

CONVERSATIONS ACROSS THE FIELD OF DANCE STUDIES



Dancing Spaces

Photo Credit: Rosie Trump

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Dear Reader,

In the spirit of *Conversations across the Field of Dance Studies*, which seeks to engage readers in current themes and debates arising in dance studies in a critically conversational tone, this introduction asks readers to imagine the theoretical possibilities emerging from intersecting dance with space by way of a text-based conversation. The dialogic structure that opens this issue reveals the dual lenses deployed in the editorial process by us as guest editors of *Dancing Spaces* and acknowledges the distinct voices and perspectives with which we think through the theme of this issue.

Ying:

In 2011, Occupy Wall Street aroused significant attention across the media landscape of the United States as a movement opposing the widening economic chasm between the wealthiest members of the American population and the rest of the country. As I watched, via various media portals, the steady transformation of Zuccotti Park from a public leisure space primarily inviting human activities devoted to the pleasures of loafing and relaxing into a stage for the performance of protest as embodied by choreographies discordant with typical uses of the park space, I was struck by the centrality of the body and its ability to transform the meaning and purposes of a space. The very semantic tenants of this movement—occupy—and the opposing mantra of police, administrators, government seeking to overturn this demonstration—evict—made the body complicit, not only in both performances of protest and state-incited retaliation, but also in the formation of the meaning of a space. The act of occupying refers to a physical appropriation of space, while the idea of eviction calls for the forced exit of (the same) bodies and thus a calculated returning of the park to its original purposes. Occupy Wall Street is one very visible example in which the body's corporeal and choreographic presence in space participates in defining the usage and purpose of not only the space, but also the environment and meaning affiliated with the said space.

Alexis:

I find theory most interesting when I understand exactly how it relates to my own actions day in and day out. In considering movement and space, I am interested in our everyday actions and engagements as they are shaped by the architecture around us. I am curious about how our spaces, often designed by others, affect us right now, in real time. Almost immediately, we are socialized in particular behaviors and learn to read cues often based on the space in which we exist at that time.

For example, when we enter a classroom space, if we are the instructor we usually head to the front of the room, delineated by the location of the whiteboard or the lectern. As students we head straight for desks or tables and sit quietly. How do students respond if the instructor decides to teach from a desk instead? Is their perception of that professor different? How does the learning experience change? What if students sit on the floor? The expected use of space communicates to us how we are expected to maneuver our bodies within that space, with resultant implications on identity. It also gives us the option to defy these conventions. And in the field of dance studies, where we foreground the use of the body, we can begin to excavate the implication of these conventions and our responses as receptive and active bodies.

Ying:

This sort of discourse, generated by the reciprocal and continued definition of the body by space, and vice versa, ideally fits within the scope of dance studies; scholars who rely upon the dancing body as a lens through which to understand the world are uniquely equipped to host this conversation. Several scholars in the field have already intervened by orienting their work on the intersection between the body and space. This scholarship is often carried out via movement forms generally recognizable as “dance,” but dance scholars are also placed at the forefront of forging a broadening of the terms “dance” and “choreography” as they often are defined in order to embrace a more fluid, expansive classification. By deploying our theoretical underpinnings, our methodologies, our privileging of the body as the basis for theorization and historicization, we enable ourselves and others to scrutinize pedestrian bodies operating in the landscape of the lived in and built environment.

As dance scholars, we constantly brush up against the idea, and the materiality, of space in our efforts to mine dancing bodies for clues into the formulation of social identities. These performing bodies, whether they exist in theaters, in shipping containers-as-theaters, in community centers, in art galleries, or in private homes are always operating within while simultaneously displaying their inscriptions onto the built environment. As such, *Dancing Spaces* comes from a desire to reveal the results of a collision between the body and space as construed in the broadest of terms, via the lens of body-centric scholars.

Ying Zhu and Alexis Weisbrod

A word from the Guest Editors



Photo credit: Mouvinsitu.
Boris Gibé et Florent Hamon of Compagnie les Choses de Rien in their screendance project that explores abandoned spaces, Mouvinsitu (France).

Ruins and Dance: A Triptych of Time

Marisa C Hayes

Linguistically, the word ruins often holds a negative connotation in our everyday language. Expressions such as *financial ruin*, *to be in ruins*, etc., conjure images of places and situations in shambles, sad remnants of their former glory. They often elicit unpleasant associations with natural disasters and human destruction, as well as moral or economic collapse. What, then, can be said of historic photos in which Isadora Duncan raises her arms triumphantly towards the sky beneath magnificent Greek columns that have weathered centuries of decay? Ruins, both architecturally and conceptually, have long fed the dancer's imagination throughout various periods of choreographic styles and foci while transforming the spaces themselves. Ruins were emblematic during the Romantic era—when the use of architectural ruins permeated both the visual and performing arts—and have been significant in the development of Butoh, a movement practice created amid the aftermath of a war-torn Japan. Today, ruins remain a prolific motif that are regularly examined in screendance and site-specific performance practices.

Architectural ruins have been widely documented and explored in the field of art history, but while the themes of these spaces in dance performance share many of the same preoccupations outlined in visual art scholarship, the obvious distinction is the interactive relationship that the human body exercises within the setting of ruins. This is evident on both a physical level though the body's presence in the space—either directly on site or transposed to the dancing stage or screen—that impacts both the movement and the site itself, as well as conceptually and symbolically through personification and philosophy of memory,

among others. Regardless of whether ruins are used as a live setting, appropriated for stage designs, or embodied by the performers themselves, the most influential aspect of ruins in dance is their capacity to create multiple, and often simultaneous, perceptions of time. Like a triptych, ruins create a three-fold relationship to time that immediately references the past while remaining anchored to the present, in addition to evoking the future. This conflux unfolds by: imagining the space as it once was in its original form, experiencing the site as it exists in its present condition, and anticipating the future of the ruins—their total demise or renovation. In other words, ruins cause us to ponder what was, what is, and what will be.

By their very nature, ruins are incomplete remnants of a once larger whole, shadows of the past. As such, they instill a sense of nostalgia punctuated by their designation as a delicate holding place between destruction and perseverance, a thin line between forgetting and remembering. Ruins of diverse eras, including our own, linger, sometimes abandoned and left to weather the elements, while others are glorified and visited frequently. Both, nonetheless, evoke a sense of melancholy, a pining for another time that immediately recalls the fragility of human life and our own inescapable mortality, even among the most triumphant ruins that instill a respect for the civilization that created them. The Romantics, in particular, capitalized on the ghostly aspect of ruins in keeping with their fascination for the mysteries of death and eliciting emotional experience, themes that inspired both awe and terror, assisted by the frequent use of exoticism and the supernatural. Ruins



Lithograph (artist unknown) of the ballerina Fanny Elssler in *La Esmeralda*, circa 1845. One of *Notre Dame's* towers is visible in the background.

of another era and culture in their wistful state were the perfect vehicle to inspire dancing associated with the Romantic period's aims.

During this time of revolt against rationalism, storytelling and character development reached a new pinnacle in ballet that shifted from established choreographic patterns to a greater freedom of movement and acting. (Atwood and Jeschke). References to the past, however, were abundant, including the ruins of Gothic cathedrals in ballets such as Charles Perrot's *La Esmeralda* (1844) and Henri Justamant's *Quasimodo* (ou la Bohémienne) created in 1859. Both performances were inspired

by Victor Hugo's earlier novel, *Notre Dame de Paris* (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*) and were popular ballets of the period. In Hugo's story, Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral is not the highly maintained historic monument that visitors recognize today, but rather a structure in sad disrepair, a state of neglect that the author repeatedly references throughout the book. Indeed, the original French title that bears the name of the cathedral is a good indication of just how central the role of this space is to the story. The decaying cathedral is a looming presence, the site of action for the entire plot, as well as a personification of the society the tale depicts.



Lithograph (artist unknown) depicting Carlotta Grisi in *Giselle* in 1841. Her slanted arabesque is fragile and off center, a transitional placement between the present and what lies beyond.

In Romantic ballet, settings often based on real life structures in various states of decay were underlined by new choreographic trends, including movement qualities that capture the aesthetic effects of ruins. As incomplete structures, often asymmetrical and

disjointed, ruins are most explicitly mirrored in the Romantic era's newly established focus on alternating in and out of balance, shifts in weight that illustrate the body in transition, aided by the introduction of the archetypal arabesque, pointe work, and a dismantling of the erect carriage that defined earlier periods in ballet (Atwood, Jeschke). Tilted bodies, no longer held rigidly upright, display a sense of precarious beauty, a wistful fragility much like the architectural wonders of the past--incomplete columns, slanting towers, etc.--that dominated the literature and art of the era. Movements such as falling to the floor for emotional effect, as introduced in *Giselle* and other Romantic ballets, transpose the feel and look of crumbling architectural structures on the human body, a reflection of the imminent despair or danger the characters experience. Italian ballet master Carlo Blasis (1797-1878) also introduced the attitude position and a more liberal use of *porte de bras* that were softer and matched the non-angular haunted atmosphere depicted in Romantic ballet backdrops featuring ruins and nature (Baker, 36).

New costume designs, including the use of veils, added additional layers to such choreographic motifs. Cloth became a dancer's facade and could be peeled away through gesture, much like the architectural strata hidden or alternately revealed by crumbling ruins. These movements and production elements associated with architectural ruins marked not only a turning point in ballet, but held a lasting impact on early modern dance pioneers, including Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, and Martha Graham (Atwood and Jeschke). Though Romanticism strongly evoked ghosts of the past, its also focused on the present by reappropriating historic remains and themes for immediate use and reinvention to create something that suited the distinct goals and framework of the era. Ruins themselves, we must not forget, inspired art and ideas in their then-present state of disintegration, not in their historic completeness. Returning to the idea of three-fold time, ruins in this context, create a tenuous relationship to the future through their state of decay, and by association the dancers within, as viewers ponder how they will evolve over time.

Similarly, a century later, Japanese Butoh departed from rigid technical standards in favor of organic movement forms that confronted death through the perseverance of ruins and ghosts, this time as a result of nuclear warfare. Dancers in white powdered bodies captured the look of ashen rubble following the atomic attacks on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that killed an estimated 200,000 people as an immediate result of the bombing (atomicarchive.com), with thousands more sustaining life-long illnesses or injuries throughout the subsequent



Photo by Shigeo Hayashi. The Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome pictured just after the devastation in 1945. Today the ruins have been renamed the Hiroshima Peace Memorial.

decades. Japanese society was encouraged to rebuild cities and reconstruct its identity in the immediate post-war period, burying both physically and metaphorically its experience of the war. It is during this period that Japanese artists began to strongly question their relationship to both the growing influence of western culture and their own history in search of new and distinct modes of expression capable of addressing the darker side of humanity and their recent experiences. The 1950s marked a transitional period in the country's architecture and population. While Japan rebuilt its economy and infrastructure, ruins of war were still visible, seen in both the bodies

of the people (radiation burns and other illnesses linked to exposure, amputations, etc.) and architecturally. While some historians rightfully insist that Butoh, a diverse genre of performance still widely practiced today by Japanese and non-Japanese dancers alike, should not be reduced exclusively to associations with the atomic bomb, the impact of this event and its aftermath is essential to contextualizing Butoh's early years of existence.

Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno, widely recognized as the co-founders of Butoh, shared a number of experiences in pre and post-war Japan. Both dancers survived numerous war-time hardships and bombings in the greater Tokyo area (Ohno himself served in the military), studied western movement techniques that they would later largely reject, and created a performance genre in the aftermath of the world's first atomic attack. Here, the influence of ruins is felt through the confrontation of memory, a recognition of remains and fragmented images that are embodied by the dancers whose own cities and families were reordered and altered by the war. Hijikata referred to them as *floating rafts* within the body, independent parts that came together to form a new whole (Hijikata, 74).

Although white makeup is common in historic forms of East Asian theatre (Chinese Opera, Kabuki, Noh, etc.), the Butoh body, often nude and covered entirely in white without the use of additional colors, becomes



Photo by Delahaye. Dancers of Sankai Juku in Unetsu choreographed by Ushio Amagatsu.

ghost-like in appearance transposing the look of the white dust and rubble of bombed Japan's ruined buildings, waste that also went on to cause physical deterioration and death among the population. Seeping through the skin, Isabel Cristina Pinedo refers to this effect as the *ruined-body-as-spectacle*

(60). First generation Butoh dancers were survivors, but the ruins of their previous life were made manifest through the moving body, captured in unorthodox and expressionist gestures. Their movements were often improvised and demanded a commitment to the present moment, while invoking the deceased and the past. However, true to the time triptych outlined earlier, this dance form also holds a deep connection to the future. Butoh asks its viewers to keep the ruins of memory and the past alive, to revisit them, to live and embody them. By confronting ruins in the present, Butoh asked (and continues to ask) its dancers and audiences what future they would like to create with what remains, *from without and within*, as Kazuo Ohno's workshop lectures are entitled. Indeed, Ohno's son Yoshito, now teaching at the Kazuo Ohno Dance Studio in Yokohama, asks his students to become empty vessels that can be filled with memories, sensations and emotions, the ruins of various people, places and experiences.

While both Butoh and Romantic ballet continue to thrive on world stages, diverse contemporary practices in dance making, including screendance (dance for camera) and site-specific performance, facilitate new forms of direct interaction with various types of ruins. This allows choreographers to engage firsthand with the physical attributes of the space in order to generate new movements and aesthetic sensibilities, as well as to create new ways in which to implicate the audience. These diverse ruins range from the location of ancient civilizations to modern industrial decay. One example of the former includes Stephanie Skura's Italian performance project *Ruins Memories* in 2010, set amid the remains of ancient Roman town houses, in which the performers were descendants of the ruins' original inhabitants. Co-created with Manuela Bondavalli, Skura writes, "*We took our themes from the site. Fragments everywhere: of walls & daily objects. Imagining hundreds of years [of] eating, sleeping, loving, fighting, crying, cheering, screaming, falling silent, worshipping & dying right there among the tiles & walls.*"

The ghosts that haunt the place...we needed to let the audience be IN the site by catalyzing intense seeing & sensing” (www.stephanieskura.com/chor-ruins.shtml). By setting movement in ruins with such an overwhelming connection to the past, choreographers create a bridge to the present. All of the historic daily motions that transpired in the space cited above, are equally familiar to present-day audiences, enhanced by dancer’s physical presence within the space. Revisiting these traces of history (past) help to underline our universal humanity, our shared biological imperative (present) to persevere (future).



Photo credit: *Mouvinsitu*. Boris Gibé et Florent Hamon of *Compagnie les Choses de Rien* in their screendance project that explores abandoned spaces, *Mouvinsitu* (France).

Non-residential ruins constitute equally powerful acts of creating connections and remembering, such as French duo Florent Hamon and Boris Gibé’s ongoing screendance series *Mouvinsitu* (an abbreviated combination of the French words for movement and site-specific). The videos in the series were filmed in various international locations, including Detroit, a city now celebrated in the artistic community as a rich source of spaces that epitomize our sublime obsession with decay. Large factories, intricate facades, and historic churches have all been left to ruin due to the city’s economic collapse and subsequent population decline. Recently, photographers and filmmakers have been busy capturing images of the continued disintegration of these architectural spaces in the former automobile industry capital, but Hamon and Gibé’s screendance work transforms these ruins into breathing entities again, no longer confined to the realm of simple documentation. Their physical explorations of empty international factories, churches, theaters, and other buildings illustrate patterns and motifs within the space never before revealed that lend modern ruins a new aesthetic appreciation, equally feeding the dancers’ choreographic practice in exchange. The three-fold sense of time emitted by ruins here becomes cyclical in that the choreographic process is regenerative in nurturing

the space, breeding a new form of life within its historic remains. This is particularly poignant when considering the origins of the city of Detroit, an early French settlement prior to the French and Indian wars, and the resonance that the location may hold for the French choreographers as a result of this cultural connection.

By conceiving their site-specific dance explorations for the camera, the *Mouvinsitu* project ensures a future for these fragile ruins within the transposed space of the screen. This also allows the sites to gain a certain degree of mobility that will enable them to be experienced by an exponentially higher number of viewers in their on-screen format. Even preserved on video, the images of these ruins will continue to evoke a three-fold sense of time, as audiences will nevertheless establish an intimate rapport with the space via the screen that provokes the same urge to imagine what it once was, what it currently is, and what it will become. Portions of the *Mouvinsitu* project can be viewed online at <https://vimeo.com/user6204607>

Ruins and their time triptych inspire the classic human quandary: Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going? These same questions are often asked in dance composition. Ruins allow us to consider the construction of movement and our experience of dance by considering: What is a dance’s point of origin? How do we built movement and is it allowed to decay? What do we gain by taking away, by removing one layer of a movement to reveal another? What is the relationship of the part to the whole within a dance? What is our connection to the past and future in the present? How do we embody fragments and what remains of something larger? While many of these questions have been explored in dance composition, ruins serve as an important architectural reminder of the layers that dance is capable of constructing and deconstructing, both physically and symbolically.

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Isolation Isn't Inconspicuous (In My Room)

Anna Marie Shogren





Isolation Isn't Inconspicuous (In My Room) was a performative installation presented within an internally curated group show with the Brooklyn-based, multidisciplinary art collective, Non Solo, at The Center for Contemporary Art Sacramento, June 2011.



With quiet reference to time-based work's veritable mirroring of life cycle, this piece is a space to note beginning, middle, and end, along with relational distances and social structures that time helps maintain. Though, *///* focuses on negotiations of formal exhibition space specifically in relation to a hierarchy of media. As a dance-based artist working largely in visual art settings, my work generally has less concrete dimensions than the more tangible, saleable, and therefore winning art of my colleagues. Members of this collective, though making thorough and multi-faceted work, produced primarily in sculpture, painting, photography; objects and images in measurable shapes that reverberate more in a consumer-driven and materialistic culture. Durational art displays a shape that cannot be kept; an arch that can present a perspective less digestible from mid-life. Suggestions were made within this group towards my piece utilizing the less desirable or prominent spaces of the simple, white box gallery or serving as entertainment for the opening. I desired to collaborate harmoniously and for us to have proportional weight within this show. Yet, at the same time, I had an ambition to be flexible with the physical boundaries of the individual work and to challenge myself, as well as the group, to hold our egos less preciously.

This subsequent process of creation was my response. I removed myself somewhat from this community to work isolated within my small Bushwick, Brooklyn bedroom, set to make a wearable garment with a hem that fit the exact dimensions of the Sacramento, storefront gallery, edging the walls displaying the work of my fellow artists. The dress was not to be fully spread until the week of the install.

For the exhibition opening, performer and Sacramento resident, Lin Greene, lay peacefully wearing the dress arranged to fit the room's perimeter. Greene was alert and alive, throughout the early portion of the evening, including a panel discussion with the collective and curator, Elaine O'Brien. The product of a solo process was now in physical contact with the work of the others and, also, a constant point of attention for those walking through as the audience viewed the show stepping on or around the dress. The fabric shifted underfoot as they moved near and away from the walls, all the while gathering the material closer to the performer, crowding her, but creating more space for everyone besides. Later, Greene slowly stood to join the crowd, behaving as a gallery goer, as herself, though with the mass of skirt keeping her inside a non-conversational sphere. After the opening, the installation was laid to rest for the remainder of the exhibition.

For several reasons, and hoping the above is one, Non Solo has since held this show to be a point of achievement and mutual pride for us. Photos also feature the work of Non Solo members, Margaret Coleman (neon), Stephen Eakin (photographs), Heather Garland (paintings), and William Hempel (video).



Forbidden Altars: U.S. Liturgical Dance after the Second Vatican Council

Michelle T. Summers

In 1999, liturgical dance choreographer and practitioner, Kathryn Mihelick attempted to organize an ecumenical dance concert entitled “Beyond Belief” in the sanctuary of the Holy Family Parish Church in Stow, Ohio. A few days before the concert was to take place, Mihelick received a call explaining that a few of the parishioners had been voicing complaints, and the Vatican itself had intervened, faxing the local bishop to request that the dance be disallowed from occurring in the sanctuary space. Forced to relocate the entire performance to a stage in a school gymnasium, this concert exemplifies the struggle that U.S. contemporary liturgical dancers face when they attempt to gain access to a space that has traditionally been forbidden to them – the altar. This article, therefore, investigates the ideological and architectural shifts that allowed dance to enter into the U.S. church space in the mid-twentieth century and the ensuing clashes of cultural politics that continue to inhibit the development of liturgical dance in the Catholic Church.

Underneath the events of this controversy lies a politicized history of 20th century U.S. liturgical dance practice that was ennobled in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, but was quickly suspended in a

conservative backlash in response to the newly “modernized” Catholic Church. The decisions and reforms put forth by Vatican II promoted a drastically different Catholic Church. Under the direction of Pope John XXIII, the Council first convened in 1962 for what would become a four-year process of renegotiating Catholic doctrine and theology. Religious leaders from 79 different countries met to modernize Catholicism, reinvigorate the Church, and create a more ecumenical and interfaith Christian religious dialogue. The Council is well-known for highly publicized reforms such as making mass accessible through the use of vernacular languages (e.g. mass in the U.S. was conducted in English instead of Latin), having the priest face the laity rather than the altar, and legitimating local popular devotion as a means of worship (e.g. the popular use of the guitar during mass in the wake of the 1960s folk song revival).

