitated or even remembered.

In moments of micro-history like these, one can clearly see cultural currents at play. Like a lightning-flash, the electric serpentine coalesced certain filaments in the ether into an immediate and unpredictable organization. We can read into Leyton's act, charged formations of the "electric" woman, the hypnotized performer, the hysteric hypnotist, Fuller's serpentine dancing, and pre-cinematic photography. And if "electric" dancing didn't catch on, there was curiosity about what its future be. *The World* speculates:

> This seems like the climax of the “danse electrique,” but even more clever schemes may be forthcoming. The future fairy of the spectacular performance may be transformed by the subtle current into something altogether too brilliant to look upon without colored glasses.[22]

Endnotes

1 "Real Electric Dancers," *The New York World,* January 1, 1893.
2 "Fun for Christmas," *The New York Times,* December 4, 1892.
3 Although *The World* article doesn't specifically name Leyton, I have concluded—through careful comparisons with accounts in the *Pick-Me-Up* and *The New York Times*—that it must indeed be a description of her act.
4 Op. cit.1
5 Ibid.
6 See Rhonda Garelick, *Rising Star: Dandyism, Gender and Performance in the Fin de Siècle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) for a lengthy discussion of Villier's *L'Eve future*. Also, Nancy Mowll Mathews' essay "The Body in Motion" in her edited volume *Moving Pictures: American Art and Early Film 1880-1910* (Manchester, VT: Hudson Hills Press in association with Williams College Museum of Art, 2005) touches on the theme of the "electric" woman in fiction. For the English translation of *L'Eve future*, see Villiers de l'Isle-Adam (transl. Robert Martin Adams), *Tomorrow's Eve* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2001).
7 Op. cit.1
8 "Nada Reyval's New Dance," *The New York Times,* July 12, 1892.
9 Op. cit.1
10 Op. cit.8
11 Op. cit.1
12 Fuller, Loie, *Fifteen Years of a Dancer's Life* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company,1913), p31.
13 McCarren, Felicia, "The 'Symptomatic Act' Circa 1900: Hysteria, Hypnosis, Electricity, Dance," *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 21, no. 4 (1995).
14 Ibid.
15 "Story of the Dance" *Chicago Daily Tribune,* May 28, 1898.
16 Op. cit. 1
17 *Pick-Me-Up,* January 21, 1893.
18 *Pick-Me-Up,* September 17, 1892.
19 Ibid.
20 Op. cit. 2
21 "At the Playhouses," *Los Angeles Times,* July 7, 1896.
22 Op. cit. 1

Reconstructing Lewis and Clark: Dance as Diplomacy

Jane Skinner Peck

Imagine a gathering of representatives from six different nations and two global businesses, all with previous alliances and different languages. A new nation arrives with plans for a third global business and upsets all the alliances, causing distrust all around. There are speeches and gifts to avoid violence, but still no trust. Then the newcomers begin dancing to fiddle music. Before long, all the other parties join them. Tensions are released, and new negotiations can be made the next day. Fantasy? No, this is a condensed version of the intentional use of dance as diplomacy in the Mandan village by the Lewis and Clark Expedition in the winter 1804 -1805. My presentation will pursue how this came about, what type of dances were being done, and why such an unusual approach was effective.

In 1803 U.S. President Thomas Jefferson received Congressional approval to launch an expedition up the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers to discover a trade route to the Pacific ship route for a future American fur trade company to rival the lucrative Northwest Company out of Montreal, British Canada. Spanish and French passports were procured. Not yet twenty-five years old, the U.S. still distrusted Great Britain, its former colonizer, and had very good relations with France and Spain. Suddenly, France decided to sell all of New France to the U.S., to keep it out of British hands. The expedition gained new and historical importance as the first exploration of this area. Was this truly wilderness? Looking at the French map of 1764 with a view from New Orleans, one sees detailed and explored territory north to the upper reaches of the Missouri River. Looking at the British (NW. Company) map of 1800 one sees detailed and explored territory south to the Missouri River and north and west to the Yukon, and along the Pacific coast. Only about 400 miles across the Rocky Mountains are undefined on the maps. England and the U.S. were racing to see which would be first to connect their Pacific ships and their inland trade by finding and claiming the route across those 400 miles.

The first two of my original questions can best be answered by examining the culture and dance of the different groups that arrived at the Mandan village on the upper Missouri River, near the Knife and Yellowstone Rivers, in present-day North Dakota. I'll first examine the American newcomers. Captain Meriwether Lewis (Jefferson's secretary) was joined by William Clark: both were Army officers. They brought with them upper-class European-American officers' culture with dances described by Saltator of Boston, Thomas Wilson of London, and Gourdoux-Daux, of Paris. These included the English "country" dances of Jane Austen fame with the elegant traveling and balancé steps from France. Also to be found were gentlemen's hornpipes, qualdrilles, Scottish reels, the earliest of waltzes, and some lingering minuets. (Demonstration of 1800 French balance steps was given here.)

The thirty middle and lower class American soldiers on the Corps of Discovery expedition brought older English country dances without the French steps, reels, as well as a passion for jigs. Jigging was so prevalent in the late 18th c. that it crossed classes and national boundaries, taking on many interesting forms. Two forms were popular among the lower classes in eastern and southern America. One was the "cut-out jig", originally from the African slaves, involving a challenge between two dancers. Another popular jig form was Appalachian clogging. The men likely would have been familiar with the staged version of the gentleman's hornpipe, also. Many of these dances are described by Kate Van Winkle Keller in *George Washington, A Biography in Social Dance*. (Demonstration of gentleman's hornpipe here.)

The Corps of Discovery also included 8 lower class French-American boatmen from the French villages of the Mississippi River whose repertoire likely included French circle song/dances that were popular in that community, as well as cut-out jigging from the French southern plantations. Quadrilles, cotillions, and minuets from New Orleans were no doubt part of their repertoire. They likely had as much enthusiasm for dancing as their Canadian cousins were reputed to have. Three French-Indian interpreters and hunters were in the Corps, including Pierre Cruzatte, the fiddler. The Corps depended heavily on the French-Indian traders of the St. Louis area to help outfit them and to guide them. As they traveled up the Missouri they passed countless French and French-Indians who lived and traded along the river. The contributions of these two groups have been underrated.

In late fall of 1804 the American Corps of Discovery arrived at the Mandan village, near the Yellowstone River, discovering an international trade center that had been commercially active for at least forty years. Many Indian nations went there to trade, the most frequent being the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, and Sioux. No newcomers to business, they had all been trading regional items for hundreds of years in various locations. They set the standard for trade protocol, which included dancing, gifts, feasting, speeches, and pipe-smoking before an alliance was confirmed. Lewis and Clark refer to several dances by Indian nations at the Mandan village: the Teton Scalp Dance, the Buffalo Dance, and general social dancing without name. The Laubins , in *Indian Dances of North America*, give some knowledge of these dances in their current form. Indian dancing was suppressed by U.S. federal law for seventy years, so the original dances are difficult to reproduce. Perhaps indigenous dance historians will be able to reconstruct some of them in the future.

From the north arrived the Northwest Fur Company traders, as well as independent traders. These men were most often French-Canadians originally from Quebec, or French-Indians whose families had been in the Northwest region longer, with the occasional Scotsman. Generally, only the main partners in the British-owned company were English. They were all aware of the Company's urgent desire for a Pacific route. Their dancing most likely resembled a blend of the middle-class American and French-American men's dance. In addition there was some Scottish step-dancing (jigging.) The difference was the passion and frequency with which they were reported to approach dancing, as listed in journals of N.W. Company traders on dancing at rendezvous between 1800 and 1818:

> "There was not much drinking, but they danced reels incessantly, and made a dreadful noise." "We have been dancing last night and nothing further was done." "We danced till daylight." "The gentlemen dressed and we had a famous ball in the dining room. For music we had the bagpipe, the violin, and the flute." "Even the prison of Montreal has become a place of public entertainment, from the circumstance of holding members of the N.W.Co. Every other night a ball is given."
>
> (Ft. Wm.Library, 1990: 1-3)

Traveler J. C. Taché in *Forestiers et Voyageurs* described several danced musical comedies performed in the evenings by French-Canadian voyageurs en route with trade items for the Northwest. These men were dancing with each other most of the time and only occasionally with "ladies of the country"(Indian or Métis). In *The New Peoples* we find a description;

> "Historically the term "Metis" is applied to those individuals of mixed Indian, western European ancestry, who arose in the St. Lawrence- Great Lakes trading system, including its extensions to the Pacific and Arctic coasts…"
>
> (Peterson, 2001:73)

This area of extension includes the Red River, the far Northwest of Alberta, and the Yukon. Most often their European heritage was French. It was along the Red River of North Dakota that they chose to see themselves as distinct from both heritages and developed a political identity which they carried to the Northwest.

The Métis offer us a fleeting vision of mutual cooperation between two races during a pre-settlement era. They had a reputation for excellent dancing. They are described by Minnesota's early settlers as "dancing all night long, and jigging someone down until they collapsed" (Morris,1976: 28) Here we have a clear indication of challenge dancing between men. My own studies with Sandy Poitra, a Turtle Mountain Reservation Métis dancer taught me the Red River Jig, a very popular Métis dance that still has many uses, both as a challenge dance and as a social dance. Descriptions can be found in *The Crooked Stovepipe*, by Mishler. (Demonstration of the Red River Jig here.)

Now that we know about the cast of characters on the scene at the Mandan village, as well as their dance knowledge, it is helpful to read some of the Willliam Clark's journal descriptions of dance events:

> Nov. 27, 1804, The two chiefs much pleased with their treatment and the cheerfulness of the party, who danced to amuse them.
>
> Dec. 25, 1804, I awoke to find the French men merrily disposed, they set to dancing and continued until 9 p.m.
>
> March 31, 1805, All the party in high spirits. They pass but few nights without amusing themselves dancing, possessing perfect

> harmony and good understanding towards each other.
>
> (DeVoto, 1981: 68, 74, 90)

It appears to be William Clark, the more socially astute of the two American leaders, who sees the benefit of extending liberal goodwill to ease the tensions of the race between British and Americans and the changing business alliances among the tribal nations. His sensitivity towards the effectiveness of dance and his intention to use it to allay tensions is clear in this journal entry:

> Jan. 1, 1805, The day was ushered in by the discharge of cannon. We suffered 16 men with their music to visit the 1st village for the purpose of dancing, at the request of the chiefs of that village. By 11 o'clock I walked up to the village with an interpreter. My views were to allay some misunderstanding which had taken place through jealousy and mortification as to our treatment towards them. I found them much pleased at the dancing of our men. I ordered my black servant to dance, which amused and astonished the crowd very much.
>
> (DeVoto, 1981: 75)

It's hard to pinpoint what the dancing goodwill accomplished or avoided, yet its intentional and successful use as diplomacy is clear in this statement. In conclusion I asked myself why dance was used as diplomacy in this expedition while rarely used at other international gatherings? The Mandan village was a place of many cultures and many languages. What better time and place for kinesthetic communication? The French from the south were meeting the French from the north, and both groups being very fond of dancing, they expressed their joy through dance. Due to the popularity of jigging, and its connection to challenge dancing, the men were comfortable dancing alone or with other men without the need for women partners. This created more flexibility in the use of dance at the village. Luckily, William Clark was aware of the infectious joy this dancing created, and the great appreciation for dance shown by the Indian leaders. The indigenous trade protocol that included dancing with feasting and gifts provided a natural setting for its inclusion in the diplomacy of forming alliances.

It is the fortuitous encounter of strong dance traditions from many different cultures that enabled dance to be used as an intentional diplomatic tool by Lewis and Clark in the winter of 1804-1805. I wonder if some of our current multicultural immigration tensions could be eased by mutual community dancing, and sensitive leaders who recognize its value?

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Resistance from the Inside: An Analysis of the *jogo de dentro* in Brazilian *Capoeira Angola*

Ana Paula Höfling

Introduction

"Eu sou angoleira
angoleira sim eu sou" [1]

Capoeira is a movement practice from Brazil that evades classification. It is movement to music, but it is not dance; it is both rehearsed and improvised interaction between two people in front of an audience, but it is not theater; it is (arguably) a martial art, but there is little contact. The practitioners of capoeira or *capoeiristas* are both movers and musicians, participants and observers. Capoeiristas call it a game, or *jogo de capoeira*, but in this game there are no winners or losers, just players.

In this paper I will analyze the element of resistance in *capoeira angola*, a type of capoeira that sets itself apart by defining itself as a tool of political and cultural resistance to an oppressive hegemonic structure referred to as "the system." In order to understand this defining element of resistance, I will briefly discuss the history of capoeira in Brazil—its long history of oppression, the period of illegality and particularly the period when capoeira's Africanness was consciously stripped away. I will then look at contemporary capoeira angola as a tradition that affirms and validates Afro-Brazilian identity. I will examine capoeira angola's internal rules and movement codes as tools of resistance to an often racist hegemony where Afro-Brazilians are discriminated against and denied the same socio-economic opportunities available to Brazilians of European descent.

This paper is based on eight months of research in Brazil[2], where I immersed myself in the practice of capoeira angola studying with Mestre Jogo de Dentro and familiarized myself with the Portuguese-language literature available on capoeira.

Brief history—rescuing capoeira angola

"Saí do Congo passei por Angola
Cheguei aqui hoje para vadiar angola"[3]

Capoeira is undoubtedly the result of the African influences brought to Brazil during its 350 years of slavery, roughly from 1530 to 1888. During the period of slavery, capoeira was repressed and slaves who were caught practicing it were harshly punished. After abolition, the oppression and subjugation of the Afro-Brazilian population continued: capoeira, practiced mostly by former slaves, was declared illegal in 1890. The punishment for the practice of capoeira, also called *vadiagem*[4] or loitering, ranged from three months of forced labor to 300 lashes, imprisonment or death[5]. It wasn't until 1937 that capoeira became legal. Capoeira was taken out of the streets and contained into "respectable" physical culture centers, where capoeira was re-shaped to cater to the white elite. During this transformation, its African elements were purposefully downplayed and stripped away. Capoeira *mestres* (master teachers) began teaching a form of capoeira that was less ambiguous about its nature—a form that was shaped more like a sport, with tournaments, uniforms and belt systems—giving in to a western, if Asian influenced, classification of the game. This new form, which borrowed elements from Asian martial arts, physical education and gymnastics went as far as omitting the word capoeira, calling itself *Luta Regional Bahiana, or* Regional fight from Bahia.[6] Capoeira was presented as local, regional and Brazilian: no mention of Africa. The descendant of this hybrid form has spread throughout Brazil and the world and is known today as *capoeira regional*.

Since the early 1980's, young capoeira mestres from the lineage of Mestre Pastinha and his two legendary living disciples, Mestre João Grande and Mestre João Pequeno, began a movement to take capoeira angola out of obscurity (where it had remained during the boom of capoeira regional) and restore its African origins. This politicized group of *capoeiristas*, who call themselves *angoleiros,* strive today to keep capoeira true to what are considered its original values and traditions, from the structure of the *rodas* (the name of the events where capoeira is

played which also refers to its circular shape), to the movement choices and the closeness of the game. This genre not only maintains the word capoeira in its name, it also includes the word *angola*, a direct geographical reference to Africa. *Angoleiros*[7] believe that the origins of capoeira can be traced back to a dance from the Congo region called the N'golo, or Zebra Dance, a competitive movement tradition performed by young men.[8] It is believed in the capoeira angola world that the N'golo was the *seed of the game from angola*, which was brought from Africa to Brazil. This belief is expressed in the name of the capoeira group where I conducted my recent research: the *Grupo Semente do Jogo de Angola* (Seed of the Game from Angola Group).

Capoeira angola's resistance—fighting the system

"Dá, dá, dá no nego
No nego você não dá."[9]

The resistance element is and has been an intrinsic part of the capoeira ideology. Resistance is the core element of the widespread hypothesis of the origins of capoeira as a means to escape slavery in the plantations of colonial Brazil and later as a form of defending runaway slave communities.[10] In this version of its early history, capoeira provided the resistance that resulted in physical freedom from the brutal and oppressive system of slavery. Although this hypothesis is discredited today by scholars, it is worthy of mention here because it exemplifies capoeira's association with resistance to oppression.

The concept of resistance is central to capoeira angola[11]. On my capoeira angola practice t-shirt it reads "Angola capoeira mãe—dez anos de resistência" (Angola capoeira mother—ten years of resistance). An *angoleiro* who I met in Bahia has the phrase "Eu odeio o sistema" (I hate the system) tattooed on his forearm. Contemporary imagery of capoeira angola includes references to slavery—such as the ubiquitous broken chain present in many capoeira t-shirts, posters and brochures—and many songs reference resistance to slavery in their lyrics. These references make a 500-year-old struggle contemporary: the Afro-Brazilian struggle against oppression, injustice and inequality.

While capoeira elements can be used in real physical altercations, capoeira angola's resistance is cultural, racial and social, rather than physical. Today's politicized *angoleiros* oppose an unjust socio-economic system by creating an environment of alternative values—values rooted in a tradition that is both old and new, both African and Brazilian—a tradition that teaches respect, fairness and above all, non-violence. They strive to create a counter-culture where socio-economic class, skin color, nationality and gender—markers of otherness and sources discrimination in the outside world—are not markers at all.

Embracing the conflict—serious play and playful seriousness

"O sim sim sim
O não não não"[12]

The game of capoeira angola embodies Africanness by literally and symbolically embracing conflict. Brenda Dixon Gottschild refers to the Africanist ability of accepting and celebrating conflict and dissonance (rather than trying to resolve it) as "embracing the conflict"—when "paired contraries" are allowed to co-exist, such as "awkward and smooth; detached and threatening; innocent and seductive."[13]

Capoeira angola is at the same time dangerous and safe, playful and serious, unpredictable and rule-bound. The element of play is evident in the moments when a player calls a *volta ao mundo*[14], (a pre-established convention where the two players take a break by walking around the *roda*) only to set the other player up for an attack, which is often met with a smile in acceptance of this momentary defeat. The playful element is also seen when, after being unintentionally touched during the game, but not hurt, a player pretends to be seriously injured, by limping, gesturing to the other player asking for mercy or pointing to the invented injury in mock pain. These two examples underscore the latent danger in the game, but they do so in a playful and friendly way. Danger and safety are allowed to co-exist.

By entering the *roda,* the *angoleiro/a* is choosing to engage in a codified and controlled form of conflict, where the inherent danger in the game is mitigated by rules of conduct that emphasize fairness and non-violence. This danger is both highlighted and eased by humor, an integral part of the angola game. Not only do the players embrace the conflict between danger and safety, seriousness and play, they are also embraced and protected in the *roda* by the other *angoleiros,* a community of *camaradas* (literally "comrades") who sit in a circle delineating the physical boundaries of the game.

***Jogo de dentro*—contained danger inside the game**
"Jogo de dentro, jogo de fora
valha-me Deus, minha Nossa Senhora"[15]

The ability to play with elegance and fluidity, to come dangerously close to the other player and feign vulnerability only to set a trap for a counter-attack, but to be skilled enough to stop a blow millimeters before making contact—this is what makes for good capoeira angola. The capoeira angola game is played close to the ground, weight shifting smoothly from feet to hands, bringing the two players together in a tight game within a small circle.

Among the many physical aspects that set capoeira angola apart from other styles of capoeira is the *jogo de dentro*, or inside game, the moment when the game becomes close and tight, when the two players are so close to each other that one player is said to be playing "inside" the other. Mestre Jogo de Dentro, who earned his nickname from Mestre João Grande because of his close playing style, defines the *jogo de dentro*:

> It is a game close to the ground, where you have to work with balance, endurance and at the same time with a lot of attention—the moment when you are there, 100% there, you cannot loose your concentration. The game is played very close, you don't give any space to your partner, you know when he is making a deliberate move and really paying attention. It's a very special moment for the capoeirista, when he starts discovering himself, his game, and when he trips his partner so he can test his partner's knowledge.[16]

The *jogo de dentro* is the moment when the players are protected by the close proximity of each other, a game that can only exist when the two players trust each other (and themselves) enough to come so close as to become vulnerable. But this is not blind trust, and the *angoleiro's* vulnerability is carefully guarded—every opening is a trap and every player must know how to protect him or herself by constantly counter-attacking. However, a skillful player knows how to render these attacks and counter-attacks harmless at the last fraction of a second.

The *jogo de dentro* is a series of tightly interwoven near misses—a moving puzzle, where both players try to outsmart each other and test each other's knowledge. The capoeira angola *roda* provides its participants with an environment packed with potential danger, but with a strict code of conduct where the slightest display of hostility could result in temporary or even permanent banishment from a group. In the *jogo de dentro*, danger and safety, trust and deception create a tangible tension that is admired and prized in capoeira angola.

***Jogo bonito*— the beauty inside the game**
"Jogo de dentro, jogo de fora
jogo bonito é esse jogo de angola"[17]

Capoeira angola opposes the Brazilian hegemony not only by creating its own subculture of respect, fairness and justice, where the latent violence of the game is strictly controlled, it opposes the system by establishing its own definition of beauty. In capoeira angola, beauty has nothing to do with skin color, body shape or muscle definition. During classes and *rodas*, muscles are hidden under loose fitting t-shirts and pants, and an untucked shirt is reason to stop the game until the shirt is tucked again. The muscled shirtless capoeirista flying through the air belongs to the world of *capoeira regional*, not angola.

Mestre Jogo de Dentro explains what constitutes a beautiful game:

> A beautiful game is a calm game, a tranquil game, an elegant game, a game [played] with a smile on your face and at the same time showing your partner […] at the right moment that you're playing a beautiful game but you are aware of everything that's happening around you, without the need to massacre your partner, without pummeling him. You don't hit [the other player]…This is the *jogo de dentro*.[18]

Beauty in capoeira angola, often paired with the concepts of elegance and tranquility, has to do with how much cunning players are able to show in their game, all the while respecting the rules of non-violence. Physical strength is less important than the mental prowess of constantly creating traps for the other player and stopping a kick or head butt just before it makes contact. Often the term *jogo bonito* (beautiful game) is used to describe the *jogo de dentro*, and the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

The beautiful game embodies both threat and trust—embracing the conflict. The game is beautiful

when the threat of violence can be "acted out" without being real. The observers can enjoy the aesthetic experience without fearing for the safety of their *camadaras.* In the counter-culture of capoeira angola, beauty is not an external attribute imposed by the media, but it is reclaimed and redefined as the ability to engage in an elegant and fair physical dialogue while smiling.

Conclusion

"Adeus adeus/ Boa viagem
Eu vou m'embora/ Boa viagem"[19]

Capoeira angola defies hegemony in many ways, beginning with its unwillingness to submit to western classifications of dance, theater, sport or martial arts. It reclaims the Africanness that was stripped away during the rise of capoeira regional. Resistance to an oppressive system is central to the capoeira angola ideology, where references to slavery and Africa serve as a way to celebrate African heritage in a society where Africanness is often feared and marginalized.

Angoleiros have created an environment where opposites are allowed to co-exist and conflict is embraced: threat and trust are not mutually exclusive and closeness can mean both protection and vulnerability in the *jogo de dentro*. The goal of the game is not to defeat the other, but to challenge one another through series of playful traps. In the capoeira angola aesthetic, beauty is redefined and measured in terms of fairness and safety, skill and elegance. *Angoleiros* exercise their peaceful resistance inside the *roda,* in a movement that continues to sow the seeds of the game from Angola in Brazil and abroad.

Endnotes

1 "I am a capoeira angola player/a capoeira angola player yes I am." The excerpts in this paper are from capoeira songs that were sung during the presentation of this paper at the 2006 SDHS conference.

2 I attended classes and participated in rodas from August 2005 until April 2006 at the Grupo Semente do Jogo de Angola in Barão Geraldo, Brazil. I also attended the Second International Encounter of Capoeira Angola in Salvador, Bahia.

3 "I left the Congo, I stopped in Angola/ I arrived here today to play capoeira angola."

4 *Vadiagem* is a term that has been reclaimed by contemporary *angoleiros* as a positive term that refers to the capoeira game.

5 Carlos Eugênio Líbano Soares. *A capoeira escrava e outras tradições rebeldes no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1850).* (Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 2001) The author makes reference to different forms of punishment throughout the book.

6 Pedro Rodolpho Jungers Abib. "Capoeira angola: cultura popular e o jogo dos saberes na roda." Ph.D. diss. (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2004)

7 The -eiro ending in *Angoleiro* refers to a person who does or makes something; *Angolano/a* is a person from the country of Angola.

8 Oliveira. *Capoeira, Frevo e "Passo."* The N'golo is also mentioned in the majority of the capoeira angola websites.

9 Hit hit hit the black man/The black man you don't hit

10 Carlos Eugênio Líbano Soares. *A capoeira escrava e outras tradições rebeldes no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1850).* (Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 2001), 42.

11 Pedro Rodolpho Jungers Abib. "Capoeira angola: cultura popular e o jogo dos saberes na roda." Ph.D. diss. (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2004), 38.

12 "Oh, yes yes yes/Oh no no no."

13 Brenda Dixon Gottschild. "Stripping the Emperor: the Africanist presence in American concert dance." *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2001), 333.

14 Translates as "a turn around the world."

15 "Inside game, outside game/ God and Our Lady protect me."

16 Jorge Egídio dos Santos (Mestre Jogo de Dentro). Interview by author, April 1st 2006, Campinas, Brazil. Video recording

17 "Inside game, outside game/a beautiful game is this game from Angola."

18 Jorge Egídio dos Santos (Mestre Jogo de Dentro). Interview by author, April 1st 2006, Campinas, Brazil. Video recording

19 "Goodbye, goodbye/Have a nice trip
I'm leaving/Have a nice trip"

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Choreographing Colonialism in the American West

Brenda Farnell

> …a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom.
> Thomas Paine 1776.

Introduction

Historian Fred Hoxie has suggested that the United States of America was founded on two "original sins"—the enslavement of Africans and the displacement of indigenous peoples from their lands and resources.[1] Both practices were predicated upon a normalized, imperialist discourse of entitlement and the assumed natural superiority of Europeans. Ironically, the American colonies, having fought for independence from British imperialism via an emancipatory narrative of liberty, equality and justice, in fact, merely imposed their own version of imperialism on the continent's indigenous peoples. This distinctly American colonial project was supported by Christian beliefs and enabled by tropes of inevitability such as "manifest destiny," "the march of civilization" and "progress." Such attitudes were only further empowered by the scientific racism of social evolutionism during the late 19th century and early 20th centuries which categorized all peoples of the world hierarchically as savage, barbarian, or civilized; a self-serving taxonomy based on the cultural norms and ideologies of those doing the classifying, of course. This general process, well documented by a number of critical historians provides the sociopolitical and historical context for my paper.[2]

King and Springwood (2001b) suggest that North America's narrative about itself centers upon a hidden text regarding its relationship with American Indians: a central text that must be hidden, sublimated and, ironically, at the same time, acted out. For the last one hundred years, this hidden text has been acted out with especial clarity on sports fields all over the United States through the appropriation of American Indian imagery and cultural practices (such as dancing) in the form of sports mascots. These range from professional teams such as the Washington Redskins and the Cleveland Indians to college teams like the Florida State University Seminoles and the University of Illinois' "Fighting Illini" and "Chief Illiniwek," which will provide my focus here. The omnipresence of such symbolism has created common sense pop-cultural knowledge out of the notion that "Indians" are a category of athletic mascot. Such "a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong" survived the civil rights era of the 1960's and 70's largely unchallenged, despite the removal of similar derogatory public representations of other American minority populations (e.g. Blackface minstrelsy, Little Black Sambo, Frito Bandito). This indicates that from the mainstream perspective, American Indians occupy a different semiotic space than other American minorities; one that remains resistant to reconfiguration along non-racializing lines.

I seek to shed light on the reasons for this resistance by asking how and why these half-time performances and associated narrative practices endow Indian mascots with such significance for non-indigenous Americans. Following Hill (2001) and Urciuoli (1996), I take the position that such institutionalized practices are racializing because they involve what Taussig (1993) has called processes of mimesis and alterity—that is, imitating in order to objectify and distance as Other—and because they continue despite vigorous objections from those so objectified.

In an earlier paper (Farnell 2004) I paid detailed attention to the spoken discourses of Euro-Americans in Illinois who support this practice. I asked, "How do such racializing practices manage to prevail in educational institutions that simultaneously espouse a commitment to diversity? Why do the non-native people of Illinois feel so strongly and emotionally attached to this symbol? What does it mean for them and why? What kind of discursive formations in mainstream American society generate talk of reverence, dignity, pride and honor towards American Indians while supporting a refusal to listen to the voices of contemporary native individuals and institutions that are vigorously opposed to these practices?[3] My analysis suggests that as members of the dominant "race-making" population (Williams 1989), supporters of Chief Illiniwek create and passionately defend a 'White public space' in which any contemporary Native American presence is positioned

as disorderly. White public space refers to "a morally significant set of contexts that are the most important sites for the practices of a racializing hegemony, in which Whites are invisibly normal and in which racialized populations are visibly marginal and the objects of monitoring" (Hill 2001: 453 after Page and Thomas 1994). My analysis revealed how through a rhetoric of honoring, the University of Illinois's athletic symbol plays a fundamental role in accomplishing the "elevation of Whiteness" (Hill 2001: 456) that concurs with a regional (state) identity. In this paper, I want to add a dynamically embodied theoretical perspective to the issue, by turning to the kinetic and visual semiotics of the performance itself.

The Dancing "Indian" Body

American Indian Sports mascots stage racial difference according to a contemporary Euro-American neo-colonial imagination that is directly predicated upon the 19th century colonial project.[4] King and Springwood (2001a) accurately locate this institutional practice as neo-colonialist when they say that analytically it can best be read as a highly produced form of social ritual that enacts a Manifest Destiny narrative of Indian conquest, sacrifice and domination all in the sustained interests of empire. At the University of Illinois, the performance of "Chief Illiniwek" literally, as well as ritually, inscribes the relations of imperial power directly onto the Native American body, represented by a white male student painted and dressed as Indian who dances at halftime for a largely white audience.

In response to criticism from American Indians and their allies, supporters of Chief Illiniwek frequently engage in a rhetoric of authenticity about the choreography performed on the football field. For decades the university promoted—and the students believed—that the Chief's dance was an authentic form of some Indian tribal celebration. Performers continue to claim that the person portraying "the Chief" is knowledgeable about Native American cultures, dances and music and that the dance is, or is based on, "fancy dancing." [5] Proponents fail to distinguish, however, between a form of exhibition dancing invented for the Wild West shows of the 1920's and 30's, and widely disseminated by the Boy Scout movement, and a contemporary genre of competitive Pow-wow dancing called "Men's Fancy Dance." Although both may have emerged from the same roots in Oklahoma at the end of the 19th century, as we shall see, Chief Illiniwek's dance does not in any way resemble dance forms known to American Indian peoples.

As Browner (2002: 30) has documented, historical records suggest that in the late-19th century and early 20th century, White producers of Wild West shows in Oklahoma urged their Indian dancers to invent "fancy" additions to the older dances of Plains warrior societies to please non-Indian audiences. Such audience demands led to the invention of "fancy war dances" that had never existed in Native cultures, but were taken up and circulated by Indian Hobbyists associated with the Boy Scouts. This is undoubtedly the source of inspiration for Chief Illiniwek's dance. Ten of the first eleven Illiniwek's were boy scouts interested in "Indian Lore" who learned their dancing in this context. Incorporated in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America modeled many outdoor activities on real or putative American Indian themes.[6] King and Springwood chart the direction of this movement:

> …the Indian was appropriated to serve as the central object of fascination and longing in the development of a white masculine character building movement whose emergence bridged the *fin-de siecle*." … [T]his movement—whose agenda was articulated in a popular series of youth novels, health manuals, speeches and the literature of the Boy Scouts of America—encouraged young boys to embrace certain elements of Indian life as a way of instilling in them discipline, courage, intimate knowledge of nature, health and moral character. Essentially the aim was to teach white children Indian ways but what constituted "Indian ways" were a set of highly idealized stereotypes of Indians as scouts, hunters and craftspeople (King and Springwood 2001a: 206).

Choreographic Contrasts

In marked contrast to the choreographic structure, spatial orientation, movement content and performance space of actual American Indian men's fancy dancing, Illiniwek's performance combines stereotyped gestures from the hackneyed 'noble warrior' motif (i.e. stoic painted face, 'dignified' postures, arms folded or held aloft) with exaggerated long stepping, supplemented by acrobatic display (splits, leaps and turns) and much traveling in straight paths across the performance space with various large

and lifted movements of the arms, in order to be seen from a distance. The small, quick, earthly grounded 'touch, step' closely attuned to the beat of the drum in genuine indigenous fancy dancing, has become a stretched out hop-step or skipping action that skims across the surface of the football field in order to reach the goal end where a high jump with splits creates a climax to the display.

In addition, Illiniwek's regalia is inappropriate on two counts: first he wears Lakota ceremonial regalia typical of the Plains region but unrelated to anything worn by the Illinois, who were Woodlands people. Second, American Indian fancy dancers do not, and never did, wear buckskin suits, long ceremonial feather headdresses, or dance barefoot. This choice on the part of Illinois students in 1926 was far from accidental or arbitrary, however. It followed already well-worn grooves that distilled hundreds of diverse Native cultures into the defining characteristics of the Plains Indian male as representing all Indians (Gone 2002).

The regalia of male fancy dancers consists, instead, of two large gaily-colored turkey feather bustles attached to shoulders and hips, a small "roach" headpiece and moccasins or beaded sneakers.[7] Dance movements specific to the genre make the bright colored feather bustles blur the outline of the body through fast turns on the spot and changes of direction within a small area of ground space inside the sacred dance circle. The low arms held out slightly to the side and upright torso combine with fast-footwork that must not loose the beat of the drum (in competition, musicians try to trick dancers into missing the final beat and thus lose vital points off their score). The combination of moves in fancy dancing are improvised but must conform to the choreographic constraints of the genre—that is, only certain kinds of steps, jumps and turns are acceptable. Clearly the Oklahoma exhibition dancing that became today's "fancy dancing" evolved in regalia and choreography in ways quite distinct from Illiniwek's dance. Ironically perhaps, it is the invented romantic White image and its choreography that has been largely frozen in time under the trope of 'tradition.'

Likewise, the musical accompaniment to Chief Illiniwek's dance is a Euro-American band march with a rhythm that crowds identify with an Indian "tom-tom" beat, a stereotypic misrepresentation derived from early Hollywood movies completely foreign to any indigenous musical expression. However, precisely because of this, it holds tremendous emotional appeal for fans, and especially the members of the marching band. Any genuine indigenous forms of musical expression would fail in this context, as would anyone dressed as an Illinois tribal leader because the visual imagery and sounds would not be recognizably "Indian" to the crowd. That is, the dance, regalia and music would not function as indexes connecting the colonizing gaze of the audience to their stereotypical image of the 'noble savage' and it's associated moral qualities (pride, spirit, courage, bravery). These moral qualities, enveloped within the performance, rapidly become indistinguishable from strong feelings of loyalty to the educational institution.

It is relevant to note that Chief Illiniwek's appearances began in 1926, under the auspices of the University of Illinois' Marching Band. The band originated in 1870 in the military department, which designed and taught military science and tactics, a required subject at the time for all (male) students. In articulation with an emergent patriotism on the Urbana-Champaign campus in the wake of the Civil war, the band enacted both a real and symbolic extension of military formations as celebrations of conquest and expansion. During his half time performance Chief Illiniwek emerges, creeping stealthily from the heart of this military formation into the open space of the football stadium. Here we find Foucault's (after Bentham) panopticon turned inside out. "Instead of the one in the center monitoring the bodies and the behavior of hundreds around the perimeter, the thousands around the perimeter monitor the behavior of the one in the center" (Fiske 1993 cited in King and Springwood 2001a). As the single Indian body that can be monitored and disciplined, Chief Illiniwek becomes the symbolic social body of all American Indians, onto which is ritually mapped all of the White readings of the significance of the Indian to the history of America. Discipline or control relies upon the technology of enclosure, and Illiniwek is physically enclosed not only by the stadium with its thousands of fans, but by the Illini Marching band which molds itself around the performing body (King and Springwood 2001a)

The performance is a celebration of imperial power, which stages a mythical version of the history of Indian/White relations. The drama played out on the football field during the game against Penn State in 1926, when Chief Illiniwek first appeared, shook hands and smoked a "peace-pipe" with a student dressed as the Quaker, William Penn, confirms this

interpretation. It's a mythology that reconstructs Indian/white relations as friendly, equal, resolved. It is in firm denial of the historical fact that all Native peoples had been forcibly removed from the state in the 1830's in a process that today we might call ethnic cleansing. This mythical history literally *incorporates* the tragic figure of the Indian into the imagined community of the United States of America, allowing White America to re-imagine itself as a partial embodiment of Indianness—"We are now the Illini tribe" say supporters—as it attempts to merge with the Indian in the formation of a 'shared' American consciousness.

That a *dancing* Indian should be the major trope for this racializing practice is not without import, nor further irony. I will summarize and simplify a complex history here, by noting the fertile tension between disgust and desire over alien American Indian bodily practices that was created for many European immigrants as a result of Puritan theology and other Christian (largely Protestant) forms of bias against the body in America during the 17th - 19th centuries (Deloria 1998, King and Springwood 2001a, Pagden 1982, Segal and Steinbeck 1977). This tension was supported by longstanding Platonic-Cartesian philosophical dualisms that separated and valorized 'mind' over 'body' (Farnell 1999, Foucault 1978, Pandian 1985, Tripp 1997, Wagner 1997). Pandian writes, "From the late Renaissance…human others became symbols for comprehending what was denied as a valid part of the [Christian] self" (1985: 42). King and Springwood (2001a) suggest that the Protestant belief system provided a religio-historical momentum in expansionist Western Europe for viewing non-Christian bodies with pious disdain, viewing them as carnal flesh because (assumedly) spontaneous, open and sensual. Dancing, especially, was singled out for Calvinist attention as a preamble to fornication (e.g., Marks 1975, Stubbs 1585). Denying such corporeal experiences for themselves, Protestants were thus poised to inscribe and read the non-western body as representing all these things.[8] The dancing Indian body that signified wild, savage, spontaneous, hyper-sexual, war-like, heathen passions—the dark and dangerous antithesis of all things civilized and Christian—was nevertheless simultaneously pregnant with fascination for the projected wildness and sexuality of the New World "Other." These alien bodily practices included not only so-called wild dancing and exotic rituals, but also unfamiliar domestic activities and excesses of gesticulation. On the whole, the greater the observable variation from acceptable European norms of physical behavior, the more primitive a society was judged to be. This rationale and distancing as "Other" provided justification for widespread colonial efforts to "civilize the savages" through disciplinary regimes that exerted radical control over bodily practices: not only dancing, but clothing, hairstyles, eating habits, sexual liaisons, social manners, work ethics and ritual activities (Farnell 1995: 32; see also Child 1998, Lomawaima 1994, Osburn 1998). Reports of such disciplinary regimes abound within the records of Government Boarding School records, for example. American Indian dance forms, intertwined as they were with indigenous spiritual practices, received special attention, however, and became subject to a series of prohibitions by the US Federal government in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (see Prucha 1975). Prohibitions against dancing continued to preoccupy U.S. government administrators and policy makers for almost half a century. In 1883, for example, the "Rules for Courts of Indian Offences" established guidelines for the discontinuance of "old heathenish dances" as hindering the assimilation of American Indians. By 1892 a modification of these rules identified dancing, (along with polygamy, the practices of medicine men, intoxication and immorality), as punishable offences. This U.S. governmental attitude in the continued into the 1920's through circulars issued regularly by the Commissioners of Indian Affairs (Prucha 1975: 187; 1984: 801-3) and lasted until 1934.

What cruel irony then, that during this period when the U.S. government attempted to control and suppress these dynamically embodied forms of expressive culture within reservation communities, colonial constructions of "Dancing Indians" began to proliferate off-reservations—in Wild West Shows and Expositions and especially on American university campuses (Deloria 1998, Moses 1996). The colonialist message was clear: dancing for the entertainment of a White audience was acceptable, dancing for spiritual and cultural purposes on the reservation was not (Browner 2002: 30).

In a crystal clear example of "imperial nostalgia," (Rosaldo 1989) by the end of the 19th century we find the emergence of a colonialist longing for that which has been destroyed enacted out in new spaces of racial representation—the Wild West Show and the sports arena. Imperialist nostalgia occurs when "people mourn the passing of what they themselves have

transformed" (Rosaldo 1989: 69). By the turn of the 20th century, when the potential for American Indian military resistance had disappeared, the actual existence of American Indians was effectively superceded and displaced by the "Indian" as a polysemous sign vehicle *for the construction of Euro-American identity*. The efforts to erase American Indian dancing only to re-incorporate it as colonial mimicry on the sports field serves to reconcile a dominant pattern of violence—ethnocide and genocide—for the purposes of constructing a morally viable White identity. At the University of Illinois, supporters of the mascot insist they seek only to honor the former American Indian peoples of Illinois, at the same time refusing to honor even the request of the descendants of the Illinois tribes, the Peoria Indian tribe of Oklahoma, to stop this demeaning practice.

Conclusion

In sum, I have argued that the 'rhetoric of honoring' of mascot supporters is contradicted in two ways: first, through the origins of this practice and its colonial juxtaposition with the legal prohibition of genuine Native dancing on reservations. And second, by the neo-colonial semiotics of the performance itself, in the audience's power to use mimesis to create a White public space—a dynamically embodied discursive regime that dictates and controls what the performance will mean for them. In both cases, the genuine expressive Indian body has been effectively silenced.

Acknowledgments

I dedicate this paper to all those Native American students and faculty at the University of Illinois, past and present, who have vigorously protested this practice and endured

Endnotes

1 Presentation at the Newberry Library, Chicago on the exhibition, *Lewis and Clark in Indian Country*, September 2005.

2 For example, Horsman 1981, Berkhoffer 1978 and Pearce 1967.

3 The article also provides an opportunity to connect my research interests in discourse-centered linguistic anthropology, Native American ethnography, and the anthropology of the body in performance, to my role as an activist against this form of institutionalized racism in the academic institution in which I work and its environs.

4 I use "colonial" here to refer to domination by an imperial power that appropriates land and economic resources and destroys or severely disrupts social organization and political autonomy. "Neocolonial" refers to symbolic domination via processes such as the cultural appropriation of imagery, symbolism, religious practices, and arts.

5 See statement by John Madigan, a former Chief Illiniwek in Garippo Report 2000 (see reference under Farnell 2001) and recent statement on the website Savethechief.org.

6 In 1915, the Order of the Arrow, a national Scout camping fraternity, was founded in which ceremonies of initiation were based on "Indian themes," and local lodges and chapters were given "Indian names." The first three individuals who portrayed Chief Illiniwek (Lester Leutwiler, Webber Borchers, and William Newton) became interested in "Indian lore" through their involvement with the Boy Scouts. They spent time "Playing Indian" (Deloria 1998) at summer camp, learning so-called Indian dances as well as arts and crafts from Ralph Hubbard, a renowned enthusiast who traveled widely in the United States and Europe producing "Indian pageants" (Powers, 1988: 558).

7 In contrast to an eagle feather war bonnet or full-length headdress, a roach is much smaller and made of porcupine hair attached to a crown hugging leather base that also supports two vertically placed eagle feathers. These are attached so as to move freely along with the head movements. They add to the visual energy but blurred outline of the body.

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Spanish Dance — A "Self-Taught Act with American Ingenuity"?

Katita Milazzo

On August 20, 1796 in the New Hampshire Gazette there was an announcement of Don Pedro Cloris, the principal performer in Donegan's Company, who exhibited some years previously to great applause, would, on the Monday next August 22, be dancing "the Spanish Fandango, blindfolded, over thirteen eggs, placed in different situations, and imitating the drunkard, stagger amongst them, without breaking" (1).

This was one of the first mentions of theatrical Spanish dancing to be witnessed in North America and the start of creative American interpretations of a foreign dance form for financial gain. Interestingly, the first mention of this "fandango" dance had been two years previously danced by the second black performer to ever appear in Baltimore, William Nesbet, under the direction of Masters Hearn and Manby. According to Chrystelle Bond in her article, "A Chronicle of Dance in Baltimore 1780-1814," Nesbet's specialty was his 'SPANISH FANDANGO, BLIND-FOLDED, over FIFTEEN EGGS, and break none'" (13).

In the 1780s when the Revolutionary War ended, most stage performers in the early United States were foreign born. Whether or not Messrs. Cloris and Nesbet were is unknown, but Americans were cutting their theatrical teeth appearing as amateurs with more professional Europeans. It was a challenge for Americans to procure work in these early days of theatre. Bond noted that John Durang, a theatrical booking agent for American acts, watched his business suffer due to a constant succession of imported dancers who stole the spotlights from his clients who combined self-taught acts with American ingenuity (6).

Obviously, these first mentions of fandangos are farcical, a mockery, a comic routine meant solely to amuse the paying spectators. They were Spanish in name only, but they paved the way for many ersatz fandangos featured as theatrical diver-tissements between acts. Thus the precedent was set for Americans who merely posed as Spanish dancers while executing choreography fashioned from American "ingenuity" and ballet steps.

In the 1800s, mail order how-to booklets were immensely popular. These publications typically included sheet music and step-by-step descriptions of the dances. Spanish dances were not exempt from this treatment and had generic names such as "Spanish Dance," "The Spanish dance with castanets [sic], and how to teach it," and "Spanish solo tambourine dance in 2/4 time." Any historical search on the internet will yield dozens of this sort of thing. Later on dancers might have augmented their meager repertoire by copying steps from the opera, Carmen (which made its New York debut on October 23, 1878 at the Academy of Music); or from Isabella Cubas, one of the first Spaniards to dance in the U.S. in 1861; or perhaps they imitated the infamous Lola Montez, the Irish dancer who had captured the heart of the king of Bavaria. This occurred throughout the nineteenth and even into the twentieth centuries. Even in 1944 Ann Barzel in "European Dance Teachers in the U.S.," was noting that:

> The authentic Spanish dance was not taught in America until recently. There had been Spanish dancers showing their art in American theatres since early times. The first was Senorita Pepita Soto who came here in 1852, a Spanish troupe of twenty dancers came in 1855, and Isabella Cubas came in 1861. Carmencita danced in the U.S. in 1889 and Caroline Otero in 1890. Teachers saw these and taught what they considered similar work. To the untutored imitator a tambourine, a lace mantilla and coquetry employed extensively while executing the usual ballet steps spelled Spanish dancing. (94)

Americans were also obtaining ideas from touring Europeans. Lincoln Kirstein in Dance: A Short History of Classic Theatrical Dancing wrote of Mary Ann Lee who "in 1839 learned Elssler's 'Cachucha,' from Fanny's partner, Sylvain, and even dared to compete with her in another theater during her New York triumph" (340). According to Barzel, Elssler paid her ballet master Sylvain $150 a week to gather and drill ballet recruits in each town which soon engendered many Elssler imitators.

Another early educator of dance in the United States was Karl Marwig. According to Suzanne

Shelton in Ruth St. Denis: A Biography of the Divine Dancer, "[n]ot only was Marwig a ballet teacher of note, he also was a chief booking agent for New York showgirls and served as 'Master of Dance' for the powerful producer Augustin Daly" (12-13). Ruth St. Denis studied Spanish dance with Marwig in the 1890s. According to Barzel, Marwig came from Switzerland in 1877. The scope of dance forms he taught ranged from processional and drill to the Tyrolean national waltz. Barzel observed that there were many teachers of Marwig's type, especially from Germany who had a repertoire of folk dances from Europe and smattering of ballet.

By 1910 classes in Spanish dance were advertised in the New York Times in schools that also offered ballroom, stage dancing, waltz, and coaching for chorus girls. The first teachers of significance arrived in 1915. The Cansino family was brought over by socialite Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish to dance at social functions in New York. Six siblings trained in Madrid by their father Antonio Cansino quickly

> launched on the Keith Orpheum Circuit, and danced in cinema house prologues . . . When the Cansinos settled down to teach in America, Eduardo, José and Elisa lived on the West Coast and Angel and his American ballet dancer wife Suzita, in New York.
>
> That range of Spanish dances, flamenco, peasant and classical, as taught by the Cansinos was a revelation to most Americans, as were the intricacies of the *zapateado*, the art of playing the castanets, and the finger cymbals. The Cansinos used the accepted method of teaching Spanish dancing. A complete dance is presented and gone over so many times that finally the pupil knows it. Technique is picked up on the way. Many Americans, accustomed to more analytic methods of pedagogy, find it exasperating, but most Spaniards teach in this fashion. (Barzel 94)

By the 1910s and '20s more Spaniards began coming to the United States to teach. Besides the Cansino family, Aurora Arriaza, Maria Montero, and Joaquin Ortega were some of the first. The Spanish style of dance passed on was not what we see today. Although they incorporated some heelwork, many of the steps taught to Americans were not unfamiliar to students of other forms of dance, but the style was unique. The timing of the accents is very different from other forms of dance. For many years I studied Spanish dance with Mariquita Flores who instructed in the time-honored Spanish tradition: we learned our technique through choreography. We repeated these dances over and over until they became a part of us. The goal was for us to be able to put our propio sello (own stamp) on them. It was a very difficult approach unless one had previous dance technique, studied a long time, or was very good at imitating. This approach is actually more conducive for children. Although learning the steps is not impossible, I observed that the style, nuances, and flavor are very difficult for Americans to absorb without an in-depth experience of Spanish culture.

Nonetheless, many dancers in the early 1900s did appropriate these dances and presented them commercially on stages throughout the United States. Perhaps the most pervasive and successful of these dancing entrepreneurs was the Denishawn group. As previously mentioned, Ruth St. Denis studied Spanish dance in the late 1890s with Karl Marwig. After Ruth St. Denis joined with Ted Shawn to form the Denishawn Company, they continued to expand their repertoire of "exotic" dances. In Jane Sherman's book Denishawn: The Enduring Influence, she mentioned that the Denishawn goal was to present intellectually stimulating fare in the language of dance. The Denishawn style of dance came out of a vaudeville mentality. Dancers could present any form of dance as long as it was theatrically and commercially viable. Denishawn shows were full of extremely diverse forms of dance from Native American, to East Indian, to abstract, to Spanish. There was no sense of ethnic propriety. Sherman stated:

> The art of dance is too big to be encompassed by any one system. On the contrary, the dance includes all systems or schools of dance. Every way that any human being of any race or nationality, at any period of human history, has moved rhythmically to express himself, belongs to the dance. We endeavor to recognize and use all contributions of the past to the dance and will continue to use all new contributions in the future. (11)

Neither St. Denis nor Shawn asserted that these versions were reproductions of the real thing. Moreover, they were not supposed to be. Denishawn "translations" were presented with theatrical color and know-how, with costumes and makeup that approximated the authentic, and with music chosen for a proper flavor. St. Denis and Shawn were honorable in intent and respectful of details in offering audiences glimpses of culture they had never before experienced. As in all of their new ethnic work, they immersed themselves in studies of the books, paintings, sculpture, and music of that area (Sherman 35) and then proffered their own interpretation.

What Denishawn lacked in tact, they made up for in integrity. In 1923 Ted Shawn went to Spain to study. He wrote to Ruth St. Denis every day he was away. Photocopies of these letters archived at Jacob's Pillow are priceless for gaining insight as to how Shawn went about procuring Spanish dances and costumes for the company. One of the most charming things about the letters were his salutations. They were never the same and always contained such endearments as "Roofie," "Distant and Longed-for Wife," "Dearest, Sweetest, Veryown," "Far-Distant but ever-near Roofie," "Goddess of the Inner Shrine," "My Dove in the Nest," and "Rhythm of the World." In Barcelona he saw described a dancer, Carolina, who wore no make-up but she and the other girls could "put our American girls to shame when it comes to a facile use of their bodies and their facial expressions." He visited Barcelona, Madrid, Toledo, and Seville. He took two lessons with one of the most popular teachers in Spain at the time--José Otero and learned two dances from him. He also learned an *Alegrías* from Perfecto Perez in Barcelona. Mostly Shawn shopped extensively picking up combs, earrings, books, castanets, shawls, and a green bullfighter's suit that is still at Jacob's Pillow today. But Ted Shawn was in Spain only for a total of twenty days--hardly enough time to become proficient.

Shawn did come back with several ideas for possible Spanish ballets for the Denishawn group. One realized piece was Cuadro Flamenco, the first full-length Spanish ballet to be presented to American audiences in towns across the country with American dancers. But according to Jane Sherman in The Drama of Denishawn Dance,

> Denishawn tours brought them [American audiences] Ted Shawn's "Seguidilla," his dazzling "Flamenco" solos, his "Shawl Plastique," . . . his "Malagueña" duet . . . And his full-length ballet, "Cuadro Flamanco." Denishawn Dancers had not been endowed either by temperament or training with the ability to demonstrate the subtleties of Spanish dance. (97)

Cuadro Flamenco was choreographed in 1923 to music arranged by Louis Horst. It is seemed farcical, perhaps to cover up the lack of Spanish training or, more likely, to entertain audiences with vaudevillian proclivities. Shawn plays Lalanda, a bullfighter, in love with La Macarena (St. Denis), the most famous dancer of Seville. Lalanda had asked La Macarena to marry him and after giving her the most beautiful shawl in Seville, she permits Lalanda to drape it around her shoulders and lead her off to celebrate their betrothal. Cuadro features segments such as a chair pulled out from under a dancer sending her sprawling on the floor, the reenactment of a bullfight, and one authentic Spanish dance, the "Seguidilla."

There is a short clip of Cuadro Flamenco at Jacob's Pillow. To my eye, Shawn obviously learned some Spanish vocabulary and had some idea of the proper execution of Spanish steps, but it was extremely basic. One of the main steps was a three count step consisting of a stamp ball heel marking step with palmas played on the downbeat on counts 1 and 2. Most of the steps for St. Denis were balletically based such as a pas de basque and an exaggerated renversé. Shawn did a little closed-in, small heelwork. It struck me as banal, as if it were an over-acted silent movie. Still it was very thrilling to be able to see this clip.

Also in the archives are the notes of a Denishawn dancer, Rose Lorenz, graciously given to me to copy by Norton Owen, the curator at Jacob's Pillow. Lorenz kept copious notes on every dance she ever performed with the company. For Alegrías #2 Lorenz recorded--"Double toe coupe then turn to R, end facing L stage, with a sudden stop, looking at audience. Wrinkle up your nose at audience--making a snooty little face at them, on last count." In El Jaleo after the dancers walk out, acknowledge the musicians, execute a rond de jambe and do a "heelwork" they are to "Walk diagonally forward to R, upon hearing a remark at R hand table. 4 meas. Twist slightly to L, laughing on trill of music, making a trembling movement with L hand, in a circle from overhead toward L stage, bending body toward L. Draw feet together leaning toward the table, another

laugh, throwing L arm out high to side laterally." Once again, a priceless find at Jacob's Pillow, but obviously the theatrical sensibility prevailed.

Besides touring, Denishawn schools opened across the country as early as 1923. Further expansion added a mail-order dance business. According to an article in Dance Data, "The Franchising of Denishawn," Denishawn sold quarterly magazines and records with word-notes: "These records, a set of eight, comprise all the Bar Exercises, Arm Movements, Spanish Technique, Nautch Steps, East Indian Hands, Center Practice, Egyptian Arms and Rhythms" (2). Their summer programs are exemplified by this one in New York in 1925: Classes met daily five times a week for three or four weeks. In a four week course, the students would learn fifteen dances; in a three week course they would learn ten. The courses covered the spectrum of Denishawn choreography including their Spanish routines. After completing the course in a satisfactory manner, the students would receive a certificate signed by both Shawn and St. Denis.

In a personal letter to Jane Sherman, I asked her what she felt the Denishawn influence to be in Spanish dance in this country. She replied that she thought I was overemphasizing its contribution. Spanish dances were few in number compared to the range of the Denishawn repertoire and the Denishawn approach to it was not different than to any other of their ethnic forms. Furthermore, she felt that Cuadro Flamenco was not overly "hammy" for the times especially in comparison to silent movies that were being produced. I disagree. Dancers such as the great La Argentina did present scenarios in her theatrical fare, but she did not descend to anything such as pulling a chair out from under another dancer. Furthermore, there were Denishawn schools all over the country which were teaching Spanish technique. Spanish dancer Pablo Rodarte told me he learned his first Spanish steps Denishawn style as a boy in Colorado. When he arrived in Spain in the 1960s at the start of his 24-year career, he felt he needed to start over. He had not learned anything like what the dancers in Spain were doing.

I feel one of the biggest differences between what Americans were doing and what was being danced in Spain is the American tendency for presenting a Spanish caricature with a few basic clichés as opposed to the sheer inventiveness seen in Spain. As Mariquita Flores, one of my first teachers used to say--"You have to know the rules to break them." Spanish choreographers were able to creatively accomplish this. In a dance sequence by the Cansino family in the 1936 movie *The Dancing Pirate*, Eduardo Cansino began with a waltz and moved into a jota followed by the sevillanas into a paso doble and then concluded with the waltz again. The range of steps in the 1941 movie *Ziegfeld Girl* featuring Antonio and Rosario is very creative choreographically. Furthermore, Spanish culture has its own characteristic gestures. Americans' are typically broad and use much effort in simple moves resulting in a Spanish dance that is often heavy handed and lacking subtlety. Many times it seems in the States, that the costume makes the dancer Spanish, not the choreography.

What Denishawn was doing was very typical and, furthermore, it inspired many other dancers to become "ethnic" dancers who included Spanish pieces in their repertoires. It must be noted that this was not strictly an American phenomenon. Rita Sacchetto from Munich was known as a lyric-dramatic or as a modern art dancer. Caroline V. Herr in an article in Theatre in December of 1909 asked:

> How does Sacchetto dance? That is difficult to say! Perhaps, after all, dancing is not the right word, as it is more a rhythmic swing of her entire body, or rhythm in which one is made to feel the periods and cadences. It is a free mingling of pantomimic art with the dance; her movements rise and fall with the melodic line; now she falls into the dance rhythm, now she lets it fall; in short she is the music. (no page number, loose clipping).