The emphasis on the Church as an ecumenical and global institution in the modern world would open the door for the arts in general, and dance in particular, to enter into liturgical services under this auspice of local popular devotion. Utilizing the rhetoric and techniques of early modern dance, liturgical choreographers and dancers began to appear and perform in churches from New York to San Francisco in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, this burst of artistic inspiration brought on by the “spirit” of Vatican II would be stopped short in its tracks a few years later when a brief document entitled “Dance in the Liturgy: The Religious Dance, An Expression of Religious Joy” was issued in a canon law digest by the Vatican Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship in 1975. This document declared “Western dance” an inadmissible form of worship within the Catholic Church liturgy, quelling the efforts of the burgeoning modern liturgical dance movement in the United States.¹ And yet, as evidenced by the attempted ecumenical concert before described, liturgical dance still seeps into chancels and around the altars of local churches in the U.S., even when it is met with fierce resistance by those who fight to keep certain bodies contained within the pews.

I am sitting in the basement of Kathryn Mihelick’s house in Stow, Ohio, watching video upon video of her liturgical dance company, Leaven Dance, and listening to her and associate director, Andrea Shearer, fondly reminisce about the many services that they have danced in different Catholic churches across the U.S. In the break between DVDs, Shearer leans back in her chair, thinking about my earlier questions about Vatican II now that she has just seen her thirty-something-self dancing next to the altar in a local Catholic Church back in the 1980s. “You know,” she says suddenly, “the removal of the rails, the removal of statues, and other items quite literally made room for the dancers

around the altar.” Her speculation insinuates that without these architectural changes initiated by Vatican II’s modernization, liturgical dance might not have happened in the U.S.

The plethora of sacred items and arrangement of the chancel itself dramatically shifted in many Catholic churches worldwide from a pre-Vatican II adornment to a post-Vatican II modernism. This was due in part to Section VII of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium*, issued by the Council in 1964, and its specific concentration on the use and liturgical regulation of “Sacred Art and Sacred Furnishings.” The document asserts:

The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it adorns the sacred buildings and holy rites with due reverence and honor... Let bishops carefully remove from the house of God and from other sacred places those works of artists which are repugnant to faith, morals, and Christian piety, and which offend true religious sense either by depraved forms or by lack of artistic worth, mediocrity and pretense. And when churches are to be built, let great care be taken that they be suitable for the celebration of liturgical services and for the active participation of the faithful. The practice of placing sacred images in churches so that they may be venerated by the faithful is to be maintained. Nevertheless their number should be moderate and their relative positions should reflect right order. For otherwise they may create confusion among the Christian people and foster devotion of doubtful orthodoxy. (Section VII)

A vivid description of the effects of this decree is evidenced in religious scholar Colleen McDannell’s work on the lived experience of Vatican II in the United States. A first hand account of architectural changes at St. Jude’s in Denver, Colorado in 1969 reveals the post-Vatican II church as “more intimate...everyone was relatively close to the altar” with stained glass windows in “abstract design” and “new designs (that) dramatized the Council’s desire to make all people feel a part of the church” (ch. 6). These transformations, too, included the addition of upholstery, fabrics, and carpets, along with the removal of the altar rails, making the church feel more like a “living room” (ch. 6). This newly intimate and casual setting was not well received by all parishioners, however. Latin American religious scholar Jennifer Hughes recounts the outcry against this “modernized” Catholic aesthetic through the vocal criticism of feminist Camilla Paglia: “Critical of the renovations of Catholic Churches then sweeping neighborhood parishes throughout the United States, Paglia condemned the mass removal of saints as a sort of ethnic cleansing” (145). The Church that had once embraced

devotional relics came to be seen as a Protestantized religion, modern and ecumenical, but lacking the very thing that had ensured its prolonged survival in so many cultural contexts – tradition.

Regardless of popular opinion, the necessity, in particular, of removing the altar rails and sacred relics that were characteristic of the pre-Vatican II church becomes evident when watching liturgical dance choreography. Mihelick and Shearer’s company, Leaven Dance, for example, utilizes both the space around the altar, the steps leading up to it, and the aisles in the nave to enact their site specific work. Liturgical dance inhabits a site that is already loaded with religious and architectural signification, and Vatican II’s physical shifts in space reflected larger ideological shifts that allowed the dance to emerge during this time. Small, tight spaces, carpeted floors, and multiple levels/steps all dictate the dancer’s ability to inhabit the sanctuary. In particular, Mihelick and Shearer note that their choreography rarely, if ever, “goes to the floor” simply for the fact that much of the congregation cannot see the dancers from the waist down, much less on the floor, due to the alignment of the pews.² When asked to respond to liturgical choreographer Susan Bauer’s criticism of the overused trope of the “circle” within liturgical dance technique, Mihelick and Shearer respond that while the circle is often used as a symbolic metaphor, in reality it becomes an essential choreographic device when dealing with a performance space that has a large altar in the center of it (Bauer 181). Liturgical dancers are unable to dictate the architecture or arrangement of spaces within the church, often necessitating choreographic adaptation. This willingness to adapt, paired with Vatican II reforms, allowed for Western dance forms to physically enter the church space as a mode of worship in a reciprocal relationship that extended ballet and modern dance’s exploration of Christian dance themes into Christian sacred spaces.

While companies like Leaven Dance incorporate dance professionals (usually trained in a modern dance technique) to serve as leaders in a dance ministry, there also arises the issue of participation – who exactly should be allowed to dance around the altar? The “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” issued by the Vatican Council in 1965 stated that the arts could elevate humanity to a more sublime understanding of truth within the limits of morality. Just three years after the Vatican’s “Dance in the Liturgy,” *the Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1978 stated that “processions and interpretations through bodily movement can become meaningful parts of the liturgical celebration if done by truly competent persons in the manner that befits the total liturgical action” (59). Dance pioneers like Carla deSola, who

founded one of the first American liturgical dance companies, Omega Dance, in 1974, brought a level of professionalism to the form that was before unseen. Dancers in companies like Omega and Leaven are highly technical dancers, usually trained in a university based modern dance or ballet program.

Yet, the perception still pervades that “interpretative” liturgical dance borders on the ridiculous – by parishioners, clergy, and outsiders alike. Modern dance legend Ruth St. Denis, deemed by many as the High Priestess of Sacred Dance, declared upon encountering a small dance choir in California in 1950: “Your spirit is good. You’re moving in the right direction. Of course, you’re closer to the Greek chorus than ballet, and you’ve much to learn --- but keep on” (Gray 6). Her encouragement praises the intention, but not so subtly derides the technique of the dancers, a common occurrence in most reviews of liturgical dance. As such, the newsletters and meeting minutes of the Sacred Dance Guild organization are peppered with strategies for increasing professionalism and fostering trained leaders who can develop aesthetic and spiritual excellence in movement choirs. Kathryn Mihelick, for her part, argues that you would not select an untrained singer to serve as a featured musical soloist in a church choir, so why should dance soloists be any different? And yet, there remains a sizable contingent whose views are reflected by Guild member Robert Storer in his response to a Graham workshop offered by the organization in 1963: “For the most part we will continue to be amateur dancers in the church, making use of movement to enrich what we are trying to ‘say’ but not dancing – really dancing” (*Sacred Dance Guild Newsletter* 9). By remaining in the realm of amateurism, many liturgical dancers believe they are able to sidestep issues of spectacle and personal glorification, attributes that are frowned upon within artistic church culture.

Companies like Leaven essentially seek to incorporate both approaches. While certain liturgies involve complex choreographies including lifts, leaps, and battements performed by company members, there is often a communal component, where simple gestural phrases are taught and executed by the laity from the pews. Because of the constraints placed on the bodies in close quarters, the majority of the congregational dance is accomplished through the upper body. For example, Omega Liturgical Dance’s “Prayers of Petition” during Good Friday Services encourage church members to lift their arms above their heads, clasp the hands in midair, and draw them into a cupped position at the chest.³ Uncertainty reigns supreme in most of these occasions, as technically evidenced by the dancers who fully extend the entire arm and lift the chest, in comparison to most in the congregation who are hesitant to extend the arms beyond the trunk of the body.

This issue is taken up by Mihelick in her “Position Paper on Issues of Sacred/Liturgical Dance Movement,” which was written as a plea to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to recognize dance as a legitimate form of Catholic worship. Her advocacy journey since that fateful ecumenical concert in 1999 has sought to overturn the default acquiescence to the “Dance in the Liturgy” document issued in 1975. Tossed back and forth between the national Conference and the Vatican Congregation, Mihelick has been told that liturgical dance is a cultural issue and therefore should be handled by the U.S. Council. The U.S. Conference proceedings have deferred multiple times to the Vatican document as the “authoritative sketch” on the matter, thus refusing to discuss the topic. Mihelick has upon the advice of her bishop written norms to standardize the liturgical use of dance in worship, met with two canon lawyers who refuse the legitimacy of the “Dance in the Liturgy” document, and accumulated a list of 295 churches and 63 retreat/conference centers across 36 states who have allowed liturgical dance to take place during mass in the United States.⁴ Despite this effort, liturgical dance remains a suspended art form.

Shearer intimates that some do not want Mihelick to pursue official recognition of dance as a form of worship because of the fear of its repercussions. As it stands now, Vatican II’s reforms opened the door and provided a small foothold for liturgical dance to operate on a local level, under the quiet supervision of assenting priests. An official decision at the national level could foreclose the small, yet significant opportunities that liturgical dancers have developed over the years through their strategic negotiation, deference, and persistence.

Mihelick quietly dips her fingertips in the holy water at the entrance to her church, Holy Family Parish, and touches it reverently to her forehead. She ceremoniously does the same to me, touching my forehead lightly and whispering, “God bless you, my dear.” The church is completely dark and eerily empty on this cold, snowy day in early March. The parable-inspired, stained glass windows filter light onto the wooden pews and gently illuminate a giant crucifix hung upon a speckled, mosaic wall behind the altar. As we slowly move through the back of the church, she gestures toward the now forbidden space behind the altar and murmurs, not quite to me, almost to herself, “I remember when I used to dance here...I put my hands on this very wall...” She quickly collects herself, but the emotion in her voice lingers as a nostalgic lament of what could have been in the now empty space about the altar.

Notes

- 1 The religious dance in the West is problematically defined in this document against counter examples such as the Ethiopians, Israelites, and those more generally labeled as “primitive.” The descriptions tie Western dance to un-pure social dances and spectacular ballets, while the cultures that are Othered are described as having “rhythmic movement” inherent to their religious experience.
- 2 This also, of course, encompasses discomfort with sexual imagery that might resonate with a dancer “going to the floor.”
- 3 This choreographic information was gathered during an ethnographic study I conducted with the company in 2009.
- 4 These numbers are based upon a list personally compiled by Mihelick.

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In-Conclusion: Dance-Space-Paper

Deveril

As part of the process of writing my 2002 PhD thesis,¹ *Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language*,² I began composing a poem. This work – ‘The First Unborn’³ – was an attempt to express a series of thoughts about the relationships between dance, technology, writing and meaning. Starting from the idea that a moving, performative body is another tool for writing words, I wanted to practice that idea. The resulting poem took the form of a re-telling of the Orpheus myth: the journey into the Underworld, accompanied by Hermes, in search of Eurydice (Orpheus’s wife). Drawing on Dante’s *Inferno*, in the first instance, the characters are guided by a Virgil-replacement in the form of Ludwig Wittgenstein. The journey is a philosophical one through a virtual reality created by words, inspired by hypertext and cyber-theories. The choreographic impulse was transformed (mutated, allegorised, analogised, re-inscribed) into poetic forms using language pushed to the edge of its usefulness in communicating. The spatial limitations of the page were explored, as though the words were bodies in space. In an atypical thesis, which was intended to be a dialogue between theory and practice, the boundaries of the two were blurred, in what might now be called a lyric inquiry (see Neilsen, 2008). The thesis was performative and problematic—deliberately so. In examining the effects of new technologies and the modern sciences – hypertext, cybernetics, biomedical technologies, MRI, genetics – on the body of the dancer, and the possibilities suggested by these technologies, the thesis strove to demonstrate the philosophical issues in dance discourse that such technologies might expose. However, an anti-philosophical stance was taken.

I present here the poem’s conclusion: ‘The Omega Man – Canto 1 and Only: First and Last and Always’. It is an open hypertext; nodes without links. It explores the idea of the dancing body – of the human dancer – in the gaps of definition, the spaces in-between reality and hyperreality. The question of “How do bodies physically navigate the infrastructure and space of the Internet?” is of direct relevance to this section of poetry. Following the notion that the human being is what Antonio Damasio describes as “an indissociable organism” (1995: xvi), the issue becomes more about the navigation of ‘persons’ through and across technologically-mediated space and time.

As with many texts, this piece of poetic writing borrows from and references a range of texts already written (and yet to be written). It uses

phrases readers may or may not know, but which might nonetheless evoke something in the reader. It paraphrases. It invents. However, the intention in this canto was to leave the reader with a sense of closure without conclusion; allowing for a personal response through imagery described in simple terms, and a peppering of unusual terms. If this canto (and the rest of the poem) were to function as the basis for a hypertextual work, they might lead the reader into a series of additional nodes. Although I am interested more in the connections that others make to the work I make, rather than the sources I imbue it with, I provided a commentary to the poem in the thesis appendix. I saw it as a start to the open hypertext that might evolve from a collaborative reading of the poem.

Notes

- 1 In the Dance Department at the University of Surrey, under Prof. Janet Lansdale.
- 2 The Prolegomenon to a Thesis on 21st Century Dance Writing.
- 3 An Epic Poem, the Spine to a Thesis on Dance and New Technology.

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The Omega Man¹

Canto 1 and Only: First and Last and Always.²

Can you see me?

Where the sky changes from grey to blue, I dance.

I am the child of Orpheus and Eurydice³.

In the creased skin of an elbow joint, I dance.

I am nameless.

When the sea is between ebb and flow, I dance.

I am the orphan son of a poet.

At the last crackle of a bonfire, I dance.

I am not alive⁴ and I am not dead.

In the free fall before crash landing, I dance.

Can you hear me?

When a bulb pops, I dance.

I am the last thing you hear before you fall asleep.

In the vibrating string of a musical instrument, I dance.

My voice is like electricity, silent, violent.

When you can't breathe, I dance.

I am a cascade of falling leaves.

Among the streams of information⁵, I dance.

I am a digital watermark.

When one door closes, and another opens, I dance.

I am asynchronous communication⁶.

Like the worker bee in the hive, I dance.

I am a daemon⁷.

Where the meatspace meets cyberspace⁸, I dance.

An infertile body in a sterile world.

At the edge of reason, I dance.

I am unbreakable code.

In the time between a cry and its echo, I dance.

I am hidden text.

As mote floats in a midnight headlight, I dance.

Can you sense me at all?

In the vacuum of the heart, I dance.

I am the half-rhyme in this line.

Where metaphor lives, I dance.

Ink, black and obsolete⁹.

Underneath a patina of green rust, I dance.

I am pixelated and lo-res.

To the sound of a dissonant chord, I dance.

I am a synecdoche¹⁰.

Where fast becomes slow, I dance¹¹.

I am the result of a synergism.

On the fine line, I dance.

Macabre¹¹ and morphotic¹².

From first to last, I dance¹³.

I am found before the moment of understanding.

Always, alone, I dance.

Notes

1 'The Omega Man': A film (directed by Boris Sagal, 1971) based on Richard Matheson's novel *I Am Legend* (1954; also filmed as *The Last Man on Earth, 1964*). This leads us back to Alpha, and the idea of the Eternal God (see *The Bible* Revelation 1:8 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending")—the most basic reason or meaning; most important part – in Lacan's construction "*Objet petit a*" – the little other, the lost object, the lack, a void (see Lacan, 1977)—the relationship is INVERSED:

Object	O	Ω	Omega	Death
autre	a	œ	alpha	Human Experience/Life

Lacan, J. (1977) *Écrits: A Selection*. Tr. Sheridan, A., London: Tavistock/Routledge.

2 'First and Last and Always': The debut studio album (1985) by The Sisters of Mercy, a UK goth band.

3 'Orpheus and Eurydice': A recent connection: *Orpheus & Eurydice: A Lyric Sequence* by Gregory Orr (Copper Canyon Press, 11 Dec 2012)

How can I celebrate love/ now that I know what it does? So begins this booklength lyric sequence which reinhabits and modernizes the story of Orpheus, the mythic master of the lyre (and father of lyric poetry) and Eurydice, his lover who died and whom Orpheus tried to rescue from Hades.

See also: Cross in his book *Harrison Birtwistle: The Mask of Orpheus* outlines the Myth of Orpheus in the arts, especially in opera and theatre.

[In Birtwistle's opera] Orpheus and Eurydice dance their wedding dance (the first Immortal Dance). [...] This waltz takes on the stylized aspects of an oriental ritual such as might be found, say, in a Noh drama. It is not a passionate love dance. (Cross, 2009: 69)

Cross, J. (2009) *Harrison Birtwistle: The Mask of Orpheus*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Orr, G. (2012) *Orpheus & Eurydice: A Lyric Sequence*. Port Townsend, Washington: Copper Canyon Press.

4 'I am not alive and I am not dead.': "Kevin McLaughlin says: I am not alive and I am not dead. I don't exist, never have existed, and never will exist. Yet here I am." <http://taoism.about.com/bl/2012/12/17/6505.htm>

5 'streams of information': "Information flows electronically, and it also moves in physical packets that stream through Metaman's circulatory system" (Stock, 1993: 264-5); Human beings are also 'information packets'.

Stock, G. (1993) *Metaman: Humans, Machines, and the Birth of a Global Super-organism*. London: Bantam Press.

6 'asynchronous communication': **asynchronous** An adjective describing an operation performed at any time and in the background, independent of other simultaneous processes. In communications, asynchronous messages can be started at any time and are marked with start and stop bits. Telephone communication is synchronous; voicemail is asynchronous. (Hale, 1996: 39)

Hale, C. (ed) (1996) *Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age*. San Francisco: HardWired.

7 'daemon': This could take us to a number of places, from Homer and Plato to Pullman. In computing:

A program that runs continuously and automatically in the background. A daemon might handle email received by a network server or respond to

requests from other computers on the network. From the classical Greek term for 'a supernatural being'. (Hale, 1996: 44)

Hale, C. (ed) (1996) *Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age*. San Francisco: HardWired.

8 'meatspace meets cyberspace': the meatspace is the real world (the realm of the body; muscles=meat); it is where the meat-bodies can actually meet f2f. Meatspace becomes metaspace in a cyber-reconfiguration.

9 'Ink, black and obsolete.': Will Print Books Become Obsolete? <http://avajae.blogspot.ie/2012/02/will-print-books-become-obsolete.html>

10 'synecdoche': Naming the part for the whole, e.g. 'body' for person. Cf. Wittgenstein "A whole cloud of philosophy condensed into a drop of grammar" (PI 222e) and Vygotsky:

Consciousness is reflected in a word as the sun in a drop of water. A word relates to consciousness as a living cell to a whole organism, as an atom relates to the universe. A word is a microcosm of human consciousness. (Vygotsky, 1986: 256)

Vygotsky, L. (1986) *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

11 'dance./ Macabre': play on Danse Macabre: the dance of death; see: Herbermann, C., & Williamson, G. (1908). Dance of Death. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved March 11, 2013 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04617a.htm>

12 'morphotic': mor·pho·tic [mawr-fot-ik] adjective, from: mor·pho·sis [mawr-foh-sis] noun, plural mor·pho·ses [-seez] Biology: the sequence or manner of development or change in an organism or any of its parts. Origin: 1665–75; < Neo-Latin < Greek mórfhōsis, equivalent to morph (oûn) to shape + -ōsis -osis

Connected with, or becoming an integral part of, a living unit or of the morphological framework; as, morphotic, or tissue, proteids. – Foster. [Source: Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913)]

13 'From first to last, I dance':

Without
words I falter
and
fall.

But words can
fail us too.

They are not always
the best way

to say what we

want to
say.

Sometimes you
cannot understand what

I'm saying, or trying to

say—I cannot always find
the right words.

Why is that?

Perhaps I choose not to speak because a quiet death is better.

'Better than what? —After the end,
the termination, there is no better or best. IT IS ALL THE SAME.'



Harrison House: Sacred Proportions

"We dwell in a place when we are at peace in that place."

- Martin Heidegger (1951).

Tania Hammidi

Dance, like architecture, does something to us. It acts upon us, seizes us, awakens and enlivens us at the point of encounter. Whether or not dance and architecture go so far as to free the soul and transport us, as portals, to the living room of the divine, is another matter. Or is it? As artistic mediums, dance and architecture both communicate through touch – touching not only the mind via aesthetics, but also engaging

the corpus as a physical, vibrational entity. Pushing an understanding of this touch as more than mechanical execution or the application of a conceptual or practical exercise, the touch of dance and architecture reaches spiritual dimensions. This essay focuses on Harrison House, a California architectural design project which intentionally integrated consideration of the sacred into its architectural blueprint. Rather

than an academic analysis of the Harrison House, in this essay, I discuss my experiences of the space while taking a Butoh dance class in conversational form. Additionally, the essay moves beyond my observational experiences to a consideration of these feelings of sacred embodiment vis-à-vis the intentions and design choices of the structure developed by the first owner/builder of the Harrison House, U.S. composer/musician Lou Harrison. My keen focus in this essay is to explore how a building can integrate the sacred into its initial architectural design, providing not just peacefulness for the mind, but also an experience of inward focus and spiritual connection for the whole sensate body.

HARRISON HOUSE

Joshua Tree, California is located two hours East of Los Angeles and three hours North of San Diego, in the California Mohave Desert. Largely functioning as a tourist town and site for holistic healing, Joshua Tree has attracted countless talented visual, performing and musical artists seeking an off-the-grid lifestyle, due to its isolated location far from the hustle and bustle of the urban cores. The main economy of Joshua Tree centers around Joshua Tree National Forest, a 790,000 acre forest feature a rare tree, the Yucca Brevifolia (Joshua Tree), which greatly resembles any number of the other-worldly creatures found in Dr. Suess children's books.