Sacchetto became the première danseuse of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. In her clipping file in the New York Public Library she is pictured in a toreador dance, draped in a huge, black cape. She stated that she tried to reproduce the spirit of Spanish dance and did not, as a rule, even use Spanish music. She stated that she reproduced not only what she felt, but what the musician felt as well.

Americans, too, jumped on the "ethnic" bandwagon. One of the most successful was Russell Meriwether Hughes, better known as La Meri, from San Antonio, Texas. La Meri had an excellent eye. Videos of her Spanish dancing at Jacob's Pillow were probably the best of the American dancers, again, albeit simple. She had a good "sentido" or feeling for

it. La Meri made it her life's work to be an ethnic dancer and scholar. She differentiated between folk and art dance. In her work Total Education in Ethnic Dance La Meri stated: "Once folk dance goes on stage it becomes art dance" (5). She thought that the "ethnologic dance is not a product of the mind but of the emotions. Style is its essence, and technique is of purely relative importance. Technique, or body control, must be mastered only because the body must not stand in the way of the soul's expression" (7).

I found it difficult to relate to her theory that the same rules apply to all "ethnic" dance forms. To me the philosophy of dancing is very different between, for instance, flamenco and Bharata Natyam. La Meri wrote: "When the dancer has understood that basic emotions are the same in all mankind--when he has absorbed the philosophy, religion, moves--he will become as sensitive to emotional projection as the native" (23). Later she said: "It is unforgivably insulting to misrepresent the basic character of a folk" (33). One is left wondering by whose standards is she judging?

When La Meri toured Asia and performed in a country for a few weeks, she contacted local dancing masters for private lessons, learned a few dances, bought a costume, and continued to the next location perfecting and performing the dances she had just obtained. From my present-day perspective, this seems to be an appropriation another's culture for one's own personal gain according to the definition by Edward Said in Orientalism. Different cultures have different aesthetics. As Americans, we are taught to look at art a specific way. It seems arrogant to assume one can become good enough to perform another's dances after two weeks of studying, much less perfect the dances of dozens of countries while absorbing their philosophy, religion, and moves. Still, La Meri was not the only one to do this. Undeniably, she was one of the best. Dance critic John Martin reviewed La Meri in 1940 in her program called "Dances of Alien Culture." He thought that she approached her work with objectivity, but he wondered if an objective approach was the one best suited to "the performances of racially foreign dances." He subsequently did not review her again although he often listed announcements in his articles of when she was performing. In general Martin reviewed Americans with the caveat that they would never be as good as the Spaniards or he tried to avoid reviewing them altogether.

Thus it has been a very curious road that many dancers have taken in their quest to present Spanish dancing on stage. And unfortunately, much of what has been presented in the name of Spanish dancing has been skimming the surface of this rich heritage imparting caricatures or worse--farcical renditions of fandangos staggering over eggs. We now know that learning the dances of another's culture can take a lifetime of study. John Martin, for all of his biases against American-born Spanish dancers, was very astute and prophetic in his time. The following was written on a note card on June 17, 1928 under the title Orientalism:

> To us of the Western world dancing is, and probably always will be, a highly personal art. In its common manifestations it is an exhibition of personal skill, an exploitation of personal charm or an indulgence in personal emotion--at its best the expression of a personal concept of beauty. The finest type of dancer is he who, through the power of his personal vision can penetrate into the realm of the absolute and bring it into tangible relationship with the understanding of others through his personal adaptation of the principles of form. In proportion as he lacks these personal gifts he lapses into banality and ineffectualness.

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United States Politics and Imperial Ballets: A Coincidence?

Renate Bräuninger

Lincoln Kirstein's aim to give America its own ballet tradition and Balanchine's wholehearted embrace of the artistic possibilities in his new home country seem to be two motivations with the same goal: the creation of an American ballet tradition. This included George Balanchine choreographing a series of ballets that could in terms of style be described as being imperial between 1941 and 1967, if one would take *Ballet Imperial* and the *Diamonds* section of *Jewels* as the hallmarks. The time when the United States joined World War II and the Vietnam War.

Kirstein writes in his diary of 1932: "Do I want to start an 'American ballet'? I do, but of course this sounds crazy" (Kirstein, 1979: 14). What seem to have attracted Kirstein about ballet, in contrast to modern dance that had started to develop as America's genuine artistic dance form, was its tradition, its balance between form and expression: "By trial and error over four centuries stage-dancers [ballet dancers] have come to know the moving balance and axis of aerial and terrestrial excitement. By brilliance they create interest, tension, and accelerative excitement in their watchers. This information has become a strict science and an honourable craft" (Kirstein, 1983: 256). Kirstein, who came from a wealthy Boston family and studied in Harvard, had only an amateur's training in fine arts and ballet, therefore his main engagement with those art forms was, at the beginning, that of a writer. While his books on ballet history and theory are valuable, his goal to give America its own ballet tradition had the more profound impact on dance history.

Balanchine's decision to come to the United States is informed by him sharing the same fate with the choreographer who was probably most influential on his work: Marius Petipa. Both of their careers as performers were cut short by a knee injury.[1] Both decided, Petipa in the middle of the nineteenth century, in 1847, and Balanchine at the beginning of the twentieth century, in 1934, that central Europe did not offer them sufficient artistic stimulus and they left. Petipa went East, to St. Petersburg, where he was hired as dancer and ballet master for the imperial court theatres of the tsar. Balanchine went to the West (to the United States) following an invitation by Lincoln Kirstein.

From its early days ballet was a pretext for the sovereign and the aristocrats around her/him to represent themselves, and the power admitted to them, in an allegoric disguise. Ballet was the medium with which to demonstrate one's political supremacy to the representatives of other countries. Certain functions of the groupings, the parading of dancer, actors and extras around the stage has not changed from the days of early court ballet to those of Marius Petipa and, as I will show, to those of Balanchine. The more splendid the arrangements of the divertissements and the more they proceeded flawlessly, like clockwork, the more impressive the overall effect. Tim Scholl states in his *From Petipa to Balanchine* (1994: 11): "Clearly, Russian ballet in the late nineteenth century was an 'art of spectacle' [*zrelishchnoe iskusstvo*, Scholl's brackets] whose static, pictorial groupings and special effects could command as much attention as the actual dancing". The trained and skilled body of the dancer on stage - in early court ballet an aristocrat and courtier, later replaced by a professional dancer - reflects the level of training a body can achieve in a particular society. In other words, if a society could train and discipline its courtiers in such a way and had the funds to stage such splendid spectacles, it would also able to train soldiers and achieve military superiority.

A circle seems to close between French court ballet and imperial Russian ballet with the production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. Premiered in 1890, it is an attempt at a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Ivan Alexandrovich Vsevolozhsky, at that time the director of the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg (his directorate lasted from 1881-1899), was a Francophile which was either the result of, or reason for, his had assignment to the Russian consulate in Paris in 1876. He adapted Charles Perrault's fairy tale *La Belle au Bois Dormant* (1697) as the libretto for *The Sleeping Beauty* for which Tchaikovsky composed the music and Petipa created the choreography (Wiley, 1991: 92). "In choosing Louis XIV style for *Sleeping Beauty*, Vsevolozhsky referred not only to the zenith of court ballet tradition, but also to the ballet's traceable origins" (Scholl, 1994: 27). *Sleeping Beauty* appeared to reflect the apotheosis of an imperial ballet: "Sleeping Beauty represents the first attempt to authentically stylize each component of an imperial ballet production" (1994: 23). Scholl modifies interpretations that regard the ballet as an homage to the Tsarist regime and argues that while *Sleeping Beauty* might celebrate court life, it might not

represent a celebration of the reign of the tsar's at the time of its premiere (1994: 36). Tchaikovsky has his score end in g minor which is very unconventional. Does this reflect an ambivalent portrait of the monarchy at time when Russia was beginning to grumble, fifteen years prior to the Russian-Japanese war of 1905?

Drawing a connection to the United States, Naima Prevots in her *Dance for Export* (1998) mentions the role of dance in United States foreign policy as a means of political propaganda during the Cold War. In 1954 president Dwight D. Eisenhower founded the emergency fund for the arts which financed the touring of American dance companies abroad through the 1950s and 60s until in 1965 the National Endowment of the Arts was established (Prevots 1998: 11). Dance companies were sent to Latin America, Russia and Asia, in order to promote the impression that the United States as a country that was not just a consumer society, its citizens buying the latest electronic gadgets and eating hamburgers, but a country that also had on offer something called 'high art'. Dance was especially suitable as an article for export, since it did not require language and therefore translation. The way in which dance communicates was regarded as universally comprehensible.

In shaping cultural and political frames Kirstein's role becomes crucial. On the dance committee which decided about the funding for the tours of dance companies to be sent abroad, Lincoln Kirstein and Lucia Chase, representing the New York City Ballet and the American Ballet Theatre, were always present. There was, at the time, concern over a possible conflict of interests between their being panel members while simultaneously representing ballet companies which would eventually benefit from decisions made by this very panel. This concern was addressed by asking them to refrain from voting when the companies of which they were in charge were the subject of discussion (ibid.: 43). This is another proof that Kirstein's interests in ballet as an American art form were never of a purely aesthetic nature. American society is clearly not an aristocratic one and in its tradition of self-representation as a country is founded on immigration from Europe, therefore, European culture was, if not rejected, at least reflected upon very critically. Kirstein and other writers on ballet, like Edwin Denby, always emphasise the importance of developing a genuine American ballet tradition and not just importing Russian ballet.[2] But why was ballet at all chosen as the art form to represent American national culture? The United States were discovering themselves as an imperialist country, and they needed an equivalent representation in the arts. American imperialist tendencies (and the self-(mis)-understanding they involve) are reflected upon by Edward Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* (1993: 3): "The United States was not a classical imperial power, but a righter of wrongs around the world, in pursuit of tyranny, in defence of freedom no matter the place or cost". He states further: "United States military interventions since World War Two have occurred (and are still occurring) on nearly every continent, many of great complexity and extent, with tremendous national investment, as we are now beginning to understand. All of this is, in William Appleman Williams's phrase, empire as a way of life" (ibid.: 64).

While Prevots (1998) emphasises the tensions of the Cold War as a reason for this foreign cultural policy of the United States, she does not explicitly refer to American imperialism. However, she mentions that the Americans wanted to demonstrate to the Russians their ability to train ballet dancers with the same efficient results. It is important to notice here that it was ballet that the authorities in United States decided to send to Soviet Russia and not modern dance, which would have been a genuinely North American art form. The political message is quite clear (ibid.: 4):

> Not surprisingly, the first company sent to the Soviet Union was not a modern dance group but the American Ballet Theatre, with a program featuring traditional works like *Les Sylphides*, as well as signature ballets on American themes such as *Rodeo*. The New York City Ballet soon followed, demonstrating that the United States could not only produce dancers as technically accomplished as any in the USSR, but also ballet that surpassed in sophistication and complexity anything seen on the Soviet stage.

What characterises Balanchine's imperial ballets? Most of them are choreographed to Tchaikovsky's music. There seems to be a close link between Soviet politics and the connotations of Tchaikovsky's music. This claim can be supported by the fact that in the Soviet Union, Tchaikovsky's music was always broadcast in times of political turmoil. At the Hofstra symposium *Tchaikovsky and His Contemporaries* (1993), Joel Sachs commented [3]:

> A very good friend of mine, who is a flutist from Moscow, happened to be in Italy on tour at the time of the attempted coup in

> 1990. She said she knew something was up, because she turned on the radio to Moscow radio at the time of the news broadcasts and heard Swan Lake coming out. She knew there had to have been a coup, because that was what always happened when there was a coup. It was, of course Tchaikovsky; it was never any of the great Russians, and, of course, certainly no one other than that.

With music for *Stars and Stripes* (1958) the choice is even more obvious; it is military marches by John Philip Sousa.

A further characteristic is the use of the human body as ornament. Starting from early court ballet onwards dancers were moved in ornamental pattern on stage. The large divertissements in Petipa's ballets had the function to show, through their sheer splendour, the power of the tsarist regime. The structures and formations in, for example, Balanchine's: *Theme and Variations* (1947), Variation no 2, and *Diamonds* (1967) are reminiscent of Petipa's work, but also developed further.

Another element is the use of the *polonaise* which is the polish national dance. The musical form of a *polonaise* was used by Russian composers as a reminder of Russia's victory over Poland and therefore a aide memoire of Russia's political power (Taruskin, 1997: 282). We find a *polonaise* at the end of *The Sleeping Beauty*, in *Theme and Variations* and in *Diamonds*. The latter are elaborate marching formations into which Balanchine incorporates also some chorus line elements. This choreographic structure shows how much he merges dance forms of genres of American entertainment with the traditions that have been passed on to him. Audiences watching those ballets have not necessarily to understand the symbolic meaning of the *polonaise.* It is likely however, that they would experience some sort of pleasure in watching the spectacular choreography. Rightly Arlene Croce associated Balanchine with Busby Berkeley (Croce, 1987: 153). This brings up the question, do we perceive the group choreography - mainly for the women - as purely ornamental and abstract as the one in a Busby Berkely movie, or is there a difference in the staging of bodies as representation of model societies? Clearly in court ballet, or in a work of Petipa's or Balanchine's choreography, members of the corps de ballet are not shown in their individuality, rather they are merged into groups in which they all look alike. However, the difference between 'girls' as mass ornaments in a Radio City show, or in a Berkeley choreography, is that, according to Siegfried Krakauer, ballet has still a ritualistic aspect and an erotic life that is missing in American entertainment (Krakauer, trans. Levin, 1995: 77). In other words, ballet can never be perceived as being a display of ornamental patterns through bodies, because it is embedded in a tradition of a particular performance practice and the bodies on stage are not deprived of erotic associations.

The question is, what function did those groupings gain when Balanchine reterritorialised them? In a Deleuzian sense reterritorialisation means, index, icon and symbol are replaced by the diagrammatic: "which constructs a real that is yet to come (Deleuze and Guattari, trans. Massumi, 1988:142)". Referring to dance, this could be translated as, elements of a choreography are stripped of their signification and reduced to pure shapes before they are able to regain meaning in new contexts. In this sense Balanchine is reconfiguring the elements handed down to him by tradition from Petipa's choreography using forms he had encountered in the United States. Those elements[4] start then to point at the new ideal American society. Do they point to the political self representation which includes the notion of the imperial?

To all of Balanchine's ballets the *pas de deux* is crucial as a central element, similarly to Petipa's ballets. However, it is neither a prince and a princess coming together, nor the unfulfilable relationship, but rather a nameless female and male dancer who met and dance. They might symbolise modern American's which in a democratic society seem to have no rank or title, but nevertheless, the dancers on stage are hierarchically grouped. There is the central couple, there are soloists, demi soloists and dancers of the *corps de ballet*.

Balanchine's attitude towards the country he emigrated to was certainly not one of critical distance. He was very proud of becoming an American citizen. On being married to Maria Tallchief, who was on descended her father's side from the Osage Indians, he was reported to have said that he had married the country and that the natives were his relatives (Taper, 1987, 213). After having escaped the Russian revolution and being grateful to have found a new home country, Balanchine might not have wanted to criticise the latter, or have simply seen no reason for such a criticism, since he knew communism in the guise of the Stalinist regime.[5] The question of whether Balanchine consciously supported American politics might not be the most enlightening to ask. Rather Balanchine is reterritorialising or reframing an already established relationship between forms of embodied

representation in the arts, politics and the state. One should rather note that the American audience was not repelled by this sort of connection, but entranced. This means Balanchine's background met with the self-identification of the American public he was choreographing for. Arlene Croce seems to make a similar connection when stating: "Something in the pattern of Balanchine's work tells us that he is a man who does not believe in coincidences (Croce, 1982: 225)". But on the very same page (ibid.) she claims Balanchine's innocence in creating works which I have named the imperial ballets. These statements by Croce make me wonder does her ambivalence not avoid the crucial point of discussion here?

Instead of blaming Balanchine's political unconsciousness, the question that should rather be asked here is that of what is the interest, for the academic discourse, in seeing the artist as somebody equally politically conscious as the scholar? Does this not show a concern with the politicisation of the discourse, instead of an understanding of the artist's attitude? Does dance function not simply as an authorial expression, but rather as part of a wider historical and institutional 'assemblage', in a way that decentres the author as source of his and her work?

Endnotes

1 See Kirstein ((1935) 1977) or other ballet histories.
2 See Kirstein's frequent references to Russian ballet in *Ballet, Bias and Belief* (1983), see also Denby's writing on the same topic in *Dance Writings* (1986).
3 See Joel Sachs comments - then chairman of the music department at Juilliard School - in 1993 (in Mihailovic, 1999: 275).
4 See comments by Kirstein and Taper on this in their writings listed in the bibliography.

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Swine Lake: American Satire of Russian Ballet and What it tells Us

Beth Genné

Many Americans first encounter ballet as a joke: take, for example, Rudolph Nureyev's *pas de deux* with Miss Piggy in the Muppet Show's production of "*Swine Lake"* or the Hippopotamus Ballet in Walt Disney's *Fantasia.* Americans have been satirizing ballet and ballet dancers -- mostly Russian -- since the beginning of the twentieth century. I want to take a look at this phenomenon within its historical and cultural context and also look at what it reveals about American's changing attitudes toward ballet in the twentieth century.

Between 1880 and 1940 the Russian population of the U.S. made an astonishing leap from 65,000 in the 19th century to almost four million in the twentieth. This population would make an indelible mark on American arts and culture. Nowhere was this impact greater than in ballet – an art relatively new to American audiences.

About 3 million of them were Jews from the Russian empire and its East European territories driven out of their homeland by religious persecution. Nearly half stayed in New York City. One and half million settled on the lower east side of Manhattan where they created a tightly knit community one of the largest in the history of immigration.[56]

Many kept ties not only to the Yiddish language and culture of the *shtetl* but also to Russian arts and culture. As they and their children gradually prospered they would become important audiences (and eventually performers) for Russian and East European performing arts.

Another and different group of Russians were exiled to the West by the First World War and by the Russian Revolution in 1917. They were the "White Russians" so called to distinguish them from the "Red" Russian Bolshevik victors. These included newly impoverished aristocrats and those of the professional classes who had been tied to Imperial Russia. All of them had lost their jobs, homes, savings and status. Like the Russian Jews, they were forced exiles whose homes and culture had been virtually eliminated. And as we all know ballet dancers were among them. They would transplant Russian ballet to American soil.

Anna Pavlova was one of this group. Her exotic name and ethereal image became synonymous with ballet in the United States. Her new home in the West was England, but, even before the war, America was a second home. Between 1910 and her death in 1931 she regularly toured the United States, giving many Americans their first glimpse of ballet.

Here she is in her signature piece Fokine's *The Swan*. It was a perfect vehicle for Pavlova's fragile Taglioni-like qualities, evoking, as it did, Romantic heroines from *La Sylphide* to *Swan Lake*. Poised on her slender (often photographically retouched) points, wearing her feathery white tutu, this image of Pavlova became the model for would be American ballerinas.

Pavlova's iconic status was confirmed when the comedienne Fannie Brice lampooned her on Broadway in the *Ziegfeld Follies* of 1916. Born of Russian Jewish immigrants, Brice was a dance lover, but she also knew that Pavlova's fame made her ripe for satire.

I'm sorry I can't show you Brice, but I do have Barbara Streisand re-creating one of Brice's *Ziegfeld Follies* sketches from the film biography *Funny Girl*. Brice's Swan Queen is not a modest, enchanted princess, but a down to earth, *Yiddisher* mama who protects her flock by talking to the prince as if they were haggling over the price of poultry at a lower east side butcher store. (Excerpt of film *Funny Girl, 1968,* dir: William Wyler, script: Isobel Lennart)

Brice also did a take off on Nijinsky when he toured America briefly with the Diaghilev *Ballets Russes* in 1916. But it wasn't until after Diaghilev's death in 1929 that the *Ballets Russes* repertory became famous enough to be satirized in America. In 1933 Colonel de Basil and René Blum brought their own *Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo* to America. With its repertory of Fokine, Balanchine and Massine ballets and its roster of ex-Diaghilev dancers and choreographers, the "*Monte Carlo*" ballet as it was sometimes called and its breakaway rival company Serge Denham's *Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo* provided another target for American satirists.

During these years of the Great Depression many of the ex-Diaghilev dancers would make America their home: Balanchine, Danilova, Doubrovska in New York, Bronislava Nijinska in California. Others, less well known, set up shop in cities and towns across

America introducing and training a generation of American children in the "new" art form of ballet.

Americans viewed these glamorous and sophisticated Russians with a mixture of awe, admiration and suspicion. Ballet was made for old world snobs, not plain speaking American workingmen and women. And -- lets face it – dancing on your toes was just plain old silly. "Just what I need, another heel clicking, simpering toe dancer" is Ginger Rogers's response when a Russian ballet dancer comes to call in the 1937 film *Shall We Dance*. Fred Astaire in disguise as ballet star "Petrov" obliges her. Dressed in white tie and tails and sporting a monocle, he enters her apartment with a *grand jeté*. Bowing low, he kisses her hand, clicks his heels, stands to attention and grandly presents himself. "I am Petrov!" he arrogantly declares with an exaggerated Russian accent… "Just "Caesar", just "Napoleon", just "Garbo", so Petrov too, she's enough."[57] (Excerpt from movie *Shall We Dance,* RKO, 1937, dir: Mark Sandrich, script Harold Buchman, Lee Loeb)

What Astaire's writers and most Americans didn't really understand was that what they sometimes perceived as arrogant and pretentious in the behavior of Russian artists was, in part, a defense, a veneer masking the fear and vulnerability of the newly exiled. After all these Russians were eking out a living in the middle of the Depression. They had to do it in a new language in a strange culture, without the respect once automatically given their skills. Just such a man is presented in Kauffman and Hart's 1936 depression comedy *You Can't Take it With You*. His name is Boris Kohlenkov and he gives ballet lessons to an American family's talent less daughter, Essie. Kohlenkhov always arrives just in time for dinner and he is not above sweet-talking the family maid into doing his laundry. In this scene, he knocks on the door just as Essie's sister, Alice and her boyfriend are leaving for an evening at the "Monte Carlo" ballet. Kohlenkhov, who saw the *original* Diaghilev *Ballets Russes*, has very strong opinions about that. (Excerpt from film version of *You Can't Take it With You*, 1938, dir: Frank Capra, script: George Kauffman/Moss Hart)

Here is the fiery Kohlenkhov instructing his "little Pavlova". Her fluffy white tutu evokes the Pavlova image but now another element is added -folk dance. Essie's steps recall the folk dances of the Russian Empire, as seen in the *Ballets Russes* "nationalist" repertory from *Petrouchka* to *Coq d'Or* as well as the Hungarian *czardas* of Swan Lake. Essie dances to Brahms's *Hungarian Rhapsody* -- but the reference is clearly to Russian ballet, especially when she ends her performance with a Dying Swan finale. (Excerpt from *You Can't Take it With You,* 1938, dir: Frank Capra, script: George Kauffmann/Moss Hart)

Americans weren't the only ones who satirized Russian ballet. The newly immigrated George Balanchine delighted in deflating his colleagues. The Princess Zenobia ballet in his first Broadway hit *On Your Toes* (1936) is a wicked send-up of the *Ballets Russes* and one of its most popular ballets, *Schéhérazade*. Fokine's ballet had helped make Diaghilev's reputation in 1910 becoming a mainstay of his repertory and the new "*Ballets Russe de Monte Carlo"* had carried on this tradition.

But for Balanchine, eager to make new choreography, *Schéhérazade* had become a tired old warhorse, ripe for satire. In Balanchine's take off, a young American finds himself trapped on stage amidst the sultan's male slaves who, with their Fokine-like "orientalist" *port de bras* and knees-up prance, pay homage to Princess Zenobia, danced by Vera Zorina, (who herself had danced with the *Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo*.) You can see this in this excerpt from the movie version of *On Your Toes* which was released in 1939 three years after the Broadway 1936 production. (Excerpt from *On Your Toes*, 1939, dir: Ray Enright, script: George Kauffman, Moss Hart)

Balanchine soon got a taste of his own medicine. Here is Vera Zorina in his *Water Nymph* ballet for *The Goldwyn Follies of 1938*. Vera Zorina rises slowly from a circular pool surrounded by a colonnade. (Excerpt from *Water Nymph* ballet, choreographed and directed by George Balanchine). Keep this image in mind. It was clearly on Walt Disney's mind two years later when he created the Hippopotamus ballet in *Fantasia* (1940). (Excerpt from *Fantasia.* A cartoon hippo rises slowly from a circular pool framed by a colonnade closely resembling the *Water Nymph* set)

The Cold War

The Cold War saw American satire take a new tack. By the mid 1950's the Russian immigrants of the first part of the century were assimilated into the fabric of American life. Behind the Iron Curtain a new generation had grown up under communism. The U.S.S.R was now a superpower in a nuclear arms race with the U.S.A. Both countries tightly controlled their citizen's access to the other and the threat of nuclear annihilation at the push of a button upped the ante to near hysteria on both sides.

Soviet premiere Nikita Khrushchev was known to fly off the handle: here he is at the United Nations in 1960. Please notice the shoe in front of him. He has just waved it in rage at the speaker. Keep this image in mind. (Photograph of Khrushchev at the United Nations)

Despite the shoe banging, Khrushchev did create a chink in the iron curtain when he allowed the Bolshoi ballet to tour the United States and Canada in 1959. Their visit was much than more than an artistic event. It was a political landmark, a step towards détente. The Bolshoi's arrival was front-page news. Every performance was sold out and extra performances scheduled in Madison Square Garden. The Soviet dancers's every move were monitored not only by the "minders" sent to make sure they wouldn't defect but also by the American press corps who saw their every activity as newsworthy -- including visits to the zoo. (Slide: "Bolshoi Dancers Arrive to Open Eight Week Tour" *New York Times*, p.1, April 13, 1960)

Times had changed and so did the satire. In the 1963 film musical, *Bye Bye Birdie*, dancers from the "Moscow ballet" are so important they can bump America's most popular teen idol, Conrad Birdie (read Elvis Presley) from America's most popular television program, the Ed Sullivan show. Now the Russian's artistic director is a party *apparatchik* who keeps one eye on his dancers and the other on the Kremlin. Unfortunately Communist art is no match for Capitalist ingenuity. The teenage idol's managers slip an "upper" into the conductor's drink before show time, turning the *Rose Adagio* into the *Rose Prestissimo* while the ballet's enraged artistic director bangs his shoe in frustration. They get airtime for Birdie, but almost cause an international incident when the Russian Ambassador to the U.S. labels the incident "a capitalist plot". Here is the 1963 film version of the Broadway musical, released on the heels of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. (Excerpt *Bye Bye Birdie, 1963, dir: George Sidney, script: Irving Brecher*).

Bye Bye Birdie was a lighthearted satire, but there were serious reasons for the Soviets to keep an eye on their dancers. When Rudolph Nureyev defected in 1961, he became the first ballet "super star" in America since Pavlova. But more than that, he became a political symbol of courage and the desire for artistic freedom as did the others that followed in his wake, most prominently, Mikhail Baryshnikov in 1974.

Nureyev's defection triggered another change in the American perception of Russian ballet and ballet dancers that would grow throughout the sixties and into the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's. To illustrate this let's look at a performance by another American idol. Miss Piggy lives out the dreams of many young fans when Nureyev's fame was at its height. You'll note that in the Muppet's 1976 television production of *Swine Lake,* the Pavlova/Swan image is still a standard trope for ballet, but this satire is not directed so much at ballet itself. Rather it is the self-aggrandizing Miss Piggy is the target of the joke. Unlike Fannie Brice, Miss Piggy tries desperately to win the heart of her prince, but his preference is clearly for those ballerinas, he can more easily lift. (Excerpt from "Swine Lake" performed by Miss Piggy and Rudolph Nureyev on *The Muppet Show*, 1976, dir: Phillip Casson, Peter Harris)

The "simpering" male "toe dancer" image was changing too, helped greatly by Mikhail Baryshnikov, whose picture, captioned "American Idol" was put on the cover of *Time* in 1975. In the Hollywood movies *The Turning Point* (1977), *Dancers* (1987) and the political-spy thriller *White Nights* (1985) Baryshnikov's sexy, charmingly seductive, but none the less tough and powerful ballet dancer-characters turned the stereotype of the male ballet dancer on its head. Most recently in 2004 it was Baryshnikov who was chosen as Sarah Jessica Parker's last lover in one of television's most popular series *Sex in the City*. (Slide: Mikhail Baryshnikov on cover of *Time Magazine*, May 24,1975 and poster for film *White Nights*, (1977, dir: Taylor Hackford)

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, a new generation of Russian immigrants including a number of ballet dancers have begun new lives in America, but they face different problems than their predecessors in the first part of the century. The first wave of Russian immigrants made ballet a part of American life. To be sure, many of the tropes we've seen today are still active in the American imagination, but they no longer evoke so much laughter. Rather, performances by little American "Pavlovas" are more likely to be cherished as Kodak moments by teary-eyed parents or deconstructed by academics like me in conference papers like this one.

Endnotes

1 Immigration records can be found in the archives of Ellis Island, New York City. The following archives were consulted in the preparation of this paper; Margaret Herrick

Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Sam Goldwyn Archive), The Harvard Theatre Collection (George Balanchine Archive) Immigration Archives of Ellis Island, New York City, The Historical Archives of the New York Times, The Historical Archives of the Washington Post, Clipping files in the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts (Billy Rose Theatre Collection, Jerome Robbins Dance Collection)

Permeable Worlds in the Choreography of Santee Smith

Carol Anderson

Santee Smith's attunement to Mohawk tradition, life and culture impart a deep sense of acknowledgement and consciousness of connecting to the earth, inspiring her work with the energy and physicality of bridging from body to spirit. An Iroquois woman of the Turtle clan who lives on the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario, Santee Smith herself is the embodiment of intersecting worlds, and her choreography manifests this. She is a multidisciplinary artist, a dancer, choreographer and pottery designer; her parents are the famous pottery designers Leigh and Steve Smith of Talking Earth Pottery. She works with air and clay, with dancers' bodies and vessels, designing in space for expression of spiritual and ephemeral ideas.

Weaving worlds is the prerogative of dance. Santee Smith's dance weaves tradition, personal and professional experience. She makes art of integrity and breadth that moves fluidly among worlds of dance, Iroquois and ballet tradition, belief about cycles of generations, and conventions of theatre, dance, music and production. Beings and creatures walk through permeable parallel worlds, within the expressive instrument that is a dancer's body. Music for her work melds traditions. She conceives her work in what seems an essentially feminine way, drawing on her cultural traditions and personal artistic viewpoint and experience. My comments here will consider her background and her two major works to date, *Kaha:wi* and *Here on Earth.*

Santee started taking ballet classes at the age of 3 and at the age of 11 began to attend Canada's National Ballet School in downtown Toronto – where she remained for 6 years. Her aspiration, she says, was always to be a ballerina, and she idolized former prima ballerina Karen Kain. We spoke at the new National Ballet School building in Toronto, where Santee has an office and rehearses. When everyone exited the buildings during a fire alarm, we happened to walk by Karen Kain, wearing a suit, wearing the authority of now being artistic director of the National Ballet. Seeing these two extraordinary women cross paths, it struck me that Santee, who is the artistic director of her own recently-incorporated company, Kaha:wi Dance Theatre, has realized her aspirations uniquely, outside the institution, without having to wear a tutu – her dance is not etherealized, but an expression of body and spirit joined.

Though she became disenchanted with ballet and stopped dancing Santee acknowledges the significance of her early dance life, recalling exposure to art as a critical component of this elite educational curriculum – including watching many ballets on video, attendance at the opera, art galleries, and of course the National Ballet of Canada. The training and the discipline are of a high order. This specialized experience, steeped in and guided by Western ballet tradition, has been important to Santee; she says she wouldn't be doing what she's doing without the NBS background - her achievements in this elite training nourish her creative aspiration and achievement. She is in a rare position of understanding and embodying both native tradition and ballet tradition.

When she stopped her ballet training Santee stopped dancing entirely for seven years. "I was coming into the identity of who I was," she laughs, "and maybe I wasn't going to enjoy being a sugarplum fairy." She returned to dance with a desire to find a more contemporary mode of expression. In 1996, involved with an NFB film project, she began to develop ideas of incorporating qualities, symbolism, rhythm and music of her Iroqouian background.

The Aboriginal Dance Project was guided by Marrie Mumford, director of the Aboriginal Arts Program at The Banff Centre, and started in 1996. Directed by Alejandro Ronceria, this project – and the Chinook Winds company - brought together young people from many nations and traditions, learning traditional dance and exploring new ways of expression, and learning all aspects of production. A fundamental area of artistic investigation for the project was how to combine traditional esthetics, philosophy and spirituality and create new choreography while preserving indigenous form.

In an article titled "Dancing a Higher Truth", for *Chinook Winds*, a publication that followed the first Aboriginal Dance Project at the Banff Centre, participating dancer/choreographer Jerry Longboat wrote:

> Aboriginal dance is a spiritual expression through which we travel to the ancestral world. Dance is a doorway to powerful wisdom. Its motions express the ancestral memory in our bodies; it is the voice of all our relations. (Jerry Longboat, *Chinook Winds*)

Santee participated in the Project in 1997, 1999, 2000 and 2001. She danced the role of First Woman in *Bones*, the first Aboriginal opera, premiered at the Margaret Greenham Theatre at the Banff Centre in August, 2001. Santee considers these Banff experiences formative; another world she has embodied, and artists she met have been important to her in a continuing way – to mention two, Alejandro Ronceria and dancer/choreographer Raoul Trujillo have acted as mentors, and Trujillo performed in *Kaha:wi,* her first major work. The Banff Project gave her, she noted, a very positive working model. The importance of the creative process, with the intention of trying to make a strong process for everyone involved has served her well in designing her own creation/production initiatives.

The individuation of Santee's movement language has been characterized by change. It took her time to retrain her body, she recalls, when she came back to dance – and to get grounded, but she had body knowledge and traditional understanding as reservoirs from which to draw. Part of this change in alignment, in getting down into the earth instead of up into ethereal levity, vertical strength, line and extension, efforts of a ballet body, she understands as maturity as a dancer, of knowing one's body and feeling connected to one's energy. It's a whole other kinesphere, more circular, rhythmic, and grounded.

The movement language of her work is distinctive, at once sensuous, earthy, dignified, ecstatic; revealing the dancer's body as a gateway, a vessel, a signifier. Important to her is the expression, physical, emotional and spiritual connection, transforming body and shape.

She has investigated her own deep awareness of relationship to the ground – yet transmuting it through her choreographer's analytical consideration. The dancer's foot, the idea of connecting to the ground and to the rhythm of earth and the drum, whether through a drum beat or a heart beat step is very physical. In her creative process she has been trying to break this down and see it through others' bodies. It's a way, she observes, of moving that is simple but specific – "a circular energy, the energy that you put into the earth, comes into your body and back into the ground. In a lot of traditional dance there isn't a break or a hold, [the energy] keeps circling and rebounding off the earth." In her work the dancers are barefoot; traditionally they would have worn moccasins. She may be rehearsing in a 4th floor National Ballet School studio but there is a strong connection through the sole of the foot to the footprint of the building down through the ground – a symbolic relationship, characteristic of a kind of pure representation that gives her dance integrity.

> As a Haudenosaunee person I believe that song and dance were gifts given to us by the Creator, to celebrate our lives on Mother Earth. It is what we do, it is what we know, since first we heard our mother's heartbeat and her muffled voice, and moved along with the sway of her hips. Song and dance together are the ultimate expressions of who we are, it identifies and defines us, it links us to each other and to the Creator. (Santee Smith)

Kahawi: *She carries* premiered in June, 2004. Performances at Toronto's Premiere Dance Theatre were part of the work for her Master's degree. The evening-length work explores circles, Woodland floral designs, images of balance and duality in symbolic ways in dance and music. In conceiving and creating the work, Santee reflected Iroquoian concepts of the sacredness of nature, and ceremonies such as thanksgiving and the naming ceremony.

In the opening of *Kaha:wi,* Santee danced a solo she called *Life Force* – an exploration of pure being, energy, essence, spirit. Life Force is very contained spatially, imparting a sense of primal source and sound, wind, heartbeat, song blending. It is an invocation, giving a sense of preparing the ground, the stage and entrée to the work, in a respectful way. As is often true of her work, the dancer's body has a floating look – strong in the core, arms and legs extending, leaves and branches, like antennae, a sense of energy transfer suggested – a metaphoric place for the dancer, this suspension between worlds, rooted in one, sensing and reaching for another.

She emphasized breath. The quality of inner and outer, of circular movement expulsed by inner motion, characterizes Kaha:wi. Choreographically she cultivates the sense that all parts of the body are alive and energized. (Santee also has a degree in kinesiology, and so this knowledge is also in her personal background) The spatial dimension of her

work evolves out of expression. Her work has an organic energy, as if the dancing is unspooling from spontaneous expression. It is often ecstatic, and the dancers' faces are alive, smiling the transport of the dancer's whole joy of the body, of fierce absorption in rhythm and flow.

Traditional social dances appear – the Stick dance, Stomp dance, and Woman's Shuffle dance; sometimes this is called the massaging of the earth – connecting to Mother Earth. That, Santee notes, creates a female energy that travels through the body, with rhythmic feet and torsos swaying to the music. In a traditional ceremony, there may be 100 women dancing the shuffle and while every dancer connects in her own individualistic way there is always the idea of individuality with a real acknowledgement of the group.

Overall, in *Kaha:wi*, Santee worked on group dynamic, breathing, stomping, to try to get unity and freedom, to convey individuality and wholeness in every moment. When all the dancers, men and women, are together they move with serpentine traveling steps, spiraling downward, their patterns suggesting flocks of birds, blowing leaves, distilled, organic shape. Sections of the work are long, allowing an experience of changing time, alteration through immersion. The ensemble gives, not a ballet-minded impression of perfect symmetry, but a message of ritual and community, harmony and wholeness.

Kaha:wi's score, developed over 4 years, shows a determination to stay rooted in tradition newly cast for contemporary expression. The songs of the *Kahawi* score, commissioned by Santee from Iroquoian musicians – traditionally there is song, drum and rattle – have been expanded by musical arranger Donald Quan. The score has a world-music sound – including oudo, cello, piano, and other instruments – but the base is traditional, stylistically strong in Iroquois tradition.

"Kaha:wi" was Santee's grandmother's name and is also her daughter's, passed on in a naming ceremony, so for Santee Smith at one level the work is a personal acknowledgment of four generations. It expresses a traditional, belief in cycles of generations and the importance of future generations.

Santee wanted to emphasize the importance of female lineage and connection to the earth in Iroquois culture. Traditional roles for women were to take care of the earth, to plant the seeds - corn, beans, squash - to take care of babies and provide for families, to take care of food - realms of nourishment, transformation, cycles.

Santee also acknowledges the importance of the moon – its association with menstrual cycles and their effect on women, with planting at certain moon phases, with the birthing of babies – the pull of Grandmother Moon on the natural world. "I believe our ancestors watch over us." says SS. The duet she created, in which the grandmother passes from life to death, breath symbolically taken from her, has a beautiful dignity. She presides, watching over her granddaughter's birth, and near the end of *Kaha:wi* performs a duet with the young girl, completing a cycle. In the final image of the work, ancestors walk among living generations; an image at once of spirit connection and exquisite theatrical essence. *Here on Earth* Santee Smith visualized about 15 years before its presentation in the fall of 2005.

> Moving through shape and form the dancers unite in ritual expression inhabiting the land of the spirits: animal, plant and human. The content of the new work is drawn from the Iroquoian Creation Story with the existence of the Sky World and the Water World/Turtle Island. The work embraces the belief that humans were originally Sky Dwellers who dream their existence on earth; for a moment spirit, earth, sky and dream are captured in image, shape and sound…

Santee Smith took this story – and in a larger way, the storytelling tradition – and created the evocative image that bookends *Here on Earth*. Four creatures (sitting on four sculptural "towers") float seemingly in mid-air. They are iconic and strong, creatures of air and spirit. When they descend from the Sky World to the earth, the symbolic medium in which they move changes, as does their movement.

This fluid and practical mythology and transformation – with the dancer as the vessel of human spirit - seems characteristic of the traditions at the core of Santee Smith's art and philosophy – blending theatre, ritual and ceremony. She carries; she also weaves with ease among the realms of being and believing that are the fabric of her art – a tapestry of deerskin and gold, wind and flesh, image and animal, like a breeze silvering a grove of aspen trees.

Near the beginning of *Here on Earth*, when the sky creatures land and become part of earth, Santee's

choreographic aim was to find an organic expression: "The way the mouth opens," she says, "the energy of the bird, the breath becomes important. It's not about putting on the movement, it's trying to feel those shapes and let them come out."

Each character goes through a transformation to deer, eagle, or in the human character danced by Santee, to a further level of awareness. It was difficult for the dancers, she noted, to find and stay with the inner awareness:

> *Here on Earth* was not about what it looked like – though that played an important part – the initial part was that expression, trying to reach different realms physically emotionally and spiritually. Making connections and playing with the energy of transforming your body and your shape – the real physical form was not the goal – the goal was to be able to dive into the spirit of the piece.

Looking deeper, working with dancers, she encourages them to be as open as possible, to tap into inner energy - a mutable line between spectacle and ceremony, crossed back and forth many times within the crucible of performance. Her aim becomes inner practice – dancers are encouraged not to censor, to allow pure expression. She tells them the outlines of the story she is working with, uses photographs, speaks about ceremony and the agency of physical challenges. She cites the Sundance ceremony, where the men pierce themselves and dance past the point of physical exhaustion to transform to a different realm.

Two couples dance in *Here on Earth*. In Act 1 they are beings in a state of instinctual harmony and innate respectfulness. In Act 2 they are conflicted, and dressed in contemporary clothing. People become dysfunctional, Santee Smith muses, when not acknowledging the natural world. Reflecting this, one couple manifests disharmony and disconnection while the other tries to embrace a more basic rhythm. Santee explains an underlying idea; though native culture embraces awareness of spirit realms and respect for the earth, keeping those strong in everyday life is challenging and there are stresses and disconnections.

At the conclusion of *Here on Earth*, the dysfunctional couple make a desperate leap from the towers, flailing and grasping for air. While the woman (danced by Santee Smith) comes into harmony with the other man and woman, the final dancer has difficulty – the group tries to take him in, he tries to make the connection.

Santee weaves multiple worlds of cultural and individual understanding in her work; the dance becomes membrane of being, attains a spirit dimension. Santee's worlds are varied, united in the expressive integrity of the dancer's body, the choreographer's unfolding vision, respect for tradition and dynamic artistic curiosity.

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The Role of Institutions in the Propagation of Ballet Technique

Anna Paskevska

Dance is mostly judged through the choreographic lens. This is not really surprising since performance is the public demonstration of originality, creativity and competence. What remains hidden is the process that nurtures dancers and provides choreographers with the means for unfettered expression. This paper while exploring the role institutions play in the transformation of a singular approach into an accepted technique examines the contribution of two masters, Enricco Cechetti and Nicolai Legat. I also address briefly the consequences arising from two contrasting initial modes of training: the adherence to a systematic method based on a syllabus and the open studio which does not address developmental issues. I limit my remarks to Ballet organizations such as companies or professional training schools.

Institutions have the means to implement a training program that serves the specific aesthetic they have espoused, whether following the inclination of a founding artistic director or the declared goals of a consortium or committee or board, or even through a more organic process when the technique has had a considerable time to evolve in institutions that are large enough to countenance unorthodoxy. Before I begin citing a few of examples of successful developments of training programs that follow one of the patterns above we will take a brief look at the necessary steps in implementing a program.

There are several factors inherent in the adoption of a specific style and its transformation into a technique. There must be an investment of energy into:

1/ parsing the practice and recognizing certain characteristic, distinguishing features that serve either broadly or narrowly the aesthetic.

2/ Designing a syllabus to ensure the uniform training of dancers.

3/ Institutional investment in the adoption of the syllabus.

4/ Time span necessary to inure the program and assess the effectiveness of the choices.

From a purist position, technique and style carry very different meanings. Technical training can be defined as serving the dancer in the acquisition of skills that will endow him or her with the proficiency to execute with ease and beauty a vocabulary of motions. Thus, technique implies a training process that leads to the demonstration of acquired skills. The body, as the medium of the dancer, is honed and shaped as the vocabulary of training is learned and perfected. These skills, once mastered, can be used in a variety of stylized ways. From this perspective style becomes an esthetic choice and can be narrowly defined as expressive of the choreographic vision or even more broadly, of a cultural bias. The factors above can be seen at work wherever there is investment by the state or endowment from the private sector to ensure stability. This stipulation explains to a certain degree why there is no consensus on training methods in the U.S. except in discrete instances.

Russia

Following the model of dance training in Europe, by the late 19th century, Russia achieved an unprecedented level of technical excellence. The melding of the French, Danish and Italian styles, combined with the expressiveness of the upper body that characterized the Russian contribution, produced a technique that could claim singularity as "Russian". The technical strides were supported by the standards established to ensure quality a highly selective process of admission into the school and a rigorous training regimen. Yet, within the aesthetic conformity the Russian teachers following in the footsteps of Petipa, Johansson and later Cechetti, formed their own allegiances. For example, Preobrajenskaya claimed to have been very influenced by Cechetti while Legat adopted the precepts of the Danish School as expounded by Johansson. Thus, the choreographic aesthetic base served the Imperial taste, but training ranged across a wide spectrum of teaching styles that could nevertheless be generalized into a common goal.

Under the Soviet rule, ballet underwent its own revolution. Vaganova was entrusted with the realignment of the Imperial sensibilities to the ideology of the Soviet State. The selection process did not change but the style had to take into account the Soviet vision that extolled heroic deeds and train dancers who could powerfully express that idealism. As a result, especially in Moscow, some of the subtleties of the old School were no longer relevant. In other words, the new aesthetic retained features of the

training tenets developed in the years preceding the Russian Revolution and subtracted those features that no longer served the choreographic aesthetic.

England

In England in the 1920s and 30s, institutions were being formed that would influence the development of the art form in profound ways. The Royal Academy of Dancing seeking a more methodical preparation for teachers established a committee to oversee the development of a curriculum for training dancers. This committee was comprised of five people,Adeline Genée (Danish School), Edouard Espinosa (French School), Tamara Karsavina (Russian School), Phyllis Bedells (English, studied with Bolm, Cecchetti and Pavlova) and Philip Richardson (dance critic) (Paskevska, 2005: 20). They agreed on terminology, devised a syllabus and an evaluation standard as well as a "comprehensive teacher's training course, a graded syllabus, and held yearly examinations for both teachers and students." (Lee, 1999: 281).

From another perspective, Ninette de Valois recognized the need for a unified philosophy to guide the training of young dancers and turned to the curriculum devised by the Cecchetti Society under the guidance of the Master. At that time Ninette de Valois had a clear choice between Cecchetti based curriculum or working with Legat. Her choice was based, as legend has it, on the fact that she did not like Legat's wife, who undoubtedly could be a rather difficult person. The British Ballet developed its own style, based on the principles Cecchetti embraced, and the technique is characterized by the clarity and cleanliness of its line. This adoption also ensured that the Cecchetti method would be promulgated in schools in England and the Commonwealth.

USA

In the U.S. we have at least one example of adoption of a training program arising out of a personal vision. Balanchine used the Russian technique to develop a style that served narrowly his aesthetic. While he initially staffed the School of American Ballet with Russian teachers, increasingly New York City Ballet dancers were employed in the school. They could not but define the training program from the perspective of their own experience grounded in Balanchine's precepts of the craft. Were Legat alive today I am sure he would embrace the somatic techniques for the insights they can bring to the understanding of the choreographic aesthetic. Thus the technique evolved along a path decidedly different from the one taken by the Soviet School.

With the exception of the RAD, where the focus was always on dance education, the examples above point to a variety of allegiances that drive the need to institutionalize training methods: filling a cultural niche as with the Royal Ballet, adapting to a national aesthetic advanced by the state as in Russia both under the Tsars and under Soviet rule, or serving a singular choreographic vision as with Balanchine. The common link in these examples is the recognition of the need to establish a structure of studies that ensures a standard of performance commensurate with the ultimate goals of the institution.

I have chosen Legat and Cecchetti to illustrate this process because they provide us with enough distance to judge how well their legacy has fared. I dwell on Legat at greater length since he is the less known.

Legat

Legat was a product of the Classical Period in Russia. He succeeded Petipa as 1st ballet master in 1903 and taught the Class of Perfection following in the footsteps of his teacher Christian Johansson. During that period he taught among others, Nijinsky, Fokine, Bolm, Oboukhoff and Vaganova. Leaving Russia in 1922, like many of his compatriots, he adapted, however reluctantly, to working in the open studio mode. He taught in Paris for a short while, and then was Ballet Master for the Diaghilev Ballets Russes before settling in London where a generation of English dancers studied with him. Among them, Anton Dolin, Alicia Markova, Michael Somes, Alan Carter, John and Barbara Gregory and my teacher Cleo Nordi. Legat's teaching was grounded in the physicality of the dancer; he adapted corrections to each individual physique applying anatomical principles while honoring the precepts of classicism that were defined by Petipa and Johansson. Moreover, he extended and enlivened the classical concepts of line, attack, and meaning through his understanding of dynamics and coordination. He used the classical tenets to inform the relationship created between the dancer's physicality and the body in motion and the benefits of moving from an anatomically aligned base.

My personal knowledge of the Legat System comes from Cleo Nordi who studied with him in

Moscow as a young dancer and again in London. Nordi taught from notes she had recorded while studying with Legat. Far from slowing her down, as teaching from notations can do, the notes provided a scaffold for a logical and dynamic class. I can echo Maria Zybina's words: "I had been trained by several eminent teachers on the continent and enjoyed their classes at which we all worked until we were exhausted. However, this was something different, here with Legat we felt refreshed after finishing a lesson." (Eglevsky, 1977: 32).

Alexandra Danilova commented: "We dancers always know when we have had "a good class"- when we want more! With Mr. Legat I always wanted more." (ibid.: ix) Similarly, after a class with Nordi, instead of feeling exhausted I felt invigorated, ready to do it all over again.

In the testimonials to Legat, from which the above quotes are taken, some of his pupils remark on the perfect balance that Legat achieved in his classes, never overworking a specific muscle group. Several comment on his elegant use of épaulement, which included a spiraling action of the upper body in order to achieve a perfect coordination of limbs that ensured equilibrium.

For me that is the central feature of his teaching, little understood and therefore not taught. Vaganova, for example, makes no mention of the spiraling torso in her discussion of the croisé and effacé poses (Vaganova, 1969: 21) nor does the Cecchetti Method which explains épaulement in a short paragraph, identifying the positions as shifting the whole body to orient to a different front. (Beaumont, 1922: 30). Another feature of the Legat system is the open hipped arabesque, adopted by Balanchine, this contrasts with the Cecchetti squared pelvis favored by the English School.

Although some efforts have been made to somewhat codify Legat's legacy, notably by the Legat Foundation in London founded by John Gregory, the teaching itself is very much open to interpretation and misinterpretation. His grand daughter Tatiana Legat while teaching under the aegis of the Foundation is a product of the Soviet School. As Barbara Gregory comments in a letter addressed to me in 2002: "Tatiana is more Vaganova than her grandfather." In this she can be hardly faulted as she never knew her grandfather. Another grand daughter, Mimi Legat, was taught by Nadine Nicolaeva, Legat's wife. I also studied with Mme Legat in Tunbridge Wells, and based on my later experience in Nordi's class concur with the opinion of Alan Carter: "She was energetic and by no means without ability and knowledge, but her mind was not classic. Truly she taught some of the master's trick of the trade, but, as I thought, in exaggerated forms, .." (Eglevsky, 1977:19)

Cecchetti

Cecchetti's training, through his teacher Lepri, was firmly grounded in the pedagogy of Carlo Blasis (1797-1878) and the precepts of the Romantic Era. He became a creative and dynamic teacher much sought after in Europe and Russia. Appointed 2nd ballet master at the Marynsky in 1890 he remained in Russia for the next ten years. Subsequently he was ballet master for the Diaghilev Ballets Russes and taught in London before returning to Italy.

The dancers trained at La Scala in Milan were known for their strength, speed and the ability to turn using the head to spot. These secrets Cecchetti shared with the Russian dancers for the ten years of his employment in St Petersburg. The Russians melded features of his teachings into the already proven methods developed at the Imperial Ballet. But in England his method inspired the formation of the Cecchetti Society, dedicated to ensuring that the teachings of the master would continue to be applied and remain true to his intention. The Syllabus, developed by Cyril Beaumont and Stanislas Idzikowski, is still taught throughout the United Kingdom and the United Stated, comprises several graduations of levels marked by examinations designed to gauge the competence and understanding of the students. The Syllabys, as mentioned earlier, was adopted by Ninette de Valois as the base for the technical training at the then Sadler's Wells School.

Conclusion

Both Cecchetti and Legat developed their styles of teaching within institutions that espoused a specific aesthetic and were supported by a curricular structure. Within that structure designated teachers brought the students to an advanced level within a specified number of years, at which point the students graduated to the class of the Master. By contrast, in the West, both masters, as was the case with many émigrés, were thrust into an essentially unfamiliar teaching situation: the open studio where they taught a motley assortment of proficiencies and talents. The strict hierarchical nature of their own training years was replaced by a need to serve a shifting population of students who came and went at will.

Cecchetti was fortunate in inspiring the formulation of a syllabus that institutionalized his method and provided a vehicle for training young dancers. He was delighted with and fully endorsed the presentation of his method by Beaumont and Idzikowski which served as foundation for a fully developed syllabus. On the other hand, Legat's teaching did not produce a syllabus that would help to formulate a curriculum, it failed to be institutionalized, and as a result many of the features of the technique, although remembered and appreciated by a few people, are no longer overtly part of the vocabulary of classical ballet.

The willingness to engage in the process of parsing, designing and adopting a syllabus while demonstrated in England through the work of the RAD and the British Ballet, has not been a priority in the US. No consensus, except in the narrowest sense of individual entities, has been reached here. In this land of émigrés, teachers who had been trained in a systematic manner were forced to adapt to new circumstances in the competitive arena of the open studio. Individual interpretations emerged as teachers were free to teach from the base of their own bias, without needing to conform to an institutionalized format. What they gained in individual freedom was counterbalanced by the loss of a systematic structure that previously may have supported their teaching.

Typically, in America the process of the institutionalization of technique continues to be more diffuse with a dizzying array of systems and allegiances. I suggest a couple of factors to explain this situation. First, many of today's teachers have a legacy of the open studio tradition. It is left up to their abilities and understanding to reconstruct a suitable progression of training for young students. Secondly, dance departments at universities have largely failed to address basic technical issues such as the pacing of elementary instruction and suitability of material. As a consequence, many teachers are vulnerable to inapplicable or inappropriate methods.

Maybe the freedom to follow one's individual inclination is too ingrained in the American psyche to countenance a single method to predominate in this vast land. There are innumerable examples of gifted teachers who have nevertheless failed to leave the legacy of an accepted technique named after them. The missing link in this evolution is the endorsement of an institution devoted to the promotion of their insights. I believe, or rather hope, that we are on the threshold of admitting these issues since today, as never before, the classical aesthetic is buffeted on all sides; both from within, through extraordinary technical demands, and without by emerging alternative training methods.

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René Blum and the Rebirth of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo

Judith Chazin-Bennahum

Please understand that this presentation will not cut a broad swathe across the complex divagations of the Blum/de Basil Ballets Russes. Rather it will magnify the early career of René Blum and tell the story of Blum's part in the re-naissance of the Ballets Russes.

I want to begin with some reflections that come to mind when discussing René Blum. First why study René when many books and articles on the Ballets Russes refer to him as a charming, elegant person with good taste and a kind heart, and that's about it? History has indeed forgotten him. In addition, he carefully avoided any connection to his prodigiously important brother, Léon Blum, first Jewish and the first Socialist Prime Minister of France; creator of the 40 hour work week, the paid month-long vacation and the old age pension. Second, Blum took over closely on the heels of Diaghilev, and "recreated the Ballets Russes," without the remarkable panache but certainly much of the creative genius. Thus, between his brother Léon and his mentor Diaghilev, one might say that René was overshadowed all his life.

Born in 1878, Blum came from Orthodox Jewish parents whose families arrived in Paris from Alsace before the 1848 Revolution; his father prospered selling silk ribbons, while his mother loved literature and taught her sons about the importance of social justice. His grandmother had supported the Commune in 1870 and owned a bookstore.

He and his brothers were hardly religious, enjoying the pleasures of wealth and convivial relationships with "tout Paris." One is hard put to find out how René earned a living before he went to Monte Carlo in 1924, and in speaking with the few living relatives who knew him, it becomes immediately evident that he didn't, that he was paid here and there by various journals, but that the three brothers who went into their father Auguste's *soieries* business were the breadwinners for the artistically inclined *bon vivants,* Léon and René.

Let me offer a very brief sketch of René's exceptionally varied and influential career before he went to Monte Carlo in 1924, gathering experiences that perfectly prepared and poised him to become a producer with impeccable taste, a "successor to Diaghilev."

In the 1890s, the defining event of the less than Belle Époque, was the Dreyfus Affair. A passionate outspoken writer and Dreyfusard, (for Dreyfus), Anatole France became a close friend of the Blum family and when René began writing plays, he took the *nom de plume* of a famous Anatole France character, Monsieur Bergeret. Léon Blum also wrote profusely about the Dreyfus Affair as he excelled as a brilliant polemicist as well as an insightful literary and theatre critic. As a lawyer, Léon assisted Emile Zola's attorney during the "J'accuse" scandal. Six years younger, René tagged along beside him, especially when Léon was writing for the important journal, *Revue Blanche*. In those offices René was introduced to Mallarmé, Gide, and most of the Symbolist poets. Claude Debussy was its resident music critic. Soon after *Revue Blanche* closed its doors in 1903, René became a theatre editor for *Gil Blas*, another prominent Parisian publication, known for its brilliant and witty columns. His brother Léon took over as a regular reviewer of books for *Gil Blas* and also for *Comoedia*. At this time, René Blum became President of the first cinema club in France *Le Club du Septième Art,* and his interest in making and showing films never wavered. He wrote the prologue for the *Salon de la Section d'Or*, le 10-30 Octobre 1912, one of the first exhibitions of Cubist paintings that included works by Archipenko, Juan Gris, Fernand Leger, Francis Picabia, de Segonzac, and Duchamp"s remarkable *Nude descending a staircase*. There was no problem when looking for designers for his ballet company.

As a young man, quiet and introspective, René was called *le Blumet* and *l'infortunio*—affectionate appellations that refer to his rather melancholic personality. He spent his summers by the sea in Brittany and Normandy in charming villages with painter friends such as Edouard Vuillard and Pierre Bonnard and poets and writers such as Romain Coolus, Catule Mendès, Tristan Bernard and Philippe Berthelot. He was also a very close friend of Jacques Bizet, Georges Bizet's son. Then a fascinating incident took place. In 1913, Marcel Proust was unable to find a publisher for the first book in his *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, and wrote a letter entreating René to introduce him to Bernard Grasset, a

publisher friend of René's. The 650 page book, *Du côté de Chez Swann,* soon appeared. At the age of 35 when WW I broke out, Blum volunteered, and then found the ravages of war almost unbearable. Several letters in the Richelieu *département des manuscripts* attest to his horror of the dead and wounded. Fluent in English and German, he won the Croix de Guerre for bravery under fire, as he saved the treasures and artifacts from various churches during the battles of WW I. It seems a ghastly twist of fate when he is arrested by the French Vichy army as well as the German police, and subsequently murdered at Auschwitz. His picture in a German prison camp in 1918 found in a photo album of his great niece Francine Hyafil, has never been seen before. After the war, he continued to work for the arts, to gravitate to publishers who produced art books and to promote the so-called decorative arts, a new field, contributing to the astounding Paris exposition on *Les Arts Décoratifs* in 1925.

René's affinity for theatre eventually led him to accept a position in Monte Carlo at the Théâtre de Monte Carlo. Like many of the cities on the Côte d'Azur, Monte Carlo and its theatre spills serenely down a hill overlooking the sparkling Mediterranean Sea. Despite the blight and dismal circumstances facing France after WWI and the subsequent Depression, Monte Carlo lived suspended, outside those deep scars and went about its business of entertaining the internationally wealthy with its gambling casino and its continuous theatrical enterprises.

In the late 19th century, Princess Alice who was the Jewish widow of the Duc de Richelieu, married Albert Ist of Monaco, with a large coterie of aristocratic gossips and art lovers. She was the daughter of Michel Heine, the poet Heinrich Heine's nephew and a native of New Orleans. She engaged another Jew in 1892 Raoul Gunsbourg to take over the full-time direction of the Salle Garnier, the Théâtre de Monte Carlo.

Gunsbourg's regime would last for 60 years. The Russian nobility stayed on the Mediterranean and in Monte Carlo for 2 or 3 months every winter. The Tsar Nicolas II was delighted that Gunsbourg arranged for Caruso to sing in St Petersburg where Gunsbourg had been an impresario over the years. In 1910, Gunsbourg attended the season of the Ballet Russe in Paris and found Tamara Karsavina gorgeous and graceful, while Nijinsky astonished him with his "electrifying entrechats." Gunsbourg offered Diaghilev a contract for 8,000 gold francs. At the Maryinsky in St. Petersburg trouble was brewing. *Giselle*, an established favorite, was chosen for a gala performance for the Imperial company when it visited Paris. Nijinsky went on stage in the close-fitting white silk tights and black velvet gilet but without the small slip obligatory for all male dancers at the Maryinsky. The Dowager Empress took one scandalized look and swept from her box, followed by the Czar's young daughters, Olga and Tatiana.

There is no question that Blum knew and admired Serge Diaghilev, as his statements to the press attest to. In an article in *Comoedia*, April 2, 1936, Blum explains that, "I must tell you that in the 7 years that I knew Diaghilev extremely well, I realized that he was an exceptional leader, a great artist and the creator to whom we owe the resurrection of dance in the Theatre de Monte Carlo. Most importantly, he taught me about the enormous resources of modern ballet, that eclectic and total art which synthesizes harmoniously dance, music, poetry, architecture and painting. I recall that one day he invited me to become his collaborator, an invitation that made me very proud."

When Diaghilev died in August 1929, the artistic administrator of the Monte Carlo theatres, René Leon, contracted René Blum to produce seasons of "les grandes manifestions d'art." "Grigorieff was chosen as the corps de ballet master with 30 dancers from the troupe of Diaghillev and he was asked to mount the ballets in the operas of Monte Carlo. Grigorieff was promised 234,000 francs for the 3 years." Most of the dancers for the company came from this core group. By the time Blum created the new Blum/de Basil company, he was being paid for all the different hats he wore nearly 750,000 francs which at the time was worth $50,000 a year. This was not an inconsiderable salary.

In fulfillment of the unexpired Diaghilev contract, for a time Blum booked such itinerant ballet groups as Boris Kniasev's Lithuanian Ballet, Uday Shankar, Vicente Escudero, and the Sakharoffs. Then in October 1931, he organized his own Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo bringing in The Colonel de Basil, the former Vassily Girgorievitch Voskresensky, and writing to Balanchine, Massine, Kochno and Lifar, the lynchpins of Diaghilev's company. Nijinska came soon after.

On one of our trips to Paris we discovered that the Mogador Theatre where Balanchine rehearsed and presented *Orphée Aux Enfers* in December 1931 is located one block from René Blum's office on the

Chaussée d'Antin and 5 blocks from the Garnier Paris Opera. Since Blum ran back to Paris all the time, not only for his family, but also for artistic and business reasons, there is no doubt that Blum met Balanchine and saw the beautiful young ballerinas in "Orphée" at the Mogador studio. Balanchine received fabulous reviews for his ballets and the whole production was a tremendous success. Commenting on her participation in *Orphée aux Enfers*, Tamara Finch or Tchinarova wrote that "Balanchine had selected 6 girls from the studio of Olga Preobrajenska. We could all, more or less, turn well. Baronova had a solo piece in the "nymphs" ballet, where she came forward and did 32 fouettés that brought the house down. (Letter to author November 7, 2000). At the time, Balanchine was living with Danilova in an apartment in Paris and when she asked if he would take her with him to the Ballets Russes, Balanchine told her she was too old. She was 27 years old (Taper 136).

The young and brilliant Balanchine took over as the first Maître de Ballet for the new company. For the Monte Carlo season from April 12th to May 8, 1932, he created 4 ballets; *Cotillon* April 12, 1932, *La Concurrence*, April 12, 1932 *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* May 3, 1932, and *Suites de Danse* May 5, 1932. And from Paris he brought two of the soon-to-become baby ballerinas—Irina Baronova and Tamara Toumanova, both from the classroom of Olga Preobrajenska, along with her other student, Tatiana Riabouchnska the 3rd baby ballerina. Having seen George Balanchine's splashy choreography for "Orphée," Blum in addition hired him to choreograph all the opera ballets of the Monte Carlo season starting on January 21, 1932 with *Tannhauser*, and continuing with no less than 17 others. The season lasted until March 31st, and must have exhausted him as he was rehearsing for the major ballet season at the same time. In the souvenir program of the first season in 1932, all the choreographers, dancers and musicians honored Blum with swift but poignant *éloges*. Balanchine wrote "A souvenir of our first collaboration and the hope that it will last forever." Something that I had not known was that Balanchine also created incidental dances for Blum's play *Les Amours du Poète* that he wrote with Georges Delaquys with accompanying music by Schumann. The drama was based on the unrequited love of the poet Heinrich Heine for his cousin Amélie.

Along with Balanchine, the choice of adding Massine's name to the roster, according to Sorely Walker, was inevitable:

> The appointment of Massine was a natural one. Massine at this time was in possession of the costumes and decors of a number of Diaghilev ballets. (Massine himself put it at 55, although this seems rather many). They had been acquired with the help of Diaghilev's lawyer, Maître Aaron, in 1930 when Raymond Goetz, the American theatrical agent, intended to back Massine in an American Ballets Russes, a plan that came to nothing because of the Wall Street.crash. Massine also possessed notated records of his choreographies, and had an important name as a choreographer and as a star performer, unlike Balanchine who because of a knee injury was no longer dancing. Certainly if Blum and de Basil wanted a widely based repertoire which could draw on many Diaghilev revivals, Massine was the man for them. (21)

Massine's career in New York had its ups and downs, although money poured in pretty steadily. (Hurok 106) From 1928 to 1931, he staged weekly ballet programs at the Roxy Theatre including a full length *Scheherazade*, with 4 performances daily, with Massine acting as choreographer and lead dancer. In 1930, he staged Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, for 4 performances in Philadelphia and 2 at the Met Opera House with the collaboration of Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and with Martha Graham making one of her rare appearances in ballet, in the leading role. Hearing from Blum about the new venture, he quickly took up work in Monte Carlo in 1932. There his success was based on his drive and hard work coupled with his marvelous dancing, especially a flair for comedy, as in Le Beau Danube and La Boutique fantasque.

From the very beginning of their relationship, de Basil boldly took advantage of Blum and ignored his position in their financial partnership. Most perniciously de Basil decided to ignore contractual arrangements with Blum and the Monte Carlo Société de Bains de Mer which owned the theatre and the Casino. De Basil purposely left out their names from posters, and vital sources of publicity and programs when away from Monte Carlo, beginning in early 1933. Almost immediately Blum realized the mistake he made in choosing to work with him. In correspondence found in the archives of Monte Carlo, there is a legal document dated July 7, 1933 sent by Blum saying that de Basil must legally comply with

their original contract. Unfortunately, did not come to pass. Another misery for Blum occurred when de Basil's successful trip to the US in 1934 extended too long, and he sent but a small group for the Monte Carlo season. Blum was obliged to hire other dancers to be directed by the resourceful Bronislava Nijinska. This was the beginning of the end for de Basil and Blum.

Though Massine created several works for the opening season, it was Balanchine's choreography that stunned and excited the ballet world.

Cotillon,was given a preview on January 17, 1932 at the celebration of Prince Louis II of Monaco, for the Fête Nationale de la Principauté de Monaco with Balanchine in the lead male role, later taken by David Lichine. The ballet opened officially April 12, 1932 and featured a stunning marbleized décor, trimmed in red, white and gold, along with stunning costumes by Christian Bérard assisted by Karinska, and a fascinating libretto by Boris Kochno. Briefly, "amid the program of festivities at a cotillion, Fate appears in the guise of a vampire wearing black gloves. A Young girl telling fortunes is rebuffed by the Mistress of Ceremonies and runs off, but reappears to lead the Grand Rond in which she pirouettes around the ballroom by herself, until the guests join her spinning and the curtain falls" (Reynolds 109). Irving Deakin wistfully recalled that, "It is, in a way, a little masterpiece of sophistication, with a youthfulness about it, and a nostalgia that alternates with gaiety, all in the mood of the brittle brilliant music" (143). A. V. Coton speaks of its decadence mirroring the world of the 1930s: "The aura of the fatal ballroom, the loveliness of corruption, the sense of sweet sin implicit in every move and gesture is the triumph of atmosphere" (Sorley Walker 9) Both *Cotillon* and *La Concurrence* provided Toumanova with climaxes in which to do her multiple fouettés.

La Concurrence also premiered April 12, 1932 to a score by Georges Auric, commissioned by Blum and costumes and scenery by André Derain. "The Theme is fashion and human vanity. Two rival tailors, both selling fashionable apparel in an imaginary town, vie for the attention of eager shoppers. The tailors begin to quarrel, and the customers are drawn into the commotion. Citizens of the town intervene and disperse the crowd; the two tailors find themselves alone with their profits, are pleased and become reconciled" (Reynolds 110). According to Sorley Walker, "The highlight of the ballet was Woizikovsky's brilliant solo as a flea-bitten hobo" (12). And added that Mr. Balanchine often included mysterious events in his finales, "At the end it introduced a totally different mood for no reason at all. A girl came on and sort of drifted around the stage, and she hadn't anything to do with the rest of it. It was a strange sort of Balanchine-esque sort of thing" (Part I 64). Pierre Michaut in his *Histoire du Ballet* valued Mr. Balanchine's philosophical side saying that, "One finds at the end of *Concurrence* and in certain episodes of *Cotillon* a kind of profound vision with a true poetry, a mysterious appeal that offers the dream keen impressions" (98).

The other important premiere in the 1932 spring season was Massine's *Jeux d'Enfants*. Though a "bluette" of a piece, P.W. Manchester was charmed by Bizet's music set to children's rhymes, and Joan Miro's luminous decor which she said looked so bright, "as if it were still a little bit wet from the fresh paint" (Part I 77). The story describes a child in her nursery who is surrounded by toys that come to life. She added that the chorography, with child-like movements for Riabouchinska, was quite simple. Baronova spun as the Top that you wound up, and all of a sudden the fouetté popped out when you pulled the string. Lichine, plays the Traveler who went round the world, captivates the little girl in the nursery." (Ibid)

In a way, the programming for this first season in 1932 could not have been more brilliantly conceived, as it offered a broad spectrum of artistic strategies, both musically and in movement styles. Meditating on the type of ballet that this company produced, one might say that their conceits were based on theatrical illusion, and strong characterizations, rather than on expanding technique, although the baby ballerinas were phenomenal technicians. For example, the men startled their audiences in 1933 in Massine's *Choreartium* when 16 male dancers did double tours en l'air in the Fourth Movement and one of them, Borovansky, did a double tour en l'air to the knee. Eglevsky, who was 16 at the time, did 12 pirouettes slowly in *Les Présages*, to the amazement of the populace, and then he came back and did it again" (Manchester Part II 66).

For this maiden voyage of the Ballets Russes 1n 1932, several outstanding Fokine works were revived: *Petrouchka*, *Danses Polovtsiennes du Prince Igor*, and *Les Sylphides*. These pieces represented the continuation of the initial triumphs of Diaghilev. In addition, Three ballets by Boris Romanoff enlarged

the repertoire with *Chout* or *Le Bouffon*, *Pulcinella* and *L'Amour Sorcier*.

The breadth and glory of the opening season validated Blum's highest hopes. What would have happened if it had been de Basil who left the company after the first season rather than Balanchine? Soon the shadows that were cast upon Europe's destiny in the 1930s paralleled Blum's gradual demise, though he sustained a series of companies in Monte Carlo and on tour until the United States entered the war in 1941. P. W. Manchester knew the grandeur of Blum's vision and said, "There never was an artistic director that Blum was, had the war not intervened" (Part I 76).

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Who's That Girl: Gendered Images in the Mirrors of *Center Stage*

Clare Croft

The 2000 film *Center Stage*, directed by Nicholas Hytner, uses dance, particularly the pre-professional ballet classroom, to develop its characters. The camera does not train its eye on the actual dancers in these studios, but rather on the seemingly ever-prevalent mirrors that reflect their dancing bodies. The fictional movie, set in New York City at the American Ballet Academy (ABA) and filmed primarily at the School of American Ballet, follows six teenagers in their final year of pre-professional training. Throughout the movie, students ascertain their physical and artistic progress via scrutiny of their mirrored images. This paper explicates how the relationship among mirrors, the camera and the young dancing bodies show both literal and figurative mirrors to have a gendering function. When the film's young women look into the studio's mirrors, unlike their male counterparts, they see an image less talented than their actual selves.

When the young dancers watch professional dancers onstage or in the studio, they see what they hope to become, their ego ideal, using the terms of Lacan's mirror stage. Again the gaze is gendered. Both the movie's female characters and the film's audience, composed of many young female dance students who were directly targeted by the film's marketing, face a similar dilemma. They must simultaneously recognize the potentially negative impact of the ballet institution on their psyches and bodies, while not relinquishing their dreams of life as a professional dancer.

Two classroom scenes, approximately twenty-five minutes into the movie, disclose the difficulties faced by the young dancers, particularly the main character, Jodi Sawyer (San Francisco corps ballet member Amanda Schull). First, in an all girls' technique class, Jodi receives attention for her less than impeccable technique; first a teacher pushes and pulls her body, forcing her turnout, then we see Jonathan, the school's director (Peter Gallagher), leaning against the mirror, his gaze following Jodi and the other women with lascivious scrutiny. The scene ends, cutting to a pas de deux class, which is almost entirely filmed in the mirror. Russian male student, Sergei, offers himself on one knee to his partner, Eva, but never looks at her, instead staring with adoration at himself in the mirror. Eva reprimands him and in turn receives a reprimand from their teacher for her harsh word choice. The teacher then corrects Jodi, telling her to stretch her foot. We see her face tighten in the mirror as her partner Charlie smirks and shrugs off the teacher's comment. All of the negative attention Jodi receives climaxes with the next scene, as she practices bourees again and again in a studio alone, clearly unsatisfied with her work, stopping only to unleash her bloody feet from their pointe shoes. No one thinks Jodi is good enough, including Jodi herself.

Jodi's blistered feet provide an entry way into how the *Center Stage* functions as a mirror for its most likely audience, young female ballet students. While the sight of Jodi's bloody toes may inspire various degrees of stomach-turning from any audience member, the moment most clearly invites identification for the young girl watching the film; her feet bandaged from her own pointe shoes. The scene creates a kinesthetic and gendered point of identification for her. Other visual references—particularly long scenes of dancers breaking in pointe shoes-- rankled and bored many critics, but I do not think those critics constituted the intended audience for those moments. The film makes kinesthetic appeals to allow young female dancers in the audience to physically relish the gazes offered by the film.

Much of *Center Stage* happens in technique class and surely these same audiences of young women find the characters' self-scrutiny familiar. (The many Websites created by *Center Stage's* young female fans suggest this to be the case.) *Center Stage's* young characters constantly dissect their own images, always under the watchful eyes of the mirror and multiple teachers. Cultural historian Kathy Peiss discusses the role of mirrors in the lives of women, noting that in order to discern the use and value of mirrors, historians must contextualize the mirror and the look it invites, asking where the mirrors are located, who has access to them, and what leads people to gaze into the mirror (1998. 44). In ballet schools, mirrors surround dancers constantly, on studio walls and in dressing rooms. In *Ballet Across Borders*, a study of ballet training in European and American settings, anthropologist and former dancer Helena Wulff explains the roles of mirrors in the lives of dancers, saying, that although dancers look to mirrors to

communicate with others and compare themselves to others

> mainly the dancers observe themselves…using the mirror for corrections of steps over and over again. . . . Since dancers spend so much time in front of mirrors in the studios and dressing rooms these . . . become devices in the routines of their management of identity (1998. 7-8).

Similar to John Berger's description of women's "to-be-looked-at-ness," the mirror image defines the dancer. The repeated rehearsal of the same step, like the scene with Jodi's bourees, suggests that the mirror produces a perpetually lacking image.

But do different dancers see different types of images? To answer such questions for real dancers requires anthropological studies like Wulff's, but *Center Stage*, through the relationship established between mirrors, the camera and the dancing bodies, suggests that young women and men use mirrors differently. Women see a mirror image less talented than their actual bodies, while men validate themselves via the mirror.

Feminist film theorist Teresa de Lauretis opens her essay, "Oedipus Interruptus," asking "What did Medusa feel as she saw herself in Perseus's mirror before being slain?" (1984. 83). The woman's gaze on her own image can only be imagined as directly preceding, perhaps causing, her demise. Peiss attributes a similar destructive effect to the gaze of real women upon their own images, describing the mirrored image as one inviting an inhibiting "self conscious performance."

Many classroom scenes within *Center Stage* display a split between boys' and girls' abilities to digest the mirrored image. For instance, Sergei relishes his mirrored image, until Eva yanks his eyes away. This scene, filmed almost entirely in the mirror, rather than focusing the camera actually on the dancers, creates a similar distinction between Charlie and Jodi. He laughs at their form in the mirror, while Jodi bites her lip and tries to respond to her teacher's correction. Charlie and Sergei enjoy their images, while Jodi critiques every detail of her reflection. The fact that the camera is trained on that reflection, rather than the actual woman, suggests that the mirrored image is both more important than and more visible than the actual dancer.

Often in *Center Stage*, the camera zooms to women's individual body parts, fragmenting the dancers' bodies, focusing on the most unruly part of their physique, for Jodi her legs, which lack turnout. Not only does the camera focus on body parts, but it moves from dancer to reflection, illustrating how young women share the sense of their bodies as fragmented. In the scenes of girls' class, negative comments from teachers directly precede a camera close-up on the offending body part, and then the camera shows the dancer in the mirror, allowing the audience to look through the girls' eyes to see an image that heavily accents the negative. This happens as the teacher's corrections continue, "Ribs in. Don't let the elbows droop."

While Lacan writes that a gaze into the mirror during the formation of subjecthood invites recognition of the unified self, the female dancers look into the mirror to see only bits and pieces of themselves. The mirror makes them appear as less than what they actually are. In contrast, in the only scene dedicated to a boy's class, the mirror stands on the frame's periphery, showing the boys dancing as the teacher shouts compliments. The boys' full bodies are shown, the mirror reflecting a similarly unified image.

Life beyond *Center Stage's* dance studios reinforces the young women's sense of their bodies as fragmented and inadequate. Jonathan calls Jodi into his office and assesses her talent with what sounds like an anatomy lecture, listing problems with her hips, legs and feet. Outside of school, Maureen's boyfriend Jim (Maureen is another ABA student) gives a similar description of Maureen, though with a sense of admiration. Looking for Maureen on a ferry to the Statue of Liberty, he asks Jodi and Eva, "Have you seen my girlfriend? Tall, thin, legs for days?" The girls in *Center Stage* repeatedly get reduced to descriptions of their body parts by those around them and, in turn, as the camera connects the mirror to the dancers' thoughts, they reduce themselves to fragments.

Negative body images and mirrors both contribute to girls' attitude toward food. One student, Emily, who is directed to see the nutritionist early in *Center Stage*, eventually leaves ABA because of weight problems. Of the remaining girls, Maureen struggles the most with food, regularly purging herself. Cooper (the professional dancer with whom Jodi has a fling) offers her cookies at his apartment. She declines, saying her body is "not good enough." When Charlie

buys doughnuts on the Statue of Liberty trip, the girls refuse as he eats.

In the scene that reveals Maureen's bulimia, she throws away her half-eaten ice cream, walks into the school bathroom, looks in the mirror disapprovingly while patting her flat stomach, enters a stall and vomits. In the cafeteria, every surface reflects the girls' images: the bar over the buffet, the tables and the spotless floor. Early in the film, Maureen and her mother move through the cafeteria line discussing who will get company positions. Maureen tells her mother to dismiss Emily since she has returned to school in a shape that "only a crane could lift her." As Maureen speaks, the shiny metal buffet reflects her face, connecting her sense of her own body with her painfully critical assessment of her classmate.

But why do the girls believe the mirrors? The mirrors come to stand in for the opinions of their teachers. The first mirror appears in *Center Stage* in the first classroom scene, the camera framing several ABA teachers sitting in front of it. Throughout the film, almost every time teachers appear they stand in front of mirrors. The camera invites a connection between teacher and mirror not only through spatial relationships, but by showing what the teacher sees in the mirror. As Jonathan delivers his opening day speech to the students, the camera pans the mirrored image of the group just as Jonathan's eyes do. Later, when the students audition for the workshop performance, the camera shows the dancers working in the mirror as the teachers, assessing each student's abilities, describe that mirrored image. The girls come to believe the mirrors because the voice of authority, the teachers, reinforces that the mirrored image is the correct one.

In *Center Stage*, there are some dance sequences filmed neither through mirrors nor in the presence of mirrors. In a later rehearsal of Cooper's new work, he draws curtains over the mirrors. But in rehearsals for Jonathan's new piece, also near performance time, the mirror remains uncovered. The difference between the two types of work done in these environments lays bare the route to escape from mirrors' tyranny.

Cooper's piece uses only three dancers, all in soloist's roles. His cast functions more like principal, star dancers. Jonathan's rehearsal features primarily corps dancers.[1] For the principal dancer, stage performance matters more than class where the mirror dominates. When Jonathan criticizes Jodi's feet in his office, she replies, "Margot Fonteyn didn't have great feet." He answers, "When Margot Fonteyn was onstage you couldn't tear your eyes away." The professional dancing star can offset physical deficiencies with stage presence (or artistry), but as one moves down through ballet's hierarchy into the corps technical demands are more strictly inscribed.

Principal dancers, Cooper and his ex-girlfriend Kathleen, become the students' idols. The audience members look to the screen, and the characters look to the company members in a way that closely aligns to Lacan's mirror stage as a gaze onto one's ego ideal. They see a unified body that they imagine they are, or, at least, might become. Jane Gallup describes the mirror stage as liminal, saying

> Not only does the self issue from it, but so does the body in bits and pieces. This moment is the source not only for what follows but also for what precedes. … And yet is itself a moment of self-delusion, of captivation by an illusory image (1985. 80-1).

The mirror stage here seems to be one where the subject hovers on the cusp of past and future, aware of both, entranced by the ideal future. Such seems an apt description of the place created by *Center Stage's* narrative for Jodi and her friends. They still cope with their own bodies' deficiencies everyday in class, but the "bits and pieces" cohere as they watch Kathleen and Cooper, particularly in an early scene in the movie where the two perform the balcony pas de deux from *Romeo and Juliet*.

However, the path to maturity, artistically and personally, seems longer for the girls, than for the boys. After Jodi and Cooper sleep together, Jodi pursues Cooper openly, often in Kathleen's presence. The resulting scenes allow for easy comparisons between Kathleen's aloof presence, composed where Jodi stands giddy and awkward. Jodi watches from backstage as Kathleen and Cooper dance Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*. The two whirl off the quick, technically complex *coda* with aplomb, while Jodi stands adoringly in the wings in pedestrian clothes. She is not even close to joining Kathleen and Cooper onstage.

In contrast, Charlie dances alongside Cooper. Rehearsing for Cooper's new piece, the two engage in a duel of technique. Cooper shows a virtuosic leaping turn, then Charlie repeats Cooper's example, adding an extra layer of complication. The back-and-forth continues until Cooper finally executes a step Charlie cannot, but, although Cooper wins in the end,

Charlie's technical prowess and its close proximity to Cooper's has been aptly demonstrated. Charlie proves legitimate competition for Cooper in a way that Jodi does not for Kathleen.

Both of the modes of looking offered to the young women of *Center Stage* relegate them to a lower status than their male peers. The female characters of *Center Stage* look with two gazes: one at the professional dancers as their ego ideals, and another at their own fragmented mirror images. The film's audience of young, female ballet students finds itself in a similar predicament, enjoying the film because the cast of professional dancers represent what they want to become, while simultaneously reminding them of what they are not. Navigating these multiple paths becomes difficult, paralleling de Lauretis's description of female spectatorship as producing a double identification: one with the female object of the male gaze and one with the male gaze.

According to de Lauretis, the complication results because the male gaze cannot be seen, only its object can (90). In *Center Stage*, only the outspoken outsider Eva, the film's only female character of color, openly discusses, names and refutes the negative institutional structures, making visible the gaze that constructs how the women see themselves in the mirrors. Bell hooks theorizes black female reception practices, saying that the black woman's perpetual position as outsider activates a spectatorship of piercing suspicion, what hooks calls an "interrogating look" (1992. 307). Though this type of look may reveal racist and sexist structures of power, hooks says that the look is often pressed into service for only white women, not black. Eva's critique of the ballet school and company fits such a narrative in *Center Stage*. She helps Jodi and Maureen see the other paths they want to take. Jodi chooses to join Cooper's new company where she can dance as principal. Eva actually performs as a surprise substitute for Maureen in the workshop performance, affording Maureen the opportunity to confront her stage mother, renounce the world of dance and face her eating disorder. Eva, seemingly no longer skeptical, accepts Jonathan's offer of a position with the company.

Jodi's primary moment of transformation occurs via a mirror. After the workshop performance, before entering Jonathan's office to hear his possible offer, she looks into a dressing room mirror that reflects back not just one image of her face, but dozens—all of the dressing rooms' mirrors become reflected in this one. In this moment, she rejects the idea of being a carbon copy of other dancers, foreshadowing the choice she will make to work in a small company of individuals rather than joining the corps.

Eva's critique helps Jodi see the constructions of the mirror and that critique partnered with a close reading of the function of mirrors within the film helps us see how mirrors can and do serve a powerful gendering function. It is important to make visible how both looking at oneself in the mirror in the studio and watching professional dancers serve to fragment and demoralize the young women of *Center Stage*. Though not disregarding *Center Stage's* fictional status and the fact that some of its conflicts arise from the director, actors and writers' dramatic intents, a close reading of the film still gives rise to larger questions, the most important of which have pedagogical ramifications: How do we, as teachers, look at others in the dance studio and onstage? How might the power of the mirror and the teacher be decentralized without diminishing the technical and artistic experience for the young dancer? Finally, a close reading of *Center Stage* serves as a reminder that gender, race and age matter desperately in the pre-professional ballet world as they form both the next generation of ballet dancers, but also young men and women.

Endnotes

1 Cooper's work has a corps too, but they do not attend the same rehearsal as his soloists. Jonathan's rehearsal brings both soloists and corps together.

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Biographical Research in Library Landscapes:

The Case of Dorathi Bock Pierre

Mary R. Strow

We celebrate the dancers of remarkable skill and technique, we celebrate the choreographers who have given us powerful and poignant dances, and we celebrate the scholars who have pushed the scientific, historical, and philosophical boundaries of the art and craft of dance. Today, however, I celebrate an individual who gave years, indeed a lifetime, of dedicated service to the field, often single-handedly. A brief entry in *The Dance Encyclopedia*, published in 1967, labels Dorathi Bock Pierre as a contemporary writer and publicist, but in truth, dance remained her first love throughout her long life, and she fashioned a remarkable career that kept her close to her passion. From an artistic childhood in Chicago to handling public relations for a major ballet company in Los Angeles, it might be said that Dorathi moved in and out of creative landscapes throughout her life.

I had the good fortune to meet Dorathi Bock Pierre when, over a decade ago, I was attempting to identify the major dance collections held by libraries and archives across the United States and Canada. I came across a reference to what may be considered her greatest legacy, in the form of the Dorathi Bock Pierre Dance Collection, held at the Beverly Hills Public Library in Southern California. Having no previous knowledge of this woman, I began to seek information about her, wondering about the extent of her involvement in dance and how she came to acquire a substantial collection of books, periodicals, photographs, and programs. As an academic librarian, I was also curious to know why the collection was housed in a public library, and how did it land in Beverly Hills?

After a series of phone calls to the Beverly Hills Public Library and Dorathi herself, I made my way to Los Angeles to meet her. In my years of work in library settings, I have come to value the importance of the primary record, particularly in the field of dance, where much history has been lost due to a lack of documentation. Fortunately, in the early 90's the dance community woke up to this fact, and since then there have been several initiatives to record, preserve, and catalog the dance legacy. When I arrived in Southern California, I found Dorathi's health to be excellent, she was more than delighted to entertain my questions, and I discovered a woman of dry wit and infinite social acumen. Though her memories may not have been 100% accurate, her spirit was intact, and her stories enriched and embellished the scant research notes that I had already accumulated.

As I embarked on my biographical research, I quickly learned to rely on bits and pieces of information culled from stories, photographs, letters, and the occasional newspaper clipping. My initial goal with Dorathi was to capture her stories through recording as many oral histories as possible. I was fortunate to be able to con-duct two with her at the ages of 94 and 95. Still, many gaps exist in her life, and I often find myself following many clues that lead nowhere.

Chicago in the year 1900 was a far cry from today, having survived the Great Fire of 1871 and the World Columbian Exposition of 1893. Dorathi was the first child born into an artistic family of German origins; her father Richard Bock was a sculptor of some renown who worked for 14 years with architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and her mother Martha Methven, was the daughter of Pennsylvania landscape painter Harry Wallace Methven. Her family, including a younger brother, Thor, was close-knit and their household was bristling with artistic fervor day in and day out. Together they attended concerts, vaudeville, opera, and musical theatre, as well as exhibits at the Art Institute and private galleries. The poet Carl Sandburg lived not far away, and frequented the home on many occasions. Dorathi was inspired by weekly classes in folk dance and ballet given by a local teacher, a few lessons with a visiting Isadora Duncan, and a performance by Anna Pavlova. She also participated in outdoor performances in Oak Park with Doris Humphrey. In 1917, at the age of seventeen, she hopped the train to New York, with dreams of dancing professionally. Soon she was swept into the magical world of vaudeville dance and theatre, and met choreographer Michel Fokine who had recently

arrived from Russia at the request of legendary producer Morris Gest.

Fokine invited Dorathi to become a member of his ballet company, though she was always was featured as a solo "natural" dancer. Isadora Duncan's influence was gaining favor by dance audiences across the United States and Fokine wanted to include such a dancer in his performances to illustrate his sensibilities towards the "new" American dance. Gest soon asked Fokine to choreograph a ballet to be the centerpiece in his huge theatrical production of *Aphrodite*, and Dorathi was asked to dance the part of the temple priestess. The lavish spectacle played in New York for a while, then went on the road all the way to the West Coast. Dorathi told me that in Chicago, the show was nearly shut down because of "nudity," which in actual fact referred not to bare bodies, but to the dancer's bare feet!

After *Aphrodite* closed, Dorathi remained in New York and performed in several musical comedies. She remembered seeing Martha Graham appear in the 1923 Greenwich Village Follies, doing a Javanese dance "straight out of Denishawn." (DBP interview, 1994) But by the end of another summer traveling with shows to Chicago, Minneapolis, and Toronto, she flew to Seattle to marry Jacques Pierre, who was 20 years her senior and had been the manager of the *Aphrodite* road show. The newlyweds then traveled down the west coast and settled in Los Angeles, eventually building a home in the Hollywood Hills above Laurel Canyon.

The traditional Jacques Pierre made it known from the beginning that he wanted his wife to stop performing, and stay at home. Dorathi confided in me that she had had hopes that Jacques would make her a "star," but also respected her husband, who had been through a bitter divorce in New York. Ever the opportunist, Dorathi first helped Jacques become established as a theatre manager, and, with his encouragement, started writing reviews of dance and theatre performances in Southern California, sending them back to Chicago to be pub-lished in a small women's magazine. Her social skills served her well as she dug up news about celebrities living in the Holly-wood region as well as those who were in town for performances. She quickly discovered a wealth of resources waiting to be studied at local libraries and became immersed in the history of her real passion, dance.

Thus Dorathi's writing career began, and through many of her husband's theatrical contacts, she took on various assignments, including writing program notes for Hollywood Bowl and Greek Theatre productions. She saved her notes and began to compile her own mini-archive of stories, reports, letters, books, and photographs. This habit was to continue for the remainder of her life, and today her collection at the Beverly Hills Public Library reflects her journalistic leanings. Preserving the written word about dance has always been easier than preserving the dance itself.

After the great Stock Market crash of 1929, Jacques Pierre lost most of his wealth, and soon was forced to return to work as road manager for dozens of theatrical productions. With Jacques gone for long stretches of time, Dorathi decided to join her parents who had, by then, moved to Eugene, Oregon, where her father had assumed the position of head of the Sculpture Department at the University of Oregon. For another three years, she studied dance at the University, and delved even further into dance history. She enrolled in several courses in writing and eventually declared herself an English major. When she returned to Los Angeles mid- 1930's, she was armed with a deeper and broader understanding of both cultural as well as historical roots of dance. She carried this expertise into her work as a publicist once again, and by 1939 launched her own monthly periodical, called *Educational Dance*.

Educational Dance filled a gap in the dance literature at the time, though it was to last for only three years; with paper and ink shortages after the outbreak of World War II and a dwindling staff, publishing a monthly journal became impossible. But while it existed, it garnered a subscription list of some 1,000 individuals and institutions, which was remarkable for the time. Dorathi was consummately absorbed as editor and publisher, while continuing her work as a publicist on the side. *Educational Dance* remains a fascinating glimpse into the world of dance during a period when dance was first becoming established as a legitimate course of study in colleges and universities across the United States and Canada. It was also a time when professional dance organizations were forming on the national and regional levels.

In 1936, Dorathi was invited to deliver a series of 6 lectures in dance history at the Los Angeles Public Library. As she said in a 1976 interview, "I was so filled with a missionary enthusiasm of what I found out about dance history, I just wanted to tell all the dancers about it."[1] The six lectures were given to packed houses in a 400-seat auditorium, and to the

dismay of Dorathi as well as the library, many had to be turned away. Ironically, Dorathi reported to me that no dancers attended her lectures; only lay people.

By the late '30's, Dorathi was a well-known fixture in the arts and culture scene of Southern California, and her efforts to establish dance in a variety of contexts were everywhere. The library lectures had connected her to Eleanor Howard, who owned the forerunner of *Dance Magazine*, *American Dancer*. Eleanor hired her as the West Coast editor for some eight years, and she was eventually promoted to the Education Editor position. In total, she contributed 28 feature articles, mostly biographies, to *Dance Magazine*, and monthly dance reviews, News Notes, and book reviews between 1936 and 1952.

One area of Dorathi's life is still sketchy for me; that being Dorathi's attempts to establish a school and professional ballet company in the Los Angeles region. Despite my best efforts at cobbling the pieces together, I remain unsure of details and the sequence of events. I do know that as early as 1939, Dorathi believed that the dance community in Southern California had grown sufficiently to support a school and ballet company that would serve as a home for dance and training ground for generations to come. She attempted to do this at least twice. Her first effort was in conjunction with the former actor and director of the Hollywood Bowl, James A. Doolittle. Their enterprise was to be called the Hollywood Bowl Ballet. The second attempt was in 1941 as auditions for "a Permanent Ballet Company" and the School of the California Ballet were publicized by the Dancer's Federation at the Perry Studio on N. Highland Avenue in Hollywood. With herself as Administrative Director, her roster of teachers included such luminaries as Eugene Loring, Bronislava Nijinska, Lester Horton, John Pratt, Lois Ellfeldt, and Myra Kinch. Courses in dance notation, music composition for dance, choreography, and costume design were to be offered, along with three years of dance history. I have found notes to the effect that the California Ballet Company existed for at least two years, but have not been able to confirm this in secondary sources.

In 1946, Dorathi was invited by Katherine Dunham to assume the position of Administrative Director of the new school she was establishing in New York, the Katherine Dunham School of Cultural Arts. The two had met in Los Angeles some years prior, when Dorathi had interviewed Ms. Dunham for *Dance Magazine*. Dorathi and Jacques made the decision to return to New York and try it for a year; Jacques wanted to re-connect with his Broadway colleagues and Dorathi was eager to participate in Dunham's institutional undertaking. In addition to her administrative duties, Dorathi was asked to teach courses in dance history, which were required along with technique and production courses. She was well-prepared to take on this function, using her notes from articles she had penned for *Educational Dance* and the library lecture series as a basis for the development of her course syllabi. Dorathi's stories of how much the dancers hated her courses are priceless! But she fully supported Ms. Dunham's premise that dancers and actors needed to be exposed to elements that extended beyond dancing and acting techniques, to include music appreciation, the cultural origins of dance, dance history, theatre and dance production, choreography, and notation.

Dorathi's parents had moved to Los Angeles in 1945, after her father retired from teaching at the University of Oregon and his health started to decline. Ever the devoted daughter, Dorathi encouraged not only her parents to move to the region, but her brother and Aunt as well. Having honed her writing skills for many years, she prompted her father to write his memoirs over the course of the next three years, until his death in 1949. 40 years later, in 1989, they were finally published in book format, with Dorathi serving as the editor. Clearly, in my research I have been able to see in Dorathi, even at the age of 94, how dearly she loved her parents, and was especially influenced and inspired by her father's artistic sensibilities throughout her long life.

The 1950's and '60's proved to be a tumultuous period for Dorathi, and little documentation exists that I have been able to tap. Caring for her mother as well as an ailing husband, she embarked upon yet another career which took her across the U.S and parts of Canada for months at a stretch. I have been able to uncover bits of her correspondence from this time in the form of type-written and hand-written letters at the family archive at the Richard Bock Museum at Greenville College in Greenville, Illinois. Dorathi became a press agent and publicity director for a variety of dance and theatre road shows, most notably working for Sol Hurok Productions. Never one to shy away from hard work, being an "advance" person for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and other groups for six years was an unusual occupation for a single woman at that time. After the Ballet Russe, she acted

in the same capacity for the American Ballet Theatre for a year, and then worked on national tours of French and British productions. To give you an idea of what an "advance" person did, Dorathi describes it most effectively in this 1976 interview:

> An advance agent is the representative, a business representative, for the Company, and I would have to go see the theatre; I would have to walk on the stage and find out what the conditions of the floor were for a dancer to dance upon; I would have to find out what kind of facilities they would have for the dancers backstage; I had to find out if they had enough equipment for the company to hang up their scenery and their lights… Then I had to talk to the house manager, find out what he was doing about selling tickets, what the price of the tickets were, how many there were, what kind of seating arrangement there was, did he have any tickets that he gave away or had a lower price; I had to sign bills or ok bills that I would approve of the company manager paying for them or refuse them if they were not legitimate; then I would go to the newspaper, talk to the newspaper people, give them press stories, furnish them with photographs…., take care of the requests for tickets for opening performances; then I would have to go make hotel reservations for all the members of the company and get signed registration cards knowing that they would have a room when they got there; I would then have to talk to the railroad man, find out about the trains coming in, where the baggage cars would be spotted, when the company would leave, what kind of car they had…. We traveled with three baggage cars and three Pullmans, our private car, and usually those cars were put on spurs…. I'd have to find out where the loading tracks were; I'd then have to talk to the trucking company and tell them how many trucks we would need, what time they would have to be there, what they were charged, how many extra loaders we'd have to have; I would have to talk to the stage union, find out how many extra stage hands we had to have, tell them what time to be there to meet the trucks to unload; that's all I had to do in every town, including one-night stands.[2]

Since Dorathi's death in early 1997, I have focused on finding secondary sources, visiting libraries in person as well as online. I have poured through family memorabilia at the Richard Bock Museum in Greenville, Illinois, talked with as many people who remembered her as possible, and searched through countless retrospective indexes and abstracts.

In southern California, my sources have been the collection itself at the Beverly Hills Public Library, and a few librarians who remembered Dorathi. I have also contacted the Library at the Los Angeles Music Center, which holds archives of the Hollywood Bowl. Dorathi's longtime friend and lawyer has given me many leads and provided a wealth of information. I have visited the Chicago Historical Society, the special collections department at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Library, and paid online visits to numerous library catalogs. Indexes to historical newspapers have been particularly useful for providing context.

Dorathi wanted to leave her collection to a library that served a broad spectrum of people, and when she met former dancer Nick Cellini, the Fine Arts librarian at the BHPL, it was a match made in heaven. Dorathi began donating her collection to the library in the '70's; archival materials as well as newly-purchased books. She knew she could have given everything to an academic or research library, but she always believed the gospel of dance should be shared with the general public. While libraries, museums, and archives give us access to much of the legacy of dance, there are still other avenues to be pursued. I have learned the value of retaining past records of professional organizations. Oral histories from the primary subject, as well as from colleagues and friends, are of vital import-ance. Through these one is able to hear the stories and the anecdotes which bring the human element into research. Two West Coast oral history projects, one at the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum and one at the University of California Riverside Dance Department continue to thrive. And as of about a month ago, the UCLA Library purchased a private collection of 1500 items belonging to Isadora Duncan, to further enrich the dance legacy in the region.

I hope to wrap up my comprehensive study of Dorathi's life within the next few years. Yet, as I pour through archives and collections across the country, I en-counter many dancers whose lives have yet to be documented. We still have much work to do.

Endnotes

1 Interview with Dorathi Bock Pierre by Mary R. Strow, 1994.
2 Interview with Dorathi Bock Pierre by Donald Hallmark, 1976.

Incorrect Images of the Empire: Ballets Russes in the Russian Press, 1909-1914

Hanna Järvinen

This paper discusses the reception of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in the light of contemporary Russian newspapers and magazines. Outside of Russian dance research, these sources have not been widely used in histories of the Ballets Russes, and in many ways, they challenge the canonised Western narrative of dance. Russian critics saw the same spectacles in Paris and London as did their better-known Western colleagues, but what they said of them differed significantly.

Russian dance criticism was highly important for the Ballets Russes as an organisation not simply because Diaghilev needed to look good in the eyes of his Russian patrons but because the members of the company closely followed what was said of them at home. For dance historians, these reviews are of crucial importance because they stem from the same cultural background as did the company. Indeed, they highlight the significant cultural differences that existed between the Russians and their Western audience.

In this paper, I can only scratch the surface of a complicated historical situation; namely, the fight against realism that characterised the *Mir iskusstva* journal, where Diaghilev was the principal editor, and with which most of the set designers of the pre-war Ballets Russes were associated. In short, Diaghilev and his coterie were Symbolists for whom ballet was a world apart, "cleansing the soul from dreary everydayness," in the words of Iakov Tugenkhold (in *Apollon* 8/1910, translation mine.) Consequently, they disliked the predominant aesthetic of realism, including both the Moscow Arts Theatre and the so-called 'new ballet' of Aleksandr Gorsky (1871-1924).[1]

Influenced by the Moscow Arts Theatre, Gorsky strove for a more realistic movement of the whole body of the individual dancer and of choreographic groups on stage, and desired greater ethnographic accuracy in sets, costumes and character dances (e.g. Krasovskaia 1971: i: *passim*, esp. 230-237). In short, he invented what we know as Fokine's Five Principles (published in *The Times* 6.7.1914). Despite his later conversion, in 1905, Fokine was one of the strikers at the Maryinsky demanding the dismissal of Gorsky and a return to the 'old ballet' of Marius Petipa (1818-1910). Thus, he was affiliated with the kind of anti-realism favoured by the miriskusstniki – and like them, changed his views just in time for the 1909 ballet and opera season in Paris.

In Russia, art had always existed in close conjunction with politics. Ballet was, to quote the Director of the Imperial Theatres, Vladimir Teliakovsky, "regarded as serious matter, a national, almost state matter, a source of the country's pride".[2] Unlike in the West, ballet held a prominent place in the Russian press. Russians were accustomed to reviews addressing the form as well as the content of the spectacles, and it was standard practice to compare, for example, different castings of the same work. Consequently, for the Russians, the Western reviews of the Ballets Russes – for all their laudatory clichés – simply indicated a lack of interest in both choreographic form and its execution by different dancers.[3] André Levinson complained that the so-called success of the Ballets Russes:

> has been reported back to us rather one-sidedly, simply as a wave of enthusiasm that seized the artists and aesthetes of Paris. But one can assert that the 'Saisons Russes' captivated the likes of Auguste Rodin, Maurice Denis and Jacques-Emile Blanche, primarily as a revelation of a painterly-decorative order, as an avalanche of unbridled and farfetched colors. The living scenic action receded into the background.
> (Levinson 1982: 33)

This is not to say that the Russians would not have been flattered by the extraordinary amount of attention the Ballets Russes attained in the West. Yet, they also saw through all the superlatives and realised that in this Ballet, the ballet was quite secondary. In fact, they might as well have performed to animals and fur-clad natives as in an image from *Peterburgskaia gazeta* (14./27.3.1913). The caption in the image reads: "Apotheosis of the reputation of the Russian Ballet! First spectacle on the North Pole!" The man erecting the flag is identified as Fokine. [See Figure 1]

And here we come to an important point: nationalism. From the Russian point of view, the works selected for the 1909 season were presenting the history of ballet in a very Russian nutshell (Scholl 1994, 61-66). *Le Pavillon d'Armide*, originally from 1907, had rather more to do with Peterhof than with Versailles. Based on the Tales of Hoffmann (who is sometimes called the "father of Russian Symbolism") this ballet was accompanied by the classical divertissements of *Le Festin*, set in a medieval Muscovite hall reminiscent of Slavophile fantasies, and *Les Sylphides* – a work trimmed from Fokine's *Chopiniana* (1907) to look more like Gorsky's *Valse Fantaisie* (1901) where the long white tulle skirts had been a tribute to Petipa's favourite "white acts" and to the French Romantic ballet.[4] Nijinska (1992, 227) and Krasovskaia (1971: i: esp. 237) also claim the decadent Oriental work of the season, *Cléopâtre*, was based on Gorsky's reworking of Petipa's *La Fille du Pharaon* (1862) in 1905.

However, instead of recognising the might of Russian history in these works, the French seemed to think Russia was some sort of Oriental backwater inhabited by naturally dancing barbarians. To give but one example:

> Restés barbares dans une Europe qui est, si l'on peut dire, civilisée jusqu'à la corde, les Russes sont au moment le plus fécond, le plus beau, de leur développement intérieur. Très neufs, avides et sincères comme des enfants, ils se donnent tout entiers et se cherchent avec fièvre. Ils ne sont pas entravés comme nous par les formules, et l'incrédulité ne les a pas énervés; ils ignorent la satiété occidentale.
> (Vaudoyer in *Revue de Paris* 15.7.1910)

Do note how Vaudoyer constitutes an irrevocable difference between the civilized French and the "last barbarians in Europe", Russians.[5]

Considering the dancers of the Ballets Russes came from the academic training organization of the Imperial Theatres, this emphasis on their natural and barbaric qualities should really strike us as odd. The critic of *Teatr i iskusstvo* positively ranted of how:

> I have not encountered a single review in which, amidst all the compliments, there would not suddenly appear "furious, hoarse, wild, exotic, barbarian" or some such expression.
> (*Teatr i iskusstvo* 17./30.5.1909, translation mine)

For Russians, expressions such as 'wild', 'exotic', or 'barbarian' had nothing to do with Russia or Russians, let alone ballet, the favoured art of the Imperial Court and the zapadniki (Westernisers), Russian nationalists who perceived Russia as a European nation (e.g. Minsky in *Utro Rossii* 1./14.8.1910). Indeed, the reception of the ballet season quite surprised the Russians:

> Last year not one critic dared speak of "amusing" Russian art in this favourable tone of patting one's back. Then all spoke of the "deep nationalism" in Russian art. By this was meant a lofty nationalism that made it [the art] pan-human, that which allowed it to transcend national borders and encompass the whole world.
> (*Teatr i iskusstvo* 17./30.5.1909, translation mine)

Do note the very Herderian attitude in the belief that nationalism would lead towards a greater understanding and peace between sovereign nations.

Things got worse when Diaghilev founded his own, private company late in 1910. Events such as Nijinsky's dismissal from the Imperial Theatres early in 1911 were actively used to create a definitive (political as well as aesthetic) break between the Diaghilev company and the Imperial Theatres that had trained the star dancers, employed most of the stage decorators, and allowed for the creation and staging of many of the works of the first seasons.[6] In this way, Diaghilev flattered the Western audiences as the true connoisseurs of the art form whilst discrediting the Russian critics, who, admittedly, said some very nasty things:

> The idea of the "Diaghilevshchina" is to demonstrate a barbaric Russian art to the *raffiné* Parisians. That Russian art might in fact not be barbaric at all, that it might be just as refined as the French – this is something Diaghilev either does not know or does not wish to know. Russian art must be barbaric – period!
> (Sabaneev in *Golos Moskvi* 8./21.6.1913 quoted in Taruskin 1996: 1016)

Like many of his countrymen, Leonid Sabaneev found the idea of a barbaric Russian ballet a contradiction in terms and attacked Diaghilev's export policy as providing to the jaded sensibilities of the French an incorrect image of Russia and Russian art. Diaghilev's publicity strategies were accused of being loud, reminiscent of the advertisements for cafés chantants and circuses, and thus distorting the image of Russian art by mixing it with popular culture, something unworthy of serious attention. Diaghilev was blamed for garish lack of taste, for introducing second-rate dancers as stars of great renown, and so on. *Peterburgskaia gazeta* (25.12.1912/7.1.1913) even depicted Diaghilev incubating little ballerina eggs with the gas flame of "advertisements". [See Figure 2]

For the same reason, Russians also disliked the Western focus on the virtuosic stunts of the star dancers. V. A. Binshtok complained that: "As for the jumps of Nijinsky and Fokine, they are much more fitting for the circus than for ballet; and they have very little in common with art." (*Rampa i zhizn* 15./28.8.1910, translation mine). The division made between highbrow and lowbrow, art and entertainment, was artificial but significant for definitions of artistic genius, the creation of appropriate form in art, aesthetic concerns for balance and harmony, etc. It was also used against the Diaghilev enterprise no matter how spectacular the Imperial ballet productions were.[7]

It did not help Diaghilev's cause that the Châtelet theatre, where the Ballets Russes first appeared in 1909, was a well-known variety theatre. Châtelet's large stage and stage technology were adequate for the purposes of the kinds of ballet spectacles seen on the Imperial stages. Yet, much of the publicity around the season strove to disassociate the company from the reputation of the particular venue: much was made of, for example, how the Russians redecorated the theatre and expanded the orchestra pit (e.g. *Comoedia* 11.5.1909; *Rech* 13./26.5.1909). This was significant, because music was considered the highest art form.

Another anomaly perceived by the Russian critics lay in the Western focus on the male dancers, particularly Nijinsky. *Rampa i zhizn* jested:

Of Nijinsky all the papers
All the Parisian aesthetes
Sing hymns and sonnets
But portraits? Oh, portraits
Are centrepieces of every display case!
My God! During the summer
Three-hundred thirty three portraits
Of the star of the Russian ballet!...
What did all this add up to –
Only Diaghilev knows!
(Lolo [L. G. Munshtein] in *Rampa i zhizn* 5./18.9.1910, translation mine)

"What did all this add up to" could also be translated as "how much did this cost?" Publicity did not come cheap in the arts capital of the world: Sophia Fedorova, feeling slighted by the impresario, told the Muscovite newspaper *Utro Rossii* (14./27.7.1910) that Parisian papers charged 1,000 francs for a picture on the cover, less for a less prominent location, and complained Diaghilev reserved these for his favourites.[8]

Matters of money directed attention to how Diaghilev could afford such publicity, and this directed attention to his social position as the grandson of a provincial vodka merchant. Diaghilev's success as an impresario was in part due to his good relations with the merchant estate, but this tarnished his enterprise in Russia, an aristocratic society to boot – much in the manner that support from rich Jews did in the West.[9]

Indeed, it seems that after the 1909 ballet and opera season ended with Diaghilev's personal bankruptcy, the Imperial Theatres required he would ensure even stronger input from private patrons in Russia and abroad for the 1910 season, and it may even be they insisted upon a more respectable venue for the season – the Opéra, rather than the Châtelet. Certainly, the season included more works that made visible the group's tie to the esteemed tradition of 'the old ballet'.

Their relationship to the tradition of realism was far more problematic. Most Russian modernists saw themselves as realists, against whom the miriskusstniki had positioned themselves. This became of crucial importance in 1912, with Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, followed by his *Jeux* and *Le Sacre du Printemps* in 1913. Many of the old miriskusstniki, including Diaghilev, never came to terms with this kind of aesthetic, and neither did many of the critics who had praised the Fokine works. As I have argued elsewhere, including at the 2002 SDHS conference, Nijinsky's new dance rested on a re-thinking of the ontology of dance that was not easily understood by his Western audiences unfamiliar with the Russian background from which these ideas arose. The Russian critics, however, loved them. Whereas

Fokine had been chided for repeating his old successes and for ruining the great classical dancers that starred in his works,[10] Nijinsky's works were praised as more truly Russian, contemporary, and highly original (even if not always fully polished) choreography, a new kind of realism fully in accordance with contemporary Russian modernism. Indeed, the Western outrage these works caused merely proved that now Russian art was, for the first time, truly in advance of Europe (e.g. Karatigin in *Russkaia molva* 24.5./6.6.1913 quoted in Taruskin 1996: 1010). As Nikolai Minsky put it:

> It is curious, that the European critics acclaimed Diaghilev as a bold innovator and reformer of choreography every time when he was staging old ballets, with romantic plots and classical technique, adorned, quickened by Fokine's temperament, Bakst's taste, and inspired by Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov. But as soon as Nijinsky, and Stravinsky in his wake, set themselves the task of radically reforming the technique and content of ballet, the public fled and the critics began to speak of northern barbarians.
> (Minsky in *Utro Rossii* 30.5./12.6.1913, translation mine)

Sacre in particular was seen as a seamless fusion of newest trends of contemporary art with ancient Russian traditions. The former Director of the Imperial Theatres, prince Volkonsky, wrote:

> One of our critics in all amity favourably described it as "cubist icon-painting" where the archaic angularity of the movement unravels itself in front of us to the pipes of Slavonic Pan.
> (Volkonsky in *Apollon* 6/1913, translation mine)

The Nijinsky works thus reasserted the company's connection to Russia, recently doubted because of the increasing internationalisation of the company.[11] This reassertion was not limited to *Sacre*, for Nijinsky's *Jeux* was, in effect, a modern version of a "white act". André Levinson, the staunchest opponent of the Ballets Russes, wrote of *Jeux*:

> These sportive "jerseys", balls and rackets – trophies of classical tennis against a faceless architectural background – perhaps they somehow embody in material symbols, naïvely, elements of contemporary life. And in the breaks and groupings of tense bodies one clearly senses some kind of contact with the newest tendencies of painting that seek depth and synthesis by way of geometrical simplification. In the work of Mr. Nijinsky there is some of this abstraction, his composition is not banal, but his approach towards this abstraction lacks creative strength and conviction.
> (Levinson in *Rech* 3./16.6.1913, translation mine)

Although Levinson scolded Nijinsky for not going far enough with his new ideas, he nonetheless preferred them to Fokine's works (see e.g. Levinson in *Rech* 2./15.4.1913: "The new ballet stopped to a halt with "Pavillon d'Armide" and "Carnaval"; I have already written of these ballets." Translation mine). It is also notable that this appraisal of Nijinsky's works ran across the political spectrum: the person praising Nijinsky's pieces in *Teatr i iskusstvo* (15./28.6.1912 and 9./22.6.1913) was none other than A. V. Lunacharsky, who was to become the Commissar of Enlightenment (Narkompros) in the Soviet Union.