Harrison House Music & Arts is a non-profit organization situated in an architectural site located on a small mesa East of the two block downtown village of Joshua Tree, parallel to Highway 62. Eva Soltes, a filmmaker, music producer, and dancer who studied Bharata Natyam with classical teacher T. Balasaraswati, founded *Harrison House Music & Arts* as a sacred site for music and live performing arts. In addition to her making documentary films, Soltes hosts dance and live music performances at the Harrison House and runs a residency program for visiting artists. The main structure which houses *Harrison House Music & Culture* is a straw-bale home completed in 2002 sitting on ½ acre of land, surrounded by mature foliage and a large octagonal dirt stage to the northeast. The home was designed and consecrated by pioneer American composer Lou Harrison, the prolific musician whose career spanned decades and geographies, and who worked with some of the most important dancers, composer, and musicians in the U.S. avant garde, beginning with Charles Ives. Harrison's special gift for Indonesian music fueled years of hybridized non-Western musical exploration and performance. He collaborated with Merce Cunningham, Ives, John Cage, Carol Beals (a student of Martha Graham), Mark Morris and many other dancers and choreographers during his long career.

What drew me to the Harrison House initially was a workshop being offered on-site by the renowned Butoh master teachers Hiroko Tamano and her husband Koichi, both who are said to be among the first to bring Butoh to the United States. I had known Hiroko and her husband through a mutual dancer friend in the Bay Area when they ran Country Station Sushi, a popular sushi bar in the Mission district. I was pleased and happy to join the workshop, to practice Butoh from these important and playful mentors.

While I anticipated the Butoh workshop with excitement, I had no preconception of the dance space we would be occupying to practice. Knowing the Tamano's just a little, I imagined that any rehearsal space would be adequate for their teachings. None of these cursory thoughts prepared me for the overwhelming feeling of understated majesty I was soon to experience when I reached the Harrison House. Upon arrival, stepping into the home, I recognized that I had entered a powerful space. The light coming through a wall-sized East-facing window seemed to gently animate every corner of the structure; time slowed down in this space of beauty. Inside the main room where the dance class was held, I felt neither that I was in someone's living room in a make-shift/appropriated rehearsal space, nor cheated of aesthetic sensibility as one might in a formal dance studio which has compromised windows and ventilation in order to gain a wall of mirrors. In opposition to the rigor of formal spaces, the Harrison studio encouraged focus and a kind of spiritual quietness that I had never before experienced. I completed the workshop – which included many hours practicing movement within the main vaulted room, plus a final performance, and never forgot the Harrison House.

A few years later, I pursued a personal interview with Eva Soltes after seeing her documentary *Lou Harrison: A World of Music* (2011) debut at Castro Theatre in San Francisco. Soltes agreed; so, we met at the Harrison House to talk. I asked Soltes about the Harrison House and what may have inspired in me the feeling of spiritual strength that I had experienced those years before. I mentioned my interest in how architectural spaces become integrated with the sacred. From Soltes' film, I learnt that the 1,000 square foot house was inspired the great Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy. This fact, however, did not explain much more than that an ancient and non-Western tradition lent its principles to the Harrison structure. As we spoke, Soltes shared an interesting thought, "If you build a structure that is empty, then that's what it is" she said.¹ Soltes comment about intentional emptiness, struck me as profound. What did that mean, architecturally? How does one wake up the soul of the built environment? What does it mean to "fill" a design with sacred quietness?

While standing on site, Soltes pointed out that Harrison oriented the house around a vaulted main room 16' at the highest point, surrounded by three equally-sized rooms on the south side. The structure was shaped by rounded corners and windows on the north sides, and a 12' high Mashrabiya window in the main room flanked with Moroccan wooden latticework (ibid). According to the documentary on the composer, Harrison envisioned his building as a "composer's cave" which would function as a giant acoustic instrument.² As a builder myself, the foresight Harrison had about his straw-bale home fascinated me. I understood that he spent his life building many musical instruments, including the Gamelan. But making a house into an acoustic tool? I found that bold. Soltes echoed the brilliance of this concept. She told me that Harrison deployed the tools and strategies of architecture to create the biggest musical instrument he had yet built.³ Soltes also suggested Harrison's success by offering a stunning anecdotal detail, about a comment made by pianist Marino Formenti. Soltes said,

"The Italian pianist Marino Formenti claimed that there has been no greater mirror of music in architecture since the Italian Renaissance than the Harrison House" (ibid).

During our walk and talk around the building and, later, the stage, Soltes reinforced the principle that Lou Harrison's design choices were based on musical proportions founded on non-linear, nor necessarily Western music (ibid). I looked around the building – inside and out. This focus on music struck me – yet again, no expert in musical composition, I could not quite decipher how music could be morphed into architectural space. I began to look more closely. I saw patterns – not only the interior arched windows, about also the octagonal stage Soltes herself had designed. I noticed the curved exterior half-walls, which divided the East-West axes into three equally-sized privacy nooks, outside.

I gazed again at the Moroccan lattice wooden shades and the high clerestory interior windows, arched and evenly stretched across the top of the South-facing wall. It made sense that these would best be understood musically, as "rhythms" organized by a mathematical ordering of not only numerical space, but also visual space. I asked Soltes about this thought as we sat in the main room during our second interview. Soltes affirmed, "Architecture is so much about rhythm and pattern. How do things go together? By harmony and proportions. Place become sacred through a feeling of safety. Safety comes from proportions and shapes, resonating with each other. Like music."

The idea of 'resonation' rang the final bell for me. I recognized that the straw bale material would absorb sound and soften the acoustic harshness of the outside world as it entered the Harrison House, thus

lessening the impact of inconsistent sounds on a laboring, dancing body inside. Yet Soltes' comments drew attention to how light inside the space was brought in for use, but curved through the space (rather than directed in a linear fashion) via rounded window-frames and corners, and through proportional and quiet "interruptions" in the visual "rhythms" of the studio space, vertically, horizontally, and all else. Each mathematical element was conversant with other elements. It seemed that this architectural ability to "hold" one no matter where one sat, stood, danced or walked in the Harrison House, was in part what contributed to the peaceful feeling I experienced while learning Butoh in the space. It was the feeling of being inside a quiet symphony.

The Harrison House's architectural proportions were chosen by a musical composer, whose pleasures and joy were Javanese and other Asian musical forms. Indeed, this passion seemed to have translated into the composer's project of making a giant musical instrument out of a straw bale house in the desert. Harrison House called on different modalities of architecture, rather than on a European rigid structuring of place and site. While on my first encounter I intuited this potency at an embodied level, later in discussion with filmmaker/producer Eva Soltes, I was refreshed to discover how something as cold and dry as math could animate a site, to spiritual proportions. Is it peacefulness what one needs to connect with the deeply divine? In my case, yes, communicated through architecture.

Notes

1 Eva Soltes, personal interview with the author. Joshua Tree, Ca. July 2013

2 *Lou Harrison: A World of Music*. Dir. Eva Soltes. Performance and Media Arts, 2011.

3 Eva Soltes, personal interview with the author. Joshua Tree, Ca. July 2013

Come Crawl Out Your Window, 2012

Rosie Trump

The following is a series of seven still images captured from the short video dance, *Come Crawl Out Your Window* (2012). Directed, choreographed and edited by Rosie Trump with performance by Sarah Brittain, Laura Gutierrez, and Marina Mizelkova.

Come Crawl Out Your Window is a reverie for youth in a time and place that never quite was. Three dancers roll in a bed of ivy, skate across a rooftop plaza, and waltz with a forgotten garden gate--time is an intricate link to space. The relationship between the environment and the dancers is defined by nostalgic absences. Potentiality hangs around every surface, man-made and natural. The different locations featured in the film are not just choreographic backdrops; each locale is a site for corporal discovery, imagination and pleasure.

Filed amid the Neo-Byzantine styled buildings and green spaces of Rice University in Houston, TX, *Come Crawl Out Your Window* was conceived as a direct response to the performative potential the filmmaker/choreographer observed in these spaces. The action and narrative of the film grew from the onsite choreographic exploration of each place. The desire to emphasize the contrasting textures and lines of each location played an important role in inspiring the dance, as well as the cinematography.

Come Crawl Out Your Window begins with a cold opening in which each dancer is filmed alone with their gaze meeting the camera's eye. The dancers are situated in an interior space, the colors muted and the atmosphere introspective and cool. The cold opening establishes a vital counterpoint to the rest of the film, which is filmed in color-rich, exterior spaces. It sets up the viewer for a series of contrasting situations, including remembering/longing, natural space/ architectural space, manicured/wild, verticality/horizontality, and passive/active.

Video Still Frame 1: *The lightness of being pulled along*



The dancers whirl, twist and glide along the concrete terrace. With hands briefly joined, the possibility of connectedness and shared joy between the dancers is emphasized. Tall, narrow windows line the building behind the dancers, the architecture suggesting an other time-ness.

Video Still Frame 2: *Reclined in the ivy*



The camera floats above the dancers so the horizon line in the background is slightly askew. The dancer's attention is pulled downward as her hand skims through the bed of ivy. Her reclining posture reflects the ease and coolness of this green space. However, she is not resting on a manicured lawn; her body sinks below the decorative foliage towards the damp earth below.

Video Still Frame 3: *Three line walkers*



The camera captures the dancers mid-step and documents the moment of weight change from one foot to another. This frame is pregnant with the anticipation of momentum; the glass blocks' vertical trajectory beckons the dancers forward.

Video Still Frame 5: Peering over the edge



The red brick in the background creates a contrasting texture against the blue checks of the dancer's dress and the stark gray of the concrete ledge. Forced perspective makes the ledge appear wider and longer than it actually is, giving it equal visual weight. As the dancer peers forward, the slant of her back completes the triangular composition of this frame.

Video Still Frame 4: *Resting in the ivy*



As one dancer's lower body is cropped out of the lower right of the frame, another dancer's upper body is cropped out of the upper left of the frame. This creates a disjointed asymmetry to a seemingly serene moment. There is a play of light, as shadows are cast onto the ivy bed from the trees looming above.

Video Still Frame 6: Standing before the fall



The dancers wait in a moment of anticipation. In the next instant, their knees will bend and their torsos will drop as they descend backwards into a patch of tall grass. The action of falling occurs in unison.

As the film draws towards the end,
this still frame captures a liminal moment.
The dancer stands center frame, with an ivy-covered
wall to the left and the bars of a rusty iron gate to the right.
She contemplates
her last act—
to
pull
the
gate
closed.



Video Still Frame 7: *Hand on gate, face concealed*

Have Site, Will Travel – Container Architecture and Site-Specific Performance

Melanie Kloetzel

In fall 2012, I presented a dance theater work inside a recycled shipping container on a snowy night in Calgary, Alberta. The piece was one of many that took place in such containers over a twelve-day movement arts festival called the Fluid Festival that has occurred annually in Calgary since 2005. Although this was Calgary's first experience viewing performances and dance films in shipping containers, it was the third time showings had occurred in these particular spaces – the first was during the 2009 Cultural Olympiad that accompanied the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, and the second was during the 2010 Olympics themselves, when the containers were placed across the street from the Olympic flame. After seeing a call for proposals for the Cultural Olympiad, but being frustrated by the complete paucity of venues, Nicole Mion, the curator of the Fluid Festival, and Evann Siebens, a dance filmmaker based in Vancouver, approached architect Robert Duke, industrial designer Keith Doyle, and designer Iain Sinclair to refurbish a number of used shipping containers for performances and presentations. 'containR', as it was called, was born. As the containR website states:

containR is a street installation at the nexus of video, public art and urban design, sitting at the cross roads of mountain and urban culture, art and sports cinema, embracing public art and sustainable design. By using reconditioned shipping containers integrating alternative energy sources, the installation references Vancouver's rich history as a major port as well as a centre for green design.¹

25,000 people saw the initial performances as well as the dance and sport films that took place in the containers. Mion was thrilled at the response and immediately started the onerous journey through city permits and bylaws in order to transport containR to Calgary, her second home and the site of the Fluid Festival, for which she acts as artistic director.

Finally, in 2012, six of the renovated containers traveled to Calgary on semi-trucks and the structures came to rest on a newly established public area along the Bow River. It was touted as a "nomadic gallery caravan camped out on East Village on RiverWalk Plaza at 5th

Street and Confluence Way SE"² for the 2012 Fluid Festival. But one such sighting was not enough for Mion. In 2013, she brought containR back to Calgary again for the Fluid Festival, this time to a site of a recent demolition in the neighborhood of Sunnyside; in fact, with the right combination of luck and support, she hopes to see the "nomadic gallery" appear in Calgary for two more years, 2014 and 2015. Mion's interest in the containers stems from her love of intimacy in performance spaces, as well as the candor in people's reactions to the work; "I love the honesty of audiences as there are clearly moments in various pieces...where people gather or leave.... I think it's a lot like kids playing in a park. You stay as long as you want and engage as you like."³ Clearly, it is a structure that speaks volumes to her, as well as to many others in the architecture field.

But what is this structure? Why the sudden interest in shipping containers as a space for performance? In the literature on container architecture, it is celebrated as a contemporary architectural design that demonstrates the current interest in flexibility, functionality, and practical green solutions. Yet, the shipping container (variously called a conex box, intermodal container, or, most commonly, an ISO container⁴) is certainly not new. The standard container with which we are so familiar appeared in 1956, courtesy of shipping magnate Malcom McLean and engineer Keith Tantlinger; it quickly took off as the global transport of goods increased dramatically in the post-World War II era and it has remained the standard in shipping containers until the present.⁵ But the use of the shipping containers for architectural purposes has only recently reached fad status. As Jure Kotnik, author of *Container Architecture*, explains,

Container architecture witnessed a kind of bottom-up development, into which architects joined only later. The compact and sturdy transport box, which is weather-, fire-, earthquake-resistant and defies all other types of inconveniences, is spatially suggestive to the extent that people first began putting it to various uses themselves. Especially in Third World countries, containers thus spontaneously became shacks, stores and shelters for those who needed them.⁶

In a not-unfamiliar borrowing direction, architects in North America and Europe began to see the benefits of using “upcycled” containers for architectural purposes in the 1990s. The first prototypes of container architecture appeared as mobile dwelling units or emergency housing shelters, with the first “Container City” constructed in east London in 2001. At present, container architecture can be found around the globe, from fancy single-family homes in California to an orphanage in South Africa to India’s National Center for Antarctic and Oceanic Research in Antarctica.⁷ Kotnik finds this popularity unsurprising. As he notes,

The ISO container, a companion of globalization, is a cosmopolitan building block, which makes container architecture at home all around the world...[It is] prefabricated, compact, sturdy, weather-resistant, and can also be mobile or set up only temporarily. Mass production of containers makes this type of architecture affordable [and] environment-friendly – it recycles and reuses the surplus of shipping containers, which results from the trade imbalance with the Far East.⁸

As a cheap modular structure (in 2008 prices ranged from \$1,500 for a used container to \$4,000 for a new one)⁹, the ISO container offers a site that can adapt to any number of uses from a basic shelter to the most high-tech research facility, and a multitude of uses in between. In Mion’s words,

Shipping containers are one of the few things in the world that is exactly the same in all countries....And while they were designed to ship goods and connect communities through commerce, they can also connect communities, ideas, and art, transporting these more intangible aspects of society.¹⁰

Current architectural magazines such as *Dwell*, as well as online architecture websites such as Arch Daily and the Inhabit weblog, swoon over such portability. Manufactured buildings and small mobile structures like the ISO container are the architect’s new darling design. Multiple texts on “prefab homes”, “mobile dwelling units”, and “portable architecture” speak to the fascination with moveable buildings – often coupled with the terms ‘green’ or ‘sustainable’. “Architecture is in motion,” as Gary Brown of the Centre for Architecture and the Liverpool John Moores University

declares.¹¹ Architects can move past the concept of the stationary structure designed for a particular site; instead buildings, and even transportation crates, can be designed for a series of sites with relocation as a sexy new possibility.

But container architecture, and its manifestation in performance situations such as the 2012 Fluid Festival, represents a larger cultural phenomenon. It signifies a globalized culture’s love for mobility. In fact, in academic circles ranging from geography and sociology to literary studies, race theory, and performance studies, the fascination with mobility has grown exponentially in the past decade. Stemming in part from the work of James Clifford, Paul Gilroy, and Marc Augé, among others, scholars such as John Urry, Mimi Sheller, Tim Cresswell, and Caren Kaplan have contributed to what is called the ‘new mobilities paradigm,’ a scholarly take on the importance of movement to contemporary culture, issues of power, and identity.¹² This paradigm examines movement of all types – both of people on the move through immigration, tourism, exile, and diaspora, to name a few, as well as images, messages, and information that are on the move through virtual means – to create a new lens for analysis that does not treat places or people as sedentary or stable beings, but rather as always moving and relating at varying speeds or distances. Of particular significance for our purposes, Sheller and Urry assert that mobility as a lens allows us to perceive the world as a “complex relationality of places and persons connected through performances.”¹³

Even in the area of site-specific performance – a presentation genre that has traditionally been associated with an archaeological delving into singular sites – scholars and practitioners argue for the need to expand our definitions to include mobility. In the larger tomes on site work – Nick Kaye’s *Site-Specific Art*, Mike Pearson’s *Site-Specific Performance*, and Miwon Kwon’s *One Place After Another* – scholars often find themselves arguing for a more fluid understanding of site. Kwon, for example, discusses how site-specificity is “being reconfigured to imply not the permanence and immobility of a work but its impermanence and transience.”¹⁴ And Kaye asserts that for any site work, “the site is mobile, always in a process of appearance or disappearance.”¹⁵ Pearson, after highlighting the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ directly, notes that “[t]here are new kinds of site, more or less stable, within and through which performance might be enacted – and new kinds of (performative) relationship within and through which site might (temporally) materialize.”¹⁶ In the most detailed unpacking of this idea, Fiona Wilkie, a well-known authority in the site performance realm, outlines the usefulness of mobility in her article “Site-Specific Performance and the Mobility Turn”.

Looking at the work of artists Mike Kelley and Mick Douglas, Wilkie argues that site-specific performance, rather than being at odds with mobility, can unearth a new model that “begin[s] to mark out a much broader disciplinary unbinding of site-based practice than has sometimes been imagined.”¹⁷ While site-specific visual art has more traditionally been about integrating with singular architectural or natural entities, Wilkie believes that mobility has always been at the heart of site-specific performance. As she nods to the work of Wrights & Sites, the National Theatre Wales, and Forced Entertainment, among others, she explains that site-based performances have included “transporting its audience to/from the site of performance”, “undertaking a journey as a mode of performance”, and “conceiving of ‘site’ as inherently ‘restless and mobile’.”¹⁸ In Kelley’s work *Mobile Homestead*, which offers a reconstruction of his childhood home that can be transported and placed in different venues, and Douglas’ *tramjatra* and *W-11 Tram*, which involve site performances in and along tramways, Wilkie notes that “[h]ere, mobilities and sites are anything but polarized.”¹⁹

Obviously, much has already been made of dance performance as a beacon of mobility due to its medium as a *movement* art. But site-specific choreographers, while employing the mobility of the dancing body, often seek a less-transient relationship to site, taking great pains and spending many hours exploring the materiality of a singular performance site in order to integrate the memories of the place into their work.²⁰ For example, Heidi Duckler’s *Sleeping with the Ambassador* (2003), which was performed at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, delved deeply into the history of the hotel (the site of Robert Kennedy’s assassination) for its inspiration, while Meredith Monk’s *American Archaeology #1* (1994), which was performed in multiple sites on Roosevelt Island, explored both literally and figuratively the island’s past including the ruins and reality of a smallpox hospital. Similarly, in Tamar Rogoff’s *The Ivey Project* (1994), which was performed in a forest in Belarus, she examined the site of a specific mass grave where the Nazis murdered and buried most of the Jews in the town of Ivey in 1942.²¹ However, even as many site choreographers attempt to sink deep into the cultural layers of *place* to inspire their work, others turn to Michel de Certeau’s model of *space*, to expand their performance focus. For de Certeau, place symbolizes restriction and immobility, while space connotes the opportunity of motion; as he comments, ‘*space is a practiced place*,’²² where practice – including the physical activities and experiences performed by human bodies – serves to unlock the fetters of place. Particularly symbolic of these emancipatory practices, a number of site choreographers – Joanna Haigood, Jo Kreiter, and Sally Jacques

to name a few – have turned to aerial work as a potent demonstration of the freedom associated with space.²³ Yet, by and large, even these choreographers’ work typically appears on fixed, often historically-loaded, structures.²⁴

In the past two decades, however, certain site choreographers have shown an interest in the possibilities of mobile sites. Eiko & Koma, for example, started toying with mobile sites back in the 1990s. In their work *Caravan Project* (1999), Eiko and Koma commissioned the construction of an 8’x14’ trailer that was pulled from town to town for performances. This trailer included doors on all four sides that could open for an in-the-round experience for audiences,

Like a library truck that delivers books to rural areas, or like an old Japanese bicycle man who delivers illustrated stories, we deliver our art.... On the day of the performance, we drive up, unhitch the trailer from our Jeep, connect to electricity supplied by the host presenter, adjust the lights and the set, and we are ready. We then perform under the night sky for 100 or so people who may have assembled for the event or who just happen by. The site can be anywhere the Jeep can go – a public park, a river bank, a street, a mall parking lot, a beach, a college green, the garden at a senior centre, or even someone’s backyard.²⁵

Ann Carlson, another well-known site artist, also has experimented with mobile performance models. Carlson describes one effort as a protest piece that took place during the first Gulf War, where she performed on a large American flag; “It could be done anywhere as long as I could lay a flag down.”²⁶ Another of her works was performed on the inherently mobile site of the back of a horse; even some of her pieces that she considers highly site-specific or “rooted” to a particular place, such as *Geyser Land* (2003)²⁷ – a piece that focused on an area of land between Livingston and Bozeman, Montana – had mobility at the very heart of the piece as it took place on a moving train.