Paradoxically, the Nijinsky works also changed how ballet was seen and written about in the West. Apparently overnight, the critics began to pay attention to the poses and movements of the dancers, the placement of groups on stage, the general structure of the events, and the counterpoint between various elements of the spectacle (e.g. *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* 10.6.1912). They also wrote of how dance created in them other feelings than joy and delight: anger and uncertainty, yes, but also deep sympathy, sadness, elation, and even fear. Dance became an art that produced not only a wide variety of emotions but food for thought, for reflection, and for analysis (e.g. Pierre Lalo in *Le Temps* 3.6. 1913; [Leonard] I[nkster]. in *The New Statesman* 19.7. 1913).

These kinds of reviews proved wrong many of the prejudices of the Russian authorities on dance, particularly the prominent claim that Western critics were incapable of analysing dance. (In fact, they may actually have felt it stylistically inappropriate to speak of the technical qualities of the dance: see *Le Figaro* 20.5.1909; Flitch 1912: 10.) Yet, it is also true that Diaghilev never hesitated to feed the prejudices of his

Western audiences – after all, he was running an enterprise. It was profitable to mystify the troupe's relationship to the Russian ballet tradition and to Russian culture in general, so that both Fokine's works and the post-war spectacles could seem more innovative and avant-garde. Novelty sold, but only up to a point: the few Cubist details of *Parade* (1917) went down far more smoothly when Cubist style was a decade old than in the works of Nijinsky, who had professed for *Peterburgskaia gazeta* (15./28.4.1912 quoted in Zilberstein-Samkov 1982: i:448, translation mine) that he "applied to choreography the theory of Cubist painters", and that this, to the horror of the interviewer, made his works no longer ballet but "a new rhythmic musico-choreographic composition".

With the support of the impresario, who never came to terms with Nijinsky's aesthetic, the pre-war Ballets Russes became much like the early works "quickened by Fokine's temperament, Bakst's taste, and inspired by Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov" – nostalgic, exotic, distant from contemporary concerns (see Järvinen 2003 for further discussion). For us, however, the materials left gathering dust in the archive can offer a glimpse of the various cultural significances of the Ballets Russes – although these may not be quite what we have come to expect.

Endnotes

1 See e.g. Briusov in *Mir iskusstva* 3-4/1902 on the Moscow Arts Theatre; Benois in *Mir iskusstva* 2-3/1902 on all that was at fault with Gorsky's *Don Quixote* (namely, the excessive dancing). Cf. Scholl 1994: 33 claims balletomanes disliked anything taking attention away from the dancing.

2 Telyakovsky 1994: 44. Similarly, Benois 1945: esp. 284, also e.g. 285-286, 292, 299-300 or Nijinsky in *Musical Courier* 7.12.1916 on Russians as more refined than the French. In *Rech* 19.6./2.7.1909, Benois represents the Russians as barbarians conquering the decadent Rome – and giving birth to a new, vital civilisation (Christianity). In conjunction with all the military metaphors, this reiterates the myth of Russian holy empire (Russia as Third Rome), not, as e.g. Acocella 1984: 330 or Berg 1988: 15 have represented, an embracing of primitivism, barbarism, or even Eurasianism (nationalist movement that appraised the Asiatic aspects of Russian culture).

3 Western critics tended to review only the first performances of each work, which peeved their Russian colleagues. See e.g. *Obozrenie teatrov* 3./16.6.1909; *Teatr i iskusstvo* 31.5./13.6.1909. In Russia, ballet was also popular entertainment, as attested by Nijinsky's childhood in touring circuses. Nijinska 1992, 4, 9; Swift 2002: 30-32, 135-136, 154-156.

4 Krasovskaia 1971: i: *passim*, esp. 132-133 on *Valse fantaisie*. *Le Festin* included both Gorsky's czardas to Glazunov's music and the Blue Bird pas de deux from Tchaikovsky's and Petipa's *La Belle au bois dormant* (1890). Original works increased in number from the 1910 season onwards, but e.g. *Carnaval* (1910) was first performed in St. Petersburg, and both the 1910 season in Paris and the 1911 London autumn season included shortened versions of familiar 'old ballets' (e.g. *Giselle*, *Le Lac des cygnes*).

5 Similarly, Abel Bonnard in *Le Figaro* 18.6.1910; Pierre Lalo in *Le Temps* 11.6.1912; Rivière in *La Nouvelle revue française* August 1913.

6 E.g. *Comoedia* 14.2.1911; *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* 11.6.1911. Also, Diaghilev's earlier dismissal from the Imperial Theatres (Svétlow 1912: 59-60) and Bakst's problems with St. Petersburg authorities (e.g. *The New York Times* 3.11.1912, 24.11.1912) were used to create the myth of the Ballets Russes as a 'revolutionary' organisation: Flitch 1912: 129 on Russia expelling the Diaghilev troupe "as hastily as if they had been political agitators", also *op.cit.* 123-130, 154.

7 *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 11./24.2.1910 also called Diaghilev "the Russian Barnum". Quoted in Zilberstein-Samkov 1982: i:212. In *Le Figaro* 29.5.1909, Jacques-Émile Blanche recollected a Russian spectator apologising to him for the 'circus décors' admired by Maurice Denis. See e.g. Levine 1988 on high vs. low in art.

8 According to Slonim 1963: 135-136, the Moscow Arts Theatre did not extend its tour to Paris in 1906 partly because the publicity would have cost so much.

9 Again, the aristocratic prestige of prince Nemirovich-Danchenko had been crucial to the success of the Moscow Arts Theatre, although Stanislavsky's merchant family ties actually paid for the enterprise. Slonim 1963: 103-127. Similarly, in 1898, the *Mir iskusstva* was funded by Sava Mamontov and princess Maria Tenisheva, and later, the significance of the patronage of the Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovich had to do with his power to grant titles to rich manufacturers. See also Garafola 1992, *passim,* esp. 199, 277-284, 311 on Jewish patronage.

10 Volinsky according to Volkov 1996: 324-325; also Fokine 1961: 74-76.

11 See e.g. Mauclair's tirade against *Faune* in *Le Courrier Musical* 15.6.1912: "il est impossible qu'un danseur slave, même si intelligent, pénètre une œuvre de ce genre"; cf. Levinson in *Rech* 25.6./8.7.1913 on how there was little that was Russian remaining in the Russian Ballet.

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Figure 1

Peterburgskaia gazeta (14./27.3.1913)

Figure 2

Peterburgskaia gazeta (25.12.1912/7.1.1913)

Postmodern Narratives: Multiple Histories, Autobiography and Understanding

Bonnie Rowell

I'll begin by telling a story. One of the key questions posed by this year's conference, and the one that immediately grabbed my attention, is 'how does dance ground practitioners across geographical, institutional, and ideological divides?' and this got me thinking first about the 'effacement of key boundaries and separations' idea that is associated with postmodernism, specifically with theorist Frederic Jameson (1988); then about location and identity and how we make sense of our art as dance practitioners and dance theorists in a postmodern world; lastly and conversely, how dance narratives may serve to make sense of our identities and ground us in a seemingly groundless society. As a researcher, I am interested in postmodernism in general and I ask questions about understanding postmodern dances from a philosophical perspective. Current dance scholarship, with some notable exceptions, tends to favour a phenomenological perspective but I want to embrace both analytic and continental traditions: I want to acknowledge the very specific nature of the medium and the role of the body, hence my interest in phenomenology, yet retain the system and rigour of an analytic approach.

So that is the story of how I came to propose this paper, what my interests are and how I am approaching the topic – and it seems not only to be acceptable, but imperative to disclose this sort of information or personal history in order to derive from some sort of truthful position, or at least contribute to an unpacking of the issues involved. The poet Ted Hughes writes:

> We all tell stories. We all recount odd incidents that have happened to us. In so far as we talk at all we are generally telling something of a story. Some of us go further and make stories up at great length, imagine how it would be if this or that happened to us, what would follow, what would happen next and next. In fact you could not live if you were not continually making up little stories.
>
> (Hughes in Tufnell and Crickmay, 2004: 175)

Thus narratives are part of our consciousness and our conscious functioning. They are central in making sense of our lives, but also in repositioning us more securely in relation to the world. Philosophers have traditionally recognised the crucial role that the arts play in all of this, but more recently, the analytic and phenomenological divide has been bridged by philosophers such as Paul Crowther who proposes what he terms an 'ecological', holistic or reciprocal model of interaction with the world in relation to the interface between consciousness and physical inherence, with the arts acting as mediators[1]. I will return to Crowther's model and enlist its help, but it is worth mentioning that Sondra Fraleigh who, like Crowther also writes from a phenomenological perspective suggests the very special place that *dance* occupies within the arts. She writes: 'To dance is neither enter-tainment nor art-making per se. More, it is the struggle to find voice through one's storied self: more still, to face oneself as one faces others and the world – imaginatively' (Fraleigh, 2004:2). Here we have the presence of the body as medium serving to locate dance within a very specific philosophical but also socio-political context.

Stories then, provide a means of making sense of our histories, mapping our lives in a process of self-interrogation as part and parcel of the *creative* process, but they also lend themselves especially well to providing ways of undermining the status quo, destabilising assumptions about our social roles and asking important questions about our diverse cultural contexts. Indeed, the concept of 'narrative' has taken on a much broader meaning under the conditions of postmodernism, in terms of our accounts of our insertion in and inter-relation with the world – offering rich but sometimes perplexing perspectives on our multiple histories. So narrative in this sense is the stories we tell to 'make sense of' things – and this, as I shall be arguing, constitutes the imposition of a rational structure.

But I am jumping the gun and this idea seems to contradict the ambiguity with which we are currently and consistently faced: as postmodernists we now have to deal with fragmented experience – fragmented in an artistic sense in terms of non-linear

development, but also in a conceptual sense, in terms of apparent lack of coherence and linear progression – together with groundlessness in terms of truth, validity, and status. The idea of narrative now, is thus intimately bound up with Barthes' questioning of authorial privilege, with the empowered role of the reader and with issues of subjectivity, reflexivity and subjectivism.

This paper addresses these issues, asking how as dance analysts we make sense of choreographies whose narratives embody postmodern concerns: how for example, we approach multiple histories with whose embedded contexts we are unfamiliar; how we relate and respond to danced autobiographies. But it will also address how danced autobiographies make sense of us and make sense of our lives.

Narrative Transformations

Sally Banes (Banes, 1987a) traces the historical roots of the resurgence of interest in dance stories as residing in the concerns firstly, of *how* dance narrates, a concern she identifies with those of the 'analytic' choreographers of the 1970s. For Banes, concern with narrative and history of the medium is a logical extension of concerns that centre on the medium itself and what makes dance distinctive from other art forms. At the same time Banes traces these choreographers' interest in myth and fairytale to a concern with comparison across the arts, across genres and classifications of all kinds, and this conforms with Jameson's analysis, referred to above. But she adds the important rider that this links dance to the moral, political and social world in a way that had not been publicly acknowledged previously. Folktales also present us with binary distinctions: between genders, between social mores (Banes, 1987b) and these distinctions are of course associated with the twin projects of truth and justice which postmodernism affects to question as part of its project to dismantle the 'grand narratives' of modernism (Lyotard, 1983).

There is a further point to be made here in relation to deconstructionist theory, which works by exposing the conventions and assumptions that underpin our reception of text. By re-locating dance 'texts' from dance history (and from the histories of other disciplines) into different contexts, we destabilise our assumptions and attitudes towards them in a way that parallels the deconstructive process.

In artworks' narratives and the process of their transformations, there is then, an implicit political dimension, one that can easily be harnessed in order to challenge elements of the status quo. Literary theorists Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins (2000) for example, make this process especially apparent in their consideration of women's intercultural dramatic performances. Holledge and Tomkins argue that textual adaptations make:

> Ideal intercultural texts because they mix (at least) two cultures, two time periods, and in some cases, two divergent theatrical worlds, [so that] new dramatic narratives emerge from story-lines, plots and characters as they travel through time and across cultural borders.
>
> (Holledge and Tomkins, 2000: 18)

And they refer to these resulting transformations as forces for challenging normative assumptions. Holledge and Tomkins give the example of Ibsen's *The Doll's House* and describe how the adaptation of this text has had a positive impact on feminist movements in such countries as Japan, China, Iran and Argentina, as the Nora character offers women spectators what Holledge and Tompkins describe as 'identity spaces'. Thus in their transformations these texts arrive at a new status and take on symbolic significance as 'women centred narratives'. Holledge and Tomkins describe too how ambiguity and the notion of an 'open text' play a vital part in these interrogations, because they permit a freedom of interpretation in which these individualised and specifically contextualised elements are allowed in.

In a way that perhaps stretches the parallel a little, but is nonetheless valid, British Asian choreographer Shobana Jeyasingh displaces and re-contextualises the movement conventions of Bharatanatyam within a contemporary dance culture. Dance writer Sanjoy Roy makes an interesting connection between Jeyasingh's attitude to classical Indian forms and Derrida's deconstructionist philosophy. Roy reminds us that Jeyasingh's 1996 dance work *Palimpsest* takes its form from Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead.* In Stoppard's play, the lives of marginal characters from *Hamlet* are taken as the central concern and the central concern of the original moves to the periphery; in *Palimpsest*, Jeyasingh overwrites Bharatanatyam in such a way that its central concern (the *abhinaya* or expressive element) becomes of peripheral importance, and *nritta* or formal elements become central, thus making a Derridean inversion (Roy, 1997:7). This inversion is interesting because it counteracts the assumptions made by many writers about Jeyasingh's work, that it is primarily about

cultural displacement and embodies glimpses of different cultural narratives (an assumption that constitutes an example of a universalising discourse perhaps). Contrary to these ideas, it seems her choreography is far more concerned with undermining pre-conceptions about Asian dance and Asian women by exposing her dancers' unique contribution in terms of their physicalities that are shaped by and subject to, different dance conventions.

But this introduces the specific difficulties raised by autobiographical dance, as the personal history of the dancer is presented publicly, exemplified for me here by Ishmael Houston Jones' 1989 dance film *Relatives*. Jeyasingh uses the formalities of the technique as a sort of backdrop against which she has her dancers move into a more personal dimension and this interface between convention and subjectivity interests me in terms of ways in which it offers a possible framework for understanding.

Ishmael Houston Jones: *Relatives*, 1989

Houston Jones's autobiographical dance film includes his mother as co-performer relating an apparently unscripted narrative about the choreographer's childhood, while colouring eggs – an activity it transpires, that has greater significance for her, in her parenting role, than for him. Houston Jones first prepares the scene, then begins an impromptu dance himself. His dance begins more as a series of doodles than polished choreography, but it seems to gain in strength and energy while retaining its introspective mood. It appears to feed from his mother's narrated memories.

The dance takes a back seat dramatically, to his mother's fluent and totally engaging spoken narrative, so much so that the choreographer appears to give up on dancing by his mother's side, or even dancing in front of her to camera, to moving location and dancing solo, with his mother's voice acting as backdrop. By making his dance on a human scale, rather than in a monumental mould, Houston Jones is challenging elitist structures. The dance does not appear to be making any further claims, but I am moved and disturbed by it and distrust the idea that a political or cultural statement is uppermost in Houston Jones's intentions. Moreover, if we found out that Houston Jones was not telling the truth, that it was not his mother who was speaking, but somebody else's mother, would it matter? We are told in the spoken narrative that he has changed his name from Charles and we infer from this and other instances, that he has reconstructed his personal history from memories and events such as these. And if we reconstruct our histories (as well as our artworks), what is the status of truth? Some postmodern theorists would urge that it does not matter. In order to interrogate the problems inherent within these questions, I will briefly compare two seemingly contrasting approaches to radical artworks: those of Ann Cooper Albright and Noel Carroll.

Autobiography, the body and the problem of authorship

Danced autobiography in Cooper Albright's account is far from introspective self-analysis, but defined (after Paul Eakins) as the 'dramatic staging of a public persona' (1997: 120), that is, as the embodiment in language and in bodily discourse of our experiences. In danced autobiography, the body as communicative tool permits observation of difference. So, autobiography gives women, alongside other under-represented groups, the chance to renegotiate the conditions of their representation, in terms, for example, of the challenge it poses to the 'dynamic of an objectifying gaze' (1997: 121). But she argues that autobiography also challenges in terms of its physical presence – because the body that is telling the story is inevitably and undeniably challenging, in an intense and uncomfortable way for the audience members.

So Cooper Albright's analysis distinguishes between the objective performance of autobiography and the subjective liberated voice, which defy the autobiographic meta-narratives of the Enlightenment. Individual lives, individual experience question and subvert what she calls the 'universal [normative] self', so, danced autobiography brings together the objectified, narrated self and subjective first person experience. Cooper Albright's perceptive comments on individual dances are illuminating and her analysis of the ways in which danced autobiography brings together the objectified self and subjective experience is thought provoking, particularly in relation to the emphasis she places on the role of memory and its key function at the interface between personal experience and impersonal conditions, which finds resonance with Crowther's holistic model.

Autobiographical narratives then, permit a renegotiation of the ways in which the individual is represented in the world; they are also confrontational and serve to directly challenge the viewer in that the spectator is faced with the physicality of the person whose narrative is being told. All this serves to challenge prevailing heterodox power relations to do

with whose stories are important and central to the culture and to its self-perception but Cooper Albright is also suggesting that they serve to reorganise the boundaries of the self and other, and although I have sympathy with this idea, I also want to interrogate it further in relation to Crowther's thesis.

Art practice and historical narrative

Dance philosopher Noel Carroll approaches the problem of understanding and accounting for radical artworks from a different direction. Carrol is interested in the narrative of art history and argues that it is this that might provide us with solutions to questions of artistic identity. This problem is not our central concern here, but Carroll's comments have a broader relevance that can help explain the role of narrative in making sense of ourselves and our world. Carroll offers a way of accounting for radical artworks within a philosophical framework, one that offers a degree of coherence and stability. Historical narrative, in Carroll's sense, looks to the ways in which art is practiced within a culture and the ways in which those practices change, develop and transform in order to reveal a story about artworks' identity and this has clear implications for the ways in which we might deal with the sort of radical transformations and challenges of postmodern artworks.

Carroll then, argues in relation to his view of art as cultural practice that this view incorporates necessary flexibility, but at the same time invokes rationality or, in his words 'practices contain the means, such as modes of reasoning and explanation, that provide for the rational transformation of the practice' (2001: 66). Of major importance in Carroll's thesis is the emphasis he places on the interface between art makers and their audiences:

> For art is a public practice and in order for it to succeed publicly – that is, in order for the viewer to understand a given artwork – the artist and the audience must share a basic framework of communication: a knowledge of shared conventions, strategies, and ways of legitimately expanding upon existing modes of making and responding.
>
> (Carroll, 2001: 66)

In this way Carroll provides for both evolution and development but also the means by which these transformations may be understood and this provides us with a coherent framework for situating the personal narratives of dance that are my primary concern here. Carroll argues that there must be two-way communication, thus some sort of stability inherent in the practice in terms of the different activities of the art world. But there must also be flexibility in order for the practice to retain its necessary dynamic, to evolve and adapt to changing circumstances. Carroll sees the narrative of art history as a kind of dynamic and ongoing conversation between historical convention and the sort of innovatory practice that is essential to a constantly evolving art form and argues that the narrative of historical evolution is what enables us to determine whether something is art – to identify it within an artistic context. In the same way, personal narratives are an attempt by artists to situate themselves within a newly theorised cultural context, so that, as well as seeking to radically undermine our world view, these new narratives seek to make sense of a dislocated world view by situating individual histories and identities.

Postmodernism, fragmentation and under-standing: Crowther's reciprocal model

These issues seem to be central to the debate when we consider my dance example. Do we believe Houston Jones when he tells us about his family and is it important that we do? Whose story are we witnessing and why should we care, if it is, as Fraleigh suggests, more than just entertainment? Paul Crowther's (1993b) work finds a resonance with the notion of two-way communication that is central to Carroll's thesis. Crowther suggests an account of art and embodiment that derives specifically from Merleau-Ponty's later theory of mind, and promotes the notion that human beings 'inhere in the sensible' (1993b: 1), a notion that reflects the fusion of the sensual and the conceptual within our make-up. But in Crowther's model, this fusion is also *reflected* in artworks, in terms of their creation and their appreciation, and this is an important point.

To briefly summarise Crowther's reciprocal model of interaction between self and other: sensible beings interact with the world and with each other via the body's sensori-motor capacities, which form a unified field. This process involves language as well as immediate and non-immediate experience. But language has a dual function: it gives us the ability for rational comprehension of the world as well as a sense of personal identity. Our interaction, as well as being informed by immediate physical and sensory

experience, is also informed by non-immediate experience, thus the historical dimension, both personal in the sense of our memories, and impersonal in the sense of the contextual conditions surrounding our experience (or, for example, the production of art works) has a crucial role to play. In our interaction with the world and with others, we thus organise the spatio-temporal diversity of 'otherness', reconstituting it as 'the world'.

The unified field of our sensory and psychological experience is key here, together with the ways in which we can reflect upon that experience in relation to the creation and appreciation of art works. It follows then, that the relationship between the self and 'otherness' is one of reciprocity and the means by which we come to understand our interaction with otherness in all its complexity becomes the issue that explains this reciprocity. In art works, we fabricate complex entities that both reflect and give sense to our experience of the world. In their capacity to function in multiple ways, art works have the capacity to reflect the complexity of our reciprocal interaction with the world, without, and this is the key point, fragmenting that experience. Art is appreciated in its objects; that is, it has a direct and physical/sensual dimension, as well as a conceptual one, and thus mirrors our experience.

Conclusions

We can see how these three approaches in turn unpick and discuss some of the main ingredients and machinations with which Houston Jones's artistic constructions present us. In his danced autobiography, Houston Jones emphasises the role, nature and status of memory: both dance and filmic devices emphasise this aspect. In using the conceit of autobiography, which implicates the truth, to present a way of locating people in the world, Houston Jones is presenting to us a methodology rather than a fact. Houston Jones demonstrates in his dance a need for personal resonance with the subject's 'building blocks'. He is discussing the moment and the instance of becoming that moment, of his deriving identity from the past and we as audience are being asked to understand the intersection of the moment and its history. History, as we have seen, is about unheard minorities and so among other things, the choreography also re-contextualises black mythology. The point is, that we are comprised of the 'building blocks' of our history, not what the particular building blocks are in this instance, so, if we find out that Houston Jones is dancing with somebody else's mother, the dance would make the same point – he does not after all remember the eggs.

The dance is compelling – his seeming improvisation parallels the spoken biography and parallels too its ambiguity in terms of whether it really is emerging from the instant or whether it has been set. So autobiography in this case has become an important structuring device that allows the choreographer to implicate a discussion of memory, to foreground the status of autobiographical 'truth', to articulate the need for personal resonance with the things that make him what he is. But the role of artistic structure and intention are of primary importance here and it is these features that allow him to articulate and discuss the intersection of the moment with its history in such a vivid way. By making his artwork on a human scale, Houston Jones provides 'loose' moments in which personal history is allowed in, but it all happens within a tight artistic rein. Whether we are being presented with the truth or an artistic conceit, we are still being confronted with the reality that we are all equally the result of, empowered by, and constrained by our physical and historical contexts.

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Endnotes

1 Crowther's model describes our interaction with the world in a way that both requires an acknowledgement of the unity of our physical and psychological experience, but also recognises the primary role played by language in mediating our past, present and future. In this way (as shall become clear) Crowther's model is especially relevant to an account of how narratives position us in relation to the world.

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Dance in the Plays of Maxim Mazumdar and Daniel MacIvor

Ray Miller

Since its origin, dance has been a vital part of dramatic productions. In fact, many cultures throughout the world conceptualize dance as essential to their theatrical forms. Sometimes, dance shares equally with theatre's dramatic functions. In that case, we often describe them with the term – dance-drama. The Japanese Noh, Balinese dance-drama, and the Nigerian Yoruba dance/opera might be some examples. Sometimes, dance shares more in common with theatre's musical attributes. In that case, we might describe it as musical theatre. This might include everything from Chinese Opera to the Broadway musical.

What is unique and interesting now, particularly since World War II, is the role that dance plays in the works of playwrights that is primarily categorized as "spoken drama" or "straight plays." Nigerian playwright Wole Soyinka, for example, incorporates dance into his plays in order to bring together traditional Nigerian drama, usually from the Yoruba tradition, with the realism of contemporary Western theatre practice. Gao Xingjian, on the other hand, is more experimental. Influenced by modern dance, Chinese acrobatics, Beijing Opera, European absurdist drama and the movement theories of Jacque Lecoq, Xingjian incorporates movement and dance into the very heart of his "modernist aesthetics." The stage directions in his plays, like those of Soyinka, are written for "choreographers" so that the physical and kinesthetic aspects of his dramaturgy will be clearly understood and incorporated into the production of their plays.

These two Nobel Prize winning playwrights are keenly aware of the role and function of movement as a "plastique" and/or metaphoric element in the dramaturgy of their work. For them, dance is not so much a separate and "stand alone" art form as it conventionally has been viewed by many playwrights in the Western tradition but rather, they see it as another aspect, or tool, or extension of their dramatic vision. They come from cultures in which the visual and kinesthetic aspects of theatrical production are not "additions" to a literary text. They are at the very core of their respective theatrical traditions and consequently play a central role in the construction of their dramas.

Many North American and European playwrights have "taken notice" of this phenomenon and have begun to explore dance as a vital component in their plays. Asian-American playwright Henry David Hwang, for example, often uses dance in his plays as a way of exploring racial and ethnic identity between first and second generation Chinese in America. Plays like FOB and The Dance and the Railroad are two such plays. His familiarity with dance is not just based on traditional Chinese theatrical forms. He has worked, for instance, with choreographer Quinny Sacks on his collaboration with Philip Glass on the opera The Voyage. He has also contributed to the American musical by rewriting the libretto for the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, Flower Drum Song.

August Wilson, the preeminent African-America playwright, often incorporates dance into his plays. Shortly before his death, he completed his ten play cycle in which he explores the African-American experience in the United States in the twentieth century. Each play encapsulates his sense of the African-American experience for that specific decade. In addition to music, he often utilizes dance to unpack the African heritage and sensibilities as they inform the American experience. This is clearly evident in the use of the Juba dance in his play Joe Turner's Come and Gone.

This experimentation and examination of dance in dramatic dramaturgy has not gone unnoticed in Canadian theatre. Two of her most well known playwrights, Maxim Mazumdar and Daniel MacIvor, have also incorporated dance into most of their plays. The purposes and the functions for their use of dance are considerable. The remainder of this paper will explore some of those in their plays.

Born in Bombay, India, in 1954, Maxim Mazumdar was an immigrant to Canada. Much of his all-too-short professional life – he died on April 28, 1988 - was spent as a performer, producer and playwright. He studied at Concordia University in Montreal. He co-founded the Phoenix theatre in 1972, the Provincial Drama Academy in 1978 and, the Stephenville Festival in 1979. Within a short period of time, he established an international reputation as a performing artist of his own monodramas – one on the

life of Oscar Wilde, another on the poet Rimbaud and another still on the impresario Diaghilev.

In addition to his work as an actor, Mazumdar was a playwright who was fascinated with the subject of dance. He wrote about it often. In this paper, we will look at two of his plays.

In the first, Invitation to the Dance, he writes about the reluctant retirement of a ballet star and his search for meaning following a career on the stage. Rather than a simple "soap opera-like" narrative, Mazumdar weaves themes and ideas about dance, family, identity and the ephemeral nature of art-making in a sketchy biographical drama. It is more a meditation than a story.

The play's world premier was on July 12, 1980 at the Stephenville Festival. The famous English ballet dancer, John Gilpin, played the lead character of the fictitious ballet dancer Jonathan Arden. There are two other characters in the play – the boy and the girl – and the actors who play them also play many other roles as well including his wife and son, the ballet company's producer, artistic director, dancers and so on. The stage setting moves between a make-up table, a dance studio, a stage and a nondescript area. The playwright leaves it up to the director to stage it as a realistic drama, or as a memory play in which the events are viewed within the mind of the aging ballet dancer.

What spares this from being an Ann Bancroft/ Shirley Maclaine Turning Point moment extended into a full length play is the playwright's ability to focus the play on that inevitable transition point in the dancer's life when s/he must leave the world of the stage for an unknown and often ill-prepared leap into life beyond the stage. The playwright is breaking open not so much a simple narrative of a particular ballet dancer but rather the vulnerability inherent in professional dance. The scenes are simply staged. There are recognizable music cues from the classical ballet repertoire combined with a shifting of lights that takes the audience from one locale and/or environment to another. Sometimes, the dialogue is funny, curt and sniping; sometimes, it is reflective, philosophical and poignant. By juxtaposing realistic scenes with those that are more often found within an Ionesco absurdist play, the playwright is able to jolt us from an illusion created by what Brecht would call a naïve realism to a point where our sensibilities are opened to the ephemeral quality of dance as a metaphor for our own sense of mortality. People are not so much afraid of their children choosing dance because they cannot make a living at it but because it reminds them of the brevity of their own lives! Performing a technique in which you pay daily homage in the dance studio is certainly more secure than leaping into an unknown future in which your best preparation is not ballet technique but maybe contact improvisation.

Jonathan Arden's favorite poem is Shakespeare's 2nd sonnet:

> When forty winters shall besiege they brow,
> And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field
> Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
> Will be a tatter'd weed of small worth held;
> (Mazumdar, 2004, Invitation: 88)

For Mazumdar, Jonathan's story is a cautionary tale reminding us that each day contains the seed of its own demise. Therein lies the poignancy of dance and of a life well lived. It is not so much that we learn new lessons echoes the old sage as that we constantly relearn the old ones.

In his play, Dance for Gods, Mazumdar's inspiration was the performance of ballet dancer, John Gilpin, in *Carmina Burana* with the Ballet Concierto de Madrid. The original production was directed and choreographed by Wendy Toye and Maxim Mazumdar performed. In his introduction to the published script, Mazumdar reminds us that he is interested here in "dance stripped to its essentials." (Mazumdar, 1979: 14)

In this play, the playwright deceptively wants "to write about an ordinary touring actor-dancer living in Greece at the time of Euripides." (Mazumdar, 1979: 15) This play is about many things, but it is essentially placed in that "inbetweenness" where the actor and the dancer meet. It is more about the aesthetics of performance than the history of the Greek chorus. In this monodrama, movement and gesture literally become an extension of dramatic language.

This solo drama centers on the fictitious character of Herakleon, the son of a famous actor known for playing dramatic roles in Greek drama. The father is a close friend to the rebel playwright, Euripides. Eventually, Herakleon comes to learn that there is a significant difference between those who act from those who dance. The difference is not so much one of talent but of a way of being or experiencing and thereby expressing the world. He eventually comes to the realization that he is the later.

Like Invitation to the Dance, the scenography is simple and flexible. Stage left is a dressing room; stage right is a marble bench; center is a painted dance floor and upstage is a pillar on which a mask is hung. As the story of Heraklean unfolds, the actors move from one location to another assisted by bells, flute and/or guitar music and a shift in lighting. From the pictures of the original production, it appears that his character is dressed in a Greek tunic that more easily suggests Pierrot rather than a Greek chorus dancer. As he engages with other characters, the actor pantomimes and talks to their phantom presences.

In the beginning of the play, we hear the passionate pleas of characters like Andromache and Hecuba performed by adult actors. But when the audience boos his performance of Hippolytus, Euripides admonishes him for wasting his time. "Your soul speaks to music. Not to words. … Your feet are a gift of the gods. … Dance." (Mazumdar, 1979: 32) After experiencing the ups and downs of a performing life as a dancer, husband and father, we arrive at the end of the play, when we discover that Euripides has written his final play The Bacchae, for Hippolutus. Now, he can act and dance.

In the final scene of the play, Herakleon reenacts the tragic tale of Dionysius' revenge on Pentheus, the king of Thebes, when Bacchaen women under the direction of his mother, Agave, tear him to pieces. She rips the head from his shoulders and takes it to her father Cadmus for approval. She is completely unaware of the severity of her crime because she is dancing in a Dionysian abandonment. She is intoxicated. She is wild. She is cursed. When she finally 'comes to her senses" and recognizes that she is holding the head of her child in her hands, she cries out (like Oedipus) "banish me." And, so she is.

Like Wole Soyinka's The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite, Mazumdar uses this tale of Dionysius to explore the realm of complete abandonment to something larger than oneself in the form of dance, music, myth, performance. But it is more than that. Each playwright confronts the Job question: Why me? Chance and happenstance seem to take precedence over the actions of a reasonable deity. The drunken, violent dancing of the god of Drama - Dionysius – unravels the reasoned discourse of the playwright. Which god is it that we worship?

Daniel MacIvor also incorporates and uses dance in many, if not most, of his plays. They are most often episodic. Each "French scene" might be only 2 or 3 pages in length. He explores a simple idea, or feeling, or perception which he juxtaposes in ways that encourage a more layered sense of who his characters are and the world(s) in which they live. Many of his characters struggle with sexual identity and familial or societal expectations and conventions. For MacIvor, identity itself is "up for grabs." His characters live in a postmodern world in which authenticity is not so much about personhood as it is about slivers of experience, the moment, snatches of authenticity. As American modern dancer/ choreographer Erick Hawkins would say: "Here and Now with Watchers."

For MacIvor, dance becomes a method by which characters take ownership of their lives. Sometimes, he uses simple social dance forms to "push and shove" his characters into physical contact so that they might confront their frailties and the barriers that they must overcome in order to be able to "simply communicate." This is certainly the case in 2-2-Tango in which the characters, James and Jim, tango, waltz, hustle and charleston with each other in their attempts to "make contact." In other plays, like The Soldier Dreams, MacIvor is much more interested in dance as an ideal, a metaphor, a "fragment" in the life of the character of David as he struggles with AIDS and its dizzying repercussions in personal and social worlds.

Of the two plays by MacIvor examined in this paper, The Soldier Dreams is certainly the more conventional in terms of dramatic structure and style. It is about the character of David, who is dying. He is in a coma-like state in a bed located in the center of the stage. On each side of the stage are platforms with microphones on them. An actor plays the dying David, who remains in the bed until the end of the play, while a second actor who can move freely from one location to another, plays and personifies the Memory of David. The other characters in the play consist of his older, cantankerous sister and her nerdy, ineffectual husband, Sam, his younger irresponsible sister, Judy and his live-in lover, Richard. Throughout the play, there are vignettes in which a German student, who David has had a liaison with, makes appearances to the Memory of David character. Family scenes around the dying David in his bedroom are punctuated mostly by individual scenes in which each character reveals some special aspect of their relationship to David and by memory scenes of David's encounter with the German student.

The play begins and ends with the Memory David repeating: "And if I had it my way, we'd all be

dancing." Throughout the play, each character reinforces David's propensity to engage in some form of social dance with his family and friends as a way to bypass the restrictive boundaries suggested by defining reality mostly with - words. As his awkward brother-in-law, Sam, would put it, echoing Hamlet: " Words. Words. Problematic. Words trap thoughts. Words are like little cages for thoughts." (MacIvor 1997: 27) He reminds us that "If David has his way we probably all be dancing - that's what he loved – he said it was good for the soul. Um. Yes. Um. Soul." (MacIvor, 1997: 27)

In this liminal state, the Dying David is coming to terms with the homophobic world of his family, friends and lovers with this German student who he happens to have met on his way to attending his sister's wedding in Ottawa. After telling a conventional homophobic joke to his new German student friend, he is admonished for doing so. The German student goes on to say: "To me life is a war and it is very important what side you choose to be. … Even when the soldier dreams the war goes on." To which, David sardonically asks: "So you don't like jokes. What do you like? " and the student responds: "I like to dance." (MacIvor, 1997: 31) With that, they begin a long distance relationship that crosses between Canada and Germany, between a restless past and an uncertain future.

Up through college, there are family photographs of David. After coming out, however, he refused to have any photographs taken. Instead, he relied upon the ephemeral quality of dancing to convey a sense of free association in which he could be who he wanted, when he wanted. At the end of the play, after the Dying David character had pass away and the family characters disassemble the bed and exit - leaving the stage bare, the Memory David re-enters and begins to spin and then falls. The script informs us: "The music continues wildly. David spins again. He falls. He tries to keep spinning. The Student enters the space walking back through it in the opposite direction than he did in the beginning. … his presence gives him strength. David spins wildly and spins and spins until it is as if he flies into the air and disappears. …
Silence. (MacIvor, 1997: 55)

For many playwrights, they reference dance as a way by which to bypass the ineffectual rational side of the human experience when trying to relate to others and/or when trying to understand how the inexplicable – God, soul – might feel like if it could inhabit one's body. It also becomes a way in which to confront harsh realities with an idealized affirmation and reaffirmation that life – maybe even after death – is worth living, is worth striving for, is worth contesting. The directness that David sees in the performing of dance as a way in which to express unedited emotion is illustrated in the varied stories each character shares with the audience about their encounter with David when he would insist on dancing as a way in which to either confront or deny a difficult or challenging problem in relationships. For David, dance is more about suggestion, possibility, hopefulness rather than about proficiency, accomplishment or artfulness. When playwrights want to shift the emotional life of the character into the shared emotional lives of the audience in ways that suggest a kind of optimism in the face of adversity, dance can and is often used as a theatrical metaphor. – as it is here.

2-2-Tango is quite different! Here – the playwright is using dance as a theatrical language, and as a dramaturgical tool to convey his ideas in an immediate and kinesthetic manner. While The Soldier Dreams has a clear narrative structure centered on the Dying David, 2-2-Tango is based on a series of deconstructed vignettes. In The Soldier Dreams, there are clearly drawn characters who reveal themselves in group and dyadic scenes and in monologues: while in 2-2 Tango, the two characters of James and Jim who are performed by two actors, who "are attired identically" as if wearing a "team costumes, " leaves open how "realistic" this play may or may not be. Are these two different men? Are they the same man? Are they representatives of some generic type of man?

Both plays are concerned with relationships. In Soldier, it is more about family and lover relationships as they help the character of David come to better understand his own identity. In Tango, the dialogue is common, conventional, stereotypical. The lines characterize relationships in the initial stages of attraction, conquest and sudden denouement afterwards when "the game is over" and the option to really get to know someone is available. While there are memory scenes reminiscent of Tennessee Williams The Glass Menagerie in Soldier, the style is one of simple realism. In Tango, the dialogue and the movement are choreographed. The author offers us a way into his play in the notes that precede the play. He writes:

> 2-2-Tango is written to be performed in a strictly-choreographed style, both visual

> and verbal. The dances in the play – Tango, Waltz, Hustle, Charleston – are not meant to be authentic but scaled-down, minimalist versions. When the script calls for the performers to 'sing' it means make a sound (da, ba, la, etc) and sing the basic melody of the dance they are doing. Unless directed … the performers are speaking to the audience. …. There should be a feeling of vaudeville.
>
> (MacIvor, 2-2-Tango, 1992: 191)

Even props are choreographed. At the top of the show, for example, "the men begin to sing a tango off-stage. They tango on from opposite sides. They tango off. They tango on carrying watermelons. They tango off. They tango on without watermelons. They notice one another. They stop. … They face the audience. A watermelon rolls on and stops in front of Jim. A moment of unease. Jim rolls it off." (MacIvor, 2-2-Tango, 1992: 193)

As we watch 2-2 Tango, we witness the comic, the lusty, the accidental and the sad emptiness that often characterizes the beginning and, for many, the extent of relationships. In this play, we also see the "common dance" that occurs in these stages of relationships played out in recognizable social dance forms. We know our script. And, so do our bodies. We act and react in easily recognized vocabularies that prescribe our behavior and our experience of one another. For many, these social dance forms are a means in which they can encounter "the other" and begin the process of dialogue. For MacIvor's characters, they are the dialogue. They define the extent of the conversation. At the beginning of the play, the character James makes clear: "'This, yes, here is a person' But the question is: just how much like me are they really though? And on the outcome of that judgment rests the inevitability or the improbability of a little warm flesh for the evening." (MacIvor, 2-2-Tango, 1992: 193) And yet, by the end of the play, they sense that there is more, but … The character of Jim recalls: "In this dream I wake up in the morning and there is a boy in my room and he is offering me a watermelon … I take it and then I ask the boy to dance and while we are dancing he is looking out the window and not saying anything and so I stop and ask the boy. 'Don't you like to dance?' and … I realize that this watermelon is a burden to him and he was just trying to get rid of it and … he picks up his tray of watermelon and he leaves and I watch him from my window … " (MacIvor, 2-2-Tango, 1992: 213-214) Unlike the beginning of the play, here dance becomes an act of volition, at least on the part of one character, not simply a well-rehearsed precondition for sex.

These Canadian playwrights, like many of their contemporaries, are not satisfied with the linearity often found in "realistic" plays. Their theatrical vocabulary is not limited to a simple narrative that requires performers to play primarily in a Stanislavskian based psychological realism. Nonlinear, imagistic scenes intersect with a kind of realism that "suggests" to the audience's imagination rather than "reassuring" them of an easily accepted conventional interpretation of reality. To that extent, these playwrights, like their American, African, European and Asian counterparts, are employing mime, music, movement and dance as a part of their dramaturgy to explore subject matter, delineate character and comment on thematic material.

Movement is too powerful to leave up to the director's interpretation alone they seem to feel. Like the directions in a Beckett play, these playwrights are interjecting specific movement into the script as a way to not only reinforce specific thematic material but also to engage the audience in metaphoric association that is immediate, kinesthetic and powerful. As Mazumdar pointed out when he saw a performance of Gilpin in which the lead character in the ballet was defeated and dies at the end of the ballet. Just when you thought it was over, the music would build and the character that you thought was dead slowly rises to a standing position. That simple act of defying audience expectations, of defying gravity, shocked Mazumdar into the recognition that dance or movement can contribute in an unexpectedly powerful way to the playwright's dramatic intentions.

For these playwrights and many of their contemporaries, "spoken drama" is not enough. They are searching to broaden the dramatist's palette to include dance and movement. The line between playwright, choreographer, visual artist and director overlap and the overarching goal is – as it always has been – to create good, meaningful theatre.

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Space & Place in Islamic Spain:

Histories of Middle Eastern Performance in Cordoba & Granada

Ninotchka Bennahum

> The essence of life is a feeling of participation in the flowing onward [history] expressed in terms of space. The poetic image offered us, takes root in us, bringing out the quality of the original . . .we begin to have the impression that we created it.
> Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 1964
>
> Art possess physical knowledge; it can be regarded as penetrating perception.
> Arthur Danto. *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, 1981.
>
> Inside the artist is the spectator – the painting has been there before inside of them – the first spectator of the work is the artist. As the artist made the painting, he/she viewed it moving toward the spectator's vision of viewing and the spectator thus retrieves the experience of the painter upon first viewing – this forges communion with the artist seeing-in – the capacity for seeing the work as representing human emotion.
> E. H. Gombrich. *Art & Illusion*, 1964.

Gypsy Flamenco developed in the white-washed pueblos of the Iberian Peninsula.[1] It is the subject of this paper to explore how the Hispano-Arab culture of Islamic Spain influenced the use of poetry, song, and choreography in the art form known as flamenco. To my mind, Gypsy flamenco in its use of space and religious chant, is an historical and artistic reflection of the Mozarabic –Sephardic, Christian & Muslim – civilizations that pre-existed the world into which Gypsies walked in 1423.[2] The years preceding the Expulsion of the Jews in 1492 and the subsequent Christian-Arab territorial wars, as well as the arrival of Gypsies on Spanish soil, thus become the site for the cultural development of Gypsy Flamenco.[3]

Thus, Gypsy *toque* – guitar – *cante* – song – *y baile* – and dance express an earlier time whose arts express a Middle Eastern quality of singing and dancing whose ethos lies in sacred chant. Flamenco music and dance is, in part, a creation of the Middle Eastern Islamic and Arab cultures through which the Gypsies passed in Persia, Egypt and North Africa on their way to southern Spain.

Flamenco choreography, in particular, represents a mapping of space and can be read as a reflection of the Islamic architectural tradition whose *alcazars* – public buildings - were frequented by all peoples living in medieval Andalusia. Flamenco's ornamental, gestural vocabulary - known as *florea y braceo* (a flowering of the hands, wrists, and arms), reflects the Islamic architectural ruins of southern Spain and the musical and poetic languages whose inscriptions are to be found on the walls of public, secular buildings, libraries, nature walks, fountains and sacred spaces, such as mosques and their minarets. The physical geography or architecture of the body in flamenco – in the Gypsy *Siguiriya*, for example - recalls the spatial design of *mesquitas* in Cordoba and Granada; that is to say, a *bailaora's* use of torso, hands, and feet express a physical historiography that resonates with the Mozarabic architectural legacy of medieval Spain.

In order to elucidate and clarify the way in which we understand or view "Gypsyism," it is necessary to recall the multiple paths of Islam as it penetrated and spread across the Middle East and North Africa. Let us first define medieval Muslim Spain. Mozarabic means "People of the Book" – Christians and Jews who lived with religious tolerance in a Muslim-ruled society, extended from the creation of the first Spanish Muslim city, Madinat 'al-Zahra (constructed by the first self-proclaimed Caliph, Abd 'al Rahman I, living outside Damascus in 785/786) near modern Cordoba to the final surrender of the city of Granada by the last Muslim Caliph living in Spain, Boabdil - Mohammed Abu Abdullah, -"el chico," on the 2nd of July, 1492.

The Creation of an Hispano-Arab Geography

Let us understand the conquest of southern Spain and France by Arab and Berber forces. This 8th century explosive army that Arab geographers described as an extraordinarily well-organized military force that rose in the year 710 in the Atlas mountains and landed at

the southernmost tip of the Iberian Peninsula. Pushing north in successive military campaigns through the Christian Visigothic Kingdom and into Provence: Poitiers and Tours, seizing Nimes & Narbonne. Historian, Henri Pirenne, describes in *Mohammed & Charlemagne* the first famous battles between Muslims and Christians on European soil.[4] These early 8th century campaigns, organized from the seat of Muslim power in Damascus, entailed thousands of Arab and Berber soldiers enlisted by their military leaders to fight Christian armies.[5] The idea was not necessarily to remain in Spain but, rather, to convert all of Christendom to the belief in the "one, true God: Allah."

Muslim, Middle Eastern culture had a profound impact on Visigothic Spain. The culturally rich civilization of Iberia was a coalescence of many other cultures past and present: Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Gothic and Iberian. Muslim Spain conquered and assimilated civic and rural cultures whose economies depended upon fertility of a land that produced wine and olives and still used aqueducts, roads, buildings, art, languages and religions of the older society. The synthesis created a heterogeneous and wealthy Andalusian society.

One of the most compelling arguments for a continuous historiography between the world into which Gypsies settled in the early 15th century and their present-day performative language as seen in Andalusia, comes from North African cultural practice itself. While reading of the first of many expulsions of Muslim Spaniards from Spain in 1508 in the excellent histories by Henry Kamen, Richard Fletcher and Bernard Lewis, I came across a memory box. All three describe the foyers of North African families whose lineage once extended to 'al Andaluz. In homes in Marrakesh and Fez, "keys to properties in Almeria or Ronda, Malaga and Granada, hung in readiness for a return to 'al Andalus." Al-Maqqari's history of the Maghrib (1630) in describing the Maghreb reaction to the departure of the Muslims from Spain wrote: "may Allah return it to Islam," referring to her coastal cities.[6] Andalusian homes once occupied by North Africans family members in Andalusian cities now hang close by as reminders of North Africans' collective memory of an historical and cultural past linked to Islamic Spain.

A powerful, historical connection that I use to connect the memory of Mozarabic civilization with flamenco is the idea of the Muslim portal as window to God. I believe that this meditative choreographic quality is found throughout the five musical sections of deep song *solea* dancing and is echoed in the high cries of the *cantaor*.

> To isolate the transforming action of the poetic imagination in the detail of the variation of the images…To consider an image not as an object and even less as the substitute for an object, but to seize its specific reality. For this, the act of the creative consciousness must be systematically associated with the most fleeting product of that consciousness.
>
> Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*.

The Great Mosque of Cordoba[7]

The Center of Islam shifted from Damascus to Baghdad after the fall of the Middle Eastern Umayyad Caliphate in 750 and its subsequent rise in Spain under its sole surviving relative: Abd 'al Rahman I.[8] The architecture of Cordoba reflects the commercial, cultural, and religious life of its larger and more powerful sister-city to the East, Baghdad. "Drawing the city to the banks of the Quadalquivir River," Abd 'al Rahman's 785/786 construction of a place of Muslim identity and spiritual tranquility, the mosque became a symbol for Christians, Jews, and Muslims of a "Muslim presence on the Iberian Peninsula."[9] The history of the mosques "chronicles the development of a Muslim language of forms on the western frontier of Islam and the creation of potent visual symbols" that were abstract.[10] A short discussion of the architecture of the mosque for purposes of a discussion of its resonance with flamenco follows.

Like the *mesquita* in Cordoba, the flamenco embodies an auditive metaphor for time and space. Its essential properties are Middle Eastern, homegrown in Islamic Spain with sounds and physical embodiments – a predatory circling of the stage, the self-isolation of prayer and devotional ritual practice, a firm pressing by dancer's foot and legs of weight into the floor, a non-western practice of connecting body to earth, soul to music that surrounds the dancer rather than drops from heaven above; the emotionally and physically explosive qualities that build slowly in the dance through repetition and inwardly-directed concentration – away from audience and toward self-reflection exposed to the *umma* that surrounds the stage.

The Cordoban mosque's prayer wall, stunning in its design and largess, consists of ten arcades of twelve bays each scattered throughout the main hall,

dispersed to the western eye in a random manner that allows no single focal point. Walking through it, I was awestruck at the sight of the arches – 900 total – that "depend upon the repetition of a single support' structure to create a hall for community prayer.[11] Dizzying in monumental profile of slender, semicircular arches that cut through the space with alternating *voussoirs* of deep red and black brick and cool white stone, these horseshoe arches embody a three-dimensional maze in which "constant echoes of arches and unruly staccato colors confuse the viewer, presenting a challenge."[12] An intellectual dialogue is built here between building and spectator that evolves as the person who inhabits the space is slowly transformed by the hallucinatory and, therefore, meditative quality of the building. Begun by 'al Rahman I with his family's Damascan mosque sharply as a symbolic reminder, the internal, illusive qualities of the Cordoban structure transform at will anyone who walks through the space, confirming the arrival of the Umayyad caliphate from the East to the southwestern reaches of Europe. The sheer power of this structure as a central place to visit and worship for anyone passing through 'Al Andaluz is breath-taking.[13]

In the early 9th century, continuing his father's magnanimous legacy, Abd 'al Rahman II, added Persian music to the development of an emerging Islamic Spanish culture along the Iberian Peninsula. Al Rahman gave refuge to Ziryab. Thought to be the finest poet/singer alive for having memorized 10,000 songs, a Persian-trained musician by the name of Ziryab (b. 789) known as "the Black nightingale" arrived in Andalusia at the Caliph's invitation in the early 9th century. Ziryab, whom say think might have been an African slave, was learned in the Persian musical style heard today in flamenco.

Ziryab brought a Persian instrument – the lute – to which he added a fifth string that became the modern-day guitar, used in flamenco. He also imported the Persian *melismata,* a hypnotic, 22-count song cycles that later inspired Sufi musicians. Like flamenco *cante*, Sufi-inspired mystical phrases, as in the poetic songs of Ziryab, told stories of human emotion—love, anger, loss, love of God, as does contemporary flamenco. Further, as in classical and scriptural Islamic literature, poetic stanzas referred to daily experience and heroic tales. Poems symbolized historical documents that, like flamenco *cante*, revealed a history and culture of Middle Eastern and Persian descent. "The poet, in Moorish culture, represented history and was woven into court society and left a geographer a reflection of the times."

A 9th century Arab geographer, Ibn Qutayba, described poetry as follows:

> Poetry is the mine of knowledge of the Arabs, the book of their wisdom, the muster roll of their history…the rampart protecting their heritage…the truthful witness on the day of dispute…he who binds [history] with rhymed verse, knots them with scansion and makes them famous through a rare line…. made eternal against time, preserved them from negation, averted the plot of the enemy and lowered the eye of the envious.[14]

The historical influence of Persian poetic and musical culture on an emerging Andalusian culture can be traced through a study of flamenco. It is to phenomenological ideas that look to connect the obvious Middle Eastern and Persian resonance in flamenco to its Islamic Spanish past. What first led me to this exploration was the carving of space and contemplative gesture that dominate the flamenco. These seemed to me to represent quasi-religious, and, at times inside a solo dance, transcendental acts of performance, complex in geography and public meditation. No other dance form in the world houses a dancer – male and female – who use the stage as a bullring, Suzanne Langer's "magic circle" in which the dancer centers, re-centers and centers again, walking around the space clockwise and then counterclockwise, marking personal time with each step he/she takes and reconfiguring her place on stage in a confessional manner – allowing the audience to see this very private meditation with musicians as they tune and retune their instruments waiting for a moment of blowout – of transcendence, or *duende*. To me, these motions embody meditation, creation, contemplation, and worship. They connote identity – gendered, national, and artistic.

The Gypsy Siguiriya & the Dialectics of Islamic Holy & Secular Space

The dance is essentially a personal prayer, or *Du'a,* in Arabic, exposed to public and musicians, that begins an ends in choreographic meditation, building in intensity as the dancer expands into space to the accompaniment of *cantaor*, or *muezzin*, and collapsing in exhaustion back into oneself, resonating with *desplante*, the finale of five-movements of a flamenco

cycle that embody the end of a spiritual journey taken with caller and musician. As in Persian music or calls to prayer, five movements define five place on stage and five newly begun sections of the dance phrasing. At the beginning of each movement, the *bailaora* circles around herself, at times with outstretched arms that seem to beckon audience into her private space – the space closest to her body. At other moments, with downcast eyes and a rapacious circling around herself, (as if she were devouring herself) the singer knows she signals him to sing for her. Hitting the ground with her right foot so that the nails in her shoe resound, she calls him – *una llamada* - to begin his storytelling.

As in *Qu'ranic* verse, the *cante* in the *Siguiriya* solo performance is entirely metaphorical with hints of place and time. Its metric beat keeps time for dancer and singer but its abstract word play delivered inside of a complex of *compass*, or Gypsy rhythms, presents a puzzle for the outsider. Here, again, flamenco resonates a Middle Eastern value: the power and beauty of the sound of poetry in tandem with musical accompaniment is considered high praise of the listener as in its inherent religiosity, it is a call to God.

Like the red, white and black repetition in color and line discovered throughout Andalusian mosques—columns that swing wildly up into nine hundred repetitions of cross-vaulted arches or just drop into the floor—a spatial design reflected both in building construction and in the richly textured arabesques created by *bailaora*.

Like no other dance in the flamenco canon, the *Siguiriya* is a confessional dance of devotion: devotion to rhythm, to dancing, to space. It is, at its base, a dance of worship: worship of the song – its poetry and poetic phrasing – worship of the rhythm and its intricacies and worship of one's ability or mark time in new ways. The dance, descendent from the Moorish *Zambra* – is a call to prayer: a personal devotion expressed publicly on stage. The *cantaor*, like the Muslim *muezzin* and the Sephardic *chazan*, calls to the dancer five times, as the people of Cordoba were called five times to pray toward Mecca.

Like the Great Mosque at Cordoba, the most ancient of the flamenco dances, the *Siguiriya* has a structure that expresses religious intensity and spatial patterning. Dizzying in its rhythmic complexities, like the horseshoe arches of the first Muslim mosque, *mesquite*, in Cordoba, the *Siguiriya* is one of the oldest dances in the Gypsy pantheon with roots reaching back to the early Hispano-Arab dances.[15] In its rhythmic structure, the *Siguiriya* is inspired by the Muslim-Sephardic *cante,* the *Saete*, which University of Seville-based flamencologist, Gerhard Steingrass, claims contains the chanting of the Kol Nidre service and the high-pitched, nasal *queijo*, or lament/cry, to prayer performed by Muslim *muezzin*, or cantor, five times a day from atop the minaret.

Dance & Song as Portals to God

The *Siguiriya* is a private meditation between singer and dancer that resonates a Hispano-Arab-Sephardic past.[16] (*Sepharad*, *or Sefarad*, means Spain in Hebrew.) Like sister musical forms that date from medieval Mozarabic Spain – the *zambras, zarabandas, pandas de verdiales, cañas, tiranas, seguidillas, jaberas, malagueñas, calescras, zorongas,* and various solo *cantes* – the *Siguiriya* represents an historical document, evidence of the "Oriental music" that survives inside of flamenco:[17] It is he use of microtones---tones smaller than a semitone; sliding from one tone to another; repeating a single sound over a long period of time, lending an hypnotic quality to the singing and guitar-playing; the creation of melodies "to flow within a small tonal range rather than jump by large intervals; the use of microtonal and semi-tonal ornamentation to give expressiveness to the music; the use of a descending cadence (in conjunction with the phyrigian mode);" a lack of harmonization on the part of the singer and guitarists—that is to say, the music sounds melodic, not harmonic; the creation within a performance of complex rhythms and cross-rhythms; harsh, nasal-sounding tones, vocally and instrumentally; tuning on stage during performance – opening up the process of musical creation to the audience; emphasis on the emotional quality of the playing and of the timbre of the music.[18]

The *muezzin's* call to prayer, what Bachelard might refer to as a "sonority of being," an offering to the people of *élan vital* – vital aliveness in space and time that is infinite – this is the sound of that call – is echoed clearly by the *cantaor* in the *cante jondo*. He cries, "olé, as the guitarists tune. It derives from the Arabic *Allah*, and, thus, the sacred nature of this musical *cantiga* is confirmed.