My own recent experiences with site works have brought mobility to the fore. In a site film work, *The Sanitastics*, which was created in the Calgary Skyway system, the notion of travel became the nexus of the work. In the film, four surveillance superheroes trek through the Skyway system, a series of pedestrian bridges suspended over busy city streets, as they attempt to eradicate the contamination that has been mysteriously introduced to the system. Using powerful, angular,

travelling movement, cleaning metaphors, and film techniques that vault the plot into the surreal, *The Sanitastics*, as I noted in the press release, “offers a site-specific adventure of the endlessly electrifying non-place.” Disturbed by the overly clean and surveilled environment of the Skyway, which was designed to allow for travel from building to building without coming into contact with the vagaries of the natural world, I turned to Marc Augé’s theories regarding the *non-place* to help me understand the particular site as a problematic space for site-specific inquiry. For Augé, *non-place* is the architectural realization of supermodernity: non-places – airports, shopping malls, hotels, and superhighways – are sites through which the main mode of experience is travel.²⁸ As I have noted elsewhere, *The Sanitastics* ended up questioning the strictures of the non-place,

Both on-screen and off, we upset the balance of the clean, orderly site that exists for the white-collar personnel to sustain their consumer culture throughout the day.... And, in the end, we questioned the innocence of our culture’s urban planning and how it circumscribes our daily lives.²⁹



The superheroes on the hunt: Deanna Witwer with Caileen Bennett, Naomi Brand, and Kirsten Wiren in The Sanitastics.

Yet, while this itinerant creation made me chafe at the implications inherent in the non-place, I can’t help returning to the possibilities of mobility. After all, as performers, as movers, immobility has difficult connotations, and certain kinds of attachment to material places do not always offer the possibility of critique. Plus, as even the most committed site-specific artist will tell you, it is sometimes challenging to spend long periods of time creating for a singular site, knowing that at the end of a short run, there is no remount in sight.³⁰ In other

words, engaging with mobility as a paradigm is highly tempting in order to extend the life of a performance work.

In light of this desire for touring viability, in 2012 I began to transition a work that I made for the stage into a site work, but a site work that had touring at its roots.³¹ This work, a duet entitled *Dwindling Dispute TKO*, is structured as a comedic and interactive boxing match of manners performed on an 8’x8’ square of artificial turf that can be unrolled and placed in any non-grassy public space. The piece draws from the Red Queen/White Queen dialogue from *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll, and its placement on the scratchy artificial turf sparks amusing recollections of regal ribbon-cuttings, sporting events, and dog lawns. With outrageous headgear and a nonsensical script, the queens, portrayed by *kloetzel&co.* members Naomi Brand and myself, enact a game of ridiculous mannerisms and contested hierarchy in short ‘acts’ that employ subtle differences and new spatial angles to make audiences question the consistency of each situation. Although I had originally intended the duet for public (presumably outdoor) spaces where audiences could gather around us on four sides, I jumped at the chance to present the piece as a work-in-progress at the 2012 Fluid Festival in containR. So, with almost no on-site preparation, we unrolled our turf inside one of the shipping containers and performed the piece for a large group of spectators that crowded in from the two open ends of the container. Quickly adapting to the incredibly narrow confines of the container, the metallic echoing of our spoken text, and the biting cold of the snowy night that insinuated itself into the non-insulated space, we garnered an enthusiastic reception, but discovered a level of connection to the site that was minimal at best (a situation that admittedly I found disappointing after my previous site work endeavors).



Naomi Brand and Melanie Kloetzel ‘on-stage’ on the artificial turf in Dwindling Dispute TKO.

But this was not the situation of every work presented in the containers during the festival. Other works had significantly more time on site and found a deeper link to these recycled structures. In the most successful of these, Kim Cooper's *Boombbox*, dancers pounded on metal walls with wooden drumsticks or rendezvoused with one another and the audience in direct, and often seductive, interactions in tight spaces. In this contemporary jazz work for *Decidedly Jazz Danceworks*, dancers also moved between the six containers inviting the audience to journey as they would through the spaces. Other works, such as Maya Lewandowsky's *Inter-action*, made use of the compact site to inundate the audience with live vocals, rhythmic slams against the walls, and light projections. For Kate Nankervis' *Only Place*, the container was treated as an intimate room, a woman's personal space where her imagination could roam; for Pamela Tzeng, the container inspired a humorous work about boxes and their contents. While these works each commented on what the shipping structures might contain or signify, the only work that directly referenced the concept of mobility was Cooper's traveling *Boombbox*

Yet, in the end, even in *Boombbox*, any "site-specific" connection to the containers remained cursory. Unlike Wilkie's description of *W-11 Tram* or *Mobile Homestead*, the choreographers showcased in containR chose to use the containers as background for thematic angles that often had little association with the portable structures. While the box or intimate space references of certain works demonstrated clear links to the physicality of the containers, few of the works accessed deeper references to the place of ISO containers and/or container architecture in our culture; more specifically, as Wilkie notes, the works did not "enact conceptions of place as fundamentally tied up with questions of mobility."³² Although this was not by any means a stated goal of the festival, I found myself wondering whether a larger discussion about issues of international trade, material goods, and exchange, as well as greater creation/connection time on-site, would allow for work that could venture further into the realm of site-specific. Or do these prefabricated, monotonous, and seemingly "non-specific" boxes inherently resist such a connection? Will efforts toward the site-specific merely slip off of these mobile shells as they head out of town in pursuit of their next rendezvous? At the close of my interactions with containR, and after further research into the meaning and significance of ISO containers, I must admit that I am still enticed by what the containers may be able to offer the site artist. After all, these recycled spaces reveal a great deal about our current interest in transport, materiality, efficiency, and compatibility in a globalizing world, and such themes could provide rich fodder for future site works.

In fall 2013, containR returned to Calgary for another edition. In this case, the containers were placed at a site along the C-Train line in Calgary's neighborhood of Sunnyside and there they will remain for a more extended stay of two years. The site itself, one that recently experienced the destruction of a warehouse space, is a semblance of a blank slate; it is a place where a city obsessed with newness has attempted to wipe clean a past in the interest of new development. The site sits empty, uncertain of its future and ready for a creative spark to animate it. containR, as presented by the Fluid Festival, aims to do just that, and this year artists will once again attempt to bring site-based works to life in the modular, durable, mass-produced belly of a recycled shipping container. Hopefully this year it won't snow...

Notes

- 1 "containR: A Convergence of Art, Ideas and Technology," accessed April 26, 2013, <http://www.containr.com/>.
- 2 "containR Calgary," accessed on April 27, 2013, <http://www.springboard-performance.com/archives/gallery/containr>.
- 3 Nicole Mion, email message to author, April 27, 2013.
- 4 ISO stands for International Organization for Standardization; it is an organization based in Geneva with representatives from nations around the world to promote worldwide proprietary, industrial and commercial standards.
- 5 The history of the ISO container is clearly quite detailed, and I am unable to dedicate space to it here. A good source for information is Marc Levinson, *The Box: how the shipping container made the world smaller and the world economy bigger* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). A key point to consider, however, is the role that the ISO container played in the expansion of trade. Due to the fact that standardized containers could be directly loaded from ship to semi-truck, the loading process grew faster and cheaper and goods would arrive with less damage. As Levinson states on p. 276-7, "the logic of shipping freight in containers was so compelling, the cost savings so enormous, that the container took the world by storm." This boon for trade, in cooperation with the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that later transitioned into the World Trade Organization in 1995, led the gross world trade (nominal GWP) to rise significantly from \$4,081 billion in 1950 to \$71,830 billion in 2012, according to the CIA World Factbook. As evidence of the crucial role the ISO container played in this, Levinson states on p. 277 that in the year 2006, fifty years after the first containers were employed for shipping, 300 million 20-foot containers traveled across the oceans, and 26% of those originated in China.
- 6 Jure Kotnik, *Container Architecture* (Barcelona: Links International, 2008), 16.

- 7 While the bulk of container projects still come to fruition in North America and Europe as everything from museums to offices, schools to passenger terminals, container architecture projects now appear on all continents and in venues from the urban to the rural, including as student housing at Tamale University in Ghana, an apartment complex in Detroit, a single-family home in Bangalore, beach huts in New Zealand, a retail and living center in Beijing, vacation homes outside of Seattle, prison cells at Van Diemen's Land in Australia, an organic farm outside of Shanghai, a music festival venue in Rio de Janeiro, a temporary school in Slovenia, and many more. See Kotnik's text as well as the websites: <http://inhabitat.com/tag/shipping-container-architecture/> (accessed on September 5, 2013) or <http://firmitas.org> (accessed on September 5, 2013).
- 8 Kotnik, *Container Architecture*, 10. Kotnik estimates that in 2008 the number of abandoned containers was as much as 700,000 at ports in the USA due to the fact that it is often more economical to purchase a new container in China than ship one back from the West for refilling. Understandably, this creates a significant environmental threat, one drive for reusing the containers for architectural purposes (Kotnik, p. 16-17).
- 9 Kotnik, *Container Architecture*, 14.
- 10 Nicole Mion, email message to author, April 27, 2013.
- 11 Gary Brown, "Freedom and Transience of Space (Techno-nomads and transformers)," in *Transportable Environments 2*, ed. Robert Kronenburg (London: Spon Press, 2003), 3.
- 12 See Mimi Sheller and John Urry, "The New Mobilities Paradigm," *Environment and Planning A* 38, no. 2 (2006): 207 – 26; Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 2006); and Caren Kaplan, *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996). Sheller and Urry argue that this paradigm has applicability for people and places across the globe and in varied circumstances; as they state on p. 207, "diverse yet intersecting mobilities have many consequences for different peoples and places that are located in the fast and slow lanes across the globe. There are new places and technologies that enhance the mobility of some peoples and places and heighten the immobility of others, especially as they try to cross borders."
- 13 Sheller and Urry, "The New Mobilities Paradigm," 214.
- 14 Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 4.
- 15 Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art* (London: Routledge, 2000), 96.
- 16 Mike Pearson, *Site-Specific Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 14.
- 17 Fiona Wilkie, "Site-Specific Performance and the Mobility Turn," *Contemporary Theatre Review* 22, No. 2 (May 2012): 212.
- 18 Wilkie, "Site-Specific Performance and the Mobility Turn," 208.
- 19 Wilkie, "Site-Specific Performance and the Mobility Turn," 209.
- 20 See the first section, "Excavating Place," in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces* eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009), 25-118.
- 21 See chapters on Tamar Rogoff, Meredith Monk, and Heidi Duckler, in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces*, eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009).
- 22 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 117. Author's emphasis.
- 23 For more on concepts of site-specific dance and issues of space and place, see Melanie Kloetzel, "Site-Specific Dance in a Corporate Landscape," *New Theatre Quarterly* 26, No. 2 (May 2010): 133 – 44.
- 24 Joanna Haigood, for example, has rappelled off of San Francisco's Clock Tower and the Senator Hotel, both historical icons in the city, while Jo Kreiter has focused on less iconic structures, like fire escapes in an alley or on a billboard; Sally Jacques' work may be seen in Austin, TX on everything from a very typical Radisson Hotel to the highly symbolic federal buildings. See chapters on Joanna Haigood, Sally Jacques, and Jo Kreiter in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces*, eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009).
- 25 Eiko Otake, "Feeling Wing, Feeling Gaze," in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces*, eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009), 192-3.
- 26 Ann Carlson, "An Interview," in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces*, eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009), 107.
- 27 Carlson, "An Interview," 107.
- 28 Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (London: Verso, 1995), 84-6, 94-8.
- 29 Kloetzel, "Site-Specific Dance in a Corporate Landscape," 142.
- 30 As Stephan Koplowitz, a site artist now based in Los Angeles, has explained regarding his interest in site-adaptive work, "these days I'm more interested in site-adaptive as opposed to one-of-a-kind site-specific work. The reason is that site-specific works generally have three or four performances if I'm lucky.... So at this point in my life I'm interested in site-adaptive works because I'm hopeful that they will be able to travel, they will have more of an artistic life, and they can continue to have an impact." Stephan Koplowitz, "An Interview", in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces*, eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009), 66. While artists in different cultures and eras may have differing views on and/or goals regarding a work's ephemerality, site-specific artists often both celebrate and lament this characteristic of site work as demonstrated by Koplowitz. But Eiko Otake, a choreographer from Japan now living in New