> If in connection with poetic images we are able to isolate a sphere of pure sublimation; of a sublimation that sublimates nothing which is relieved of the burden of passion and freed

> from the pressure of desire…by thus giving to the poetic image at its peak an absolute sublimation, I place heavy stakes on a simple nuance. The poetic image is under the sign of a new being.

Bachelard's notion of "poetic image" refers to visual metaphor or imagined space/place. I borrow this term, the poetic image, to refer to the physical, psychic, musical, memorialized relationship of the singer and dancer in flamenco to the complex Mozarabic language of architectural form found in Andalusia. Outdoor space in Mozarabic Spain was filled with the beauty of the natural world —fountains, ponds, plants, trees, walkways that leant a harmonious relationship between individual and the world. Indoor spaces defined by the "codification of an early Islamic space for prayer without the intervention of clergy or liturgy," a place of communal gathering unaffected by hierarchy and transformative in its transcendent use of space and light.[19] Flamenco has resonance from both of these ideals in its choreography and music, resonating in deep song tradition with the architecture, poetic meter, and civic life of Muslim Spain.

Mosque architecture experienced by anyone who has wandered through Andalusian public spaces, gives the individual spectator a sensation of an all-pervading light – a light that comes from God. This diffusion of light engenders physical sensibility in the spectator who walks through the architectural remains of Andalusian *mesgrids*, or mosques. The play of light and space in the Cordoban *mesquita,* in particular, generates a metaphysical sensation of energy in the viewer that leads to the perception that one stands in a holy place. Perhaps it is what Bachelard defines as *élan vital*, a "vital aliveness" that gives the spectator the sense of liminality, a bridge from the present to the past. Its essence is what Bachelard, calls a "threshold of being," that joins the present body to its surrounding space in harmonious union.[20]

A maze-like prayer hall housing an immense open space divided by alternating shapes, ornament - latticework – and columns that dizzy the eye and render the mind passive, the Cordoban mosque's immense hall houses a built-in dialogue between viewer and form subtly transports the spectator into a subconscious state of being between the present and another time. Empty niches pointing East, toward Mecca, express the purpose of the hall even in the absence of its original architects and inhabitants. Walls lined with Koranic verses chiseled into stone and painted gold, stand in relief as light seems to emanate from underneath the letters, giving the viewer the impression, like the space in which the characters reside, that the words of God are floating. They look like "letters of light" to anyone who circles the columns on which they are inscribed.[21]

Flamenco also carries a scriptural language, played out by hands and arms, eyes and feet, as the dancer traces centrifugal shapes around her head, body and surrounding space. The internalization of the inherently contemplative design of Muslim architecture by anyone who wanders through a *mesquita*, is reflected in the physical design of the body moving through space in flamenco *solea*. The *bailaora* seems to embrace this sense of transformative space filled with its ornamental intricacies as she slowly surrounds her own body with stylized arm and hand shapes and motions, akin to the complex, enfolding latticework found at the tops of arches and columns in Mudejar art.

Extending out into space, she forms tiny *rond de jambs* with her toes and legs. In a meditative motion, the dancer constructs S with her slowly moving limbs – shapes that embrace the surrounding space. She reaches out to the four corners of the earth, dragging each corner closer through sustained toe-tracing shapes along the floor, pulling the space into herself until she is exhausted from the movements' ritualistic repetition, a mapping of space and self.

Is the self-enclosure by the dancer an attempt to hide or to express? Perhaps a study of Andalusian structures may reveal the historical relationship between dance and architecture. Andalusian homes house inner spaces, hidden from the street: enclosed patios, in Arabic, *fondak*, with fountains and plants – a reflection of how Mozarabs "took root in their corner of the world." (The very word for garden, *Jardin*, is an Arab word.) It is the woman who gestures so intimately with her body, and sustaining these arm gestures throughout long solo performances, we are reminded of the femininity of the home – a feminine space, secluded and hidden – as distanced as the *bailaora* makes herself as she falls into trance.[22] Whenever the singer walks toward her, she hides her face, turning quickly around so that he cannot lay eyes on her. As he follows her around the space, she quickens her step, separating herself from him. She holds forcefully to her own space that includes only herself. [23] It is a personal, meditative space that she designs for herself, an empowering self-isolation.

The intended seclusion of women designed and ensured by the *fondak*, is absorbed by the flamenco dancer as she circles around herself, gesturing to the surrounding space, beckoning it with outstretched fingers, hands and slow articulations of her wrists. It is as if she absorbs the architectural space around her, transplanted now to a stage space, repeating the ritual feeling of wandering through the *mesgrid*, or *mesquita* in the choreography of her solo meditation.

Music also reflects a Muslim past. The *cantaor*, whose chant and verse embody historical reflections of the Muslim court *rawi*, or reciter of poems and songs, holds the history of his people in his song. A material reality, the *cantes*, or songs, chronicle the history of the Gypsy people in accompaniment to the dancer's physical tracings of space in time and place. The actual choreographic gesturing of the dancer becomes a material reminder of the sacred, public (mosque, plaza) and private (gardens, caves) spaces through which Gypsies passed like any people living in tri-cultural 15th century Spain.

One further phenomenological connection resonating in flamenco *baile* is in the masculine dance: the *farruca*. Like the Minaret that shoots up into the sky, the *bailaor* effortlessly and repetitively rises onto the tips of his boots, extending his whole body up, reaching for the sky with extended, sharp gestures. He then promenades slowly around himself, distilling his cool balance and male bravura into an image of controlled self-inscription.

The *Siguiriya*, thus, represents an atavistic flamenco dance whose sheer, explosive rhythmic sequences, repeat five times throughout a *solea*, building in intensity as the dancer reaches the end of a performance – blowout, transcendence, *duende*. This final *desplante* carries the audience on a journey with dancer, singer, and guitarist that proves to the spectator the transcendental quality of the dance. Descended from the Moorish *Zambra*, these Hispano-Arab-inspired solo performances are considered by Andalusian scholars to come from the 8th century.

French phenomenologist, Gaston Bachelard, therefore, explored the notion of poetic imagination inherent in artistic being and creation, in which, he sees that a "fundamental reverie," pleasure, imagined memory of one's psycho-physical connection to space occurs. Every individual, thus, develops an idea about the experience of space on sensorial and metaphysical grounds that place, time and memory.[24] What poetic effect can one argue Muslim architecture, therefore, had on the creation of Gypsy choreographic design? If Bachelard is correct, then one's experience of form generates imagined landscapes. The formal, in this case, choreographic and musical, structure housing the Gypsy's poetic/aesthetic reaction to that space in time is influenced by and, perhaps, constructed in the ruined structures of 'al Andalus, becoming the poetic synthesis of both the architectural space surrounding the performers and the musical cadence of Mozarabic religious chant – that which no longer exists.

> Images stir and expand…they reverberate in the [performer's] reverie.[25]

Endnotes

1 Flamenco is a complex art form not easily understood. Its music and dance rhythms and poetic phrases require knowledge of Spanish, the Gypsy language, Calo, and the artistic relationship between singer and dancer. To understand the aesthetic power of flamenco is to understand a history of the form; to understand a technical history of flamenco is also to become fluent in Islamic Spanish culture. Thus, it is to an earlier time that we travel to consider the root sources of the form, its aesthetic and spiritual philosophical base.

2 The words "Islamic Spain" also refer to the following Arabic phrases: Mudejar – meaning art influenced by Moslem-ruled Spain; Mozarabic – a cultural phenomenon that grows out of Moslem-occupied Spain. For example, Christians and Jews living in Arab-ruled and culturally influenced Spain.

Caliph means "commander of the faithful," supreme leader of law and faith. He rules over all peoples either born into or converted to Islam. The faithful share a transnational kinship. For example, the Umayyad dynasty ruled over all peoples from Damascus to Cordoba. Abd 'al Rahman I, the last-surviving son of the Umayyad dynasty, destroyed by the Abbasids in a murderous take-over, proclaimed himself commander of the faithful of Spain.

3 For a more comprehensive study of Muslim-Christian political and religious wars following the year 1492, please read: Henry Kamen. *Empire: how Spain Became a World Power: 1492-1763* (New York: HarperCollins Books, 2003).

4 Henri Pirenne. *Mohammed & Charlemagne* (New York: Norton Books, 1939): chapter 1.

5 For a discussion of social class distinction in the early 8th century Muslim armies, please read: Bernard Lewis. *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982).

Islamic civilization in Spain began in the heart of the Muslim Middle East in the 8th century, in the city of Damascus in the year 710. The Umayyads, rulers of the Shi'ite dynasty claimed direct decadence for Mohammad the Prophet. Following the Prophet's teachings, they set up political bureaucracy – one that would be replicated in Spain – that was so well-organized, they collected taxes and ruled from Syria over Arabia, Sasanid Iran, Palestine, After the death of Mohammed, Damascus became Islam's first civic center.

6 Richard Fletcher. *Moorish Spain* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1992): 171.

7 "The light of 800 lamps filled with fragrant oil made the crystals in the mosaic-work flash like pearls and produced on the pavement, the arches and the walls a marvelous play of color and reflection…The mosque of Cordova is…by universal consent the most beautiful temple of Islam and one of the most beautiful monuments in the world," Charlotte M. Yonge. *The Christian and the Moor* (London: Macmillan & Co, 1878): 78.
8 For two fine histories of early Umayyad rule in Spain, please read: Henri Pirenne, *Mohammed & Charlemagne* (New York: Norton, 1939) and Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
9 Jerrilynn D. Dodds, ed. *Al Andalus. The Art of Islamic Spain* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art): 11.
10 *Ibid*.
11 *Ibid.*
12 *Ibid,* 15.
13 A substantial travel literature extending from the time of the Muslims in Spain through the conquest of Spain by Napoleon Bonaparte's troops in the 1790s and throughout the 19th and 20th centuries is absolutely worth reading to gain truth and legendary tales about the splendid architectural remains of Muslim Spain.
14 Bernard Lewis. *Music of a Different Drum: Classical Arabic, Persian, Turkish & Hebrew Poems* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001): 32.
15 Flamencologists draw a relationship between every cultural dancing tradition that ever swept through the Iberian Peninsula and flamenco. In particular, they site the Roman Gaditanes dancing girls whom both the Roman poet Martial and Cervantes described as "dancing with honey in their hips" for the Roman Emperors," and Gypsy flamenco. One can point to a rhythmic relationship between the Greek use of finger cymbals and the Spanish Gypsy use of castanets. For further reading, please see: José Blas Vega & Mañuel Ruiz. *Diccionario enciclopédico ilustrado del flamenco* (Madrid: Editorial Cinterco, 1988) and Angel Alvarez Caballero. *Gitanos, payos y flamencos en los origenes del flamenco* (Madrid: Editorial Cinterco, 1988).
16 "Sephardic" refers to Jews of the *Sefarad* – the Jews of Spain - who came with the Romans as slaves 450 b.c.e. By the 15th century, close to 1 million Jews lived in Spain. "Had they not been expelled," writes Jane Berger, " they would have by now had two millennia of continuous presence in the Iberian Peninsula…Only Babylonian Jewry, which lived for two millennia in the territory now called Iraq, had a longer record of continuous existence in one country. See Jane Berger, *The Jews of Spain*: *a history of the Sephardic Experience* (New York: Free Press, 1992): 10.
17 Paco Sevilla, "Flamenco: the Early Years," *Guitar & Lute* (November, 1982): 24-27.
18 *Ibid*, 25.
19 *Ibid*, 12.
20 Gaston Bachelard. *The Poetics of Space*, 36
21 Jerrilynn D. Dodds, 37.
22 For a more comprehensive discussion of feminine spaces in Arab culture, please read: Pierre Bourdieu, "The Berber House," *the anthropology of space and place* (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 2003): 131-141.
23 See Jerrilynn D.Dodds, chapter 1.
24 Colette Gaudin, "Introduction," *On Poetic Imagination and Reverie* (Putnam: Spring Publications, 2005): liv-lv.
25 Gaston Bachelard quoted in *On Poetic Imagination and Reverie*, xlvii.

Making Dance History and the Politics of Influence

Suzanne M. Jaeger

My presentation takes as its starting point two sections on Canadian dance history written by Nancy Reynolds and Malcolm McCormick in *No Fixed Points*, their massive and enormously useful account of the general history of dance in the twentieth century. My concern is the framework or conception of history that leads these authors to dismiss somewhat superciliously the formation of dance in Canada as either provincial or primarily derivative of innovations from other nations. According to the authors, Canada is a colonized nation whose contributions to any significant history of dance have been made because of the presence of more civilized, educated and artistically developed colonizers. From the Canadian perspective this characterization is troubling. Partly because of the important contribution Reynolds' and McCormick's book makes to dance scholarship, and partly because of the politically significant assumptions underlying their claims, its two sections on Canadian dance history deserve further critical attention. In my discussion I turn to the work of recent critics of historiography to explicate a different conception of history than the one assumed by Reynolds and McCormick. To quote the literary critic Edward Said: "We can no longer afford conceptions of history that stress linear development […]" Rather, what is needed is an understanding of history and the development of cultural practices as "hybrid, and encumbered, or entangled and overlapping with extraneous elements" (Said, 1993: 384). No historical development of a cultural practice is ever pure.

I would like to begin by providing some sense of how Canadian dance history is represented in *No Fixed Points*. Before I do so, however, I would like to acknowledge again the enormous contribution to the scholarship and teaching of dance history that Reynolds' and McCormick's book makes. It takes a tremendous amount of time, commitment and careful work to produce a book with the breadth of knowledge presented in *No Fixed Points*. My critical comments are directed specifically to the authors' account of Canadian dance history, and my claim is that their misrepresentation of this history draws our attention to a nationalistic-minded historiography of cultural practices that is often assumed in the work of Canadian as well as American scholars. Critiques of nationalism can be found in post-colonial and subaltern studies, and it is these critiques that are brought to bear on the book's claims about the comparable significance of Canadian and American art dance history.

In the Preface, the authors state that their book is not a history of all dance in the twentieth century, but covers events that have "advanced the art" (xi). They explain further that their assessment of what has advanced dance art is guided by a notion of "innovative choreography" (xi). They also inform us that their account is dependent on personal observations and experiences, but also on objective standards existing in the dance world and passed on to them in their first hand experience with "masters" such as Balanchine, Tudor, Limón, and Pilobolus. Moreover, the authenticity of Reynolds' and McCormick's understanding is legitimated through their teachers and so "their experience reaches back to the beginning of the century" in a lineage traced back to include Duncan, Pavlova, Diaghilev, St. Denis and Shawn (xiii). The understanding of innovative choreography holding together the narrative of this particular historical account thus gains authority on the basis of its assumed lineage through the authors as artistic descendents of these historical figures.

One might well question the circularity of this concept of historical authority, granted by the authors to themselves unquestioningly on the basis of their ancestry with fore parents who fulfilled the authors' criterion of having advanced the art. However, my concerns are not so much with the circularity of this constructed authority. They are more with the characterizations of Canadian dance history ensuing from this assumed, historically established, authoritative perspective. Although my criticisms of the authors will be rather sharp, I also want to make clear that some of Canada's art dance history provided by Reynolds and McCormick is accurate. Well-known historical figures are discussed, major Canadian dance companies are mentioned and the development of Canadian art funding structures is generally correct. Nevertheless, there is also a subtle denigration of Canadian dance history manifest in the authors' perspective. To provide examples of this slight, but

nonetheless, noticeable disparagement, I will quote extensively from *No Fixed Points*.

Chapter fourteen, titled "Ballet's High Tide," contains one of the book's two brief sections on Canadian dance history. Asserting Canada's relative status to the U.S., the authors tell us that "activity in Canada began to mushroom as the dance boom in the United States took hold" (573). Apparently there was a "lack of faith in native talent" evidenced by the presence of key figures such as Rachel Browne, Celia Franca, Eric Bruhn, Rudolph Nureyev, and Danny Grossman, among others who were either foreigners or immigrants to Canada. Given that Canada and the U.S. are both countries populated greatly by immigrants from Europe and elsewhere, it is unclear to whom the authors are referring when they speak of "native" Canadians in comparison with immigrants and native Americans. It is also curious that neither Balanchine's nor the Ballet Russe's immigration to the U.S. and subsequent influence on American dance history is interpreted as evidence of any lack of faith in American talent. Furthermore, whereas Rachel Brown's immigration to Winnipeg and subsequent development of the Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers is seen as "American colonization of Canadian modern dance," no parallel interpretation is made of the many artists who moved from Canada to work in the U.S. or Britain, for example, Melissa Hayden and Patricia Wilde who emigrated to the U.S. to become prominent ballerinas with New York City Ballet and Lynne Seymour and Jennifer Penney who both became stars in England's Royal Ballet.

Without considering differences between Canada and the U.S. with respect to population density, territorial size and social and economic structures, Reynolds and McCormick negatively portray the 40 years it took for a ballet company to develop in Vancouver, despite the fact that three major ballet companies were formed in three different regions of Canada between 1938 and 1955 (574).[1] Moreover, despite their extensive touring schedules, their roster of internationally renowned guest artists and choreographers, according to Reynolds and McCormick, the Montreal and Winnipeg troupes were only "homespun affairs" (574). The development of significant Canadian dance relied "on foreigners." Even the contribution of the Canadian born, raised and trained dancer, choreographer, and artistic director James Kudelka is inexplicably tied by the authors to English forebears without sufficient acknowledgment of either the influence of Russian, Danish and French ballet on Canadian ballet or the creative power of Canadians to appropriate and transform European forms of ballet for themselves like the Americans did. Similarly, the work of John Alleyne, another Canadian choreographer and artistic director is perceived to be based on non-Canadian influences. Alleyne was born in the Barbados, raised in Montreal, trained at the National Ballet School in Toronto, Canada, danced with the Stuttgart and later the National Ballet Company of Canada. However, his work is not described so much as Canadian by the authors as showing the influence of Cranko, Kylián, Forsythe, Kudlelka and Mark Morris. Well, at least Kudelka was named. The authors close this section by referring to Christopher House and Robert Desrosiers, two internationally known Canadian dance artists. "That the two are usually categorized as modern-dance choreographers is a measure," say Reynolds and McCormick, "of the degree to which Canadian ballet has shed the provincialism of its origins to become openly responsive to new directions" (580). Again, one hears that subtle denigration of the provincialism of Canada's dance history contradicted nevertheless by the authors' admission of the reliance of Canadian dance companies on international influences for their artistic development.

The second section on Canadian dance history is in chapter 15, titled "Late Modernism: Pluralism and the Ascendancy of Style." Here again the authors emphasize the colonial origins of Canada's cultural history stating that "most Canadians accepted the idea that the arts and any institutional frameworks supporting them should be rooted in European traditions" and that Canada's "longstanding colonial status fostered this attitude" (633). The authors cannot be blamed entirely for this misrepresentation of Canadian attitudes towards the arts. Although the reality of the Canadian dance scene is that contemporary dance companies, the independent artist communities, so-called "ethnic" dance forms and other community oriented dance practices are as important to Canadians as classical ballet, they have generally received less support from federal, provincial and corporate funding bodies. What needs to be acknowledged, even by some Canadians, is that Canada has not been a colony by 1867, which is close to a century prior to the historical developments discussed in *No Fixed Points.* Furthermore, although Canada has indeed been colonized by England and France, like the U.S., Canada has also been populated by immigrants from many different countries in

Europe and elsewhere in the world. Its population is heterogeneous and the influences on its cultural forms are vastly diverse. The continued description of Canada in the twentieth century as a colony is not only anachronistic but is, as I argue later, a politically problematic eclipse of the many different cultural forces that have shaped not only Canadian, but American history as well.

This troubling effacement of our cultural diversity becomes evident yet again when the authors attribute Canada's failure in mid-century to develop an indigenous, professional modern movement to a lack of "impetus to view Canadian dance through Canadian eyes" (634). The unstated comparison here is with Martha Graham, whose work was later brought to Canada by *Toronto Dance Theatre* founders Patricia Beatty, David Earle and the American, Peter Randazzo in the late 1960's. Graham along with Doris Humphrey and a few others developed distinctive forms of Modern dance that contributed to the formation of a unitary American national identity in a way that Canadian dance artists did not. Although earlier in the book, Canadian modern dance choreographer Christopher House, who is the current artistic director of *Toronto Dance Theatre* was described as an innovator of Canadian art dance, in this chapter he is described as following a more mainstream point of view. According to the authors, the emergence of professional art dance and dance artists in Canada was by comparison with the U.S. mostly derivative of European and American inventions: "The revolutionary spirit of American modern dance was largely missing from the Canadian scene" (634). The suggestion is that Canadians only recapitulated dance methods and styles originating south of the border (634). This gloss on the history of dance in Canada ignores, however, the more in-depth knowledge of specific Canadian dance works and artists that is available through the *Dance Collection Dance* archives in Toronto, among other archival resources and publications in Canada.

On the other hand, Reynolds and McCormick acknowledge the distinctive contributions to Canadian dance occurring in French Canada with the activities of Les Automatistes and later followers of the movement who went on to develop other projects and styles. Again the authors emphasize the foreign influence of European artists on the Quebec dance scene, naming Pina Bausch and French and Belgian choreographers. It is also pointed out that Edouard Lock, an internationally renowned Canadian choreographer and artistic director is originally Moroccan.

The presentation of this history of dance in Canada contrasts in specific ways with American dance history. With the U.S. having achieved independent status earlier than Canada, its cultural practices are understood to be guided more by a revolutionary spirit forging the sovereignty of a national identity. Despite the acknowledgement of the influence of European artists such as Mary Wigman on American modern dance, the Europeans are never described by the authors as colonizers, nor as providing evidence of any lack of confidence in American talent. Asserted instead is the way in which this influence was used to develop a unique American identity. Several times the authors describe the early modern dance artists as heroes in the history of American modern dance making. These heroes and pioneers, including, of course, Martha Graham, Ruth St. Denis, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Pauline Lawrence and Louis Horst among others, all contributed to and shaped modern dance into something identifiably American in comparison with Canada's dance history, as derivative.

Such is my sketch of how the history of dance in Canada is presented in *No Fixed Points*. Without having to say much more, the offence Canadians might take to this account is probably already understandable. However, I would like to explore further the concept of history presumed by Reynolds and McCormick by considering some recent discussions of cultural practices, imperialism, and the philosophy of history. Certainly the understanding of history assumed by the authors of *No Fixed Points* is not alien to Canadian historians. Every nation faces the task of forging out an identity, and Canadians too are concerned to be identified by their heroes and pioneers. Canadian artists may be overlooked by other nations, Canadians may see their history differently than outsiders, but Canadians are often as caught up as Americans in presenting a Canadian identity through artistic and other kinds of achievements. Thus, the concern I have with the concept of history presumed in *No Fixed Points* is a criticism as much of an espoused Canadian perspective as it is American. It just so happens that Reynolds and McCormick provide an obvious and relevant example of a troubled view of history of which we ought to be wary, given the current political realities. I turn now to some critical observations of the historical formation of cultural identities in the twentieth century and their

significance for how we ought to understand dance history in the Twenty First Century.

My main point is drawn from Said's claim that while the effects of colonization by the great imperialistic states continue to be assessed and worked through, because of empire, "all cultures are involved with one another" (1994: xxix). "American identity," says Said, and I would add here Canadian identity, "is too varied to be a unitary and homogeneous thing" (xxix). There are still advocates in both the U.S. and Canada for a unitary identity, but there are also those who see the whole as a complex that cannot be reductively unified into one. "This opposition," says Said, "implies two different perspectives, two historiographies, one linear and subsuming, the other contrapuntal and often nomadic" (xxix). He goes on to argue that only a contrapuntal, nomadic historiography is "fully sensible to the reality of historical experience." American identity, like Canadian identity, is not singular or pure, but "hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (Ibid).

When Reynolds and McCormick claim that an indigenous professional modern dance movement did not develop in Canada because Canadians were not interested in seeing Canadian dance through Canadian eyes, they reveal more about their own assumptions than about the reality of dance in Canada during the twentieth century. For the authors, the development of significant dance history is, at least in part, a narrative about the formation of a monolithic cultural identity. And it is precisely because of this way of doing historiography that they miss much of what has occurred in Canadian dance that has nonetheless been significant to Canadians, but for reasons that the authors of *No Fixed Points* fail to take into consideration. On the one hand the mélange of diverse influences and cross fertilizations that led globally to the development of a plurality of rich art dance aesthetics and practices in the twentieth century is acknowledged. However, the grand narrative of national identity gets imposed on this diversity as a unifying force. My concern is with what gets effaced in imposing this lens through which to talk about the significance of art dance practices. What is ignored in Canadian dance history by interpreting the significance of events so narrowly in relation to the narrative of identity formation?

There are many dangers in continuing to appeal to monolithic conceptions of national identity to describe the histories of our cultural practices. There is not only the danger of educating our children in such a way that they learn to venerate the uniqueness of their tradition at the expense of any interest and informed knowledge of others (xxix). There is also the danger that we too as adults get caught up in venerating our nations and our traditions, so that we pursue our interests in the world with disregard for other societies. Said reminds us that:

> We live in one global environment with a huge number of ecological, economic, social, and political pressures tearing at its only dimly perceived, basically uninterpreted and uncomprehended fabric. Anyone with even a vague consciousness of this whole is alarmed at how such remorselessly selfish and narrow interests – patriotism, chauvinism, ethnic, religious, and racial hatreds – can in fact lead to mass destructiveness. The world simply cannot afford this many more times. (21)

I realize, of course, that we are only talking here today about dance history and not wars, pollution, global warming, capitalistic exploitation of natural resources and the other disasters to which Said is referring and which we face, to a great extent, because of first world domination of global resources. I think Said's warning applies, nevertheless, in some measure even to dance scholars like Reynolds and McCormick. It is important for us to guard against self-aggrandizement in the ways that we construct our histories. We ought to be as critical of our internalized norms of official self-identity as we are of our internalized norms of power (380). To quote Said again, "The job facing the cultural intellectual is not to accept the politics of identity as given, but to show how all representations are constructed, for what purpose, by whom, and with what components" (380).

Thus, we ought to accept that there are many histories of dance and even of innovative choreography, comprised of overlapping experiences across national boundaries that are established by various legislated, nationalistic-minded forces. The history of dance is also influenced, however, by resistances to and transformations of these official cultural identities. There is no pure history or singular narrative thread that can pull together the lineage of a historical tradition that is not tainted by hybrid, entangled, overlapping and extraneous influences. The nature of art dance as it exists today, and to which the title of Reynolds and McCormick's book refers is a far

less stable entity than their assumptions of historical narrative would let on.

In the last section of my paper, I want to mention briefly the work of a contemporary Canadian dance artist. His name is Wen Wei Wang, and he is originally from China, though he has been living in Canada for the last 13 years. In 2003 he won the Clifford E. Lee Award, a prestigious Canadian recognition of his choreography. Wang allowed me to observe his rehearsals and spoke extensively of his work during an interview in February 2006. He identifies himself as a Canadian and because of his achievements and talent Canada is happy to acknowledge him, although it would not have been the case in the early part of the twentieth century. His most recent work, "Unbound," which was work-shopped in Banff at the Dance Centre in April 2006, and premiered shortly after on June 9th at the Canada Dance Festival in Ottawa, is a truly hybrid work composed of images drawn from his childhood, for example, of his grandmother's femininity with her delicate, bound feet, and of his mother who was spared the ordeal. He works with non-Asian, "modern" dancers using a movement vocabulary they created together in rehearsals. Wang's body moves with a litheness emanating from the centre of his chest that he attributes to the many years he spent doing traditional Chinese dancing. He tries to convey this way of moving to his dancers who will perform "Unbound," but I can see in the rehearsals that they don't get it. It is not in their bodies. They have not studied traditional Chinese dance. Yet, together in the studio with Wang, they find a way to move that creates new dance images and new meanings. From their work evolves a style of movement that combines the capacities of these North American modern dancers, some with classical ballet and other forms of dance including Hip Hop in their background, with Wang's movement sensibilities and artistic vision.

Here then is an example of the encumbered, entangled and overlapping nature of choreographic invention. It is difficult to say how exactly this work is Canadian or any other specific nationality. How should one trace the effects of national identity on Wang's work? Who is the one making claims about how national identity figures in the work, is it the artist himself, or is it someone in the audience? How are these claims supported, and what is the epistemic status of these markers of national identity? Moreover, what are the political motivations for tracing the influences of national identity? These are some questions that ought to be asked by anyone who appeals to the narrative of national identity in order to understand the significance of artistic developments.

Endnotes

1 The Winnipeg Ballet in 1938, the National Ballet in Toronto in 1951 and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in Montreal in 1955.

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Dance in Crisis: Rhetoric from the Dance Community and Policy at the Canada Council for the Arts

Katherine Cornell

The term crisis appears to be synonymous with Canadian dance. Based on statements from the media[1] and the long list of defunct companies, one could assume that professional Canadian dance has been at risk almost since it emerged in the mid-twentieth century. The dance community often accuses the federal body, the Canada Council for the Arts, and its funding policies, as being at the heart of the crisis - hence the policy documents examined for this paper focus on the Canada Council and its relationship to the Canadian dance community.

This paper will examine Canadian dance in crisis, as described by the community itself and the media, as well as the Canada Council's reaction to the crisis. The term dance can encompass many techniques and cultural forms; over the history of the Canada Council, dance generally refers to professional ballet, modern and contemporary forms, unless otherwise noted.[2] The dance community, for the purposes of this paper, includes dance companies, artists, and organizations funded by the Dance Section of the Canada Council and their provincial counterparts. The stakeholders involved in these crises, both public and private funders as well as the dance community itself, were influenced by political and economic pressures. For the purposes of limiting this discussion, I will examine dance organizations in financial crisis only. Financial crisis generally occurs when the Board of Directors refuses to deal with the company's unwieldy deficit, or when a public funding agency refuses to support the organization further – as a result, the company collapses. Research questions include: When has the dance community been in crisis? How has the Canada Council dealt with crises in dance? Are dance companies entitled to special consideration and funding? Certainly, the dramatic rhetoric from the dance community has communicated a plea for urgent funding since 1957, when the Canada Council began. These reports and discussion papers clearly document overwhelming problems in the dance community including mismanagement, the income gap (between costs of training and production and revenue from ticket sales), meager audiences and even smaller media coverage that have all led to periods of financial crisis.

Timeline of Crisis

Financial difficulty in dance goes back decades to the beginning of professional activity in Canada. Western theatrical dance began in the second half of the twentieth century – the first ballet company in 1939 and the first modern dance company in 1964. In addition, national Canadian ballet festivals occurred at different locations across the country from 1947 to 1954 in an effort to offer more performing opportunities to talented Canadian dancers who often had to leave Canada for employment in the field. The Canadian Ballet Festival Association was the only dance organization to report to the Massey Commission in 1951. The Royal Commission on the Arts Letters and Sciences, commonly known as the Massey Commission, examined the post-war Canadian culture, specifically the high arts, and tried to protect it from invading American popular culture. The Commissioners acknowledged that dance was a late-comer to the performing arts scene in Canada and recognized that it could be fostered and, to a certain extent, molded by cultural policy. The Commissioners recognized the importance of keeping Canadian (ballet) dancers in Canada but also hoped to guide the dance community through policy and funding towards a comprehensive structure with flagships, similar to other artistic disciplines.[3]

Following the recommendations of the Massey Commission, the Canada Council was created in 1957; at that time, the diverse and active dance community had complicated matters significantly by establishing three different ballet companies (one in Winnipeg, one in Toronto, one in Montreal) instead of one national flagship. [4] The opening of the Council represented the first period of crisis for the dance community - the three companies had to compete and justify their requests for federal funding. (Periods of crisis in Canadian dance, often include the preparation of reports and/or policy documents at the Council.) At first, the National Ballet of Canada[5] was the big

winner, consistently awarded larger operating grants than the Royal Winnipeg Ballet or Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. Every year, the Canada Council questioned whether it should be funding all three ballet companies instead of one. In 1962, the Council commissioned an assessment of the three ballet companies, by Lincoln Kirstein of the New York City Ballet and Richard Buckle of the *Sunday Times*, to try and solve its funding dilemma. The resulting Kirstein-Buckle Report was a problematic document because Kirstein wrote that Les Grands Ballets Canadiens deserved all the Canada Council's dance funding, whereas Buckle wrote that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was more worthy of substantial funding. Neither foreign expert could agree, therefore the Council maintained the status quo, funding all three but increasing the allotments to the Winnipeg and Montreal companies accordingly. The three ballet companies continued to have financial difficulties, but the crisis of exclusive funding was over.

Many subsequent Canada Council documents recognized the extreme amount of growth in dance, particularly from 1964 to 1981 with the advent of Canadian modern dance companies.[6] In 1971, the Canada Council commissioned the study, *The Financing of the Performing Arts in Canada: An Essay in Persuasion*, by Vincent Bladen, Professor Emeritus of Political Economy from the University of Toronto and the President of the National Ballet's Board of Directors. Bladen described retrenchment,[7] the policy of freezing funding levels or even cutting back, as a serious threat to Canada's cultural assets that would devastate the field. He (like many other report authors) mentioned W. J. Baumol and W.G. Bowen's influential research on the 'income gap' between earned revenues and production expenses, which is filled by public (and private) support. Grants that did not even keep pace with inflation would not allow Canadian arts organizations to excel. Bladen's persuasive argument had an effect; in 1972, the Canada Council finally created a separate Dance Section to deal with the growing field.[8] The new Dance Section, while directed by experienced bureaucrat Monique Michaud, still needed direction on policy issues.[9] In 1973, the Council commissioned the statistical and policy report, *Directions for the Dance in Canada* from the management consultants, McKinsey and Company Inc.[10] This report offered recommendations first to the Council on how to develop policy for this field with small audiences [11] but exponential growth; and second, to the community in order to facilitate greater stability. The dance community questioned the Dance Section's actions related to fulfilling these priorities and the transparency of its decision making process.[12] The Council considered and implemented the recommendations of the *Directions for the Dance in Canada* report over the seventies, until the next policy document was commissioned in 1980.

In 1980, the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee began its comprehensive work as a follow-up to the Massey Commission. The Committee, chaired by Louis Applebaum and Jacques Hébert, examined existing federal cultural policies and programs, listened to the needs and concerns of the arts community at public hearings across the country, and then recommended directions for future policies in its final Report.[13] Of the 521 briefs and presentations to the Committee, 19 came from the dance community.[14] Briefs emphasized to the Committee that dance was unique and deserved individual consideration apart from other performing arts; the most dramatic brief came from the National Ballet.[15]

In March 1981, the National Ballet of Canada submitted a brief to the Committee entitled, *An Imminent Crisis: Canadian Cultural Policy and the National Ballet of Canada*. This brief used the National Ballet's growing international reputation as justification for increased funding; and reviewed the past, present and future of the company with particular attention paid to touring within and outside of Canada and to the international status of the company. The brief included many charts and impressive statistics regarding government support of other countries, such as the Stuttgart Ballet,[16] to prove that the National Ballet could not compete, at current funding levels. The brief warned that, based on projections, the National Ballet would quickly accumulate a deficit of $500,000 by 1983 if federal support continued at the same slow pace - thus bringing about the imminent crisis.[17] The National Ballet advocated for an increase to the Canada Council's allowance to permit the support of both "less proven organizations" as well as "cultural flagships."[18]

In 1982, the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee published its final recommendations and the Committee devoted a chapter in the Report to the performing arts. The Report explained that since the Massey Commission of 1951, the growth in the performing arts sector had been overwhelming. First, the Committee asserted the Canada Council's need for

more funding. Next, the Committee acknowledged that traditional art forms, such as ballet, flourished in the past thirty years, whereas contemporary arts have generally blossomed since the country's centennial celebrations in 1967. The Committee also noted that Canadian ballet companies lagged behind modern dance companies in terms of the percentage of Canadian content in their respective repertoires. Accordingly, the thirty-ninth recommendation insisted that the Canada Council create a program of incentive grants to generate, produce and market new Canadian works, but not to institute a quota system. In addition, the Committee strongly advised against the consolidation policy[19] for grants in dance at the Canada Council - in order to maintain the dance ecology and encourage experimentation, creativity and new Canadian works. In addition, the Report advocated a blended approach to fundraising from multiple sources, both public and private.[20] The Committee acknowledged that the large accumulated deficits of some Canadian performing arts organizations qualified as a "state of financial crisis."[21] Instead of suggesting more aggressive support from the Cultural Initiatives Program of the Department of Communications (which was granting funding to deal with deficits), the Committee advised a long-term deficit reduction policy based on audiences. The Committee strongly advocated that performing arts organizations create programming to attract young audiences. In addition, the Committee considered the short careers and lack of job security for professional dancers. In its forty-first recommendation, the Committee stated that, "the federal government should assist dancers and other artists who have short professional careers to resettle into allied professions where their artistic skills can best be put to use."[22] This bold recommendation exposed an inherent problem in dance, and attempted to build a healthier sector for the future. Although the majority of Committee's recommendations did not apply to dance, certainly the Report recognized the crises and strongly supported arguments made for further funding of dance in previous studies. In the late eighties, the Dance Section tried deal with these complex recommendations, as well as inflation and a conservative government.

The nineties was the era of cutbacks, in and outside of the arts, and therefore few reports on dance were commissioned – as financial crisis was on the mind of every arts organization in the country, including the Council itself. By 1990, the value of the parliamentary appropriation to Council had declined by 20% (when taking into consideration inflation). In 1992/93, the Council had to trim $8.7 million from its budget.[23] By 1995, the Council had undergone an eight-month review process and a 50% reduction in administrative staff; the review resulted in a new strategic plan entitled *A Design for the Future*. However, this 1995 reform took place after the damage had been done in dance. The community lost several established organizations such as the Dance in Canada Association (1989), Anna Wyman Dance Theatre (1990), Compagnie Eddy Toussaint (1990), Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise – TIDE (1991) and the Ottawa Ballet (1994). Then in 1996, the National Ballet's Artistic Director, Reid Anderson, publicly resigned over repeated cuts in public funding and left for Stuttgart, Germany.[24] Anderson's resignation made the public aware of the reduction in touring, particularly in Eastern Canada and the dwindling size of the large performing arts companies. A Statistics Canada article estimates that approximately 75 Canadian performing arts organizations out of 625 went out of business in the nineties.[25] Of course, all the cutbacks of the nineties forced arts organizations to look elsewhere for funding; not surprisingly by 1995, provincial funding had exceeded federal funding as the primary supporter of the arts in Canada.[26] This series of events demonstrated dance's fragility.[27]

The most recent period of crisis happened in an unlikely place, Quebec. Dance artists outside Quebec have long admired the generous funding from both the provincial Ministry of Culture and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Quebec. The dissolution of Montreal's largest festival and one of its most established companies in 2003 and 2004 was shocking to say the least. The Festival International de Nouvelle Danse folded in the fall of 2003 under the pressure of a $600,000 deficit. Poor attendance and mismanagement were blamed as the cause. Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault[28] suspended operations in fall of 2004 after stranding its artists on tour for seven weeks without salary. Notably, the Canada Council did not (publicly) intervene in either crisis. Ironically in 2001, a collection of service organizations, the Dance Umbrella of Ontario, Regroupement québécois de la danse and CAPDO (now the Canadian Dance Assembly), presented the Dance Section with a two part study entitled Dance at Risk (the study was followed by a joint paper listing factors that challenge the community and funding priorities for the future in

March 2006). The first part of the study focused on the lack of media coverage and the dwindling audience for dance in Quebec[29]; and the second part made urgent recommendations to elevate dance funding in line with the other performing arts - asking for a staggering 57% increase in Canada Council funding to dance.[30] The Dance Section has not acted publicly on this report, undoubtedly because that extreme increase would not be feasible. This recent crisis demonstrated again, the fragile state of dance and the Canada Council's reservation to save drowning companies.

All of these reports and studies have attempted to pinpoint the cause of repeated financial crises and thereby what makes dance different from the other performing arts. Over the decades, four catalysts of crisis have emerged: the large income gap between revenues and expenses, the diminishing media coverage of dance and dwindling audiences, the intense competition for both public and private dollars, and the overworked and at times inexperienced management. Any one of these catalysts could cause crisis but most of Canada's failed dance companies had at least two of these deficiencies.

Issues around advocacy and entitlement

All of these reports advocate for increased public funding for dance. As advocacy documents, at times the content of those reports differ from the objective facts provided by other third party organizations, such as Statistics Canada and the Council for Business and the Arts in Canada (CBAC). Report authors also never consider the possibility that funding policies need to be selective so that the strong survive. Reports tend to look at one sector of Canadian dance, such as modern dance, and not consider the entire field (undoubtedly because of the historic squabbles between factions with in the community). In addition, these reports use examples that suit their own needs and ignore success stories from the dance community. For example, in 1999 CBAC reported four Canadian dance companies with accumulated surpluses (Decidedly Jazz Danceworks had the largest at $168,747);[31] and Statistics Canada documented that private funding to dance organizations increased a remarkable 35% from 1990-95.[32] On the other hand, Statistics Canada supports the contention that "dance is the most highly government-subsidized performing arts discipline"[33] and that funding increases do not meet the rate of mounting operating expenses. CBAC's *Annual Surveys of the Performing Arts* (from 1990-99) document that, in general, dance audiences shrank. The data supports the notion that dance is a precarious field with complex relationships, but the authors must consider the entire field if their arguments of entitlement are to be taken seriously.

The underlying issue concerning dance and cultural policy is that of entitlement. Throughout these reports and studies, four general arguments have been made to justify dance's entitlement to public support; these arguments appear in chronological order. First, the dance community contended that without funding talented Canadian artists would migrate to other countries. Second, often the advocates assumed entitlement based on precedence and a desire to emulate refined European culture. This assumption resulted in an ineffectual argument that virtually omitted the reasons for entitlement and merely focused on the size of funding. (This assumption has hindered advocacy and is an example of ineffectual management.) Third, the dance community has contributed to Canada's development into a mature nation with a distinguished culture. The third argument is perhaps the strongest and least used; it demonstrates the comparative nature of nation building and Canada's strong desire to move beyond being perceived as a colony. Fourth, the dance community is a productive industry that contributes a significant amount in taxes, therefore it participates in a strong Canadian economy (at times, taxes exceed subsidies).[34] Since the seventies, dance organizations have learned the value of the economic impact argument; although the community generally emphasizes the economic need and the state of dance in comparison to other performing arts (who naturally make the same argument). The dance community has also come to realize that public funding is a privilege - tied to political whim and the state of the economy. The assumption of entitlement to public funding, and subsequent use of dramatic rhetoric, is littered throughout these reports. Authors have repeated many of the same arguments since the fifties.

The numerous reports and studies have proven that Canadian dance is prone to crisis and needs more funding. Importantly, these reports and studies have also demonstrated that the dance community has not made the most effective argument for funding and clearly lacks organization and consensus. Furthermore, success stories exist within the dance community but advocates continue to ignore these companies as possible models. The community needs

to rally together, preferably under the auspices of a unified voice offered by a national service organization and argue a better case to a more diverse set of funders.[35] The dance community must realize that over the past fifty years, its argument has not been concerted or clear enough.

Conclusions

Dance is perhaps the most volatile performing art form in Canada – with a significant amount of growth and a significant amount of failure. It has been a problematic art form at the Canada Council. Dance differs from the theatre and music because of the diminutive presence before the Massey Commission, the rate of growth in the dance community over a relatively short period of time, and the lack of one central flagship organization and the general absence of one national advocate. Several reports and studies have been written about Canadian dance because of its complex situation. Over the past thirty four years, the Dance Section's actions have been focused on cautious building of potential when and where possible. The Dance Section has supported the majority of the community to a certain extent (as opposed to a minority to a greater extent). The Canada Council has no written obligation to help delinquent companies, and yet most of the ire and dissatisfaction within the dance community has been directed at the Council because artists see it as the primary supporter of the arts in Canada.[36] Certainly, over the years, some of the recommendations from these reports, such as the creation of a Dancers' Transition Centre,[37] have improved the quality of life in the dance community; unfortunately, the repeated requests and unfulfilled recommendations in all these reports - along with the long list of defunct Canadian dance companies - demonstrates that dance will always be in crisis.

Endnotes

1 In February 2005, Megan Andrews, the editor of *The Dance Current*, exclaimed that "dance is at risk" and the current financial crisis at the Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault was only one in a series of signs. See, Megan Andrews, "Editorial," *The Dance Current* (February 2005), p. 5, and Ellen Bubsy, "Balancing the Equation," *The Dance Current* (May 2005), p. 11.

2 The definition of dance at the Canada Council has been a point of contention. In 1957, the Canada Council only recognized the work of ballet companies as dance; slowly they began to incorporate modern dance into the funding structure.

3 As the youngest performing art in Canada, the dance community differed from theatre and music in that it lacked organization when the Massy Commission began.

4 It is important to recognize that the Canada Council only funded ballet companies in the beginning (even though there was some professional activity in modern dance, folk and other dance forms.) Although funding to the dance community did extend past the three ballet companies: individual artists and choreographers were funded in the sixties through research and travel grants in the Arts Awards Section. The Canada Council did not have a separate Dance Section until 1972 and it did not fund modern dance companies until the late sixties.

5 There was much debate over the name of the National Ballet and whether it truly represented the nation at that time. For more information on the Kirsten-Buckle Report please see, Katherine Cornell, "The Ballet Problem" found in Iro Tembeck (ed.), *Proceedings of Estivale 2000: Canadian Choreography Then and Now*, Toronto: Dance Collection Danse, 2002.

6 For example, the Council went from funding 7 dance companies in 1976 to funding 19 in 1977. Please see, Canada Council. *Trends in Canadian Performing Arts 1972-1983*. Ottawa: Canada Council Research and Evaluation, 1986, p. 9. (Make work initiatives at the Department of Communications and Secretary of State during the seventies and eighties helped support emerging performing arts companies; when the funding ended, those companies quickly approached the Council and significantly increased its client base.)

7 Bladen explained that the Council had asked the National Ballet to not expect increases but instead to expect retrenchment and therefore the National Ballet should begin the process of reducing its expenditures. Vincent Bladen. *The Financing of the Performing Arts in Canada: An Essay in Persuasion*. (Toronto, 1971), p. 1.

8 Vincent Bladen. *The Financing of the Performing Arts in Canada: An Essay in Persuasion*. (Toronto, 1971), pp. 1-22.

9 McKinsey and Co, Inc., Management Consultants. *Direction for the Dance in Canada*. (Ottawa, 1973), p. iv.

10 The team of researchers examined the field over an eight-week period, interviewing all of the Council's clients and dance staff, as well as hosting a three-day national conference on dance (a fortuitous meeting that would lead to the creation of the national service organization Dance in Canada Association).

11 Ibid, p. 3-3.

12 By this time, the dance community had organized and formed the national advocacy group, Dance in Canada. The dance community revolted over the next report commissioned by the Dance Section on the funding of professional dance schools. Many of the complaints were directed at Monique Michaud and her close friendship with Betty Oliphant, founder of the National Ballet School, the bigger winner of funding after the Brinson Report of 1974.

13 Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, *Speaking of our Culture: Discussion Guide*, (Ottawa, 1981), p. 3.

14 This is a huge accomplishment considering that the Massey Commission heard from only one dance organization. Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, *Summary of Briefs and Hearings*, (Ottawa, 1982), pp. 245-262.

15 *Simply Dance*, a report by Timothy Plumptre of Hickling-Johnston Limited, commissioned by the Department of Communications in cooperation with the national service organization CAPDO argued that dance was incredibly fragile, particularly modern dance companies in comparison to ballet companies.
16 Notably, this persuasive comparison argument only focused on European countries and companies that did not have the blended approach, private and public, to funding the arts. This was yet another attempt of the National Ballet to argue to the federal government the request for special treatment. Ibid, p. 8.
17 Ibid, p. i.
18 National Ballet of Canada, "An Imminent Crisis: Canadian Cultural Policy and the National Ballet of Canada." (Toronto, 1981), pp. 8-11.
19 The consolidation policy was both artistic and financial. The Dance Section consolidated its funding to ballet and modern dance, supporting a small group of established companies instead of encouraging more growth. Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. *Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee*. (Ottawa, 1982), pp. 182-183.
20 The Report advocated arts support that combined the approach of government support in European nations and the prominent private philanthropy in the United States .
21 Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. *Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee*. (Ottawa, 1982), p. 176.
22 Ibid, p. 182.
23 In 1993, the Senate rejected the controversial rejoining of the Canada Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council at the last minute. Canada Council for the Arts, About Us, "History," [website] (Ottawa: Canada Council for the Arts, 2005, access 30 May 2005); http://www.canadacouncil.ca/aboutus/history/#29.
24 Paula Citron, Deidre Kelly, Lewis Hertzman, "NBC leader walks after government pulls funds," *Dance Magazine*. (Jan 1996), p. 31.
25 Statistics Canada, The Daily - Monday October 21, 2202, "Challenges for the performing arts," [website] (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2005 access 21 May 2005); http://www.statcan.ca/DailEnglish/021021/d02102k.htm, p. 1.
26 Marie Lavallée-Farah, "The Flyers and the Payers: Funding Not-for-Profit Performing Arts," *Quarterly Bulletin form the Culture Statistics Program.* 9, 2 (Summer 1997) pp. 1-2.
27 "Statistics Canada, The Daily - Monday October 21, 2202, "Challenges for the performing arts," [website] (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2005 access 21 May 2005); http://www.statcan.ca/DailEnglish/021021/d02102k.htm, p. 1.
28 For more information see, Philip Szporer, "Precipitating events: The closing of Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault," *The Dance Current.* 7, 8 (March 2005) pp. 23-25.
29 Parts of this report are considered confidential to protect the opinions of respondents. *Dance at Risk:* a document prepared for the Canada Council by Regroupement québécois de la danse, Dance Umbrella of Ontario and CAPDO, Part 1, 2001. (available from Dance Collection Danse, Toronto)
30 Regroupement québécois de la danse, Quebec Danse, "Danse en Peril (Suite)," p. 5. (Since the demise of F.I.N.D., the Canada Council has worked with the Department of Canadian Heritage to offer special funding to a new dance festival in Montreal.)
31 Council for Business and the Arts in Canada. *CBAC Annual Survey of Performing Arts Organizations 1998-1999.* (Toronto, 1999), p. 11.
32 Marie Lavallée-Farah, "The Flyers and the Payers: Funding Not-for-Profit Performing Arts," *Quarterly Bulletin form the Culture Statistics Program.* 9, 2 (Summer 1997) p. 3.
33 Ibid.
34 National Ballet of Canada, "An Imminent Crisis: Canadian Cultural Policy and the National Ballet of Canada." (Toronto, 1981), p. 27.
35 It has been clear since the cutbacks and policy shift of 1995, the Canada Council is not the only funder in an increasingly complex and competitive field, although it continues to set policy trends.
36 In some parts of Canada, such as the Maritimes, the Canada Council is by far the primary supporter of arts organizations and therefore the object of most of the advocacy.
37 The Dancers' Transition Resource Centre was created in 1985 and is one of four in the world. The creation of such a support network was suggested in the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee Report.

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Provocative Loci: The Banff Centre for the Arts and Other Places of Dance Creation[1]

Margaret O'Shea

Rationalist discourse produced in recent centuries by the scientific method and Enlightenment epistemologies has reduced the geophysical location of innovation to being immaterial. Essentially, the place of intellectual creation has faded in importance to the point that genius productions appear to manifest from anonymous, undifferentiated labs and studios. In the words of Thomas Nagel, rationalism has created a "view from nowhere" (Barnes 567) that delocalizes the genesis of ideas and knowledge itself. The lived experience of innovation tells a different story, a story that privileges the actual physical places of creativity. In his keynote address at the 2004 annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Trevor Barnes proffered an intimate portrait of the intellectual epiphanies he has experienced and their geographic loci. He dismisses the rationalist 'view from nowhere' and reminds innovators to value the "embodiedness and material embeddedness of the intellectual process" (565).

Barnes' sensitivity to the place of innovation is but one example of an individual accrediting his surroundings with his achievements. A phrase we are starting to hear more often is genius loci, the spirit of a place. Site-specific choreographers are often especially sensitive to the genius loci of their unorthodox 'theatres', but I think dance practitioners, artists more generally, innovators and academics (I'm aware that great overlap exists among these categories) can all benefit from an expanded sensitivity to the places of creativity. Michel Foucault states "Our epoch is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites" (23); Foucault stresses the relational mode of knowing that can only exist when two places (therefore sites of knowledge) meet, and all their inherent contradictions, similarities, tensions, flows, etc, come into dialogue with the human being.

A codicil of the previous arguments must be made explicit before we venture into the implications of place theory to dance creation and other endeavours. Foucault's description of knowledge in our time as essentially relational is premised on the existence of differentiated space. If knowledge emerges at the frontiers, the intersections, diverse and distinct regions and modes of being must first exist so that borders and boundaries can meet. Further, those borders must be encountered, either through passage, trespass, encroachment, or negotiation to expose their relational meaning. In this framework, the interstitial spaces, the liminal zones between seemingly stable and knowable regions offer vast potential for exploration and learning. An individual encountering a new land or a transition zone develops meaning and tactics for movement by building on previous experiences of places and the associated spatial patterns of behaviour. Before turning to an analysis of transitional and borderlands in the context of innovation, I will sketch for you the foundation of place-based knowing that every individual develops over time and that informs and shapes that individual's future experiences in new places.

An influential cultural geographer, Yi-Fu Tuan, writes that people differentiate between *space* and *place* according to our experiences in the region and associations made over time. Tuan writes: "What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we endow it with value" (6). All forms of value are legitimate here, including social, economic, political, ecological, personal, aesthetic, and artistic value. Quoting again from Tuan:

> From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place. (6)

In this excerpt, spatial and temporal practices become entwined. Tuan is not limiting knowledge of place to a static, frozen moment stripped of kin-aesthetic engagement; instead he is capturing brief episodes of deep and meaningful being-in-the-moment that forge attachments between a person and his or her

environment. For example, I came to know the golden, undulating prairie by time spent mesmerized by its motion and by running my palms over the soft tops of waving grasses, highly kinaesthetic moments[2]. I think it is more powerful to reconfigure the temporal component of his argument with the possibility of multiplicity. For example, Relph, Tuan's colleague, underscores the centrality of place to future knowledge creation when he states that home is "an irreplaceable centre of significance ... the point of departure from which we orient ourselves" (40). Relph's description of the time and location of place attachment as elastic is simultaneously liberating and grounding.

This is one of the paradoxes of place attachment, that intimate knowledge of a place is at once grounding and inspirational. A place that is home becomes the jumping off point for all other endeavours and journeys. Attachments to place form as a person makes a path through the world, encountering obstacles both physical and conceptual. Place attachment is a deep knowledge of the relationship between the person and the environment, perhaps deeper than language allows us to explore, but no deeper than our experiences of the place and our understanding of how we practice being in that place.

Attachment to place occurs subtly, cognitive psychologists may claim it is sub-conscious. In this term, sub-conscious, psychology's belief in a mind-body duality is revealed. Alternatively, many performance artists, and, slowly, some academic researchers interested in corporeal knowledge, have come to speak of the thinking body, the integrated, embodied self. *The disappearing body* is a popular and admittedly useful phrase used to describe those moments when mental attention and physical action appear to be at odds. We've all arrived home safely only to realize that we have no recollection of driving the last 20 minutes and five intersections. Though the *dis-appearing body* might linguistically capture the experience of being on autopilot, in reality physical attunement and response to this situation is paramount to personal safety. Surely if the driver has succeeded in navigating the turns, stops, and merges of the route, her body has in fact been aware and responsive to environmental elements.

Site-specific choreographer Victoria Hunter describes the process of responding to a site with danced movement as a result of "heightened awareness of being in the moment during which the body becomes porous, open, and receptive" (368). 'Height-ened awareness' is a noble aim but my argument, supported by place attachment theory, is that elements of the physical world penetrate *every* moment of creativity, contributing to movement shapes, air flows, and a dancer/choreographer's sense of groundedness. Relying on Hunter's isolated moments of receptivity to place raises the question, where is the body the rest of the time?, a logical tautology. Comparing the works of German choreographers Sasha Waltz and Jo Fabian, Jens Giersdorf proclaims that the concept of the disappearing body "removes the performing subject … especially the dancing subject… from cultural and political issues" (415). In reality, the human body is constantly receptive, open to the elements, processing stimuli and taking courses of action. The body's complicity to knowledge formation and access is crucial to the construction of place attachments as they seem to develop while everyday life continues.

Michel de Certeau's most referenced text "Walking in the City" describes the active process of walking through Manhattan, constructing paths as social spaces, routes as negotiations of individual needs and desires. Within the strict spaces of the rationalized city, walking for de Certeau actualizes some possibilities of the established, planned spatial order, ignores other possibilities, and even opens up new possibilities that were not inscribed on the original city plan. The small practices of everyday living make bold statements about our conceptions of spatial utility and meaning. De Certeau says "spatial practices in fact secretly structure the determining conditions of social life" (96). His emphasis on secrecy supports the subtleties of embodied practice that form emotional, personal bonds to places.

Having formed strong bonds to places and having come to know the ins and outs of a locality, shifts in space, in the larger geography of the world, or in the smaller geography of commodities, can cause ruptures in a person's place attachment that upset both a person's sense of place and of self. Such a rupture decentres the individual, forcing him to rethink his mode of being in space and to develop new practices for living or coping with elements of the environment. De Certeau states, and I agree, that "other regions give us back what our culture has excluded from its discourse" (qtd. in Driscoll 384). As an example, the beauty of dancing prairie grasses is made more fleeting by my knowledge of the permanence of the Rocky Mountains. The interface of these two eco-systems provides new knowledge of both the prairie

and the mountain *and* their relationship to one another. Thus, epistemological potentials and intellectual discoveries exist at the margins where new worlds are met by the thinking body – an exciting promise for artists and innovators seeking new ideas and representations.

A rupture in the artist's sense of place can be used strategically to unleash new modes of thinking and doing. Movement, both pedestrian and artistic or expressive, becomes naturalized in a place where long-standing roots exist for the individual. This is a tenet of dance as a cultural, locatable marker and will not be discussed here except to say that disturbances to place attachment require an individual or group to cope in a new environment, adjusting movement patterns and spatial practices to navigate new paths and ways of being. Instead, I will focus on two kinds of disturbance to place attachments: Foucault's heterotopias, and frontier or transitional areas.

Foucault coined the term heterotopia to stand in opposition to and complement the more commonly known utopia. A utopia comprises a perfect form of society in its environs – Foucault states utopias are "fundamentally unreal spaces" (24). Heterotopias, in contrast, "juxtapose in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible" (Foucault 25). In this sense a heterotopia is a place of simultaneity, allowing for multiple uses or functions at one time. Foucault cites the example of a theatre that is capable of displaying a range of times and places on one rectangular stage, or the cinema that projects 3-dimensional space onto a 2-dimensional screen, comp-lete with aural, visual, corporeal cues. A heterotopia is a space of play and discovery, a flexible place of unlimited possibility. Apposite to the discussion of heterotopias in the context of dance creation, Kevin Heatherington describes the anatomical provenance of the heterotopia concept: "[Heterotopia] is used to refer to parts of the body that are either out of place, miss-ing, extra, or, like tumours, alien" (qtd. in Barnes 574). A parallel is easily drawn between the dislocatedness of experiencing a heterotopia and the awareness of the physical body in cases of disease or pain. These real but confounding places of confrontation and juxtaposition offer a shock to our place attachments and present a new ordering of things we thought we knew. Foucault deems heterotopias 'counter sites' (Barnes 574), which function to invert or critique a set of relational knowledges that were once comfortably known.

The Banff Centre for the Arts is one such place of potential rupture as it functions for most visitors as a heterotopia, occupying neither a home place nor an away place since visits are often prolonged. Sited on a hill not very far from the commercial centre of Banff, the Centre has elements of the urban (a choice of delectable restaurants within walking distance) and the rural (calving elk threatening conference attendees). While artists use the Banff Centre as a retreat in which to focus their thoughts and efforts, the exhibitions, performances and publications publicly stage the artists' products, commercialising and publicising their artistic visions. The interpenetration of public and private spaces at the Banff Centre owes a debt to feminist principles in the field of planning that are now seeking a more balanced social and physical landscape (Hofmeister 118). Feminist planning principles also call for transitional spaces.

Transitional spaces are regions that separate "islands of ordered time-space" (Hofmeister 114). They are often disordered at least from the perspective of the neophyte, and unsigned in that the spirit of the place is foreign and the neophyte is illiterate to its lexicon. Though disordered and perhaps nonsensical, sometimes transition zones command the best of both or all of the worlds they border. Ecologically, it has been proven by many studies that numerous animal and plant species thrive in the transition zones between urban and rural tracts to a degree unseen in 'natural' habitats. Sabine Hofmeister calls for a re-valuation of transition spaces for those species and for human innovation. In this way, transitional spaces might also be described as heterotopias where interfaces, confrontations and renewal can occur.

The value of transitional spaces as creative spaces has also been addressed in business and management literature on the managerial model of entrepreneurship. In this model, managers encourage employees to be innovative in the workplace, sometimes providing tools for creativity like art supplies or time slots during the workday assigned for exploration and lateral thinking. The same literature reports that enforced creativity falls very flat and results in employee distress and dissatisfaction with their jobs. Obviously, this is not the intended result. The Banff Centre for the Arts is also a designated space of creativity, housing artists, workshops, and apprenticeships largely to great success. How then does the Banff Centre evade the pitfalls of enforced innovation that fails miserably in other arenas? The answer lies in the confluence of Banff as a

heterotopia, a space of play *and* work (thought the two are not mutually exclusive), and the local-tactical entrepreneurship that must occur as place attachments are uprooted and confronted with the liminality of the Centre for the Arts.

De Certeau defines the everyday as "the cultural activity of non-producers of culture" (Driscoll 381). Some artists may take offence at the suggestion that they are either Producers of Culture (capital P and C) or that they do not Produce Culture, but the suggestion in de Certeau's quote is merely that culture exists in the smaller moments, the day to day grounded practice in a place, the tactics of coping with unexceptional obstacles. An individual need not recognise their actions as creating culture – the everyday tactics of being in a place might even operate as background noise that only subtly works its way into the creation of a dance or artefact of Culture. A disruption to a person's sense of place that does not include the threat of death, or any host of tragic consequences, for life at the Banff Centre is, we can all agree, quite cushy by many standards, demands small adjustments, subtle developments, slight but significant shifts in daily practice to accommodate new landscape elements, both natural and constructed. The Banff Centre for the Arts as a transitional space is a "liminal place of possibility" (Hofmeister 105) where attendees must develop new tactics of spatial behaviour in adaptation to the place that is suddenly both mountainous and paved, expansive yet closed-in, designed but untouched. A transitional geophysical area is also a transformative realm for personal growth or change. According to Parse, transformation occurs when there is a "shifting view of the familiar-unfamiliar" (qtd. in Schmidt-Bunkers 26), an effect achieved by upsetting established place attachments.

According to de Certeau, a tactic, or a technique of coping, "must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power" (Hjorth 391). A tactic is developed in the face of new and unsigned information, in this case spatial information. We seek out the rules of spatial behaviour that have functioned well in the past in other terrains; sometimes those 'rules' translate to new landscapes rather well and are easily adapted but in other cases an individual must inventively explore her capabilities to determine a functional movement pattern that suits the region and her purposes within the region. Site-specific choreo-graphers constantly work to translate both their moves from the studio to the site and the genius loci to their movements. Fiona Wilkie writes of a 'repertoire' of movement allowed by the constraints and history of a place. It is easy to extrapolate from her analysis of historicity of a place as it informs a dance to emphasise the materiality of the site that informs and even shapes spatial movement patterns, subtly filtering into the dance structure.

In the words of Bruno Latour, material artefacts of a region are not merely intermediaries with no agency or consequence (Barnes 571). Material artefacts, the physical stuff of life from concrete steps to bird feathers, are rather mediators of the human-environment relationship, affecting outcomes of human action and endeavour. The physical stuff of life at the Banff Centre shapes the outcome of artistic exploration done here: The dynamic seasons of the Rocky Mountain range, an ever-evolving community of peers at the social intersection that is the Banff Centre, the contradictions of rural and urban, commercial and aesthetic, retreat and performance, all make demands on participants at the Centre to find a new *place* and mode of participating in that place. Once removed from its place of creation, a dance or other artistic creation maintains some residual essence of the place, jettisoning elements of that place into the global information flow, informing people far and wide of place-based perceptions and perspectives (Drake 513-514).

Jens Giersdorf reminds us all that life itself is a performance of values, emotions, and allegiances, all tied firmly to the provocative loci of everyday life. In the following quote, Mike Pearson is speaking of site-specific dance, but I feel he really gets to the heart of making sense of place and the knowledge we generate by simply being in place.

> The multiple meanings and readings of activity and site intermingle, amending and compromising one another. They reveal, celebrate, confound, criticize, and make manifest the specifics of the site which begins to resemble a kind of saturated space or 'scene of crime', where, to use forensic jargon, everything is potentially important. (qtd. in Wilkie 258)

Provocative loci like Foucault's heterotopias and the transitional spaces between stable geophysical areas are places of opportunity. The liminal nature of both zones provides an endless horizon for exploration, personal development and intuitive response.

Jeremy Ahearne states "tactical practitioners do not have time at their disposal. They must respond to situations as they are 'touched'" (qtd. in Hjorth 393). The tactics of everyday life are immediate and significant to our place attachments. Marginal experiences like sensing place and responding to ruptures in place attachments are elusive. Richard Terdiman describes it thus:

> Speaking on the margin and about marginality are constitutively arduous. When we attempt to talk about that protean and ungraspable nonplace where everything passes over, we learn how frustratingly experience can wriggle away from words. (401)

What I insist that you take away from this presentation is the value of the "embodiedness and material embeddedness of the intellectual [artistic] process" (Barnes 565). As social, cultural, grounded beings, the place of human innovation is equal in importance to and constitutive of the innovation itself. Indeed, the power of place cannot be overlooked and should instead be celebrated and acknowledged.

Endnotes

1 The Banff Centre for the Arts is used merely to illustrate an embodiment of the theories of heterotopia and transitional space in a physical place some readers may have experienced. The Banff Centre is not problematised here because its value is as a concrete example of the physical concepts addressed and not as a political, social centre. For an exposition of the Banff Centre for the Arts as an historic cultural, social, artistic and educational institution, please see Amy Bowring's "Moving Mountains: A History of Dance and Movement at the Banff School of the Arts, 1933-1967" (this volume). An anthology of critical and historical writings on the Banff Centre for the Arts as an institution for dance education and creation is being negotiated for publication in the near future.

2 Sandra Schmidt Bunkers takes up the prairie as a unique place of learning and innovation in her essay "Reflections on the Prairie as a Creative Teaching-Learning Place." Her treatment of the prairie as a liminal yet boundless space for creative thought largely complements the discussion of transitional spaces as a place of coping and innovation in this essay.

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Embodiment of the Revolution: An Ideological Study of Cuban Modern Dance

Valerie E. Gerry

"Artistic creation is free whenever its content is not contrary to the revolution. Forms of expression in art are free." This declaration - taken from the Cuban Constitution – may underestimate the role that artistic form can play in advancing or obstructing political agenda. Following the Cuban Revolution of 1959, the Castro government created a National School of the Arts with separate divisions and professional companies for ballet, Afro-Cuban, and modern dance. In selecting which art forms to endorse, the new government took into account the social and political significance of their various histories. The inclusion of modern dance was surprising given that it had been virtually nonexistent in Cuba prior to the Revolution. On the surface, the egalitarian nature of modern dance makes it seem a logical choice for the expression of Revolutionary values. But amid expectations of artistic realism, nationalism, and pressure to reinforce social ideals, the relationship between modern dance and Marxist-Leninist ideology was not always a comfortable fit.

In preparing this paper, I looked to the communist movement within modern dance in New York in the early 1930's to locate potential points of friction. Out of the social unrest and hardship of the Great Depression, the Worker's Dance League, with the slogan "Dance is a weapon in the revolutionary class struggle" emerged with the goal of using dance as a tool for political change (Graff 317). In conversation with leftist critics, these radical dancers left behind rich insight into the intersection of modern dance and Marxist-Leninist ideology. I applied this to the study of Cuban modern dance in the late 1960's and early 70's, when Cuba's economic difficulties forced a closer alliance with the Soviet Union and a more explicit acceptance of Marxism in cultural policy. During this time positions within the ministry of culture were put in the hands of former military, and enforcement of communist values on writers and artists reached a new height (Howe 5).

The 1971 Congress on Cuban Education and Culture broadcast new attitudes on the nature and function of art with its declaration "The cultural media cannot serve as a framework for the proliferation of false intellectuals who try to convert snobbishness, extravagance, homosexuality and other social aberrations into expressions of revolutionary art, removed from the masses and the spirit of our Revolution" (Ripoll 520). In the communist view, art should be a realistic, unabstracted reflection of current political and social issues, should represent the interests of the proletariat, and privilege the masses over the individual. This insistence on artistic realism and literalism derived from Lenin's reasoning that given the interpretive power of the human mind, abstract art could be transformed by the observer into fantasy, which in the long run would lead to conceptions of God (Elion 128).

Modern dance challenges the communist model of art in several important ways. In the New York revolutionary dance movement, classic modern dance artists such as Graham, Humphrey, and Weidman (all of whom indirectly influenced modern dance in Cuba) were labeled bourgeois and criticized by the leftist press for work that was too personal, individualistic, mystical, , and abstract (Graff 318). Critics and choreographers debated whether bourgeois modern dance techniques had any value whatsoever for revolutionary dancers, or if a completely new technique was needed to express communist values. In Cuba also, in the early days after the revolution, Soviet-modeled critics were apprehensive about the influence that this "bourgeois" dance form might have on Cuban culture (Mousouris 57).

In light of this, the government's decision to invest in a National modern dance school and company is even more perplexing. Government officials were conscious that policy decisions would define the new regime both at home and abroad. In an effort to redefine Cuban cultural identity through art and education, Castro set out to equalize access to the arts geographically, racially, and economically (Loomis 19). Prior to the Revolution, ballet training and performance were accessible only to wealthy Cubans living in urban areas, while Afro-Cuban dance traditions, associated with the lower class, were not valued or promoted at the national level (Daniel 16). After the revolution, an attempt was made to democratize ballet and to support Afro-Cuban dance at an equal level. Government-funded dance training

increased the racial diversity of Cuban ballet schools and companies, while ballet performances were made affordable for the average citizen and salaries even made comparable for principal dancers and members of the corps (Daniel 42). At the same time, a national Afro-Cuban dance company was created and classes were included in the curriculum of the first national art school.

Modern dance was seen as a way of uniting ballet and Afro-Cuban styles into one uniquely Cuban form that would represent the diversity and unity of the new Revolutionary culture. By combining ballet and Afro-Cuban dance, modern would embody the breakdown of racial and socioeconomic stratification. In addition, the founder of Cuban modern dance, Ramiro Guerra, who had studied with Graham and Weidman in the late 1940's, had already begun experimenting with a unique Cuban style and was an advocate for modern dance after the Revolution. Guerra was appointed the director of the new company, the *Conjunto Nacional de Danza Moderna*, and several Americans, most notably Lorna Burdsall and Elfrida Mahler, as well as Mexican dancer Elena Noriega, began working with Guerra to establish a new technique. Guerra selected 12 black and 12 white Cuban dancers for the first company, and began to explore how the collective Cuban body moved and what it had to say (Mousouris 57).

Realism in 1930's revolutionary dance was one of the major sources of conflict between dancers and their critics. With the advent of the Workers Dance League, abstract works were widely criticized in favor of ideological clarity. In some cases, to make the work as accessible as possible, the choreography employed a linear narrative structure and pantomimic gestures (Prickett 16). Since Cuban modern dance derived from some of the same artists most heavily criticized by the New York leftist press (such as Graham), I was curious to see how this concept was applied in Cuba, where artists were also under pressure to address contemporary social issues with, as the First Congress of the Communist Party of 1975 stated "firmness and ideological clarity…" (Ripoll 521).

Under Guerra's direction the *Conjunto Nacional de Danza Moderna* found a way to connect modern dance with the Cuban people by using shared myths, themes, and histories that audiences could readily recognize and understand (Mousouris 66). In the early years Guerra, Mahler and Burdsall all created works of political narrative that celebrated the revolution's triumphs. Writing for Dance Magazine in 1971, Muriel Mannings noted that "Although there is a strong relationship between the new work and the revolutionary culture, there are lyrical and abstract works in the repertory" as well (62). This departure from realism did not seem to attract negative attention from Cuban cultural officials, whereas the New York critics would have been very vocal.

The Marxist expectation of strict realism in art was not always what audiences, and the Cuban government itself, were really looking for. Maintaining political control in fact often called for the suspension of reality. In both Afro-Cuban dance and ballet, political commentary was scarce and the emphasis was on ideals of beauty and communal celebration. In 1978 Roger Copeland hypothesized that the popularity of ballet in Cuba derived not from its realism, but rather "from its ability to usher the viewer into an exotic and ethereal dimension far removed from the material world" (D1). 1930's Revolutionary dance critic and performer Edna Ocko offered an amusing take on the tension between dance as commentary on, rather than an escape from, social realities. She recalled "We had major problems in trade unions when we danced. They all loved tap dancing, and here we came in our rags, in our safety pins, always being starving workers, and the real starving workers wanted ballet dancers in tutus, or tap dancers" (Prickett 19). Realism, if strictly practiced, would require accepting the negative along with the positive, and this the Cuban government was not always prepared to do.

The desire for realism was tempered by the nationalistic desire to represent Cuban culture positively and to define it independently from the United States (McPherson 39). Angel Gonzalez, the director of the Cuban National Art Schools in the mid-1970s described how with the help of the Soviets, the Schools had established a "much more scientific and rational" methodology for the teaching of the arts that would encourage students to "create true socialist, Cuban and Latin American art" (Fernandez 83). The declaration of the Cuban Congress of Education and Culture of 1971 was explicit about the need to combat "any attempt at foreign control in the area of ideas and aesthetics" particularly from capitalist cultures such as the United States (Ripoll 520). Anti-Americanism was a common feature in political rhetoric and Castro repeatedly warned against American "cultural colonialism" (Ripoll 520).

Modern Dance's North American roots certainly did not ease its acceptance in Cuba and in other communist countries. According to dance ethnologist Yvonne Daniel, despite the uniquely Cuban style of modern dance, it could not shake its association with "an 'American' or North American indigenous art and for this reason did not emerge as a prime facilitator for a national image from the Cuban dance community" (113). In the early 1930's, Anna Sokolow, an American revolutionary dancer and choreographer who often included Soviet themes in her work, traveled to the USSR to present some of her pieces. Neither the communist content of her choreography nor her own political sympathies could negate the fact that her work had been created in a capitalist society. To Sokolow's surprise, the Soviets disapproved of modern dance altogether and dismissed her work as the product of "bourgeois decadence" (Prickett 19). Dance Historian Stacey Prickett explains that to Marxist theorists "True socialist realism…could be created only in a country where the shift of power toward the proletariat had begun" (19). But even Cuba's *Conjunto Nacional de Danza Moderna* met with a cool reception on its first tour to the Soviet Union in 1969. In an interview with the Cuban communist newspaper *Granma*, Ramiro Guerra remarked that the *Conjunto* had encountered considerable prejudice against its experimental style. He also observed that Soviet countries were experiencing what he believed to be a choreographic crisis because of their conservatism (Vazquez).

Cuban cultural authorities agreed that art should reinforce the political and social mission of the Revolution. Although modern dance has achieved great success in Cuba, it has not approached the popular appeal of Afro-Cuban dance or ballet. Modern dance's struggle to find an audience amid more accessible forms is not unique to Cuba. But in ballet and Afro-Cuban dance, the Revolution found a more effective mouthpiece than modern dance could provide. In a 1978 New York Times article entitled "Why Cuba Champions Ballet" Roger Copeland observed that despite ballet's aristocratic heritage, "The qualities celebrated in ballet- hard work, discipline and regimentation, sublimation- are the very qualities the Cuban revolution wished to instill in the average citizen" (D9). Yvonne Daniel argues that Afro-Cuban dance (in particular, rumba) had been selected over ballet or modern to represent the national culture because of its association with the ideologically venerated working class (113). Ballet embodies the pride and drive of the revolutionary citizen while Afro-Cuban dance celebrates the worker's central role in society. By fusing elements of both these forms, Cuban modern dance may have diluted, rather than summed the political potency of each taken separately (Levine).

Ballet and Afro-Cuban dance were more in harmony with revolutionary social ideals than was modern dance. The Cuban government at this time spent considerable resources addressing the perceived threat of homosexuals among artists and intellectuals. Communist ideology viewed homosexuality as an unproductive and narcissistic lifestyle and by 1965 the government had created Military Units to Aid Production: forced labor camps where homosexuals and other deviant groups were sent. Strangely, homophobia even factored into the inclusion of modern dance in the initial arts programming. Ricardo Porro, the architect of the original School of Modern Dance at Cubanacán, explained that government officials thought it "prudent to support a form of dance that was less effeminate than ballet, so the boys who wanted to dance would run less of a risk" (Guillermoprieto 271). In the early days of the revolution, ballet battled the stereotype of the effeminate male dancer with proactive campaigns that reached out to the working class. The Ballet Nacional created several demonstration pieces, using scenes such as a male ballet dancer lifting a ballerina above his head next to a man lifting weights (Copeland D9). Ironically, this campaign for greater open-mindedness also involved the exclusion from National Ballet companies of any male dancers who were openly gay or showed effeminate tendencies. Because of these initiatives over time, ballet was recast as a vehicle for machismo and heterosexual love. In rumba too, Yvonne Daniel points out, machismo is central, with male dancers acting out the role of strong protectors of women within the family unit (98).

Modern dance may have been considered less effeminate then ballet, but it also lacked the structure and gender specificity of ballet and some Afro-Cuban dance forms. Where art was valued for its role in reinforcing social structures, modern dance under Ramiro Guerra took an increasingly iconoclastic turn. One of his last works with the Conjunto, Impromptu Galante, satirized stereotypes of machismo and femininity (Mousouris 67). While Guerra had begun with political narrative in the days following the Revolution, he said he soon became interested in working with "metaphor, irony, satire and burlesque"

and wanted to open his work "…to chance, freedom, and creativity" (Mousouris 66). In 1971, his piece *Decálogo del Apocalipsis* (Decalogue of the Apocalypse) was banned before it opened for its depictions of prostitution, homosexuality, and, as he described it, a world "howling, moving, changing, and exploding, eradicating identities to create new directions" (Mousouris 67). So controversial was this anarchic work that Guerra was removed from his position as director of the company and not permitted to work for years.

Social philosopher Hannah Arendt wrote "The most radical revolutionary will become a conservative the day after the revolution." Whereas radical dance in New York in the 1930's was a way of rehearsing a revolution that never came (Franko 28), modern dance in Cuba was expected to commemorate and celebrate what the revolution had already won. After nurturing an early period of experimentation resulting in the creation of the *técnica cubana*, emphasis shifted toward preservation in the face of outside influence. In 1930's New York, critics urged choreographers to depict political oppression, hardship and social inequality. In Cuba, such depictions would have been interpreted as criticism of the Revolutionary government. The antiacademy nature of modern dance, its need to break with convention and take risks, were embraced by the revolutionary dancers in New York seeking to incite social change. But these same qualities were viewed with suspicion in post-revolutionary countries searching for social stability. As Ramiro Guerra discovered, Pre- and Post-revolutionary art call for different approaches.

One Cuban dancer I interviewed, Neri Torres, told me that a dance piece of hers had been banned in the early 1980's because it was considered too "negative" (Torres). Even more surprising was that the Ministry of Culture had not viewed the dance itself, but had relied on a *written proposal* describing its content. 1930's critic Emanuel Eisenburg, frustrated by the revolutionary dancer's lack of progress toward true communist art, wrote that the *titles* of the pieces often "do the embarrassing job of expressing more of the dancers' ideas than the actual movements" (11). For all my interest in the intersection of ideology and dance, these examples remind me that ideology is better served by the specificity of words than by dance's tendency to refract content in a thousand different ways. It was Cuba's imprecise embrace of Marxist-Leninist ideology that allowed it to accept modern dance at all and to see it through its 47-year history.

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Bread and Blackouts: Cuban Modern Dance

Suki John

Shortly after the Cuban Revolution of 1959, Fidel Castro's government appointed Ramiro Guerra as director of the Department of Modern Dance within the *Teatro Nacional* in Havana.[1] The goal of this project was the creation of a dance company with original repertory based in a new, indigenous Cuban modern dance style and technique.[2] The new *Teatro Nacional* was founded, funded and fully supported by the Revolutionary government. It was the parent organization of the departments of music, modern dance, theatre, chorus and folklore, and its buildings housed a library and research organization in addition to the burgeoning performing companies.[3]

Cuban National Identity

My claim is that state support for dance in Cuba created not only a new technique and style, but a sense of identity and value for Cuban dancers. Modern dance was part of a movement toward Cuban national identity. The Department of Modern Dance was formed "amid the effort to define that which is Cuban."[4] This movement, which encouraged nationalist sentiment in a country long defined and dominated by Spain or the United States, was both capitalized upon and stimulated by the new regime. The ongoing tradition of Cuban dance, with African, Spanish and indigenous origins, made dance a logical element in what Jean Franco calls "the obvious attempt to bridge the gap between intellectual and common man."[5] The new regime consciously engaged culture as a means to bring Cubans together after the Revolution. "…Seeing how passionate Cuban people were about their traditions, the government recognized the value of connecting these traditions with the state and founded two national dance companies, one folkloric and one devoted to contemporary dance."[6] Cuba already boasted a national ballet company of some stature.

One goal of the Castro government was to develop Cuban artists.[7] In dance that mandated the development of an indigenous modern dance form that would reflect Cuba's mixed population and strong dance heritage. The Department of Modern Dance was charged with creating a national dance company with a new, essentially Cuban dance style, and with building an original repertory that would speak to a Cuban audience.

Dance has played a large role in Cuban lives and self-concepts, contributing heartily to what is known as *cubanismo, cubanidad* or *cubanía* – all of which loosely translate as "Cuban-ness." John Charles Chasteen, in studying national dances and their social function sees dance as "a basic social mechanism for group solidarity, [an] agglutinative force in world history."[8] He contends that dance helped to develop the Cuban sense of identity; I believe that is true in defining Cuban experience both before and after the Revolution. In this context it is logical that those in the National Theater -- at that time under the auspices of the *Consejo de Cultura*, in turn directed by the Ministry of Education[9] -- perceived the need for a theatrical dance form that truly expressed the many aspects of Cuban culture. Just by providing a forum for Cuban cultural expression and presenting Cuban concerns in a uniquely Cuban form, the state encouraged Cuban nationalist sentiment. It was not necessary for the content of the dances to be overtly "revolutionary" or political; the medium was -- in large part -- the message.

Intentionality

La técnica cubana, or the Cuban modern technique, was created intentionally with government backing. That intentionality is in itself quite rare. The idea of creating a dance form because one is needed is highly unusual. I posit that because Cubans are highly attuned to dance as a participants and spectators, the creation of *técnica cubana* was a logical step in the cultural life of the island.

"Cuba possesses a privileged place in Latin America with respect to the dance,"[10] according to the father of Cuban modern dance, Ramiro Guerra. Cuba had a dance maverick and leader in Guerra, who was searching for a way to introduce Cuban movement tropes into North American modern dance prior to the Revolution. In 1957, Guerra founded the chamber group, *Conjunto de Danza Moderna*, and created choreography "in search of a certain *cubania* in his style of dance."[11] After the Revolution, Guerra was was put in charge of the new company that would create and codify the new dance form. He was given

the institutional support he had previously lacked, and which allowed him to maintain his artistic collaborators and to build a school in which to train dancers. Unlike most modern dance companies that operate independently in the United States and beyond, members of the *Conjunto* were able to devote themselves exclusively to dance work without relying on outside jobs for income, without searching for funding to produce concerts, finance theater rentals or rehearsal space, disseminate publicity, build costumes, commission compositions or construct sets. The dancers were able to focus on designing a movement language and building a repertoire that would meet their aesthetic criteria and appeal to a Cuban audience. Guerra has said, "we established a nexus between our repertoire and the culture in general."[12]

Guerra was joined by the North American dancers Elfriede Mahler and Lorna Burdsall, and by the Mexican dancers Elena Noriega and Manuel Hiran. Guerra and his colleagues had prepared themselves as artists with deep inquiry into various dance forms, including modern dance, ballet, Cuban folklore and various forms of show dancing. Guerra himself had impeccable credentials: he had lived in New York and studied with Martha Graham, Jose Limón, Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. Although Guerra and his core group of collaborators had considered questions of characteristic Cuban movement prior to the founding of the *Teatro Nacional*, the formation of the new Department of Modern Dance gave *técnica cubana* a mandate and a context in which to develop. The intentional creation of *técnica cubana*, a state-supported, multi-cultural dance form, gave concert dance a role in the pluralistic representation of Revolutionary Cuban culture.

Because of Cuba's history of isolation from North American society during the twentieth century, Cuban modern dance is relatively unknown within professional circles in the United States. The United States has no diplomatic relations with Cuba, and has had an embargo in place against that country for more than 40 years. Travel to Cuba is increasingly difficult for American citizens, who must acquire a license from the United States Treasury Department in order to enter Cuba. Academic licenses are currently being revoked from universities by the Treasury Department, and scholars are increasingly restricted from travel for research and conferences. It is also quite difficult for Cubans to acquire entry visas into the United States as tourists or artists. In keeping with the embargo, Cubans cannot be paid while touring or performing in the United States. When requesting exit visas from their home country, Cubans often face incomprehensible bureaucratic regulations and long waits, although artists tend to have more freedom to travel than other Cuban citizens. Canadians, who are free to vacation or study in Cuba, are often more familiar with Cuban art and culture than citizens of the United States.

A Cuban Way of Moving

Cubans talk a lot about being Cuban, it's in their songs, their poetry, and their self-concept. The phrase *cierta manera* [13] refers to a certain manner, a way of being or moving that is considered part of *cubanía*. Cuban dancers and choreographers share a consciousness of how the Cuban body moves, and an understanding that Cubans move in a way that is distinct and recognizeable. Cuban choreographer Narciso Medina addressed this question directly when I interviewed him in April of 2006.[14] He referred to a quotidien Cuban "street theater," saying that both men and women try to turn people's heads as they walk. In response to a street audience, the walker will invariably emphasize his or her internal rhythm, adding *sabor*, or flavor, to each step. Recently I also had the opportunity to also ask Guerra about this phenomenon.[15] He explained that he saw North American dancers as more athletic and Cuban dancers as more polyrhythmic. In creating the *técnica cubana* he had discovered that Cuban dancers have "certain foci in the body – specifically in the torso and the pelvis." Guerra's process of developing a Cuban dance form relied on the use and magnification of those Cuban ways of moving, what Yvonne Daniel refers to as "Cuba's immense movement repertoire."[16]

Plurality

Técnica cubana was designed to incorporate the great range of Cuban movement intelligence, as opposed to expressing the artistic genius of a single individual. Guerra had the foresight to bring together an eclectic group of amateurs and professionals skilled in ballet, modern dance, cabaret, or Afro-Cuban. Together they began to synthesize previously diverse dance forms into a truly Cuban style. Under Guerra's guidance they established a technique, gave classes in art history, psychology, philosophy, and music. They read Stanislavski and viewed films together. They built a repertory. They danced on a state television program called *Noches Cubanas,* Cuban Nights, where they introduced a wider public to Cuban

modern, demonstrating that concert dance was more than ballet.

Cubans use the word *ajiaco*, literally a stew, to describe their mixed racial background. Guerra chose ten white dancers, ten dancers of mixed race, and ten black dancers to begin his company. He felt that dancers from different backgrounds moved differently, and he wanted to celebrate that in his choreography. *Técnica* became an *ajiaco* of dance forms, including classical, contemporary and Afro-Cuban traditions.

Afro-Cuba and the dances of the orishas

The Afro-Cuban dance tradition includes the *orisha* dances of *Santería*.[17] "*Santería* is a widely practiced Afro-Cuban religion that includes components of Catholicism, traditional African religion, and Kardecan spiritism, which originated in France in the nineteenth century."[18] African elements were syncretized, or melded, with Catholic tradition, which is why each of the *orishas,* or deities*,* in Cuba corresponds to a Catholic saint. As Yvonne Daniel has noted, African dance influences in Cuba include Yoruba*,* Kongo-Angolan, Arará, and Carabalí.[19] Conditions on the sugar plantations of Cuba were brutal and deadly, and new shipments of slaves were brought in through the mid-nineteenth century. The late arrival of large numbers of Yoruba from modern Nigeria, Benin (formerly Dahomey) and Ghana, accounts in some part for the survival and hegemony of certain Yoruban cultural elements.[20]

In *Santería* ritual divine union is sought through *orisha* dancing. Each of the *orishas* has his or her specific colors, rhythms, gestures and food. Gestures, footwork, torso isolations and rhythmic patterns of the *orisha* dances became part of *técnica*, and add to the huge Cuban repertory of what Yvonne Daniel calls "embodied knowledge."[21]

Orisha dances include elements of pantomime, with gestures slightly abstracted but still recognizable. Changó, king of the *orishas*, jabs the air with one hand as he throws lightning. He is the only *orisha* whose dance includes leaps.[22] Yemayá, the mother goddess of salt water, dances in a 2/4 against 3/4 rhythm as she swirls her blue and white skirts like the sea rising. Her sister Ochún, goddess of fresh water, covers her body in honey as she admires herself in a copper mirror, laughing.

Rumba, a more secular form of Afro-Cuban dance, is also represented in *técnica*. The most competitive rumba dancers are male. In Cuba there is less stigma attached to men dancing socially or professionally than there might be in other places. "Dancers, and all artists, have a privileged position in Cuba," says Medina.[23] Social dancing is seen as a basic interpersonal skill. In Cuba, practically everybody dances.

Castro is one of the few Cubans who can't dance at all. But he seems to understand the importance of dance to Cuban culture, because his support for the art form has been very consistent. It's a pragmatic choice. Cuba exports more culture these days than sugar, rum or cigars.

Ballet

Técnica cubana owes a great deal of its strength to Cuban ballet. And Cuban ballet, of course, owes everything to Alicia Alonso. Her singular influence has made Cuban ballet world class. One must also credit Fernando and Alberto Alonso, Alicia's former husband and brother in law, respectively. Together they founded the *Ballet Nacional de Cuba* in 1948, and the company ballet school in 1950. Alicia Alonso's career is of course legendary. She was a principal dancer with Ballet Theater, Balanchine created Theme and Variations for her, and Igor Youskevitch was one of her favorite partners.

After the Revolution in 1959, Alonso could have worked anywhere in the world. Conversely, the Revolutionary government could have said that ballet was an "elitist" art form. But Alonso loves Cuba, and Castro saw her as a resource. Alonso had enjoyed no official backing for the company until 1959, when Castro's Revolutionary government offered its support. It was to prove a successful alliance for both parties.

Alonso's achievement would have been unlikely in a culture less attuned to dance and without the enthusiastic support of the Revolutionary government. Ballet is disseminated to the general public via television, tours to the provinces, and affordable ticket prices. The Havana season of the *Ballet Nacional*, routinely sells out, and Alonso's interpretation of Giselle is often shown on the three state-run television channels. Cubans are fanatical balletomanes. *Ballet Nacional de Cuba* alumnae Carlos Acosta, José Manuel Carreño, Xiomara Reyes, Rafael Rivero, Lorna Feijoo, and her sister Lorena Feijoo dance with some of the best ballet companies in the world.

"Young people in Cuba know that ballet is a high career," Alonso told this writer in 2000. It is understood that performers who travel with dance

companies have economic opportunities unavailable to the general population. Alonso has created a system of ballet schools across the country, including the prestigious Havana school that recently moved into a state-of-the-art facility in the Vedado neighborhood. In 2006 Alonso boasted that 4000 students across the country auditioned for the national ballet schools, among them 1600 boys.[24]

Cuba has three state-run national dance companies that travel internationally: *Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Danza Contemporánea de Cuba* (previously *Conjunto de Danza Moderna),* and *Conjunto Folklorico de Cuba*. Most performers in these companies are graduates of the regional arts schools that operate in each of Cuba's fourteen provinces. Modern dancers receive a six-year education of ballet, folklore, social and modern dance (including three years of straight Graham technique), music, history, and a full load of academics. The best students nationwide are transferred to *La Escuela Nacional de Arte, (La ENA)* the National School of Art, in Havana. Advanced studies take place at the *Instituto Superior de Arte, (La ISA*), the Superior Institute of Art. Food, housing, transportation and tuition are all provided at no cost, along with excellent training. Artists receive concrete support in the form of education, health care, and guaranteed salaries once they graduate. Salary increases come with career advancement, from corps to soloist for example. Dancers earn salaries comparable to those of doctors and lawyers, although dancers are more likely to have the opportunity to earn hard currency abroad. After retirement, dancers continue to receive their salary as long as they maintain an association with an arts organization.

Daily Class in *Técnica cubana*

Técnica cubana class includes a center warm up, floor work and/or *barre,* complex center combinations and locomotion across the floor, all danced to live folkloric music including *orisha* songs. Dancers frequently join in the singing while waiting for their turn to cross the floor. The training is exceptionally strong. Dancers schooled in this form display virtuosic control as they turn, jump, contract, pitch, hinge, undulate and balance. The technique is studded with Afro-Cubanisms such as rib, pelvis and head isolations, as well as the use of polyrhythm. The *gancho*, or hook, is one of the characteristic shapes of *técnica* that refers back to Afro-Cuban dance: the dancer sickles and flexes the gesture foot, turns the leg in from the hip, spirals and contracts the torso and twists the head to the side. This movement/shape occurs within sequences that may include *pliés, tendues, degagés*, *rond de jambes*, or *battements* paired with hip and head rolls, drops of the elbow, ripples through the spine, shifts to the knee and back to standing, falls to the knee or floor, turns in spiral, contraction, on the bottom or on the knee. Flourishes of the hand reminiscent of the *floreo* of Flamenco found their way into the technique after the performance of Panorama, a piece by Cuban choreographer Victor Cuellar.

State Support

Dance, and all art in Cuba, takes place in a clear context of state support, prioritized arts education, high standards and national visibility. Issues of artistic freedom are manifest in diverse ways depending on the artistic medium. For the most part dance in Cuba has had free range. There is one very notable exception.

Despite the intentional creation of *técnica cubana,* as well as government support of the company and school, modern dance was far from fully accepted in Cuba of the 1970s. The modern dance company, by then known as *Danza Contemporánea de Cuba*, had to create its own dances incorporating its own dance form, and then build an audience to whom those dances would appeal.

Castro's infamous speech of 1961, *Palabras a los intelectuales* (words for the intellectuals) has been interpreted as a warning against unfiltered freedom of expression. Over time the exuberance and openness of the 1960s was challenged. By the 1970s intellectual and artistic freedom was severely curtailed in Cuba. Cultural organizations were put into the hands of political officials and party members. Ramiro Guerra experienced a classic case of state support and censorship. Significantly, it was one of the only cases of its kind in Cuban dance.

Guerra writes, "by the end of the Seventies, the worldwide sexual revolution put pressure on the national culture, which was easily vulnerable to the dialectic struggle between art and politics."[25] Guerra spent a year working with his dancers on an experimental piece steeped in the aesthetics of psychedelia, happenings, and sexual revolution. *El décalogo del apocalipsis* (The Ten Commandments of the Apocalypse) was a huge production, designed as a site-specific extravaganza on the grounds of the *Teatro Nacional,* adjacent to the "sacrosanct *Plaza de la Revolución*, used by the government to address

mass assemblies and behind which Cuba's most important government buildings are located. The National Theater was traditionally home to contemporary dance and Guerra acknowledged in hindsight that he did not take into account other possible implications when he chose the location for his iconoclastic work."[26] Costumes were designed by Eduardo Arrocha, and included unitards with flowers whimsically painted in the place of genitals, feathered headdresses, sweeping capes, strings of beads and striking references to what Guerra calls "neo-Africanist"[27] themes, Kings Day and Carnival. The piece was divided into ten scenes, four of which included sexual content. Guerra describes his Prodigal Son section as including "a strong erotic relationship with incestuous and violent origins."[28] The piece was highly experimental in movement style, presentation, visual statement, the use of text, and most significantly, theme.

In *Decalogo,* the great social upheavals of the 1960s were expressed through the breaking of taboos in the dance paradigm itself. The piece was never premiered. Guerra lost not only the chance to show the piece, but also lost the will to lead the company he had formed. In 2006, Guerra spoke to me at length about the piece and the scandal that followed:

> It was a special crisis, in the '70s, something that occurred within Socialist systems. The famous Cultural Revolution that occurred in China, we had that here too, demanding that art had to be strictly political. In the '70s culture here was paralyzed. I worked on that piece for a year, it cost a lot of money. It used the space in front of the Central Committee (laughs), outside the *Teatro Nacional*. There were very strong moments. I didn't use nudity; nudity was not permitted. But it was about the ten famous commandments. And I inverted everything, I made the prohibitions into commands: Rob, Lie, Fornicate. So there were lots of sexual images. Not nudity, but for example the costumes were unitards in the same shade as the dancers' skin. In the place of their sex was a flower. If it was a woman, the flower was open; if it was a man, the flower was extended…It was in the psychedelic mode, Arrocha's designs were beautiful. For the Song of Songs, the musician improvised with the texts. I did an arrangement of the words, parodies of the great poetry of the bible. So the scandal began. There was a candelabra of a psychedelic phallus which blew smoke; lots of proscribed things. There was a scene of insults, where the dancers cursed in other languages, hitting the iron grating around the outside of the *Teatro Nacional*, making the rhythm. But at the end they cursed in Spanish. (laughs)
>
> They didn't know or understand what I was trying to do. I was not commenting on the politics of Cuba; I was speaking about the world in the 1970s. I knew I could not continue as the director, following rules I disagreed with; because at that time the directors of artistic groups were members of the party, not artists. I got mad. I went home.[29]

Fortunately, for Cuban audiences and artists, the 1977 appointment of Armando Hart to the position of cultural minister changed the situation significantly; among other things, Guerra's reputation was rehabilitated.

Censorship experienced in other artistic media -- Cuban film, theater, and literature -- is well documented. The chilling effect in literary and intellectual circles was particularly profound, both through outright censorship and self-censorship. Writers, including some celebrated members of the *nuevo boom* in Latin American literature, have been imprisoned, vilified and exiled for any number of supposed transgressions.

It is my contention that dance is in its own category when it comes to issues of provocation and government censorship. Dance is most likely to offend for infractions of socio-sexual morals. The form's lack of literalism means that dance can engage certain social or political themes head on or obliquely, and that it does so in reaction to the political and social climate of the times. In more concrete art forms – especially those where a written text or script can be examined and re-examined – instances of outright censorship and subtle self-censorship are more common. Dance retains the freedom of abstraction; it can take on an intentional illegibility that makes its social commentary less impeachable. In dance, movement can be designed to be understood on many levels. Underlying meanings that may have seditious content can be obscured by theatrics, technical virtuosity or by intentionally engaging the very

difficulty many viewers from outside the art form report having when they try to "read" dance. The repeated complaint one often hears by audience members unaccustomed to dance is, "I don't understand it." While overt sexual content is hard to miss, more subtle social or political commentary may be easier for the choreographer to cloak, if he or she chooses to do so, than for the writer to bury in satire or metaphor.

As Guerra has pointed out, earlier taboos regarding allusions to both homosexual and heterosexual activity are now broken with regularity in the world of Cuban dance.[30] Narciso Medina, Rosario Cárdenas, and Marianela Boán are among those contemporary choreographers who take chances in form and content. They are not censured; in fact, they frequently receive state support.

The Special Period

In January 1990, Castro publicly predicted a period of severe economic hardship for the Cuban people. The fall of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of its financial support to Cuba, coupled with the ongoing economic embargo imposed by the United States, precipitated a time of extreme difficulty.

> The whole country, used to middle-class living standards, suddenly had had to endure an awful poverty. There was no gasoline to fuel the trucks that brought food from the countryside to the cities, so people were hungry for the first time since the Revolution. There was no fuel for generators, so officials had to ration electricity and people suffered blackouts almost daily. The infrastructure began to decay – roads, bridges, water mains, sewers. There was no toilet paper, no underwear, no meat, no milk, no hope.[31]

This period coincided with my most substantial working visits to Cuba, and has become a focus of my research. There was little bread, and many blackouts, but there was art everywhere – in the capitol and in the country, in the theaters, the galleries, and on the street. How is it that dance flourished while so many aspects of Cuban life withered? Electric power to whole neighborhoods, including the theaters within them, was frequently cut off without notice. Dancers, just like the rest of the population, were hungry. They were tired from long commutes without good footwear or adequate transportation. I believe that the material lack that resulted from the Special Period engendered a particular sort of creativity in Cuba. The term "*invento cubano*," Cuban invention, was used colloquially to refer to a sort of national ingenuity in response to restricted resources. This ingenuity was manifest in the arts as well as in daily life. Artists accustomed to having access to the basic tools of their art – dance shoes, costume pieces, lighting fixtures, sets, props, etc. – learned to do without, to recycle, to invent. Lacking the stage craft Cuban choreographers were accustomed to commissioning from their accomplished designers, dance makers returned to the raw material of the body in order to create theater art. Because the practitioners of the *técnica cubana* are extremely versatile and accomplished, the lack of material support did not deter choreographic creativity. Instead, the use of basic choreographic language – movement vocabulary, spacing, grouping of dancers, theme and variation, canon, and of course, musicality – was developed even more keenly during this period. Cuban choreographers were forced to expand their basic dance vocabulary and find ways to make it speak clearly.

Cubans are keen to watch and participate in dance events. The Cuban public is accustomed to live performance; theater and dance are affordable and ubiquitous while few people have televisions. During the Special Period there were few diversions from the daily '*lucha'* or struggle. Audiences, albeit hungry and frustrated, were eager for entertainment. At the height of the economic crisis, dancers found that their art continued to be of value -- whether economic, personal or spiritual. For some, dance served as an outlet and escape from innumerable daily hardships. For others, dancing provided the opportunity to travel and earn hard currency. Most importantly, Cuban society continued to show a basic respect for artistic production and dancers continued to receive their salary from the state.

I posit that the new economic realities influenced dance companies artistically in many ways. Repertory was developed that offered subtle criticism and sarcasm about the Special Period. One such piece was Narciso Medina's *La Espera*, which chronicles a seemingly endless wait at a bus stop. At the end, the dancer assumes the form of the cross as the music switches to Ave Maria. Audiences responded enthusiastically to such topical work which, significantly, was not suppressed by the government.

In addition to forcing artists to be increasingly inventive, the crisis also forced art institutions to be increasingly practical. Over time it is possible to see evidence of market-based choices made in the development of repertoire and the kinds of international dance workshops offered. As the economic situation worsened, the state-provided salary no longer served to buy the basics. Many goods were available only in dollars. A new kind of commercial ambition entered the general consciousness. This prompted both artistic and commercial experimentation, as people found new ways to augment their incomes.

According to Medina, who opened the first non-state sanctioned dance academy in Havana since the Revolution, "in the Nineties there was a small opening from the point of view of business, or if you will, private initiative. Family restaurants opened, the farmer's market was opened again after many years of being closed, and they de-criminalized the dollar."[32] Medina explains that when he began his school in 1993 the state allowed it but did not support or tax it. Salaries were initially not paid by the government, unlike the big established companies. Medina had worked for twelve years in the national modern company, and intentionally chose independence in order to push himself and his dancers. "It signified that we had to work harder, that we had to be better, more exact in everything because we did not receive a monthly salary like the state dancers," he explains. Today Medina's company is state supported, the dancers' salaries are paid, and they have been given a theater. They also enjoy the right to travel frequently – a rare privilege in Cuba. "Now my company is supported by the state," says Medina, "And I can tell you, I have to demand more. The dancers feel that if they take care of the theater, which we refurbished ourselves, they will be paid. But if not, they will be paid also."

A Sense of Place

Modern dance has been considered important enough to merit ongoing state support from the beginning of the Revolution, through the Special Period, to today. Cuban modern dance could not have been created during the Special Period, when there was little room for expansion or invention. But once *técnica cubana* existed, it gave dancers a language to incorporate and expand. The repertoire of Cuban modern dance grew as an expression of the current generations' experience, using a form created in a richer, more idealistic time.

Cuban dancers embody a sense of purpose that has helped to integrate their national identities as Cubans with their personal and professional identities. Working with Pierre Bourdieu's models of class structure and taste, what he refers to as "a sense of one's place… a practical anticipation of what the social meaning and value of the chosen practice will probably be,"[33] I posit that dancers have situated themselves as artists within the greater Cuban society, a position that gives them a certain sense of place. They know that their "chosen practice" has value. While the average dancer's economic holdings may be as paltry as the next person's, his or her socio-cultural capital is strong. They perceive themselves as important members of society, building on those many years of training and preparation, empowered by a social contract with a society that sees their contribution as valuable. State support for dance in Cuba has created not only a modern dance technique and a style, but an identity and sense of value for Cuban dancers.

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Endnotes

1 Mousouris (2002: 57)
2 Mousouris (2002: 61)
3 Hagedorn (2001:137-138)
4 Daniel (1995:41)
5 Franco (1967:279)
6 Mousouris (2002:57)
7 Mousouris (2002:57)
8 Chasteen (2002:67)
9 Hagedorn (2001:139
10 Guerra (2000:162) my translation.
11 Pajares (1993:28) my translation
12 Guerra, quoted in Pajares (1993:83) my translation
13 Bénitez-Rojo (1992:11)
14 Personal exchange, Havana 2006.
15 Personal exchange, Havana 2006.
16 Daniel (2005:15)
17 At this point it is interesting to note that Afro-Cuban cultural

elements are now widely referred to simply as "Cuban," according to choreographer Marlen Carbonell. Personal exchange, Havana 2006.
18 Brandon (1993:1)
19 Daniel (1995: 35)
20 Bastide (1967:12)
21 Daniel (2005:title)
22 Daniel (2005:139)
23 Personal interview, Havana, April 22, 2006.
24 Personal interview, Havana, April 21,2006.
25 Guerra (2000:168)
26 Mousouris (2002:67)
27 Guerra (2000:171)
28 Guerra (2000:168) my translation
29 Personal interview, Havana, April 20, 2006.
30 Guerra (2000:174)
31 Robinson (2004:154)
32 Medina's statements in this section come from an interview conducted in Havana, April 22, 2006.
33 Bourdieu (1984:466)

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The Right to Move: An Examination of Dance, Cabaret Laws, and Social Movements

Dawn Springer

"They did not know for sure, but they suspected that the dances were beyond nasty because the music was getting worse and worse with each passing season the Lord waited to make Himself known. Songs that used to start in the head and fill the heart had dropped on down, down to places below the sash and the buckled belts."

Toni Morrison, *Jazz.*

Every night in New York City, dancers throughout the five boroughs are prevented from dancing. New York's cabaret laws, created in 1926, exist with a vengeance amidst the nightlife of the city. No Dancing Allowed signs are posted in clubs and bars, and bouncers tell patrons to stop dancing if the establishment is not a licensed cabaret. Under the New York City Administration Code, a cabaret is defined as "Any room, place or space in the city in which any musical entertainment, singing, dancing or other form of amusement is permitted in connection with the restaurant business or the business of directly or indirectly selling to the public food or drink."[1] Businesses that wish to have dancing must apply and pay for these difficult to obtain licenses through the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. In order to acquire one of these licenses, a club must comply with strict fire and building codes, as well as be located in an area of the city that is zoned for dancing. Most of the zoning restrictions only allow dancing in commercial zones on the outskirts of New York City. If NYPD catches a dancer in an unlicensed club, the business will be fined and padlocked by the city for days or weeks at a time. Clubs such as Plant Bar, The Slipper Room, and Lakeside Lounge, as well as Joe's Pub have faced such penalties for allowing patrons to dance.

New York's cabaret laws have been more strongly enforced at certain times than others. By examining when and where the city has chosen to tighten their grip on cabaret licenses through out New York, it becomes clear that during times of social upheaval, dance is a strong part of the community of resistance, and the cabaret laws are enforced as a means of social and political control. Most notably in Harlem in the 1920s, when the laws were created, Greenwich Village in the sixties, around the time of the Stonewall Riots, and when electronic music became popular and the rave culture hit its peak in the nineties.

During these moments in history, the body became a symbol of the movements of the time. The moving, dancing body within the framework of social change in American culture was targeted as a representation of immorality. The cabaret laws were created as a means of inflicting the social majority's view of decency on the bodies of those they felt violated the bounds of acceptable bodily interaction. Social dancing in clubs was the spirit, the voice, and the embodiment of change. Dancing at nightclubs and dance halls created community for ideologies to be shared. The cabaret laws were created and are enforced as a means to control the movement of those sociopolitical ideas.

Expression and Social Dancing

Recent resistance to the cabaret laws in New York by certain groups such as the Dance Liberation Front, and a complaint filed in July of 2005 to the New York State Supreme Court by Paul Chevigny, Professor of Law at NYU and Norman Siegal, former director of the New York American Civil Liberties Union, on behalf of five dancers, have illuminated the issues of social dancing and expression. The complaint was filed on the grounds that the cabaret laws violate freedom of expression and due process for the plaintiffs John Festa, Ian Dutton, Meredith Stead, Byron Cox, and Gotham West Coast Swing Club – all of whom are professional or former professional dancers who have vested interest in social dancing.[2] The affidavits in the case include statements made by Mercedes Ellington, granddaughter of the late Duke Ellington, as well as Julie Malnig, cultural historian of dance at New York University. The complaint and affidavits describe in great cultural and anthropological detail the history and significance of social dance forms. Initially, after the complaint was filed, the court motioned to dismiss on the grounds

that "recreational dancing is not expressive conduct."[3] At the time of the writing of this paper, Chevigny and Seigal had responded to the motion to dismiss and are waiting for the city's response. The hope is that the judge will deny the motion to dismiss, which Chevigny believes would indicate that "there's something to the argument about expression from social dance."[4]

The United States Supreme Court removed social dancing from protection under first amendment rights in 1989 in *City of Dallas v. Staglin*. *Dallas v. Staglin* involved the owner of a dance-hall/roller rink in Dallas who challenged a city ordinance that restricted teenagers between the ages of 14 and 18 from admission to dance halls. Initially, the court upheld the ordinance, but the Texas Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the plaintiffs on the grounds that the age restrictions violated first amendment rights. The US Supreme Court reversed the Court of Appeals' ruling. The Supreme Court's reversal stated "nor do the opportunities of adults and minors to dance with one another, which might be described as 'associational' in common parlance, involve the sort of 'expressive association' that the First Amendment has been held to protect." The Supreme Court defended the ruling on the grounds of potential sexual relations, stating, "Limiting dance-hall contacts between adults and teenagers would make less likely illicit or undesirable juvenile involvement with alcohol, illegal drugs, or promiscuous sex. While the city permits teenagers and adults to roller-skate together, skating involves less physical contact than dancing, a differentiation that need not be striking to survive rational-basis scrutiny."[5] The ruling of in *Dallas v. Staglin* set the precedent for several Supreme Court rulings thereafter where dancing was concerned. And while it is certainly fair to argue the necessity of protecting minors as stated in the ruling, it is the Supreme Court's association of dance to sex that is more notable.

Bodily expression in any form garnered a great deal of criticism through out the twentieth century because of the often-misplaced link of the body to sex. Dance is especially susceptible to such claims due to its usage of the live body. Paradoxically, current American culture is thriving with advertisements containing scantily clad models and other provocative material. But in non-mediated experiences, like dance, that involve the body, or when art challenges sexual boundaries or other sociopolitical ideologies through usage of the body, the first amendment becomes a subjective right.

The Body in a Chaste Society

The cabaret laws remained dormant for a number of years between the 1960s and 1990s. But after the New York City Mayoral election of 1993, the laws made a comeback. The 90s for New York City brought Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and his Quality of Life Campaign. The campaign involved several reforms, including initiatives to change adult zoning laws, which removed adult video and sex stores out of certain areas, most notably Times Square. Guiliani's campaign cracked down on graffiti, and passed a noise pollution bill. The campaign and zoning restrictions also targeted dance clubs. Although the cabaret laws had been in existence since 1926, clubs had not been policed in such a strict manner since the gay club raids of the sixties. Club owners found themselves with large fines to pay, and the unhappy task of having to prevent people from dancing in their clubs. This was especially difficult for places like Lakeside Lounge,[6] Plant Bar,[7] and Joe's Pub[8] that have live music several times a week, but no cabaret licenses to permit dancing. Club goers and nightlife patrons started crying for their first amendment rights.

And they weren't the only ones. The 90s were full of free speech debacles, and New York City and Giuliani were well versed in the topic. Chris Ofili's *The Holy Virgin Mary* piece in the "Sensation" exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum in the fall of 1999 became the source of a major dispute through out the city. Giuliani denounced the work on the grounds that it was disrespectful to a large number of religious groups in New York. He attempted to pull funding from the museum. The city also tried to evict the museum from its city-owned building. Eventually both sides dropped their charges after a federal judge ordered the city to restore funding to the museum. U.S. District Court Judge Nina Gershon then prevented the city from "taking any steps to inflict any punishment, retaliation, discrimination or sanction of any kind."[9]

On the federal level, the National Endowment for the Arts was central to a great debate over bodily expression when the decency standards were developed in the 90s. After Robert Mapplethorpe's display of homoerotic photographs in the retrospective exhibit *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Moment*, as well as Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ*, both of which were supported through NEA funding, North Carolina

Senator Jesse Helms proposed legislation, which Congress passed, requiring NEA judges to evaluate candidates by "taking into consideration general standards of decency and respect for the diverse beliefs and values of the American public" as well as artistic merit.[10] In doing so, the NEA stopped funding artists whose work might broaden such generalized standards.

The body was targeted as artists and performers sought expression and fought for rights to utilize the body in their work in the 90s. At the same time, social dance entered a new era with great force. Electronic music built the rave scene, starting around 1989 in New York when Frankie Bones, who had been djing in London,[11] brought raving and techno music to New York City. The trend caught explosively quickly, and by 1992 massive amounts of dancers and party kids were raving; dancing all night, aided largely by the drug ecstasy. The parties quickly became targeted by law enforcement, largely due to the availability of drugs, but also because of the massive amounts of people these parties were drawing, and the foreign sounds of electronic music.

Droves of young people were celebrating the explosion of house, trans, and drum and bass music across the country. There was an enormous sense of community at raves. Positivity and nonviolence were central to many parties. People were dancing for hours upon hours, sharing in an experience that was transcending the solicitation of clubs. Violence was rare at raves. For ravers, it was all about the music, the movement, and for some, the added high of ecstasy. But the community was central. "The reason these kids were going out wasn't the ecstasy in the pill, but the feeling you got when everyone was together."[12] Groups of young people were becoming empowered by the rave scene. Fashion started reflecting the new trend.[13] This momentous new social dancing community reinforced the need for strictly enforced cabaret laws in a time when the body was repeatedly being chastised. The masses of people at raves, dancing all night, symbolized the resistance to the stifled, constrained body of the 1990s.

Music for Dancing

Historically, most of the attention towards the cabaret laws has surrounded how they have affected musicians, particularly jazz musicians. The verbiage of the cabaret laws inextricably linked music and dancing, and much of the discourse surrounding the freedom of expression rights for musicians argued for the separation of the two. In 1986, Chevigny was victorious in the case *Chiasson v. New York City Department of Consumer Affairs*, in which he represented the vibraphonist Warren Chiasson. The Chiasson case challenged the cabaret law's three-musician limitation. The court ruled that the laws were a direct restriction on jazz musician's rights to practice improvisation by prohibiting more than three musicians to play at a club at once and because the laws previously allowed only "piano, organ, accordion, guitar, or other stringed instruments."[14] The result was an amendment to the law, removing the limitation. The separation of dance and music, and the musician's victory in the case, resulted in social dancing becoming further vilified in the eyes of the cabaret laws. As illustrated in the cases of *Dallas v. Staglin,* and *Chiasson*, the expressive nature of music is more widely acknowledged, as it is more commonly a part of everyday life, whereas dancing as it relates to bodily expression and physical contact is a taboo subject in American culture.

Certain types of music are synonymous with dancing. "Jazz music would not have the character that it has if it were not for the dancing that is and was done to its rhythms. My grandfather, Duke Ellington, wrote most of his music for dancers, and his band constantly played for dancing."[15] Ellington states in her affidavit for the case of social dancing being presented by Chevigny that the cabaret laws inhibit some of the music by restricting dance. "I recently went to the club Birdland on 44th Street, where a Latin band was playing. The music is actually intended for dancing, and is not as enjoyable if one cannot dance to it. I spoke to the manager, telling him that he ought to have dancing for such music. The manager said that the club had no license for dancing."[16] Ellington points out the historical interconnectedness of music and dancing. She makes the case that while musicians have won certain freedoms in their fight with the cabaret laws, including Chevigny's victory in *Chiasson* on behalf of the musician's union in 1986, dancers are still being prohibited to dance despite the interdependence of music and dance through out history.

Social dancing is inherent to concert dance. But there has yet to be the kind of discourse within the community of concert dance practitioners about the importance of clubs and social dancing to the concert dance form, nor has there been any major resistance towards the cabaret laws prior to the current Chevigny complaint. There is a high art/low art perspective in

relation to concert dance and social dance, despite their interdependence. For example, the way Improvisation is highly regarded in the modern dance community versus how getting down on a dance floor is valued. Yet the communication of bodies on a dance floor is essentially the same as the physical and metaphysical conversations that occur in Improvisation. DJ Dennis the Menace describes this in discussing the flow on the dance floor during the rave scene of the 90s. "Group energy, where one person triggers the next person who triggers the next person . . .You could feel it vibrating between everyone."[17] And although much of this is echoed within concert dance practices, social dance practices are scarce in many dance educational institutions. Because of the separationist attitude, and the fact that the cabaret laws may not directly affect the livelihood of dancers, the resistance from the concert dance community to the cabaret laws has been meek.

Social Dance and Social Movement

During the Harlem Renaissance, black Americans who had migrated to the city, largely from the south, began to form a new identity within American culture. "Blacks had to determine not only where the individual belonged in early twentieth century American society, but also where a people who historically had been rejected from majority American society fit into contemporary culture."[18] Jazz became the voice of the sociopolitical movement in Harlem. The cabaret laws were an attempt to silence this voice.

The jazz in Harlem birthed the cabaret laws. By 1926 when the laws were written, what was classically considered a cabaret was virtually extinct in New York City. Modeled after its Parisian archetypes, a traditional New York cabaret included upper-middle class patrons dining politely with musical entertainment. But these cabarets that the laws purportedly were regulating had already been destroyed by Prohibition in 1926.[19] It wasn't until the sounds of resistance, and what many people called wild abandonment, started coming from uptown when Harlem's jazz scene began flourishing and drawing attention in the 1920s that the cabaret laws were created. Clearly what propelled these restrictions was much deeper than Prohibition.

The word jazz comes from the word jass, which was slang in the early 1900s. There are a variety of definitions for the word jass, all of which have sexual connotations. This freely structured form of music, new to New York City in the early 1900s, became the sound of debauchery. Its rhythmical pulse was sensual. And the dancers who embodied that sound became the raucous image of New York City and America's ultimate fear – interracial sex.

The jazz clubs in Harlem were unusual in that they were some of the only places in a segregated society where there was an integration of whites and blacks. Large groups of people started heading uptown to clubs in Harlem. Not just from New York, but people from all over the country were flocking to the performances of this new sound, thanks to the growing use of the radio.[20] Dancing to jazz was a means of transcendence for African Americans at the time. As Brenda Dixon Gottschild discusses in *The Black Dancing Body,* dancing in core African American populaces was "a means to transport us to extraordinary flights of the spirit." [21] However, there was a pervading, racist viewpoint from all over the country in the era of the 20s that jazz music and dancing in the black community were sources of indecency, much like hip-hop in modern times has been called a source of violence. New York City administration began to fear what their national image would become if they did not try to control the happenings and interracial socializing in the clubs. The Board of Alderman's Committee on Local Laws recommended "favorable action" towards the clubs on account of there being too much "running wild in some of these nightclubs."[22] The cabaret laws were New York City's attempt to save face and control the immoral, "wild" happenings in Harlem.

Morality has played a large hand in the enforcement of the cabaret laws, and the distribution of such enforcement follows morality's trends. Like the spirit of Harlem in the twenties, the clubs in Greenwich Village in the sixties housed the resistant movements of the homosexual community, mostly for gay men.

Stonewall Inn, by 1969, had become the most popular gay bar in the city. It was the only gay bar establishment in New York City that permitted dancing.[23] However, it was illegal for men to dance with men at the time. The dancing at Stonewall was the movement within the gay movement in New York, defying oppressive laws and structures that strove to squelch the rights of gay men. Its popularity made it a target from both opposing forces of the gay movement.

During the sixties, law enforcement pulled from a grab bag of regulations, including the cabaret laws to justify violent raids in gay-clubs. Also pervasive at

the time were the indecency laws, which made it illegal to wear clothing of the opposite gender. During these raids, if patrons of a gay bar were without ID, dressed in drag, caught dancing with another man, or in some cases, employees of the bar, they were subject to arrest. Patrons at clubs like Stonewall had become accustomed to these raids, and it wasn't uncommon for the bar to reopen as quickly as the following night after being shut down.[24]

Similarly to the white owned clubs of Harlem, many gay clubs in Greenwich Village at the time where run by members of the mafia who neither lived in the neighborhood nor actively supported the Gay Liberation Movement. Stonewall Inn was one such bar. Generally, the club was tipped off by sixth precinct police before a raid[25]. The night of the famous Stonewall Raid was different from previous raids, however, because it was a federally operated sting, and it is likely that the raid was based in mafia investigations.

The Stonewall Riots were undeniably a turning point in the gay liberation movement. The dancing that was taking place inside Stonewall generated the physical momentum of the raids outside the bar during the riots, and propelled the movement of gay liberation into the future. The events of Stonewall exhibit how people who move tend to stay in motion.

For some, such as the loyal patrons of Stonewall, social dancing and clubbing is a practice. It is a discipline of individualized physical expression that creates agency for the dancers, as well as generates community through shared experience. Moving ideas are translated and shared on a dance floor.

Social Dance Embodying Political Ideology

When individuals associate on a dance floor through movement, they are participating in a structure of commonality. The dance floor at Stonewall was a platform for the gay-rights movement. It galvanized the male homosexual community. For the dancers at the Stonewall Inn during the sixties, the practice of dancing together created a physical discipline in their political ideology. Foucault discusses discipline in relation to embodiment of political ideology in *Discipline and Punishment*. "Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies . . .it dissociates power from the body" . . . "it turns it into an 'aptitude,' a 'capacity,' which it seeks to increase."[26] While Foucault examines this theory as a top-down idea, in the case of the Stonewall riots, the discipline of dancing created a capacity for force against the higher repressive powers of the opposition of the gay liberation movement. The dancers and rioters at Stonewall dissociated the power of the state from their bodies through the practice of dancing. The physical discipline enabled the political ideology of the gay rights movement to actualize through their bodies. The dancers at Stonewall became "docile" to the gay-liberation cause by continuing to dance. Moving together as a community enabled their ideas of freedom, and embodied their hopes of equality.

The clubs in Harlem in the 1920s had a different, more complex community ideology. Although the integration that was occurring in Harlem was a pivotal moment in history, it was also problematic. While the association of blacks and whites through dance and music in the Harlem clubs in the twenties had a literal embodiment of integration, the integration did not embody equality. In all the clubs of Lennox Avenue in Harlem, also known as Jungle Alley[27], regardless of the race of the patronage, the performers were black. The popularity of jazz music created a stereotype of the black entertainer. This stereotype in American culture was further popularized by Broadway shows such as *Shuffle Along* and *Dixie to Broadway.*[28] The African-American concert dance form was born out of the dancing that was taking place in this era, and as an attempted to move away from that stereotype. Katherine Dunham describes this transition as a way "to attain a status in the dance world that will give the Negro dance student the courage really to study, and a reason to do so. And to take our dance out of the burlesque to make it a more dignified art."[29] It was the movement of the clubs in Harlem, and the political ideology that was born out of that time and space, that gave way to the concert dance form for African Americans.

Moving Forward

2006 marks the 80th anniversary of the cabaret laws' existence. Will social dancing remain on the outer limits of New York City for decades to come? Will current Mayor Bloomberg or one of his successors amend the cabaret laws? [30]

Perhaps it is a question of the vitality of social dancing, and a respect of its historical significance and current relevance by those who make a career as dance performance artists that can enable change. If those who commit their lives, passions, and careers to dance are willing to stake claim for this most essential form of dance, and support the fight for dancers' rights to practice, share, and explore dance, in any

form, without restriction of time or place, dance will no longer remain a part of society that exists only for underground movements in warehouses on riversides. If there is an appreciation for social dance as a generator of momentum, a confluence of community, and an embodiment of freedom, the dancing that occurs on the floors of clubs can shape social justice, give voice to the unheard, and fortify the rights of individuals to their bodies.

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Moving Mountains: A History of Dance and Movement at the Banff School of Fine Arts, 1933-1967

Amy Bowring

Combine the need for escape from the rigours of daily survival, the need for artistic stimulation, an immigrant population used to cultural enrichment, the worst economic depression, an unprecedented environmental drought, a university extension program and a team of visionary educators. These are the disparate elements that collided and sparked the idea for Alberta's Banff Centre for the Arts (Banff School of Fine Arts 1934-1989). Formed in 1933, the Centre has grown from its humble beginnings as part of the University of Alberta's Extension Program to an internationally renowned centre for creative expression, superb training and artistic rejuvenation. Among its coveted programs is the dance program formed in 1947 by Gweneth Lloyd, co-founder and artistic director of the Winnipeg Ballet (Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1953). However, the roots of movement at Banff actually extend a little deeper dating back to the inclusion of pantomimic movement and eurhythmics classes taught within the drama department since the Centre's inception. And of course, there have been major contributors to the dance program following Lloyd such as Betty Farrally, Arnold Spohr, Eva von Gencsy, Brian Macdonald and Annette av Paul, among others. This paper will focus on the early movement courses at Banff followed by Lloyd's contribution to the development of the dance program and to Canadian ballet history in general.

When one looks at the Banff Centre's inspiring campus nestled in the Rocky Mountains, the obvious question is "How?" How did such a glorious centre for art and learning come into existence? It began with the University of Alberta's Extension Program, which was designed to bring the university to the people through lectures and presentations. By the early 1930s, the university's Extension Program, then led by Ned Corbett, had gained a reputation for its innovation using a team of dynamic lecturers as well as radio programming to reach Alberta's citizens. Word eventually reached the Carnegie Foundation in New York, which encouraged the university's president to apply to the Foundation for help in developing an extension program in fine arts.

The start of the Banff school is really about the right pieces coming together at the right time. Many Albertans were immigrants who had come from centres where exposure to the fine and performing arts was a part of their upbringing; however, their children, born on the prairies, were growing up without this cultural enrichment. Time after time, when Extension Program instructors returned from a circuit, they had repeatedly been asked if the university could develop a program in the arts. Additionally, the Depression had caused the closure of many small-town movie houses. But Albertans still needed entertainment and escape from their present circumstances. Consequently, hundreds of small theatre groups emerged but many groups knew little about mounting theatrical productions or even how to go about choosing plays. Elizabeth Sterling Haynes, an actress, director and producer with the Edmonton Little Theatre, joined the Extension Program to assist community theatre groups with their stagings. And then, in 1932, the Carnegie Foundation granted the university $30,000 over three years to further develop extension in the fine and performing arts. Haynes' outreach role increased but it was soon evident that she couldn't get to all of the nearly 300 drama groups in Alberta – a school was needed to centralize theatre education in Alberta.

Strangely, the Alberta Drama League did not support the idea when it was proposed in 1933 – they thought it was too soon for such a venture and would probably fail. Corbett was undeterred and soon met with Banff service clubs, the school board and the Banff Advisory Council. He found the support he needed as well as facilities. Corbett began to advertise his school immediately. The first "School of the Drama" in Banff was held August 7-25, 1933. Hoping to get a roster of forty students, the new school enrolled 102.

The first program offered courses in staging, costuming, play production, voice and eurhythmics. In the Banff school's course calendars from 1933 and

1934, Mary Ferguson and Jocelyn Taylor are identified as teachers of Eurhythmics and pantomimic movement. Course calendars also reveal that Regina's Grace Tinning taught movement at Banff in the late 1930s.

Ferguson was a graduate of Montreal's McGill University and the University of Manitoba. While at McGill, Ferguson was exposed to Eurhythmics through the university's physical education department where, in 1929, McGill had begun offering credit-bearing courses in creative and interpretative dance, including Eurhythmics. Before coming to Banff, Ferguson taught Eurhythmics at Wellesley College.

In 1933 and 1934, Ferguson co-taught a course in "plastic" with New York University's Jocelyn Taylor. This course, on "the fundamentals of theatre gymnastic and stage movement" is described in the course calendar as follows: "The course will begin with harmonic and rhythmic relaxing exercises used by various schools of the theatre and proceed to the problems of posture, walking, turning, falling and gesture as developed in theatre practice." An additional paragraph indicates that the pair also provided a series of Eurhythmics classes taught each weekday afternoon.

The 1937 course calendar provides a description for a course titled, "Training the Actor's Body": "This course will begin with harmonic and rhythmic relaxing exercises and will proceed to their application in theatrical situations. The Senior class in this course will concern itself principally with exercises designed to stimulate and accent sense memories, emotion memories and creative fantasy." No instructor is identified; however, Grace Tinning appears in a 1937 faculty photograph. Tinning is also listed as a teacher of Eurhythmics in 1936 in Donald Cameron's memoirs and course calendars reveal that she taught two levels of Eurhythmics in 1938. The course calendar describes the class as follows: "The course in Eurhythmics is designed to train the body, to promote muscular control and to achieve grace of movement. The application of Eurhythmics to dramatic work will be fully treated."

In the 1930s, Tinning was the social pages editor of the *Regina Leader-Post*. She had graduated from Rupert's Land College in Winnipeg and had also passed her solo performer and piano teachers examinations at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. Her early dance training was with a Dorothy Rowell and then later at the Mary Wigman School in New York. It is likely that her Eurhythmics training came from the Toronto Conservatory of Music, where, from 1927-1957, Madeleine Boss Lasserre taught Eurhythmics.

While the original focus of the Banff School was dramatic art, it did not take long for the Department of Extension to extend the mandate to include courses in the other fine and performing arts. The Painting Division was added in 1935, Piano in 1936, Creative Writing in 1937, Choral Leadership in 1938, Oral French in 1939, Ceramics and Pottery in 1941, Weaving in '42, and Children's art classes in '44.

The first inkling of a dance program came in 1941 with a letter dated January 31 from Gweneth Lloyd to Donald Cameron, who had succeeded Corbett in 1935. In her letter, Lloyd, aware of the presence of movement classes at Banff, simply offers her services as a teacher stating, "I understand that in the past you have had movement or dancing in the curriculum of your summer school at Banff, and, in the event of your not yet having engaged an instructress for this subject, I wondered if you could consider my application." She then elaborates on her teaching experience and qualifications. Cameron replied on February 4 with a pretty standard response, "As our staff is pretty well completed for this year, I am afraid we will not be able to make use of your services. We shall be glad to keep your name in mind in case we have an opening another year." This correspondence debunks the myth that she actually proposed a ballet program in 1941.

In their history of the Banff Centre on its fiftieth anniversary, David and Peggy Leighton state that wartime restrictions on funds and facilities made it impossible to begin a new division at this time. However, during the war years, a new auditorium was opened in 1940, plus Divisions in French, Ceramics and Pottery, Weaving, and children's art classes were all added. My suspicion is that dance simply wasn't a priority. Cameron, himself, probably did not have a lot of exposure to dance in the 1930s and 1940s. While there were numerous dance and ballet schools across Canada, the amateur ballet companies that would turn professional in the 1950s were just getting started. In Vancouver, June Roper had been producing professsional ballet dancers since 1934 and into the early 1940s, but with little paid work in Canada, many of her pupils left home to find jobs with Ballet Theatre, the Ballets Russes companies, in Hollywood musicals and on Broadway. Boris Volkoff's fledgling ballet company in Toronto performed locally and at the 1936 Berlin Olympics but did not tour to western Canada until the 1948 Canadian Ballet Festival in

Winnipeg. Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally initiated their Winnipeg Ballet Club in 1938, but this group was in its early stages of development when Lloyd wrote her letter to Cameron. And international tours organized by impresarios such as Sol Hurok rarely made stops as far north as Edmonton, where Cameron lived. Ballet probably just wasn't on his radar but by the war's end it would be.

The course calendars from 1939 to 1946 offer no movement courses except as a component of the acting course, which is described as "A course on movement, pantomime and grouping only in so far as the actor as an individual is concerned. Exercises adapted from the Stanislavsky method." The instructor is unknown. However, in 1946, Cameron invited Mara McBirney and Gweneth Lloyd to visit the Banff School to assess the possibility of developing a ballet program there. Mara McBirney was a Royal Academy of Dancing teacher and examiner whom the RAD sent to Canada in 1946 to teach the new children's syllabus and to examine students. She settled in Vancouver in 1948 and became a central figure for the RAD in that city, maintaining the excellence of the program and offering her studio for the Academy's courses and examinations. She was also a major participant in the Canadian Ballet Festivals from 1949 to 1953 collaborating with other Vancouver teachers so that Vancouver dancers always had a presence in the festivals. McBirney seems to have acted as an initial advisor but it is Lloyd who is credited with truly founding the ballet program at Banff.

In his 1977 memoirs, Donald Cameron writes, "One of the best investments the school ever made was to persuade Gweneth Lloyd … to head the … Ballet Division. This began a twenty-year love affair between Miss Lloyd and the Banff School which was to last until she retired in 1968 after building the Ballet School to the largest in America."

Gweneth Lloyd is arguably the mother of Canadian Ballet. While she is by no means the first ballet teacher in Canada, she set in motion the machinery that would lead to the full professionalization of ballet in Canada.

Born in England in 1901, Lloyd began social and fancy dancing at age thirteen. She loved dancing and was determined to make it her career. She attended the Liverpool Physical Training College and during her first teaching job she reconnected with dance when she became interested in Ruby Ginner's Revived Greek Dance. Historian Anna Blewchamp argues that it was the emphasis on expressivity and musicality in the Revived Greek Dance that characterized Lloyd's chor-eography. In 1924, Lloyd left her job to study with Ginner full time. She complemented this training by studying Cecchetti and RAD ballet technique eventu-ally becoming an examiner for the RAD. In 1926, Lloyd and a colleague opened a school in Leeds where she befriended a student named Betty Hey (later Farrally). The two immigrated to Canada settling in Winnipeg in 1938. Betty was 23, Gweneth, 36.

Upon their arrival, the pair opened the Canadian School of Ballet. While there was an ample supply of dance teachers in Winnipeg in 1938, Lloyd and Farrally realized that to really foster ballet's development in their new prairie home, public education was needed. Within months of their arrival, they initiated the Winnipeg Ballet Club and offered free tuition to anyone accepted. They also held monthly lecture-demonstrations. They soon connected with a dynamic jack-of-all-trades named David Yeddeau. This "holy trinity", so called by later Royal Winnipeg Ballet artistic director Arnold Spohr, formed an unstoppable team that brought ballet to new heights in Canada. Lloyd was the choreographer, Farrally the rehearsal director and Yeddeau added experience in set design and construction, wardrobe and make-up, and stage management.

Following the programming developed by producers such as Diaghilev, Lloyd decided she would create programs that offered a mixture of white ballets, comic ballets and the avant-garde. Anna Blewchamp describes Lloyd's process in *The Encyclopedia of Theatre Dance in Canada*, "Lloyd was one of few choreographers who could visualize complete works before she began rehearsals. She would listen to the music and write her ballets, sometimes with casts of over twenty dancers, with musical measures noted against her own personal notation of descriptions, ballet, national and Greek dance terminology, floor plans and figure drawings." Lloyd created truly Canadian ballets using Canadian themes in such works as *Grain* (1939), *Kilowatt Magic* (1939), *The Shooting of Dan McGrew* (1950) and *Shadow on the Prairie* (1952); using Canadian designers such as Robert Bruce (*Dionysos*, 1945) and Joseph Plaskett (*Visages*, 1949); and using Canadian composers such as Walter Kauffman (*Visages*, 1949) and Robert Fleming (*Shadow on the Prairie*, 1952).

In 1948, the "holy trinity", along with Toronto teacher/choreographer Boris Volkoff, initiated the Canadian Ballet Festivals. The six festivals, presented

in various Canadian cities between 1948 and 1954, brought new notoriety to ballet in Canada. The chief goal was to create an environment in which Canadian dancers could earn a living in their own country and they succeeded. By 1951, Winnipeg Ballet dancers were paid a small wage. Later in 1951, the National Ballet of Canada made its debut. By 1952, dancers were making a living dancing on television in Toronto and Montreal, and later Vancouver. By 1957, the Canada Council had formed and was funding the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

Mixed in with all of this activity was the Banff School. Lloyd was unable to teach in the first year of the ballet program in 1947 and instead sent Joan Stirling, a Winnipeg Ballet dancer and a teacher at Lloyd and Farrally's Canadian School of Ballet. In 1948 and 1949, this role was filled by Jean McKenzie – Winnipeg's star female dancer. Finally in 1950, Lloyd began teaching at Banff herself eventually bringing her long-time friend and colleague Betty Farrally. The ballet program was a part of the Theatre Division and included classes in "Rhythmics" for actors. The ballet courses were based on the RAD technique but also included improvised movement, Revived Greek Dance and mime. Lloyd also staged ballets that she had created for the Winnipeg Ballet including *Arabesque I* (1947), *Arabesque II*, (1949), *Pleasure Cruise* (1946) and *Façade Suite* (1941), and she choreographed new ballets, such as *Partita* and *Petite Suite*.

By 1951, the ballet program had grown from ten students in its inaugural year to over 100. Winnipeg Ballet dancer Eva von Gencsy joined the faculty in 1954 to teach ballet but later she incorporated jazz-ballet into her teaching and she led the jazz dance department at Banff from 1966 to 1976. Von Gencsy is also notable for co-founding Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal in 1972. But jazz had actually been introduced to Banff earlier when choreographer Brian Macdonald joined the faculty in 1960. He founded the musical theatre program in 1964. The ballet program became its own division in 1958 and really began to grow at this point. Lloyd invited guest instructors from the Royal Academy of Dancing such as Louise Brown and Sonia Chamberlain, and her own student and Royal Winnipeg Ballet dancer Arnold Spohr. By the time Lloyd retired as Ballet Division head in 1967, the program had grown to include over 200 students. There was always a strong connection to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet even after Lloyd had resigned as its artistic director in 1957. Banff provided teaching opportunities and summer training for RWB dancers and Banff provided future dancers to the RWB. With the production experience gained and the chance to work with choreographers such as Macdonald, students received superb professional training at Banff. Furthermore, many of Macdonald's works that began at Banff later made their way into the RWB repertoire.

By the time Gweneth Lloyd left Banff, she and Farrally had resettled in Kelowna, British Columbia, having opened a new branch of the Canadian School of Ballet. Lloyd received numerous awards for her contribution to Canadian culture including the Order of Canada in 1969 and the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement just months before she died in 1993. This mother of Canadian ballet has left us an internationally renowned company approaching its seventieth anniversary and a highly sought after training program that will be sixty in 2007. Not bad for someone who was just seeking a new adventure on the Canadian prairie.

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losing ground: Seeking Functional Support in the Landscape of Dance

Anna Mouat

The Clifford E. Lee Foundation has been supporting social and artistic development in Alberta for over 30 years. One element of this support, the Clifford E. Lee Choreography Award, was established in 1978 to encourage the artistic development of emerging Canadian choreographers and to help foster the establishment of their choreographic careers. The award, declared to be one of the most prestigious in the dance world, is presented annually by the Banff Center. The award recipient spends six weeks in residence at The Banff Centre, and creates a new work for the dancers of the Professional Dance Summer Program. The Banff Centre provides full production support, and hosts four performances of the new work at the Banff Summer Arts Festival. In addition, the award recipient receives a cash prize of $5,000.

In 2005, the Clifford E. Lee Choreography Award was shared by two Canadian choreographers: Sabrina Matthews and Peter Quanz. Sabrina Matthews, the focus of this paper, is a graduate of the National Ballet School and a former soloist for the Alberta Ballet. The work which she created at the Banff Centre is entitled *losing ground.*

What emerges in *losing ground* is an interesting analogy between the underlying theme of the work and the means by which the work was engendered in the first place. Matthews describes the subject matter of *losing ground* as lost souls searching for their path in life, who turn to others for support. Although Matthews is not construing herself as a lost soul, nonetheless, she turned to the Clifford E. Lee Foundation and the Banff Center for support, and was granted institutional and financial assistance for the creation of her work. At this point, however, the analogy fails. *losing ground* is not a work about civic support in the sense of institutional and financial provision, but rather, personal support in the sense of emotional validation. It explores the private domain of human psychology, rather than the public domain of social and artistic development.

The concept of emotional support implies an inherent duality: emotional support can be life enhancing or controlling, unconditional or qualified; steadying or destabilizing; it can foster functional autonomy, or cultivate emotional and physical dependence. This paper looks at the notion of functional versus dysfunctional support as it arises in the movement, imagery and meaning of *losing ground.*

The work opens with a bold visual statement of stark contrast. Eight dancers stand in vertical stillness, their bodies balanced in quiet symmetry. Juxtaposing their vertical equilibrium is a stage set of heavy, concrete pillars, topped by a massive beam. The pillars tilt precariously on a slant; the upper beam slashes across the stage on a striking diagonal. The effect is unsettling. The dancers look vulnerable, their human frailty emphasized by the sheer amount of cold, unyielding concrete present on stage. The slanting pillars and angled beam evoke images of instability and imbalance, and of forces that subvert and destabilize.

As an opening image, it makes a bold and powerful statement, and it introduces us to some of the concepts that are later developed in *losing ground.* However, Matthews reveals the full range of the ballet's imagery and meaning more with understated allusion, than with bold statements, and she does this through one of the work's prominent motifs: supported, adagio duets.

The male dancer supporting and lifting the female has been a cornerstone of classical ballet choreography for over 200 years. When Charles Didelot introduced duet partnering in his ballet Flore and Zephyr in 1796, he expanded the ballerina's use of vertical space. By the end of the 19th century, she was performing unprecedented feats of balance. Amalia Ferraris astonished her audience in 1861 by performing pirouettes, assisted by her male partner, on the edge of an upturned tambourine. Some dance scholars have interpreted classical ballet partnering as women being manipulated and controlled by their male partners. In her analysis of Balanchine's *Four Temperaments,* Ann Daly states that "the manipulated ballerina looks less like a dominant dynamo than a submissive instrument…she makes no movement of her own; her body is fully contingent upon the manipulations of her partner." A counter to this argument, however, is that with the advent of partnering, the ballerina's repertory has been expanded far beyond that of her male counterpart. She can achieve feats of balance and aerial flight which were hitherto impossible without the physical support of her partner. Rather than

experiencing passive manipulation, the ballerina can actively use her partner's support to experience an expanded and highly privileged repertory of movement. These are two, albeit divergent, viewpoints that arise when the concept of support is applied to the sexual politics of classical ballet partnering. Between these extremes, however, lie many subtle nuances, intrinsic to the very nature of the duet form. These shades of meaning are what Matthews explores in the supported adagio duets of *losing ground.*

In the first section of *losing ground*, we witness a variety of choreographic devices, whereby the ballerina is balanced, supported, and carried through space. The movement quality of this section is profoundly tender; the feeling is one of nurture and great compassion. These ballerinas are fragile cargo, to be handled gently, and treated with immense care. A dancer sinks softly to the floor, caught in a loving embrace. She is raised by kind, supportive arms, and carried tenderly. . Each duet, and there are six of them in this section, is rendered more poignant by the ballerina's total surrender to her partner's ministrations. Her movements are open, yielding, unresisting. Mathews creates an impression of benign generosity, both on the part of the giver and the receiver, where support is given freely and accepted gratefully. We perceive the ballerina as delicate and fragile, but not weak; she is vulnerable but does not evoke our pity. Her male partner is powerful but not aggressive, helpful but not manipulative. This whole section might be characterized as a distillation of loving kindness. This is the helping hand that lifts us when we fall; the words of kindness that comfort us in the face of defeat; the open arms that embrace us in times of despair.

Following this section is a longer duet which contrasts the soft, yielding quality of the previous section. The female dancer is now aware of her own strength and power. Her use of stage space is increased, and her movements are fuller. She dances with more authority, as if aware, not only of her ability to take up more space on stage, but also her right. She is an active participant in this duet, rather than a passive recipient. From a secure, anchored foundation of support, she can veer off the vertical plumb-line; stabilized at the waist, she can balance precariously, perform multiple pirouettes, extend her powerful, sinuous limbs in space with freedom and determination. The kind of support her partner provides also contrasts the previous section. Lifts of the entire body being carried through space are used sparingly. The support is now more likely to be confined to one hand. This requires the ballerina to contribute a far greater degree of her own strength, balance and active energy to the partnership. Not only is the ballerina actively participating with her partner, she is also using that support to perform her own strong, independent movements. She pushes against his outstretched arm and propels herself into a triple pirouette, confident in her ability to secure his assistance when required. He catches her at the last instant and she gives him her weight, even when she doesn't really need to; at another moment she throws off his support in a burst of self-sufficiency. She dances beside her partner in unison, creating an impression of equality. And all the while, her movement is resonant with an undercurrent of driving purpose. She is forceful, determined, resolved to take advantage of every opportunity to use her partner's support, both literally and metaphorically, to perform her own free, autonomous movement. This is the notion of support in the sense of the strong, enabling arm of security that bolsters the growth of our self-sufficiency, and facilitates our independence.

The third duet in *losing ground* which serves to illustrate the concept of support, introduces images of manipulation and destabilization. The duet opens with the male dancer thrusting his partner's torso forward in space, with the driving force of his own ribcage; the female floats her arms upwards, he shoves one arm down and immediately hoists up her leg, threatening her equilibrium. Later, she takes an unfolding attitude downstage left, strong, independent, centered. He runs to her side, and brazenly knocks her off balance. For the first time in the work, we see the notion of support that results from subversion, where the female, actively destabilized by her partner, has no choice but to fall into his waiting grasp. This is not the helping, compassionate embrace that catches us when we fall; nor the strong, enabling arm of security that bolsters the growth of our independence. What Matthews introduces here is the notion of dysfunctional support that seeks to undermine, disempower, manipulate, and ultimately control, and in so doing cultivates the physical and emotional dependence of its quarry.

Moments later in the ballet, we see a glimpse of that physical dependence as the female grabs her partner's arm, thrusts it under her armpit, lunges out sideways and abandons the full weight of her body onto his extended limb. In another moment of urgency, she wraps his arm around her waist and forces him to drag her on the upstage diagonal in an

off-centered attitude. In both instances, we witness the female dancer manipulating her partner for support, not in the sense of using him as a springboard from which to launch herself into autonomy, but in a manner that speaks of physical dependence and needy insecurity.

losing ground is not a narrative work about relationships that degenerate into emotional dysfunction. There is no acting, no characterization, no plot development, no story. The imagery and meaning of the ballet are revealed to us through subtle nuance and allusion, rather than by literal reference. In fact, the references in the movement are so abstract that we may miss them altogether. We may view the ballet purely on the level of kinesthetic empathy, appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of the movement, and evaluation of the dancers' technical and artistic skill. Matthews, however, has been quoted as saying that she wants to keep her audience thinking. She also believes that we can re-evaluate our lives through art. *losing ground* reveals aspects of human behavior that can indeed prompt us to thought, and lead us to re-examine issues in our lives. This paper has investigated the notion of support as it arises in the movement, imagery and meaning of the ballet. We can view support as sustaining and life enhancing, fostering stability, equilibrium, and healthy autonomy. Or we can see it as disempowering and destabilizing, encouraging emotional need and physical dependence. Reflecting on the very title of the work, we may conclude that when we are subject to manipulative, controlling behavior, we will always slide backward and fall behind. We will always feel as if we are "losing ground".

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Making Dance Epic: Ballet, Brecht and Britain

Helena Hammond

Working to a commissioned score by the German composer Hans Werner Henze, in 1958 the Royal Ballet's resident choreographer Frederick Ashton created *Ondine*, the last in a series of full length three-act ballets which he conceived as vehicles for the company's star dancer Margot Fonteyn. For Lincoln Kirstein, writing in the same year, *Ondine's* London premiere betokened a company with 'no intellectual direction, no contact with necessity, that is WHAT IS ACTUALLY NEEDED [capitals are Kirstein's] for its public.' (Kavanagh: 438). 'Why has nobody done a horror number of the Angry Young non U's…?' Kirstein asked in this – to quote Julie Kavanagh – 'lengthy diatribe to Cecil Beaton', before concluding '…it [the Royal Ballet] has a great theater, a subsidy, and it is a national object of veneration, and Ninette [de Valois] is a combination of Montgomery of Alamein and Mrs Bowdler. If I had anything to do with it, I would blast the place open…' (438-9). While Martha Graham's likening of witnessing Fonteyn perform the same ballet's titular role 'to be[ing] touched by dance as ritual – the dancer as goddess' (New York) indicates that *Ondine's* status was considerably more complex - and considerably less unambiguously retrograde - than Kirstein's comments might imply, a group of young British dancer-choreographers – some members of which worked in close collaboration with Kirstein's 'Angry non U's' - indicates that there existed, at the same time, ample fertile ground in which Kirstein's clarion to 'blast the place open' could take hold and bear fruit.

Focusing on Kenneth MacMillan, a founder-member of this group, this paper aims to plot the co-ordinates and chart in outline the process through which a hitherto overlooked but crucial strand of post-war British dance theatre was able to establish a critical space from which to mount a Brechtian critique of dance history, and of recent British dance history in particular. I will be especially concerned to elucidate the process through which this British Brechtian dance theatre, true to the founding principles of Brechtian epic, furnished a critical dialectic space through which to fashion and articulate, in performance terms, substantive and significant comment on the socio-political order and institutional underpinnings that had given rise and direction to that dance history in the first place. In essence then, I will read post-war British Brechtian dance practice as enabling a return, or repatriation, of a history of dance institutions to the dancing body, a restitution specifically worked through the gestic articulations of that dancing body in performance.

'1956 and all that'

To quote from the title of Dan Rebellato's book (cited in bibliography below) which takes as its subtitle 'the making of modern British drama', beyond its allusion to a range of events around which the history of post-war British has conventionally been written, 'all that' can be taken to refer to the threat posed to Britain's political hegemony by events of 1956 spanning the Suez Crisis and the way this laid bare Britain's waning Imperial power; Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin; and the Soviet invasion of Hungary. In a 1989 interview with playwright Julia Pascal to mark his 60th birthday, Kenneth MacMillan recalled 1956 as the year in which **'**it was time to push ahead, to change some of the rules. For me dance could not merely be an ornate art. I wanted it to be strange.' And here MacMillan was clearly talking to an observation he made elsewhere - 'I felt I was in the theatre and, in general, ballet didn't reflect all that theatre can do' (London).

As far as the reactionary British tabloid *The Daily Mirror* was concerned, MacMillan's project of estrangement took shape immediately. 'Has the Lord Chamberlain Seen This?' screamed a front page banner headline the same year (Taylor: 119). Included below was the offending image which the paper sought to bring to the attention of the Lord Chamberlain, a post within the Royal Household to whom censorship of British dramatic theatre was governmentally entrusted until the abolition of theatre censorship with the Theatres Act of 1968. A half-page photo taken of the ballet from the Royal Opera House's new production of *Tannhäuser*, for which MacMillan had just provided the choreography, showed near-naked satyrs grappling with maidens, apparently naked from the waist up. Beyond its invocation of the Lord Chamberlain, the front page headline is so loaded with significance for the

discussion which follows, especially when scrutinised in light of MacMillan's comment above, that it is worth pausing for a moment here to unpack further both of these.

In its allusion to the way MacMillan had managed to slip beneath the Lord Chamberlain's radar, the headline very neatly calls attention to how dance's extra-textual status enabled it to operate beyond the reach of the Lord Chamberlain's censorial pen, an agency that would prove highly significant for the encounter between radical Brechtian technique and post-war British dance theatre. In the context of this encounter, the inauguration of MacMillan's project to make dance *strange* through a staging of Wagnerian opera acquires added resonance. MacMillan's rejection of 'dance that was merely an ornate art' - in other words of theatre that was only decorative or culinary - in favour of a praxis that *estranged* dance, evokes exactly the notion of *Verfremdungs-* or distanciation effect on which Brechtian epic theatre depended. And in applying distanciation in the first instance to Wagner, MacMillan doubly honoured Brecht. It was of course as an antidote to the 'fused' Wagnerian *gesamtkunstwerk* which, for Brecht, hypnotically triggered a culinary 'fog', 'likely to induce [in its audience] sordid intoxication…, [and so] has got to be given up', that Brecht had devised epic theatre in the first place (Willett: 37-38). The Brechtian seeds of MacMillan's project of estrangement acquire still further significance in light of MacMillan's dating the launch of this project precisely to 1956.

The inaugural British visit of Brecht's Berliner Ensemble in September of that year is universally acknowledged as one of the decisive factors driving the consensus that 1956 marks a key fault line in post-World War II British theatre history. Significantly for the discussion that follows, as definitive examples of Brechtian epic theatre, the three plays which Brecht's company performed during their first London season were all concerned with retellings of history.[1] In the absence of the necessary German linguistic skills with which to track Brecht's rich juxtaposition of text and speech patterns (English translations of Brecht's plays and theoretical writing only became widely available in 1960s), the audience inevitably found themselves focusing on the plays' extra-textual aspects. Brecht had been quick to anticipate this, famously predicting in 'Our London Season', his last note to the company in advance of the London visit and shortly before his death, that 'we shall be offering most of the audience a pure pantomime, a kind of silent film on stage for they know no German.' (Willett: 283). As Brecht predicted, observes Margaret Eddershaw, 'it was of course the visual effects of the productions and the physical aspects of the acting that had the greatest initial impact on British audiences' (51). The impact of the first of these has been well noted, by Martin Esslin for instance, who observed in 1969 'as far as design is concerned practically *all* British stage design…today derives from the work of the main Brechtian designers...' (Palmer: 216). However, the way in which subsequent British dance-based adaptations and extensions of the gestic body amounted to an unusually powerful - rather than idiosyncratic or eccentric - response to the specifics of Brechtian practice as they emerged within a British context has passed entirely unnoticed. Brecht's own championing of dance as a vital component of the techniques of his gestic theatre of estrangement, makes the omission of this chapter from histories of the British reception of Brecht doubly glaring.

'Getting the gest'[2]: dance and Brecht's notion of *gestus*

In his observation that "a theatre that bases everything on the *Gestus* cannot do without choreography' (Broadhurst:77) given that 'the very elegance of a movement and grace of a movement defamiliarises [sic]' (Shepherd and Wallis: 188), Brecht makes clear the status of dance as an indispensable and central component in his conception of a theatre that privileges 'representation…which allows us to recognise its subject, but at the same time make it seem unfamiliar' (Edgar 1999: 7). Given its alterity or otherness when juxtaposed with the 'master' discourse of text, dance exercised particular purchase in the establishment of Brechtian estrangement or distanciation - the vital intervening space on which a Brechtian notion of critique or dialectic depended. And even leaving aside his inherent assumption that all dance is intrinsically graceful as one that is clearly too restrictive for the modern reader, Brecht's central insistence on the special agency of the dancing body in the formation of gestic performance codes that privilege the representation of behaviour as societally determined over the expression of personal psychological states endures undiminished.

It was most likely with dance's particular gestic or attitudinal purchase again expressly in mind that Brecht recognised the potential of certain aspects of the Broadway musical as models for devising his own

staging techniques. Carl Weber thinks Brecht intended specific reference to *Oklahoma!*, and to Agnes de Mille's choreography especially, when, having seen the musical in 1946, he observed: 'The stage designers and choreographers employ to a great extent V-effects, the latter ones such as have been culled from folklore….In the dance numbers, which sometimes are intelligently devised pantomimes, the gestic elements of Epic theatre appear.' (58) In this context it is also relevant to remember that the choreographer Ruth Berghaus, wife of Brechtian composer Paul Dessau, served as artistic director of the Berliner Ensemble for some years in the 1970s. It was to Berghaus that Brecht had turned when he intended to incorporate several dance sequences in his 1954 Berliner Ensemble production of *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, including an elaborate dance at the end of the play. Seeing his actors lacked the necessary dance training, Brecht eventually abandoned the dance, substituting a procession in its place (Weber: 60). Writing, in a 1936 article in the *Left Review*, of how 'the gestic mode of acting owes much to silent film, elements from it were re-introduced into the art of acting' (Weber: 55), Brecht also indirectly credited dance given that many American silent screen actors had originally trained as Denishawn dancers.

Returning to Britain and 1956, if the revelatory impact of the Berliner Ensemble's visit registered most obviously through a new school of British stage designers, these designers instinctively gravitated to the recently founded English Stage Company (ESC) when it established itself at London's Royal Court Theatre that year. In light of the ESC's founding mission to champion new forms of politically engaged dramatic writing, identification with Brechtian theatre had been written into the company from the outset. Preceded, in February, by Sam Wanamaker's pre-season production of *The Threepenny Opera*, in May of 1956 John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* famously opened as part of the ESC's inaugural season.

The precise nature of the anger unleashed by the play and of the exact meaning and significance posed by 1956 are subjects of intense academic debate, as especially evidenced by Rebellato, cited above, who brings a Foucaultian interpretation to the Royal Court, arguing for a greater implication of the theatre in the British establishment than its outsider status would at first suggest. Yet even if the conventional notion that Osborne's play revolutionised British theatre overnight is no longer tenable, the acknowledgment of John Osborne and the Anger Play by David Edgar, Britain's leading contemporary political playwright, remains highly significant. Edgar's lineage to Brecht has been fully traced but to this must be added Edgar's own declared indebtedness to Osborne's theatre. 'I don't think I would be writing for the theatre were it not for John Osborne' observed Edgar in his essay *The diverse progeny of Jimmy Porter*, Porter being of course *Look Back's* protagonist (Lacey).[3] Edgar (2006:8) has very recently expanded on this observation to embrace 'those [plays] of generation after generation of writers…which would not have been written for the theatre, or for any medium at all, without *Look Back in Anger*'. In a neat of echo of Edgar, Kenneth MacMillan famously sourced the development of his choreographic career to the same play, stating how 'I saw *Look Back in Anger* and was absolutely bowled over by it.' (Bailey), and later writing to Osborne, the leader, of course, of Kirstein's 'Angry Non-Us', 'Your bombshell made me see that everything in my world was merely window dressing' (Heilpern: 186).

The World of Paul Slickey

MacMillan's first dance essay in Brechtian theatre would be as choreographer of the musical *The World of Paul Slickey*, conceived, written and directed by Osborne in 1959 and impossible now to reconstruct. If Osborne's status as a Brechtian interlocutor is seen by many as problematic, the Brechtian status of *Slickey* has never been in doubt. The author of a major German study of Brecht's impact on British theatre was reproved for not having focused on works like *Slickey*, singled out by reviewer David Bathrick as a 'clear example' of a play 'where the link to Brecht is obvious' (179). Written and directed by Osborne as 'a show about modern archetypes in a schizophrenic setting' (Osborne: 117), and featuring a host of ESC-associated actors, *Slickey*, according to Darwin Turner, blazed 'with the same fury which illuminated Osborne's earlier *Look Back in Anger* and *Martin Luther*…Osborne slashes at a society which he refuses to redeem…[his] caustic irreverent raillery at British institutions delights the intellect but forbids sympathy for the puppets' (167-8). Calling *Slickey* a 'revolutionary […] weapon', critic Charles Marowitz insisted that with the musical's May 5 opening at the Palace Theatre (London host of the Berliner Ensemble in 1956) 'the revolution has begun and nothing in the world can stop it!' (Rebellato: 37-38). Clearly then, in working on *Slickey*, MacMillan – whom Osborne described the musical's 'happiest and most valuable

recruit' (Osborne: 119) and whose contribution to the show's 'devastating satire on politicians, aristocrats, and ministers' (Turner: 167) included a satanic dance for the ensemble led by the lecherous Father Evilgreene, was doing - in Kirstein's words – 'a horror number of the Angry Non U's'.

The Seven Deadly Sins

MacMillan's first production of a Brechtian ballet was *The Seven Deadly Sins*, for Western Theatre Ballet (WTB). In 1961 Lord Harewood, who was also a most energetic founding board member of the ESC, commissioned WTB to produce and stage the Weill-Brecht - and originally Balanchine choreographed - sung ballet as part of the programme for the Edinburgh Festival whose artistic director he had recently become. Rehearsing 'several familiar themes, principally the way the lower class betrays itself as it attempts to rise within the class system' (Humphrey: 395), *The Seven Deadly Sins* most palpably stages what it sees as the impossibility of the artist surviving the dictates of the capitalist marketplace with her principles intact through the schizophrenic splitting of her identity into two bodies. The split identity that ensues, by enabling Anna I - the singing Anna - to comment in highly ironic terms on the actions of Anna II – the dancing Anna, allows the audience to view the two Annas' journey from American city to city from an intervening space of distanciation. In the context of this paper's concerns it is worth remembering that the original 1933 production of the ballet had transferred to London immediately after its Paris premiere. That London's initial and direct encounter with Brecht had therefore been routed through the Brechtian ballet body is surely not without significance for the unfolding British engagement with Brecht, even is this dimension is little remarked upon in discussions of Brecht's British reception. MacMillan however may have been unusually aware of the significance of the 1933 production as Constant Lambert, who would of course have been extremely familiar to MacMillan as music director of the Royal Ballet, had conducted the London performances in 1933 and especially praised *The Seven Deadly Sins* for 'dealing with a modern and emotional subject without chi-chi, false sentiment or mechanical romanticism' (Jacobs and Ohlsen: 15). Western Theatre Ballet, an experimental small scale Bristol-based touring company which sought, in the words of its founder-director Elizabeth West, acknowledgment 'as the balletic equivalent of a combination of the best efforts of the Royal Court and [Joan Littlewood's] Theatre Workshop' (Massie: 54) was ideally suited to mount the first British revival of *The Seven Deadly Sins*. The production clearly made a lasting impact on MacMillan who would go on to mount two further stagings of the ballet, a version for the Royal Ballet which he choreographed as its artistic director in 1973, and a version for Granada Television in 1984, the first time a production was made for British television.

Coming Home: MacMillan's *Isadora* as Brechtian epic

MacMillan's most thorough-going Brechtian work was *Isadora* created for the Royal Ballet in 1981, to mark its fiftieth birthday. If the past, present and future directions of the company would be implicit in any work conceived to mark this milestone anniversary, they are addressed explicitly in *Isadora*. By taking as its subject the history of Isadora Duncan, MacMillan's full-length ballet not only profiled one of the 20th century's most prolific dancemakers, but crucially one whose oppositional stance to ballet meant that with the staging of her history came the in-built potential for an intervening space of distanciation from which the Royal Ballet's history as Britain's institutional purveyor of ballet could also emerge in Brechtian terms. 'Brecht's conception of the "historical sense", which links "delight in distance" not with a picturesque remoteness but with "delight in what is close and proper to ourselves"' detected by Loren Kruger (166) in John Arden's play, *Armstrong's Long Goodnight*, might be said to be equally at work in *Isadora*. MacMillan's ballet, it could be argued, writes back, through and to the company's collective dancing body, an institutional history of the Royal Ballet that is staged in Brechtian terms.

Critical response to *Isadora* in 1981 was in the main harsh and has not softened with time. For one dance critic it is the 'universally dismissed…nadir of MacMillan's creative output' (Robertson: 28) and for Jann Parry, author of the forthcoming authorised biography of MacMillan, it remains 'a MacMillan ballet whose revival I, for one, would not welcome' (5). Despite its direct borrowing of *The Seven Deadly Sins's* splitting of the protagonist role into two bodies, in *Isadora's* case a dancing body and a talking body, this and the ballet's many other overtly Brechtian credentials were almost entirely bypassed and unacknowledged by critics, even if dance critic

Alastair Macaulay, in characterising *Isadora* as 'just the sort of ballet you didn't want at a family occasion' (McCarthy), seems to pick up on its alienation effect as part of what for him was the ballet's unwanted otherness. Monica Mason's plan as incoming artistic director of the Royal Ballet (and long-standing MacMillan collaborator) to mount a revised staging of *Isadora* in 2004, as part of the season immediately following that which coincided with the tenth anniversary of MacMillan's death, suggests that the ballet's alterity meant considerably more to the company, even if financial and time constraints were ultimately to thwart her proposed revival.

While the constraints of space prevent a fuller discussion of *Isadora's* Brechtian rhetoric and politics here (a fuller analysis, from which the present discussion is extracted, will be presented elsewhere)[4], it is appropriate to conclude by recalling the response to *Isadora* of Michael Billington, distinguished theatre critic of *The Guardian*. In a 1981 article entitled 'Is the new too shocking?' (Billington) printed the day after *Merrily We Roll Along's* November opening on Broadway, Billington characterised *Isadora*, together with Sondheim's musical, as theatre that was 'pioneering and audacious…[that offered] important artistic breakthroughs'. Moving to focus on *Isadora* specifically, Billington went on to recall 'nothing I had heard or read about the work had prepared me for its exciting theatricality or for the fact that it opens up whole new possibilities for dance', 'scene after scene bristles with theatrical invention' he continued. Billington, significantly the only critic to pick up on *Isadora's* close connection to *The Seven Deadly Sins*, went on to bemoan the 'politely cool reception' given to the work by Covent Garden audiences. Billington wrote elsewhere in the same year of the way in which one 'has to concede that genuine experiment [in theatre] is in very short supply, that there has been a steady seepage of good writers to television and cinema and that many of our most pioneering directors (Brook, Littlewood, Jonathan Miller) are either in exile, retirement or other jobs' (in Marowitz et al: 11). This makes all the more significant his enthusiastic testimony to the audacious experimentation of MacMillan's Brechtian ballet, an experimentation that was shared by the Royal Ballet dancers who entered into MacMillan's project.

Endnotes

1 These were *Mother Courage, Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Trumpets and Drums*.

2 I am borrowing this title from Tom Kuhn's essay on Brecht and Willett in The Brecht Yearbook 17, University of Wisconsin Press, 1992: 260-273

3 I am grateful to Stephen Lacey for the source for this quotation.

4 In part presented as 'Dancing Duncan: the politics of dancerly identity in MacMillan's *Isadora*', paper delivered at SDHS, Evanston, 2005 and under preparation in expanded form for *Contemporary Theatre Review*.

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Presentation and Discussion: Issues of

Authenticity and Change in Aboriginal Dance

Robin Prichard

The purpose of this presentation was to bring up some of the challenges I believe aboriginal performers face in bringing their work to Western audiences. Because of the limited time frame, and because I wished to present as much of this as possible through choreography, in my opening discussion I generalized very broadly about commonalities within the circumstances of presenting aboriginal dance or cross-cultural indigenously based dance in Western formats. Of course, there are enormous differences not only between the particulars of individual aboriginal groups, but also between the social and cultural forces that are at play within the dominant societies in which they exist. For example, there are very different economic and political forces at work in the U.S. than in Australia in terms of how aboriginal dance comes about and how, when and by whom it gets seen. However, my purpose here was to look at some of the commonalities among these situations.

My viewpoint is constructed from three positions: The first is my research and experience as a Fulbright scholar in Australia, investigating cross-cultural choreography between aboriginal and contemporary dance. The second is my experience as an educator, teaching choreography to the next generation of aboriginal artists in Australia. The third and most formative, is from being an artist of mixed Cherokee, Chickasaw, and white descent presenting choreography in postmodern America. It is an amalgamation of these three viewpoints from which I delineate two contrasting outside forces at work in contemporary aboriginal dance – one that demands change, and one that precludes it.

The economic and cultural pressures that force indigenous dance into Western venues demand fundamental and radical changes to traditional practices. By Western venues, I am referring not only to proscenium theaters, but also museums, cultural centers, roadside tourist stops, and conferences – anywhere the demands of the marketplace make it possible and viable for indigenous dance performances to occur. These changes are often of the obvious sort: For example, there are the requisite changes it space and setting that occur when moving a land-centered work into a theater, as well as changes in the element of time, cutting down a multi-day dance to fit into an agreeable performance slot. But there are often more fundamental changes in regard to the function of dance and the role the performance takes within the larger society. To create a polarity that I am not necessarily satisfied with, if Western theater practices are built predominantly on individualism and constant innovation, then aboriginal practices can be seen to emphasize unity, reinforce normative and traditional structures and sustain communities. To go further with this, indigenous dance often has a performative element to it that is absent in European derived artforms. In using the word performativity, I am specifically referencing J.L. Austin's use of the word to mean bringing into being a circumstance that would not occur without that performance (1962). An aboriginal performance may have very serious consequences, which might be called legal, spiritual and physical, as well as social. As Joseph North notes in relating dance to the formation of law in Australian indigenous culture:

> the identity of the dancers, the dances performed, and the quality of the performances are all relevant to, and in part, the causes of, the actual change in legal status. If any are insufficient, the change in legal status will not be effective; if any are seriously deficient, negative consequences may ensue for society as a whole as well as for the individual concerned.
>
> (North 2003:8)

Grau relates a similarly convincing case with the Tiwi of the Torres Straight Islands. She states that:

> "by looking at Tiwi kinship through the dance, one may get certain information which may not be available in other areas of Tiwi life, because nowhere else do the Tiwi themselves present kinship theory in such a

> systemic way…there is no doubt in my mind that the kinship system is not merely a reflection of Tiwi kinship, but that it is kinship…Thus I do not think it too far-fetched to say that the Tiwi dance their kinship"
>
> (Grau 1983:333)

Taking a dance with a specific performative act and displaying it for its aesthetic quality, creates a different dance with an entirely different meaning and changes a performative act, if you will, into a statement – describing an already existing circumstance.

To contrast, in contemporary European derived artforms, artworks that contain another function (for example: therapy, education, community building) are often regarded suspiciously as possibly no longer fitting into the category of art. Performativity has been subjugated by the formalistic properties of art and "art for art's sake." Given this, we can see how removing a dance from its context, creates a very different dance – not just in time and space, but in function, investment of performers and audience, as well as its effect on society.

Concurrent with the forces that demand these fundamental changes to indigenous dance is a contrary demand for authenticity. Audiences want to know they are getting the real deal, which most certainly means that the performer is a "real" indigenous person. But more insidiously, this often means that the "goods" should be an undisturbed cultural artifact from pre-contact civilization. Audiences and consumers of art (and particularly those in the U.S.) are often sincerely interested in the by-gone indigenous culture of yester-year. Unfortunately, this demand for "authenticity" fixes aboriginal cultures in the past and denies them a living, breathing, changing culture.

I certainly don't mean to imply that aboriginal dancers and artists must choose between these two polarities – authenticity vs. change and/or innovation. Rather, I mean to suggest that the choice is impossible – that both positions are untenable as is the simultaneous demand for both. Stuck between the pressure to change to accommodate Western audiences and the pressure to stay "authentic," Aboriginal performers can become cultural oddities and consumable commodities by a world that is sincerely interested in their art and unaware of the effects their interest precipitates.

So what's an aboriginal artist to do? So how do artists mediate between these two influences? How can indigenous choreographers create work that is relevant to contemporary indigenous cultures as well as true to the traditional functions and aesthetics of indigenous dance? And how can we retain these elements within Western theater formats? One thing I know for sure is that I don't have any answers. But, as an artist, my main method of inquiry is choreographic, and I have many attempts at the questions.

At this point, I presented a choreographic work entitled "when sandstone sings". With music by Aldyn Ool-Sevek, Johnny White-Ant Soames and Adam Planck, and David Hudson, it is in four sections following one rotation of the earth, experienced as dawn, midday, dusk and night. The four titles of the sections are:

1. …the dawn is the beginning is the end is the beginning…
2. ...and my lips are like cactus flesh...
3. …and a lizard danced on my belly...
4. …at night, my breaths freeze into stars

In "when sandstone sings" I attempt an evocation of a landscape: a cyclical image-based narrative evoking the desert southwest. The intention is not only to combine elements of Native American culture with the structure and vocabulary of contemporary concert dance, but also to bring a ritual, land-centered sacred dance inside the theater. It is my hope that by presenting this dance, I have helped further the inquiry of how aboriginal artists can walk the tricky line between authenticity and change. My thanks goes to all those who participated in the viewing and discussion of this piece and these issues.

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A Little Fleshy Philosophy – Improvised Dance Practice as Research

Vida L Midgelow

Score 1. *'Travelling through routes in the body'*

I was wondering how I might start…

...whether I would start or whether it possible to know.

I just start… without plan - without a predetermined direction – without any known end. Following routes and noting emerging pathways. Tracing along bones and sinew. Moving around organs and in muscles.

I should move on… I could be enjoying myself too much in this practice, in this writing with the body. Is such sensate pleasure allowed in the recasting of dance practice as theoretical embodiment?! - my dancing body as critical mass.

Threshold: Fleshfold

The atmosphere is cool. Shadow lines intersect. Standing between two oblong frames she shifts her weight, the back elongates and pitches forward at the pelvis. Her hip pushes out to the side – distorting the shape of the body. Both knees bend. Extending her arm out, she lets it drop and swing from the shoulder. This is a body dancing, a dancing body. This is a body in transformation, a body which refuses definition. This is a body reaching, searching, researching.

A voice is heard. She makes a sharp turn of the head.

Have you ever felt the morphology of the body whilst jumping?

Have you ever experienced the process of becoming whilst spinning?

Have you ever considered the importance of the Deleuzian fold whilst rolling?

I can recommend it.

Investigating improvised dance I seek out multiple embodiments and chart my own improvised choreographic installation *Threshold: Fleshfold* as Practice as Research (PaR). Blurring boundaries between theoretically-informed practices and choreographically-informed theories I revel in the pleasures of a sensuous hybridity and the viscosity of a fleshy ontology for, I propose, it is when shifting in-between that new spaces, new corporealities, and new theories, arise.

Threshold : Fleshfold – is the result of a collaboration between Brendon O'Connor, a spatial designer, and myself, a dance maker, with especially commissioned music by Robert Wilsmore. Working together and in parallel Brendon and I created two intersecting works born out of shared research and discussions, and realised in two media. Our attentions focused on the interrelationships between spaces, and between bodies and spaces.

The installation is made of fine wood panels and transparent surfaces in repeated modular forms. It uses the concept of the architectural corner as both a termination and starting point of space to create multiple boundaries that exist as both real and virtual. This installation is the context for an improvised solo dance performance that evokes the intensive interconnectivity of bodyspaces in intimate and subtle ways. Folding, touching and curving this improvised dance is both sinuous and serene. Foregrounding connectivities and flow in what might be considered a Deleuzian manner, *Threshold : Fleshfold* seeks to interlace different orders of space and surface, and to blur boundaries between the inside and the outside, and between bodies and architectures.

Threshold : Fleshfold encompasses then a number of fields of research that are interrelated and were variously brought to the fore through the research process, such as: the conceptualisation and experience of space, challenges to dominant visuality and perspectival viewing, methodologies in solo and interactive dance improvisation, Conceptualisation of the body as fluid, transforming and sensate and finally interconnectivities and foldings. What I am interested in here is not the installation as a whole but the nature of the dance improvisation that is integral to *Threshold: Fleshfold* and the implication of improvised dance practice per se in the context of PaR for the academic community. Thereby *Threshold: Fleshfold* is here operating as an experiential case study – as a springboard for discussion.

Practice as Research and PARIP

Working against the traditionally acknowledged modes of research as established and disseminated in scientific and written forms the pursuit of practice as a form of research and knowledge creation has become increasingly important during the past ten years to the research cultures of the performance arts (Piccini c.2002/3: 1-2). PaR is, however, a contest term that resists closed definitions. However very simply stated, PaR is frequently used to suggest a relationship in research between theory and practice. The acceptance of practice as a mode of research acknowledges that there are fundamental epistemological issues that can only be addressed in and through practice — that practice 'can be both a form of research and a legitimate way of making the findings of such research publicly available' (Painter 1996, cited in Piccini c.2002/3: 2).

Whilst this appears a simple definition – it is of course problematic conceptually and laden with issues in terms of the nature, status and worthiness of PaR. Engaging with these PaR debates in the UK has involved the formalizing and institutional acceptance of performance practices and processes as arenas in which modes of research and knowledges might be opened in order to situate the performance work of artist/scholars in the governmental Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). PaR in this frame is clearly not innocent but politically loaded – as research funding has been based upon successful outcomes in the RAE.

The focus of much of the research in to PaR in the UK has been spearheaded and galvanised by PARIP – an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project - which has sort to generate debate through conferences, seminars, and artistic projects in this thorny area. For example in 2003, and then again in 2005, PARIP held large international conferences that addressed through performances, papers and discussion groups the following areas:

> 'How does 'practice as research' problematize notions of 'professional' and 'academic' practices?'
>
> What might be the various epistemologies of and knowledges generated by practice as research?
>
> What kinds of resourcing/plant/ infrastructures are needed for practice as research?
>
> What makes an instance of practice 'count' as research?
>
> Does practice as research involve different methods as a result of its framing as research as distinct from 'pure' practice?
>
> How might the multiple locations of practice-as-research knowledges be conceptualized and assessed/evaluated/ judged? And who decides?
>
> Must practice as research include some form of disseminable 'reflection' or is the practice in performance/screening contexts sufficient to stand as research outputs? What might be the role of documentation across media?
>
> (www.bris.ac.uk/parip/sep2003.htm)

I have been particularly interested in two of these areas: what types of knowledges are generated (or at play) in PaR and how these knowledges are accessed – made knowable – made shareable - in order that they can be disseminated.

Dance Practice as Research (DPaR)

Whilst much of my earlier choreographic work could be called DPaR - Dance Practice as Research, it was in 1999 that I first sought to articulate the nature of my work in this frame in a collaborative paper written with Jane Bacon (formerly Mulchrone) for the Society of Dance Research seminar *Exploding Perceptions – Performing Theory : Theorising Performance*. This paper sought to illuminate *The Collection* (1999 - a dance video work by Bacon and Midgelow) and to verbalize the ways in which 'theoretical perspectives were actively used and explored to guide artistic choices' (Midgelow and Mulchrone 1999: 15).

In June 2003 I further explored some of these ideas at a Drama in Education conference (IDERIE) held at University of Northampton, UK. At this conference I presented a performed 'research conversation' with Franc Chamberlain. This conversation was entitled *Practice as research: Falling between two stools?* The two stools referred to in the title could be seen to represent the areas of theory and practice. The working premise of the conversation was that in PaR there is an important relationship between the epistemologies of practice and those of theory. In a playful manoeuvre two literal stools were placed in alongside each other, such that as theory and practice Franc Chamberlain and I could shift seats and speak from two perspectives.

But…

What if one should steal the clothes of the other? (What would the sheep look like in the wolves clothing)?

What if they should lean in toward one another? Would they both collapse into an uncatergorised chasm? Would they lean together equally? Would they press into each other to support one another's precarious position?

What if they should kiss? What would be the result of this sharing?

Would it leave an abrasive mark? Could it form a new being?

If it should create a new being, what would this being look like?

Like a diva crossed with Judith Butler she steps out…(hints of Pina Bausch's women perhaps!)

Like a ballet dancer crossed with Félix Guatteri she falls…(flashes of Sylvie Guillem dancing William Forsythe)

Embodied knowing – Theories of embodiment

Beyond these formulations of theory stealing from practice or visa versa, or of two entities touching is a more radical one – one which I as dancer/academic have come to recognise in myself, one which reflects my own experience. That is the concept of embodied knowing. In this formulation there is only one stool and that stool acknowledges that all knowledge is embodied for, as Carol Brown has pointed out, there is no 'fleshless ontology, no way of knowing that is not also aligned to bodies of specific kinds and their leakages' (2003: 2).

The type of embodied knowing I am referring to here incorporates and goes beyond any traditional formation of a dancers bodily knowledge – that is the deep mastery of the body attained through years of practice and experience. Rather I am also referring to an ontology of the bodily in which theories and practices are embedded and embodied, existing in movement practices reflexive and critical ways. The forms of knowing and knowledge are various – abstract and concrete, experiential and conceptual, physical and visual – and encompass both know how and know what.

This is not as straight forward as it may seem, for even the briefest rehearsal of traditional notions of body and knowledge reveal the ways in which body / mind and knowing / doing, remain within a Cartesian framework. The neglected body has stood, and often still stands, in a marginalized domain along with woman, native, queer and other others! Even the recent obsessive discussions of the body by numerous writers have seemed to leave the body, the person, behind – as a highly theorized 'no-body' takes its place. Perhaps we should not be surprised at these disembodiments, but when we look to dance – a highly embodied practice, we find a continuation of these Cartesianisms. For the tendency of dancers to evoke bodily knowledge and the sensate above other modes of knowing is just as dualistic in construction as the academic inclination to reduce the lived experience to abstracted concepts.

It may be however that if bodily actions are allowed to carry their own inscriptive weight, over just sex or regimented practices, they may empower us with a new sense of human agency. For rather than the body being written upon it can be seen to take up the act of writing. By breaking down conventional epistemological structures dance practices as research may shape and participate in the structuring of meaning production, thereby making signs as well as embodying them, initiating as well as responding.

This mode of embodiment is multi-coded and deconstructive. By drawing to together theorising and dancing – conflating the dancing body and theoreticians (traditionally a static writing) body – an articulate questing form evolves creating mutability and fluidity instead of stasis. This dancing body might propose 'a body that is less an empty signifier (executing preordained steps as it obeys blindly to structures of command) than a material, socially inscribed agent, a non-univocal body, an open potentiality, a force-field constantly negotiating its position in the powerful struggle for its appropriation and control' (Lepecki 2004: 6). This mode of embodiment, when dance become a critical practice, is, I suggest, at the centre of dance practice as research.

My experience of this embodied knowing resonates with the useful contributions made to these debates by performance studies professor Susan Melrose (2005). She has convincingly argued that the use of the theory / practice dualism is as unhelpful as the mind / body dualisms discussed above. She has pointed to the seemingly obvious, yet generally overlooked, fact that there is no necessary relationship between theory and writing. Rather writing, dancing, and singing are all modes of expression which may, or may not, incorporate critical or more specifically

theoretical enquiry. The continued use of a theory / practice model – wherein – theory and the mind are attached to the written and spoken word, and practice is attached to the dancing (non-speaking) body fails to recognise the bodily practice of writing, and the mindful theorizing of dancing.

Body, blood, mind,, thought.
Less, more,

me ...
in neither place and in both.

The physical patterns of the dancer, the critical awareness of the philosopher,
the playful shifts of the improviser

The know how, the know what, aesthetics, ethics, philosophy, theory...these not separable elements. They layer and intersect … forming and informing moments of movement and evolving patterns. But it is also clear that whilst my improvised work is also my reading of various theorists of difference – the filtration of their ideas through a practice - the practice is not a demonstration of theories - the theory is not causal. Rather the practice develops through its own logic, its own methodology, such that the knowledge embodied is not simply a demonstration of a pre-theorised intellectual position but an explication of its own internal discourse that can be understood via its intersection with other varied discourses. In this way improvised dance practice generates ideas – generates knowledge.

Score 2 . 'Alignment is everywhere'

I carry her with me. I know this.
Years of practice have embedded her deep within me – in my bone, in my muscle, in my synaptic pathways.
I worry.
Will you know?
Will you know that I know?
Will you recognise the game? Will you be able to see her within in me?
Can you read me?

Indulge me…
I am enjoying myself too much. This sensorial, sensual shifting… I am dissolving in my own pleasure.
I am staging my own disappearance
I am a body moving ... I am a body writing
But can you see the script across the wall?
Can you locate the practices in my body?
Is this body that is reaching, searching, researching resonating with you?
Are you following me?

Perhaps I have lost you. Perhaps like the dancers that went before I have disappeared. Perhaps I should cover you in further words?… would this be appropriate? Would this help us to find each other? Should I historicise my practice? Would some context assist you?

Improvisation: Context and Ontology

Unfolding and unravelling *Threshold : Fleshfold* emphasises the transient and the sensuous over the fixed and the visual. These features are heightened due to the improvisatory nature of the work. Styled through Release dance the improvisation is conceived in 'image clusters' (to use a Skinner Releasing term) that guide but do not restrict the improvisation. These image clusters are free floating in that they exist as concepts with guidelines attached, (games or scores if you will), from which I work, but these images do not provide a structured movement vocabulary, any pre-set order or predetermined location for the improvisation.

Shifting through images clusters such as 'A pose that is not fixed'; 'Travelling through routes in the body'; 'Everything folding at once'; 'Alignment is everywhere' and 'Resting and Relocating' the dance improvisation shifts between the external architecture of the space and the internal architecture of the body, resonating with poststructuralist articulations of space and connectivity. These images, in line with Release forms of movement shift the emphasis away from 'the (static) look of the body, as a body that is available to an observing eye,' towards 'the person's co-ordination, fluency, efficiency, ease and enjoyment of movement' (Dempster, 1993: 18). This type of bodily presence is in line with new and postmodern dance artists who, since the 1960s, have been searching for alternative audience performer relationships and have been developing different bodily aesthetics. Using the grounding of release dance then enables me to emphasise the 'disordering of the visually dominated sensorium so that other, culturally neglected senses, might be experienced more fully' (Dempster, 1993: 19).

Forming shifting textures and landscapes this dance seeks to bring the audiences attention to the detail of each movement and of each specific moment in time for, in an improvisation such as this, the movement develops in the moment of enactment. *Threshold : Fleshfold* thereby invites an alternative way of looking, a looking which focuses on the detail of moments and interconnections within moments, rather than the consideration of grand composition - for the grand composition is never complete. Through these transformation processes the identity of the body comes to be in constant flux, mitigating against fixity and singularity.

The choice to perform through improvisation is not an impartial or naive one. This mode of presentation has been associated with the practices of the 1960/70s groups Grand Union and The Judson Church Dance Theater, and the artists/practices, such as Contact Improvisation, that came out of these (Banes, 1986). These groups used improvisation in performance as a way of breaking free from the perceived strictures on and of the body in modern dance forms. Significantly, the assertion of improvisatory practices in the late 1960/70s coincided with the growth of the women's movement. Improvisation was seen as part of the mobilisation for change and a method of working which destabilised hierarchical relationships and empowered the performer. Also the broader social conditions of the period encouraged the conception of individual liberty and equality which forms such as Contact Improvisation embodied (Novack, 1990). Through the 80's and 90's a rather more critical, perhaps cynical, view of these idealistic visions is evident (Banes, 2003).

The territory of dance improvisation can be framed around the interrelationships between spontaneity, discipline, skill, flexibility, intentionality and unpredictability. As an improvised work there is an attempt to track back and forth between the known and the unknown, or rather exist in a place of 'unknown knowing'. Susan Foster notes that the 'known' incorporates: 'behavioural conventions established by the context in which the performance occurs'; 'structural guidelines that delimit the improvising body's choices'; 'the individual body's predisposition' (training patterns); 'any allied medium' and 'that which has already occurred previously' (2003: 3-4). So for me the 'known' encompasses: the established image clusters and my practiced responses to these; release and other body training systems; the arrangement of space (although this changes in each new location); the music score; compositional experience; previous performances of the improvisation and the conceptual framing of the work.

So what is unknown? The unknown might be the specifics of the movement (I start with no plan of what, when and where – rather this emerges in the moment). The unknown might be the emergence of unexpected trajectory – a new image, a new texture, a new vocabulary. The unknown might be the relationship to the audience – for this is negotiated a new at every performance and in each moment. These unknowns are not unexpected but part of the process of improvising – they are what improvisers train themselves to be aware of and to be open to. However, the unknown is often, due to the repeated dualism of mind / body in dance, considered to be 'a letting go' - a letting go of control, a letting go of the known, a letting go of thinking processes, letting go of the 'mind', in order to 'free' the body! This is clearly an unhelpful replay of body/mind dualisms and overlooks the mindfulness of all bodily articulation. As Foster phases it:

> Each body segment's sweep across space, whether direct or meandering, is thought-filled. Each corporeal modulation in effort thinks; each swelling into tension thinks; each erratic burst or undulation in energy thinks. Each accented phrasing or accelerating torque or momentary stillness is an instance of thought. Conceptualised in this way, bodily action constitutes a genre of discourse.
>
> (Foster, 2003: 6-7)

This improvising body, this body styled through release dance, is not then a 'free' or natural dancing body. I am not asserting an essentialist position. For whilst letting go of the assurance of pre-choreographed work allows the focus to be placed on transformation, the improvised movement is clearly located and locatable and the unknowns are framed by known circumstances.

Forgive me… perhaps the practice is sufficient… yet these things are easy to fetishise… easy to loose ones self within.

Weight moves from left to right.

A rotation of the head – the eyes open…a pause, a knowing look.

Lowering to the floor – a rest.

A roll in the hips is reflected in the shoulder and ripples through to the hand.

The moment, the movement, is gone but yet continues to resonate, only to return, yet somehow different. Layering one moment on top of another a composition, of sorts, emerges.

In an academic context obsessed with accountability the accessing and assessing improvised dance as PaR is an important and contested area. Improvisation challenges the knowledge paradigms of traditional hard science – that is – testability and provability. For these are not helpful and do not suit much PaR in general or improvised practice specifically. However to espouse an 'anything goes', a 'free body', an utter relavitivism, is not helpful – or 'true' to the practice either (Nelson, 2003). And here I have veered between sense-making and a revelling the luscious moments of dancing.

However inbetween these extremes its possible to 'know' improvisation like one might 'know' a palimsest in which layers of knowledge and practice rub on and off one another – for knowing improvisation requires an engagement with an ever shifting territory. This territory, in the practice of improvisation, is, as outlined above, one of 'known unknowns' – which, like a Barthesian open text - may have multiple points on entry and untold directions but is still recognisable as knowable if discussed in its own terms.

Nevertheless in a commodity and replay obsessed culture, driven by the requirements production, evidence and assurance, the art of erasure that is improvisation remains a subversive one - something to be used and celebrated I think. But this is also difficult, perhaps dangerous, place to be when such work is also tied to research assessment strategies and to funding.

What if all the billion, trillion cells in your body could all fold at once? (with thanks the Deborah Hay)

What if you could shift, trace and travel through the routes and spaces in your body?

What if alignment was everywhere?

What if space could fold, collapse and turn in on its self?

What if your outside and inside should merge?

Score 3 . 'Everything folding all at once'

Folding in-between

Noting the ways in which theory and practice are both experienced bodily *Threshold: Fleshfold* folds in-between to blur binaries of seeing / being seen, inside / outside, body / space, theory / practice. For via the conflation of embodied practical knowledge and more traditional forms of academic knowledge it transforms and destabilises both modes of knowledge and their accompanying values. By drawing together theory and practice into a single hybrid form, which is framed as fluid, this improvised dance offers a challenge to traditional epistemologies and histories, suggesting mutability and transformation instead of stasis. Such forms of embodied knowing have a crucial role in dance practice as research as they give rise to changing corporealities, ontologies, and to an expanding field of improvised practices.

Endnote

1 An earlier version of this paper was first presented at PARIP 2005 International Conference, Bretton Hall, University of Leeds, UK.

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Useful websites

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), UK: www.ahrc.ac.uk

Practice as Research in Performance (PARIP), UK: www.bris.ac.uk/parip

Governmental Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), UK: www.rae.ac.uk

Dancing Space into Place/Moving Nature: How do We See Space?

Susan Cash

Take a moment to contemplate where you are right now and think about this question: What do you see in this space?

I am interested in how dance in space can change the perception of place. In my own choreography I am interested in highlighting the element of space through movement to enhance the power of place. As a choreographer and teacher of composition I have learned that the most valuable tool for serious makers of dance is the honing of observation skills.

In my definition, space is the infinite inhabitant of the cosmos. I believe through thoughtful contemplation, intuition and sensory prehending, we make space 'place'. In turn place intrinsically impacts life.

Strands of ancestral ties connect us to the natural world. These strands become complexly intertwined in this globalized, trans-national world we live in. My Mohawk grandmother chose not to live with her people on the land coming to the city instead. With my adopted Chinese daughter I am considered a trans-racial family, moving between cultures in a unique fashion to make new culture. But the one constant is that we are intimately bound by nature. It shapes the way we see everything.

So of course when nature is compromised, withheld, disrespected or damaged we can see the effects on the people around. When I teach composition I try to invigorate the stands that lie dormant or have been numbed by inactivity or convention so we can experience natural life as it relates to art and everyday life. Joe Sheridan, environmental studies professor at York University said there are children in the Jane/Finch corridor (a neighbourhood that runs next to York University) who have never seen Lake Ontario. Toronto is on Lake Ontario. The neighbourhood is roughly 5 miles away from the lake. The fact that these children have never seen the lake has serious consequences on how these children make sense of their place in the world.

The challenge of art is to make space a place. Too often we rely on seeing with only our eyes. This kind of seeing is given priority. However the sensory involvement of seeing, uses all faculties to observe, calculate, document and interpret not just ones eyes. Contemporary dance is often relegated to the conventional stage, which sets up the art form to create place whereas when dance is done in unconventional spaces especially everyday outdoor spaces it has to move with the space it inhabits to collaboratively make place. The impact is different too for audiences of both. The stage audience makes a point to pay money and sit and watch the work. In everyday spaces, audiences don't plan to see it and have a variety of unpredictable responses. Because everyday dance is in an everyday space it can have more tangible immediate impact.

Rudolf Laban taught the joy of movement to dancers and lay people alike, which added richness to the regular life of the 1920s and 1930s in Europe. In Martin Gleisner translated article about Laban's Movement Choirs he says that Laban's concept of space harmony led him to encourage "communication between people through space which they commonly share."[1] His movement scales generated a form for movement to be played and experimented with. Moving together in large groups heightened the experience of interaction. All moving together, in cooperation, still allowed for individuality, as demonstrated in the subtle personal dynamic predisposition's that were free to emerge.

Laban explored the transformation of people through movement in space. I am interested in transforming space through movement. Just as Laban has spoken about the power of freeing movement from within, I am looking at how the power of space can be freed through movement. In particular I'm interested in how perspective can be changed by movement in an unusual space or manner.

We are use to seeing art objects and paintings in public spaces. What would happen if movement were more a part of our everyday landscape? My first idea was to do a work along a mundane roadside on campus. My sense was that the mere presence of people in intentional collective gathering let alone moving in synergy with one another would elicit a change in on-lookers habits, beliefs and perspective of that location. While difficult to measure it is possible to observe the actual shifts in people's responses to these locations.

Even when I rehearsed the work I observed drivers slowing down and people looking. People

changed their minds about what to do next. Some stayed a little longer instead of dashing off wherever they were going. Some clapped as if it was a performance. Some gathered in clumps to watch. Some stared or nodded. They would say to me, "What is it?" "Wow, mesmerizing."[2]A little boy came up to one of my dancers during one work while the dancers were in still shapes and asked, "What are you guys doing?" The dancer whispered, "We're doing a dance." Then he says, "Then why are you frozen?" The dancer said because it is a freeze dance."[3] This kind of participatory response and spontaneity is rare in most dance performances.

When I choreograph for stage and theatre I am always asked about whether I think about my audience when I create my works. While I am interested in the impact of the work on my audience, my priority is not what they are getting from the work. I am usually preoccupied with the choreography and how I might manipulate the stage area to conform to my idea for the work. However in my moving-site work I find the audience response is my main impetus, intrigue and curiosity. How will the general public respond?

Loosely based on Laban's dimensional scale or defense scale as it is sometimes called I sculpted Fence on a corridor of grass beside a road on the York University Toronto campus. Garden was done on a scrap-patch of land outside a residence in between a toddler playground and garbage area. While Fence was involved with line and direction with a purely spatial feel to it, Garden incorporated shape and shaping and had a freer structure in terms of collective moving.

Fence seemed loaded for me with questions and meaning. Taking place in front of a fence the human link somehow increased the intensity of the environment. Essentially the environment is one of holding or containing. The actual fence encloses a parking lot and creates a barrier for people to pass through. The movers in fence delineated that sense of structure but layered other elements of purpose and meaning. I wasn't intending to present some specific message but it allowed for analysis and interpretation if one wanted to pursue it.

Garden had a whimsical, quirky feel to it that had potential for more bold development of all the elements involved: from the choreography to the costuming. But one aspect of this work was clear; the life of that scrap of land was invigorated in that instant. By lovingly dancing Garden on that scrap enabled that little piece of campus to light up and be noticed in a new way. It was a form of reverence, with humor and respect for all the earth we walk upon and chance to pass.

I think that my artistic concerns are parallel with the current interest of environmentalist, community arts activists, visual artists and architects. John Bentley Mays wrote in the Globe and Mail national newspaper, "One reason we lay folk need architects is our chronic blindness to the opportunities offered by ugly or merely ordinary things in the urban environment." This was an aside in his article about the forward thinking architect Bruce Kuwabara who doesn't see the urban Spadina railway cutting through the Toronto corridor as an eye sore but rather as "(an) open cut for the rail line (which) creates a river-like condition opening the space of the city."[4] He is going to make us see this aspect by the way he engages his construction with this environment.

American sculptor Richard Serra's recent created works on exhibition at the Bilbao Guggenheim called The Matter of Time is, in his own words, about "how your body responds to the weight of the steel. The focus is no longer on the object but on your experience."[5] In essence it is about the perceptions one has in experiencing this art that is at the crux of the work. This is a notion that I would like to explore further in my own art as a choreographer.

In my moving-site work it felt good to allow nature to be involved in decisions and adapt to its taciturn ways as well as the human changes that occurred. Half way through Garden a tree was cut down by construction workers. Some days it was so windy and cold that hats were a necessity and were incorporated as a costume item in Fence. Most people who commented on the work said they never noticed the locations before, yet many had walked or driven by on numerous occasions. Many said the dance had an impact on how they would view these locations in the future.

I often do a study in my composition classes where I set up an installation of objects in the studio or I bring a decorative box to the class. The students come in to an environment I create with objects or I bring the box closed to class and set it in the middle of the room and say to the class, "tell me about your observations." Most often the students will circle the box or installation and list the details of the objects in the installation or the surface of this box never touching or looking inside. The word "observation" has a meaning that only allows seeing with the eyes.

It suppresses all the other senses and forms a detached relationship to what is being observed. But if they don't experience the relationship of all the aspects of the box or the installation they don't really see it. They don't get the sensory stimulation that is intended for the meaning to ensue.

I ask students in the studio setting to document everything they observe of the items or installation. Students are often literal and restrictive in their methods of observing and sensor instincts or are held by cultural conformity.

Joe Sheridan says in his paper The Silence Before Drowning in Alphabet Soup written for the Canadian Journal of Native Education, "The issue is the consequence of assuming that literate definition has priority."[6] The issue also in my mind is that these so-called literate people prioritize senses and sensing, limiting capacity for sensual experience. How can one only see with ones eyes? The sense of seeing is suppressed or underdeveloped if it lacks the connection between the other senses. Sheridan goes on to say further in this paper that "Alphabetized minds are mediated minds and prefer to write about the sunset, or photograph it, or interpret it in guitar riffs."[7] And I would add prefer to dance about a deep love. He goes on to say that, "These are preferred to experiencing the sunset on its own terms."[8] In the case of dance and many other art expressions, therein lies mediocrity and art that lacks experience and genuine depth.

Little do these students know that I have filled these boxes with artifacts, things that have meaning, objects of texture, contour, color, weight, small musical instruments that can be played, things to eat, things that smell nice and smell not so nice and games that can be shared. The same goes for the installation where little gems of natural and sensory objects hide from the naked eye and invite interaction. When students are encouraged to observe in a different way, the tambour of the room changes, relationships emerge and the individuals experience a whole other level of physical experience that is part of creating, and integral to compositional exploration and choreographic excellence. Curiosity, experience and ones link to the natural world are at the center of a substantial work of art and paramount in dance.

Now we will go back to the question I asked you to contemplate at the beginning of my presentation. I wonder what your thoughts were then about what you saw in this space? You might have made mental notes of the desks, audio-visual equipment, the people around and the seating. You might have noticed the lines, shapes, light, dynamics, sound, quality or animation of the room. You might have assumed this room to be purely an ordinary, functional and a utilitarian place. It might have immediately transported you to a memory, idea or thought. What was your response to this place?

The room we are in right now is kind of like a box. It is a room with four walls, a ceiling and floor. It has doors and windows. If we weren't in it we would say it is an empty room.

Now draw your attention to this rather ordinary area of the room for instance. With this dancer in place, how would you describe what you see in this space now? Has the space changed for you from what you contemplated at the beginning of this presentation?

This box that is a room, presents possibilities and can engage us on different levels. Unless we interact with it, it remains detached and we can't know its potential for meaning. By dancing space, into place we open the box for meaning.

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The Politics of Passion and Purity: Cultural Idealism and the Choreography of Crypt Scenes from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet.

Jamie Lynn Webster

Introduction

When important institutions produce story ballets, cultural idealisms influence how company directors and dancers interpret and perform the work. This study compares two filmed performances of Sergei Prokofiev's neo-classic ballet, Romeo and Juliet. I limit my focus to the crypt scene of each version due to limited space, as this portion synthesizes many *musical*, *choreographic* and *social* themes reflective of the entire ballet. The first version, choreographed by Leonid Lavrovsky and danced by Galina Ulanova and Yuri Zhdanov for the Bolshoi Ballet's 94 minute, 1954 film, set the precedent for classic style characterizations of a radiant and courageous Juliet. The second example, choreographed by Kenneth MacMillan and danced by Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev for the Royal Ballet's 124 minute, 1966 film, gained acclaim for it's psychological interpretation and the provocative romantic chemistry between Fonteyn and Nureyev.

Both films use versions of Prokofiev's music, and feature prima ballerinas nearing the ends of their respective careers, yet the disparate creative outcomes reflect different approaches. This paper examines how different choices regarding *music*, *plot* and *choreography* create observable differences between the two productions and explores the ways that respective national and cultural values were elevated through these choices. I argue that the Bolshoi ballet performance reflects proletariat values and Soviet social policies that purposefully subdued elements of passion and individuality in order to elevate the so-called purer aspects of brotherly love in a moralistic society. Contrarily, the Royal Ballet performance reflects popular western ideology of the time that more openly embraced expressions of self and romantic relationships.

Composer: Sergei Prokofiev

According to the Soviet musicologist Nestyev (147), Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet was conceived "as a large choreographic tragedy, with all the psychological complexities of the heroes, clear-cut musical character portraits, and realistic theatrical depictions of scenes." While Prokofiev did not address intentions for the score in his autobiographical works, he was notoriously individualistic in his compositional style, and completed the work upon his return to Russia after two decades of artistic freedom in the west.

Both Prokofiev's composition and the Bolshoi production were affected by the Soviet policy of Zhdanovism, created by Stalin's cultural idealogue, Andrey Zhdanov, as they transformed from page to stage to film screen. This policy rejected western thought in favor of "social realism" in an attempt to "bring art back to a unified party line, emphasizing the *folk* tradition and an *affirmative* outlook" (Redeppening 415, emphasis mine). Although the original conception for the ballet had no direct political connection to the Soviet government, Prokofiev used this relatively conservative story ballet to gain political favor with Soviet leaders who had expressed displeasure with him and placed a ban on certain of his works for being to "modern" and "western." A letter from Prokofiev to the Zhdanov tribunal expressed regret for past formalist and atonal grievances, and offered up works such as Romeo and Juliet as a sign that he had "overcome these tendencies successfully" (Redeppening 416). In other words, Prokofiev used this ballet to make up for perceived transgressions.

Music Analysis

Now for a brief music analysis followed by my argument that two institutions interpreted the music remarkably differently. Prokofiev's music for Romeo and Juliet includes musical references to action, motivation, and emotion. The music is *descriptive* in that it provides an emotional canvas on which to display action, and *prescriptive* in the way that certain moments in the music, such as silences or exceptionally loud tones, correspond with specific actions. One main musical theme used in both versions of the crypt scene is a restatement of a motive used for Juliet throughout the ballet. This

melody suggests aspects of Juliet's character such as youth, sweetness, and vulnerability. This theme is stated five times (followed by a coda) in the crypt scene, each time with different instruments, a different volume, and a different key. Three things about this theme become relevant in the analysis of the two ballet versions. First, the variation and increasing intensity between each of the five statements adds to the heightened drama and emotional quality of the crypt scene. Secondly, musical accents and pauses define moments of Romeo and Juliet's demise, such as the moment poison is taken, or that the poison takes its effect, or the moment that a knife is drawn, or that the knife is thrust. Thirdly, a trumpet blossoms into a soaring descant during the fifth, most dissonant statement. Reflective of the ways brass instruments are used throughout the narrative to express masculinity and conflict, the emergence of a trumpet from within Juliet's theme could symbolize many things including her ability to be powerful, acknowledgement of passionate emotions, and/or some sort of metaphorical entwining with her Romeo. Later, I will show how each version chooses to utilize these three elements.

Example One: Romeo and Juliet, Bolshoi Ballet 1955

Leonid Lavrovky choreographed three staged versions of Romeo and Juliet, all featuring prima ballerina Galina Ulanova, before revising again for film with Ulanova and Yuri Zhdanov. In stagings prior to Prokofiev's death, tensions arose between Prokofiev and the Bolshoi regarding artistic interpretation. Noted for her soft, flowing style, Ulanova experienced physical challenges in interpreting Prokofiev's music which she perceived, according to dance historian Lvov-Anokhin, as having "often abrupt, and bewildering...frequent changes of rhythm" (Lvov-Anokhin 227). While directors and performers were concerned with the *danceability* of the score, Prokofiev was uneasy with the dancers' lack of "flesh and blood" characterizations. According to Nestyev, Galina Ulanova performed her role as Juliet to Prokofiev's liking more than any other dancer in the production, yet was still constrained in her portrayel by the direction and choreography of the Soviet production. She, too, seemed influenced by the cultural policies of the Zhdanovist era. By the time Ulanova performed in the 1955 film, she approached her art as a *sacred duty to her country*, and grew "increasingly aware of...her enormous responsibility to the people..." (Ilupina 79).

> In Moscow I gave my heroine fresh thought: she carried within her all the experience of my life, all the years I had lived through. In Juliet I saw exceptional strength, the ability and readiness to die for happines...That is where I found the determination, despair, and courage I strove to express in my dancing (Ilupina 79).

Crypt Scene Description and Analysis.

The Bolshoi version of the crypt scene de-emphasizes the individual nature of love in order to affirm universal moralistic truths. Shakespeare's murder of Paris at the hands of Romeo is omitted, while the deaths of the lovers are characterized as aesthetically beautiful, noble and tidy. While Lavrovsky's choreography emphasize "rationality and effectiveness," according to dance historian Mamontov, action and emotion are portrayed with bold, strong movements. Furthermore, both relatively wide camera angles and Romeo's conservative proximity to Juliet throughout the scene downplay the physically intimate nature of the lovers' relationship.

Choreomusical analysis, as explained by Inger Damsholt and Rachel Duerden, considers the ways that physical movements reinforce and/or counteract metaphors of perceived movement in music. As seen in the crypt scene, Lavrovsky's choreography tends to use movements that *oppose* the music rather than reinforce it. For instance, the *high* strings accompany the *low* image of Juliet on her back. She moves during silence, sitting up while the we hear low notes. The subsequent *smooth* music accompanies *frenzied* action as she attends to Romeo. Then, the music skips over two sections, from the second statement of the theme to a version of the fifth statement in which some parts are either inaudible or missing. The passionate trumpet countermelody is hard to hear as the orchestra accelerates to 120 beats per minute, even though the score indicates *sweetness*. The strong accent on the pitch "A" *precedes* the thrust of Juliet's knife by a beat or more. Instead of thrusting the knife *on* the accent, she draws the knife *away* from her on the accent. This functions to removes the observer from the violent action that follows. As the quotation of the lovers' pas de deux music rises out of the Coda, Juliet turns to die *facing away* from her lover, rather than towards him.

Monks arrive before the last notes subside, rallying others to the tomb. The death knell tolls before the Capulet and Montague patriarchs gather, ultimately embracing one other in a reconciliatory sign of *brotherly* love. Romeo and Juliet's *romantic* tragedy is a vehicle by which to address the greater issue of *brotherhood* in which youth and its passions are merely metaphors for national spirit and potential, crushed by ancestral wrongs.

Example Two: Romeo and Juliet, Royal Ballet: 1966

Kenneth MacMillan's 1966 filmed choreography starred Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev. MacMillan originally choreographed Prokofiev's score for two younger dancers, Lynn Seymour and Christopher Gable. It is significant to mention MacMillan's initial casting preferences because, while the eventual performances by Fonteyn and Nureyev have been described as "pretty hot," by some accounts, recorded in Daneman's biography of Fonteyn, Seymour and Gable were "even hotter." This supports my hypothesis that MacMillian desired to emphasize the passionate, romance of individual lovers. However, Fonteyn and Nureyev were, at the least, close friends, and the intimacy experienced in their personal lives brought a naturalism to their movements - often perceived as a "chemistry" between them.

Crypt scene description and analysis.

The Royal Ballet version of Romeo and Juliet focuses on the lovers as individuals. Choreographic use of touch between characters supports realistic expectations of intimate lovers, while layers of more subtle gesture help to create a detailed picture of love and grief. Structurally, the plot includes Romeo's murder of Paris and ends focusing only on the young lovers. The accompanying music includes *all* five statements of Juliet's crypt theme at a much slower tempo, around 65 beats per minute. The passionate trumpet countermelody soars plaintively from the last statement. The viewer's intimacy with the characters is further enhanced by various angles and closer proximities of the camera lens.

Using Damsholt's and Duerden's choreomusicological approach once again, choreography for the Royal Ballet version tends to align *with* the music rather than *against* it. This is in contrast to the Bolshoi version in which the movements *oppose* the music. In the video excerpt, beginning musically with the fourth thematic statement -- one that the Bolshoi version left out. The *active rhythm* of the piano chords accompanies Juliet's similarly busy movements. As the melody *ascends*, Juliet also *rises*. The prominence of the trumpet descant, previously discussed as signifying power and violence, foreshadows Juliet's dramatic decision to take her life with Romeo's knife. Similarly, the action of stabbing herself begins *on* the accented "A." This functions to connect the observer at a viscirile level with the violent action. Juliet *slumps* when the melody descends, using the pas de deux quote and the rest of the coda to reunite with Romeo. As an example of nuanced gesture, even her fingers tremble as she transfers her last kiss to his lips. The curtain closes on the lovers.

By focusing on Romeo and Juliet as individuals, the notion of *youth* is represented as *relevant*. The romantic love portrayed through the two characters becomes a catalyst for passionate actions which cast away any pretext of moralistic purity or noble reserve. Rather than the placid, idyllic star-crossed ending in the Bolshoi production, love and death in this version are both emotional and "messy."

Summary and Comparison

While both Juliets dance to the same musical theme, the Bolshoi version *omits* two statements of this theme, and accelerates through the statement that includes the trumpet countermelody. This lessens the impact of Prokofiev's emotionally intense music, and compacts the action into a shorter time span. The Bolshoi's exclusion of more dissonant and intensely textured phrases supports the hypothesis that the company wished to downplay displays of individual passion to make room for broader messages of national spirit. The Royal Ballet version uses all five statements of Juliet's crypt theme, savoring the aural experience of each by maintaining a slower tempo. The Royal Ballet's inclusion of all of the emotionally intense phrases supports the hypothesis that MacMillan wished to represent the passion of individuals, and their inner struggles on a psycho-emotional level.

The plot, as displayed by action on screen, is most different at the beginnings and ends of each version. The Bolshoi version allows Paris to leave the crypt alive, while the Royal Ballet version shows Romeo's murder of him. By allowing Paris to leave free, the Bolshoi version maintains the illusion of Romeo's moralistic *purity*. Furthermore, the Bolshoi version

ends by focusing on the community impact from the lovers' deaths, affirming that brotherly love represents positive national spirit. Contrarily, the Royal ballet asserts notions of youth's natural *passions* by showing the murder of Paris at the hands of Romeo, and likewise affirms *romantic* love by ending with the focus on the individual lovers.

There are observable differences in the ways that the dance coordinates with and against Prokofiev's musical ideas. Lavrovsky's choreography empahisizing "social realism" often moves *against* musical metaphors in order to mitigate intensely passionate sounding music, and further downplay elements of individual passion. MacMillian's choreography emphasizing psychological "naturalism" moves *with* the same musical metaphors in order to augment the emotional qualities of the score.

Through choices regarding music, plot and choreography both versions either mitigated or elevated thematic elements of passion and moralistic purity that referenced their respective cultural surroundings. Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* was recontextualized by the Bolshoi Ballet to reflect a Soviet moral idealogy that elevated the *nation* above the *individual*. MacMillan's later version for the Royal Ballet emphasized elements of romantic *passion* as experienced by characters as *individuals* in order to reflect mainstream western values that elevated individual experience.

Choreomusical Analysis – Bolshoi Ballet, 1955

high strings	-	low Juliet
low brass	-	Juliet sits up
smooth melody	-	frenzied action
strong accent	-	retracts knife
subsiding note	-	stabs self
pas de deux quote	-	faces away from Romeo

Choreomusical Analysis – Royal Ballet, 1966

motor rhythm	-	Juliet moves
ascending melody	-	Juliet rises
trumpet descant	-	decision to stab self
strong accent	-	stabs self
pas de deux quote	-	reunites with Romeo

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Juliet's Crypt Theme, "The Death of Juliet"

Theme	Key	Melody Instrument(s)	Accompaniment
1st Statement	**G**	**high winds**	**piano/harp chords**
Pause	**on "C"**	**low brass**	
2nd Statement	**C**	**strings**	**clarinet arpeggios piano/harp chords**
3rd Statement	**Ab**	**strings, trumpet**	**triplets in strings (fast shimmering)**
Accent	**on "Bb"**	**winds, strings**	
4th Statement	**C**	**horns, violins**	**dissonance**
5th Statement	**Ab**	**horns, strings**	**trumpet descant**
Accent	**on "A"**	**oboe**	
Coda	**C**	**winds, strings**	**"pas de deux" motif**

Society of Dance History Scholars
29th Annual Conference

GROUNDING MOVES: LANDSCAPES FOR DANCE
June 15-18, 2006
The Banff Centre, Alberta Canada

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Thursday, 15 June 2006

REGISTRATION 8:00a-10:00a
3:00p-9:00p

CONTEMPORARY ABORIGINAL DANCE PRACTICES 9:30a-1:00p
Movement workshop with Rulan Tangen and Gaétan Gingras
Sally Borden Gym

PRIZE CEREMONY AND OPENING RECEPTION 7:00p
Max Bell Fish Bowl

DOLLAR-A-DANCE 8:30p
Max Bell Foyer

Friday, 16 June 2006

BREAKFAST 7:00a-9:00a

REGISTRATION 7:30a-3:30p

SESSION I **8:00a-9:30a**

OWNERSHIP AND AUTHORSHIP
PDC 103 BP Canada E
Brenda Dixon-Gottschild, Chair, Temple University.

1. Anthea Kraut	Copyright Claims and Cultural Politics: Historicizing the Institution of Authorship in Dance
2. Rebekah Kowal	"African Note from Pearl Primus": Diasporic Subjectivity and Postwar Cosmopolitanism
3. Mary Anne Santos Newhall	Returning to the World of Men: The Hamatsa Dance of the K wakwaka'wakw

TECHNOLOGIES ACROSS THE CENTURY
PDC 102 Royal Bank
Lisa Wymore, Chair, University of California, Berkley.

4. Jody Sperling	Sublime or Ridiculous? Some Thoughts on the "Electrical Serpentine Dance" of the 1890s

5. Roger Copeland	A Close Reading of Merce Cunningham's 1994 Essay: 'Four Events That Led to Large Discoveries'
6. Deidre Marissa Cavazzi and Kara Miller	Submerged Ascension

DANCE AS A TOOL OF POLITICAL NEGOTIATION
PDC 104 Petro Canada
Pumima Shah, Chair, Duke University.

7. Jane Skinner Peck	Reconstructing Lewis and Clark: Dance as Diplomacy
8. Jens Richard Giersdorf	Dancing, Marching, Fighting: Performance of Nationhood and Utopia by the Dance Ensemble of the East German Armed Force
9. Ana Paula Höfling	Resistance From the Inside: An Analysis of the Jogo de Dentro in Brazilian Capoeira Angola

ABSTRACTION, TRANCENDENCE AND RETENTION OF SUBJECTIVITY: ALWIN NIKIOLAIS' *"SANCTUM"* (1964).
Sally B. East Gym

10. Alberto Del Saz and Claudia Gitelman	Presentation and Movement Reconstruction

SESSION II **9:45a-11:15a**

COLONIZING ENCOUNTERS, INDIGENOUS DANCINGS
PCD 103 BP Canada E
Jacqueline Shea Murphy, Chair, University of California, Riverside.

11. Brenda Farnell	Choreographing Colonialism in the American West
12. Rachel Fensham	On not "Dancing with Strangers": Re-Choreographing Indigenous and British Political Sovereignty in the Colonial Encounter
13. Tanya Lukin Linklater	Re-Membering, Re-Creating, Re-Telling Alutiiq dance

TECHNO-BODIES ON STAGE AND SCREEN
PDC 102 Royal Bank
Norah Zuniga Shaw, Chair, Ohio State University.

14. Jennifer Buscher	iBody
15. Karen Mozingo	Bodies Abandoned: Emio Greco's Rimasto Orfano and Andre Gingras' CYP17 Techno Body
16. Colleen Dunagan	Dance in Film and Television: Mapping the Aesthetics of Dance-Commercials

U.S. POLITICS, U.S. VIEWS
PDC 104 Petro Canada
Linda Tomko, Chair, University of California, Riverside.

17. Katita Milazzo	Spanish Dance - A "Self-Taught Act with American Ingenuity"?
18. Renate Bräuninger	United States Politics and Imperial Ballets: A Coincidence?
19. Beth Genné	"Swine Lake": American Satires of Russian Ballet and What They Tell Us

BALLET CLASS OBSERVATION 9:00a-10:30a
Dance Studios
Banff Professional Summer Dance Program

Conference Delegates are invited to observe a Ballet class taught as part of the Banff Professional Summer Dance Program

WORKING GROUPS 11:15a-12:15p

20. DANCE HISTORY TEACHERS
Tricia Henry Young, Convener
Kiln Cafe

21. EARLY DANCE
Patricia Radar, Convener
Gooseberry Deli

22. ETHNICITY AND DANCE
Purnima Shah for Joan L. Erdman, Convener
PDC Lounge

23. INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO 19TH CENTURY DANCE
Debra Sowell, Convener
PDC 104 Petro Canada

24. POPULAR, SOCIAL AND VERNACULAR DANCE
Sherill Dodds, Convener
PDC 103 PB Canada

25. PRACTICE-AS-RESEARCH
Thom Hecht, Convener
Sally B. East Gym

26. RECONSTRUCTION
Jody Sperling, Convener
PDC lounge

27. STUDENTS IN SDHS
Sarah Nixon Gasyna, Convener
PDC 102 Royal Bank

LUNCH 12:15p-l:15p

SESSION III **1:30p-2:45p**

CONTEMPORARY ABORIGINAL DANCE ON STAGE
PDC 103 BP Canada E
DAYSTAR/Rosalie Jones, Chair, Artistic Director. DAYSTAR Contemporary Dance-Drama of Indian America.

28. Carol Anderson	Permeable Worlds in the Choreography of Santee Smith
29. Karen Vedel	Silica Tales and Other Moves in the Mparntwe Riverbed

INSTITUTIONALIZING STRUCTURES
PDC 102 Royal Bank
Priya Srinivasan, Chair, University of California, Riverside.

30. Theresa Jill Buckland	The Institutionalization of Dance Teaching in late Victorian and Edwardian England
31. Carol-Lynne Moore	Ninety Years in the Occult Underground: How the "New Art" of Eurythmy has Survived

32. Anna Paskevska — The Role of Institutions in the Propagation of Ballet Technique

NARRATIONS AND LOCATIONS
PDC 104 PetroCanada
Carol Marsh, Chair, University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

33. Astrid Bernkopf — Reversed Gender Relations - Reversed Storytelling Patterns? Explorations of the Narrative Strategies of Jules Perrot's Der Kobold (1838)

34. Debra H. Sowell — Romantic Landscapes for Dance: Ballet Narratives and the Ideology of the Sublime

35. Judith Chazin-Bennahum — Rene Blum and the Rebirth of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo

IN THE FLESH, ON THE SCREEN, FROM THE HEART: PERCIEVED PRESENCE WITHIN TELE-IMMERSIVE BASED PERFORMANCE
Sally B. East Gym 1:30p-2:15p
Lecture Demonstration

36. Lisa Wymore — The Presence of Presence

SESSION IV 3:15p-4:45p

INDIGENOUS CONTEMPORARY DANCE: THE STATE OF THE ART
PDC 103 BP Canada E
Brenda Farnell, Chair, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.
Lecture Demonstration

37. DAYSTAR/Rosalie Jones

GAMES/IMAGES
PDC 102 Royal Bank
Colleen Dunagan, Chair, Cal State University-Long Beach.

38. Juliet Bellow — Graphing Games: Abstraction and Automation in Jeux

39. Derek Burrill — Amplifying Avatars: Reading Digital Choreography in Video Game Space

40. Clare Croft — Who's That Girl: Gendered Visual, Narrative and Cinematic Mirrors in Center Stage

CHOREOGRAPHERS/CANONS/INSTITUTION
PDC 104 Petro Canada
Jens Richard Giersdorf, Chair, University of Surrey.

41. Jennifer Fisher	Who Becomes a Dance Legend Most? Geography, Institutions, Marginalization and the Case of Bella Lewitzky
42. Mary Strow	Biographical Research in Library Landscapes: The Case of Dorathi Bock Pierre
43. Randy Martin	Nikolais Returns

SOLSTICE BBQ 6:00p
Dining Centre Outdoor Patio.

PERFORMANCE 8:00p
Margaret Greenham Theatre

Gaétan Gingras *Manitowapan*
Manitowapan is the latest creation by Gaétan Gingras (1998 Clifford E. Lee Choreography Award) inspired by the oral and dance traditions of the North American Native people.

Rulan Tangen *Tree Of Life: Time Of Drought*
Rulan Tangen, co-director of Earth Dance Theatre, presents *Tree Of Life: Time Of Drought* inspired by the richness and vitality of Indigenous themes and stories.

Adult $15 *Student/Senior/Child* $12

Saturday, 1 June 2006

BREAKFAST 7:00a-9:00a

REGISTRATION 7:30a-3:30p

SESSION V **8:00a-9:30a**

DESCRIPTIVE IMPERIALISM
MB Room 251
Randy Martin, Chair, New York University.

44. Susan L. Foster	Choreographing the Native
45. Paul Scolieri	Choreographing Conquest: Aztec Dance and the Noche Triste
46. Hanna Järvinen	Incorrect Images of the Empire: Ballets Russes in Russian Press 1909-1914

DANCE AND LITERARY STRUCTURES
MB Room 252
Janice Ross, Chair, Stanford University.

47. Bonnie Rowell	Postmodern Narratives: Multiple Histories, Autobiography and Understanding
48. Linda Shapiro	Literary Lives, Kinetic Conundrums: The Influence of Language, Literature and Literary Structures on the Work of Douglas Dunn and Tere O'Connor
49. Ray Miller	Dance in the Plays of Maxim Mazumdar and Daniel MacIvor

LOCATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS
MB Room 253
Sally Sommer, Chair, Florida State University.

50. Ninotchka Bennahum	The Use of Space in Islamic Spain: Histories of Middle Eastern Performance in Cordoba & Granada
51. Suzanne M. Jaeger	Modern Dance in Canada: Mostly Derivative or Distinctly Canadian?
52. Katherine Cornell	Dance in Crisis: A Discussion Paper on Rhetoric from the Canadian Dance Community and Policy at the Canada Council for the Arts

BALLET AT THE BANFF CENTRE 8:30a-9:30a
MB Auditorium
Jennifer Fisher, Chair, University of California, Irvine.

Question and Answer session with Banff Professional Ballet Program Directors: Annette av Paul and Brian Macdonald

SESSION VI **9:45a-11:15a**

DANCE SITES, DANCE INSTITUTIONS
MB Room 251
Allana Lindgren, Chair, University of Victoria.

53. MJ Thompson	Shelter from the Storm: Judson Memorial Church as a Culture-Producing Institution
54. Camille LeFevre	One Place, Two Histories: Site-Specific Dance at Jacob's Pillow
55. Margaret O'Shea	Provocative Loci: The Banff Centre for the Arts and Other Places of Dance Creation

REVOLUTIONARY STAGES
MB Room 252
John Perpener, Chair, Florida State University.

56. Valerie E. Gerry	Embodiment of the Revolution: An Ideological Study of Cuban Modem Dance
57. Suki John	Bread and Blackouts - Modem Dance in Castro's Cuba
58. William Jordan	Grants for Gurus: Institutionalizing the Culture of Bharata Natyam

POPULAR DANCES, SOCIAL SPACES
MB Room 253
Anthea Kraut, Chair, University of California, Riverside.

59. Jessica Berson	"Naked is the Best Disguise": Difference and Desire in Striptease Dance
60. Sherril Dodds	Dance and Youth Subcultures: The Value of Pogoing, Headbanging and Skanking
61. Dawn Springer	The Right to Move. An examination of Dance, Cabaret Laws, and Social Movements

FUNDING DANCE TECHNOLOGY: WHAT CHALLENGES FACE ARTISTS, CURATORS AND INSTITUTIONS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT?
MB Auditorium
Rachel Fensham, Chair, University of Surrey.

62. Isabel Valverde,
Norah Zuniga Shaw,
and (via teleconference)
Hellen Sky and Sarah Rubidge — Roundtable discussion: Funding Dance Technology: what challenges face artists, curators and institutions, and what to do about it

MEMBERSHIP MEETING **11:15a-12:15p**

MB Auditorium
Susan Manning, Northwestern University, Chair.

LUNCH 12:15p-1:15p

SESSION VII **1:15p-2:45p**

DANCE AT THE BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS: HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS
MB Room 251
Jerry Longboat, Chair, Canada Council.

63. Amy Bowring — Moving Mountains: A History of Dance and Movement at the Banff School of the Arts, 1933-1967

64. Anna Mouat — losing ground: Finding Functional Support in the Landscape of Dance

65. TBA — The Aboriginal Dance Program

RE-CHOREOGRAPIDNG SUBALTERN BODIES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE "NATIVE" IN PERFORMANCE
MB Room 252
Yutian Wong, Chair, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

66. Priya Srinivasan — The Bodies Beneath the Cigarette Poster: Theorizing the Disappearance of Nautch (Indian) Dancing Women in American Dance

67. Karima A. Robinson — Re-reading the Colonial Discourse on Black Dance in Jamaica: The Black Body as a Site of Contention

68. Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns — Sanctioned Dancing: Taxi Dance Halls and Immigrant Workers' Corporeal Contact

BALLET, THE BODY AND DANCE'S RELATIONS TO INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES
MB Room 253
Karen Eliot, Chair, Ohio State University.

69. Helena Hammond — Making Dance Epic: Ballet, Brecht and Britain

70. Ann Nugent — Orpheus and William Forsythe's Destabilisation of Myth

71. Ligia Pinheiro — Teaching Ballet Technique in Higher Education

DANCING RESEARCHING
Sally B. East Gym
Thom Hecht, Chair, London Contemporary Dance School at the Place.

72. Robin Prichard — When Sandstone Sings: Land - Centered Sacred Dance Inside Western Theater

73. Vida L. Midgelow — A Little Fleshy Philosophy: Dance Improvisation as Research

PLENARY PANEL **3:00p-5:00p**

DANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES
MB Auditorium

This plenary panel brings together internationally-renowned choreographers, scholars and dance program administrators to discuss institutional best practices: how institutions can support, hinder or redirect dance scholarship, dance practice and dance making. Panelists will address how the institutions they are or have been involved with have supported dance, as well as the challenges (practical, cultural, political, ideological, artistic, financial, etc.) these institutions have faced.

Susan Foster, Chair, University of California, Los Angeles.
Gaetan Gingras, Choreographer
Jerry Longboat, Canada Council for the Arts
Susan Manning, SDHS
John Murrell, The Banff Centre
Claire Rousier. Centre National de la Danse

Sunday, 18 June 2006

BREAKFAST 7:00a-9:00a

SESSION VIII **8:15a-9:45a**

DANCING SPACE INTO PLACE: THREE CULTUREAL PERSPECTIVES
MB Room 251
Darcy Callison, Chair, York University.

74. Susan Cash	Moving Nature
75. Sashar Zarif	Making Space their Own - Dancing to Belong
76. Troy Emery Twigg	Aapaskaiyaawa: Looking at the Components of Blackfoot Traditional Dance Through Faye Heavyshields' Installation Piece

MASCULINITIES AND SEXUALITIES
MB Room 252
Thomas DeFrantz, Chair, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

77. Marian Smith	The Disappearing Danseur
78. Penny Farfan	Man as Beast: Nijinsky's Faun
79. John O. Perpener	Creating Black Masculinity Through Dance: Two Solos by Eleo Pomare and Talley Beatty

POLITICAL LANDSCAPES, EUROPEAN HISTORIES
MB Room 253
Susan C. Cook, Chair, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

80. Susan Laikin Funkenstein	Picturing Palucca: Abstraction, Mass Culture, and the Dancing New Woman at the Bauhaus
81. Nèlida Monés I Mestre	Moving to the Avant-Garde Dance, Music and Drama in Times of Silence: The Liceu Opera House in the 1950s under the Franco Regime
82. Jamie Lynn Webster	The Politics of Passion and Purity: Cultural Idealism and the Choreography of Crypt Scenes from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet

SESSION IX **10:00a-11:30a**

AESTHETICS AND POLITICS IN STAGING RACE: AFRICAN AMERICAN CONTEXTS
MB Room 252
Michele Moss, Chair, University of Calgary.

83. Shelley C. Berg	What's Remembered: Agnes de Mille's The Four Marys
84. Thomas DeFrantz	Forces of Nature: Indigenous Black Diaspora
85. Andrea Harris	When Praxis Wore Pointe Shoes: Josephine Baker, Classical Ballet, and the Politics of Aesthetics