York, is drawn to site-adaptive work for a different reason than Koplowitz. In her Butoh-focused site work for *Eiko&Koma*, Otake wants to discover a certain commonality between sites that can transmit to audiences. For her touring site-adaptive work *River*, for example, she notes that “One reason that we do not focus on a site’s historical events is because we look for some kind of commonality between the places we perform; we focus on the primal elements... [W]hat we like to bring to the audience is the very essence of the river; we show what connects one river to another river – water that runs.” Eiko Otake, “An Interview”, in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces*, eds, Melanie Kloetzel and Carolyn Pavlik (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2009), 183.

31 Note that I veer from using the term ‘site-specific’ to describe such a work; a more accurate category may be ‘reframed work’ as Koplowitz might call it (Koplowitz, “An Interview”, 74) or ‘site-sympathetic’ as Fiona Wilkie has described (Fiona Wilkie, “Mapping the Terrain”, *New Theatre Quarterly*, 18, Issue 02 [May 2002]: 150). For current purposes and for simplicity, I am choosing to place the work in the more generic category ‘site work’; for not only is it not in a theatre, but it is site-sensitive due to the fact that I do provide a framework for presenters regarding the specificities required for the site, and we do focus on the particular site of the artificial turf.

32 Wilkie, “Site-Specific Performance and the Mobility Turn,” 212.

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Contributors

Deveril comes from a broad background in performance and experimental video. He has worked with performance companies such as Stacked Wonky and Dead Earnest; made dance films with Litza Bixler; taught filmmaking for Cineclub; and made music promos for Alexa De Strange. His doctoral thesis while at University of Surrey was a poetic investigation of the relationships between dance and writing, textuality and technology, anti-philosophy and autobiography. As an independent researcher, Deveril continues to teach and supervise at a variety of levels across cultural and media studies.

Tania Hammidi is an educator, writer, and performer with a Ph.D. in Critical Dance Studies from UC Riverside (December 2011), with regular publications in *Curve*, *Bitch*, and *ITCH* magazines. Her dissertation *Dress, Dance, Desire: Statecraft and the Dressed, Dancing Body* focused on masculinities and the role(s) of costume in contemporary queer/drag performance. Tania has been running a live performance & fashion runway showcase called Queerture: Queer + Couture since 2005. Tania was voted one of the “Top 25 Most Significant Queer Women of 2011” by Velvet Park: Dyke Culture in Bloom. Tania is a visiting faculty member at the California College of Art and the San Francisco Art Institute, where she teaches courses in studio practice and queer/feminist theory.

Marisa C. Hayes is a dance artist and scholar based in France. A former student of Kazuo Ohno, her areas of research and practice include Butoh, dance-theatre, improvisation, and screendance. She is the founding director of the International Video Dance Festival of Burgundy, France’s annual screendance platform and serves as Cultural Ambassador to Hong Kong. Marisa regularly contributes to research journals and books on dance history and screendance, including publications by Intellect Press, Oxford University Press, and the French National Dance Biennale. She and her collaborators work under the name Body Cinéma and are currently in residence at the National Opera House in Vietnam.

Melanie Kloetzel is the artistic director of kloetzel&co., a dance theatre company founded in New York and now based in Calgary. For the past sixteen years, kloetzel&co., has presented theatre works, site-specific performances, and dance films across three continents. Kloetzel is currently Associate Professor of Dance at the University of Calgary and her anthology *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces* is available from the University Press of Florida.

Anna Marie Shogren is a native Minneapolisian cum Brooklyn based dancer/choreographer/ artist. Her work has been seen in New York, Brooklyn, and Minneapolis at Danspace, DNA, Gowanus Ballroom, Movement Research at Judson Church, AUNTS, Catch!, Dixon Place, Walker Art Center, Southern Theater, and the Bryant Lake Bowl Theater. Her installation work has been shown at the Center for Contemporary Art, Sacramento; the Thomas Hunter Project Space at Hunter College; Loft 594; and the Flux Factory, and elsewhere. She dances with the Body Cartography Project, Yanira Castro, and Cynthia Stevens. She has also performed with choreographers Faye Driscoll, Megan Byrne, Morgan Thorson, Karen Sherman, Justin Jones, Laurie Van Wieren, Chris Schlichting, and others. Shogren studied at the University of Minnesota where she received a BFA in dance and a minor in art, graduating in 2005. She was voted CityPages (Minneapolis) 2008 Dancer of the Year. She works with the Brooklyn based art collective, Non Solo. annamarieshogren.tumblr.com

Michelle T. Summers is a Ph.D. candidate in critical dance studies at the University of California, Riverside. Her dissertation *The Forbidden Body: Dancing Christian from Ruth St. Denis to Pole Dancing for Jesus* explores the cultural politics of Christian sacred dance in the United States since the mid-20th. In addition to research grants received from the Theta Foundation, BYPED, and the California Center for Cultural Innovation. She has presented her work at the American Academy of Religion, Society of Dance History Scholars, and Congress on Research in Dance Annual Conferences. Summers is also an active dance practitioner, teacher, and choreographer. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Texas Christian University and Camelot Academy, and her choreography has been presented at the San Diego Dance on the Edge Festival, the Barefoot Brigade Festival, and Dance New Amsterdam. Summers is currently an AAUW American fellow.

Rosie Trump is a dance choreographer, filmmaker, and the artistic director of Rosie Trump | With or Without Dance, a pick up company with a hybrid practice in dance and video media. Trump’s work stems from an interest in representations of femininity, domesticity, identity and intimacy. Her films have been presented by Dance New Amsterdam, Dance Camera West, Motion Captured, Dances Made to Order and Anatomy Riot. She is the founder and curator of the annual Third Coast Dance Film Festival. Trump is an Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Nevada, Reno. www.rosietrump.org

Alexis A Weisbrod received her BFA from University of Minnesota and her Ph.D in Critical Dance Studies from UC Riverside. A former competitive dancer, competitive dance instructor, and competition director, her research focuses on the role of Competition Dance in the United States, both as a site of new dance production in the 21st century as well as a means for packaging American dance for export. Currently, Alexis is on faculty at Mt. San Jacinto College as well as Co-Owner and Manager of Alias Movement Center.

Ying Zhu is an Assistant Professor of Dance in the School of Theatre and Dance and Affiliate Assistant Professor in the Department of Humanities and Cultural Studies at the University of South Florida. She holds a Ph.D. in Critical Dance Studies from UC Riverside. Her scholarly interests converge at the intersection of bodies, space, architecture, and memory. At present, she is at work on a book manuscript using the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as case study to consider the body, as a complicating factor, in processes of national, collective memorialization. As a dancer, Ying worked with Ann Carlson; Maedée Duprès, a founder of London's X6 Collective; KC Chun-Manning of Fresh Blood; and Evolving Doors Dance (Boulder/Denver, Colorado).

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Tilden Russell (Professor of Music, Southern Connecticut State University) *Introduction* (vol. I) & *The Compleat Dancing Master: A Translation of Gottfried Taubert's Rechtschaffener Tantzmeister (1717)* (vol. II) (Peter Lang, 2012)

2013 Gertrude Lippincott Award

Anurima Banerji (UCLA) "Dance and the Distributed Body: Odissi, Ritual Practice, and Mahari Performance" in *About Performance* 11 (pp. 7–39).

J. Lorenzo Perillo (UCLA) "If I was not in prison, I would not be famous": Discipline, Choreography, and Mimicry in the Philippines" in *Theatre Journal* 63 (pp. 607–621)

2013 Selma Jeanne Cohen Award

Rachel Carrico (University of California, Riverside) for her essay: "On the Street and in the Studio: Decentering and Recentering Dance in the New Orleans Second Line"

Sinibaldo De Rosa (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et Danse de Paris) for his essay: "Samah: Kardeşlik Töreni — A Dynamic Bodily Archive For The Alevi Semah"

Mique'l Dangeli (University of British Columbia, Canada) for her essay: "Dancing Our Politics: Contemporary Issues in Northwest Coast First Nations Dance"

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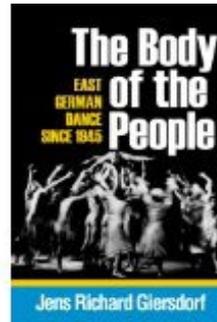
Anaïs Sékiné (Université de Montréal) for her paper: "Cultural Appropriations and the Politics of Joy: a study of Lindy hop in Montreal swing dance"

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The Editorial Board of the Society of Dance History Scholars is actively seeking submissions of manuscripts for its monograph series *Studies in Dance History*.

Because the society defines dance history in the broadest possible terms, the board encourages submission of manuscripts on a wide range of topics. Submissions & inquiries may be sent at any time to Sarah Davies Cordova, Chair, Editorial Board: cordovas@uwm.edu

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(For details please consult: <https://sdhs.org/conversations-call-for-contributions-network-of-pointes>)

Deadline for submissions: May 15, 2014. Please forward inquiries and submissions to Kathrina Farrugia (kfarrugia@rad.org.uk) and Jill Nunes Jensen (jnunes@lmu.edu).

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Joint conference with CORD

Writing Dancing/Dancing Writing,

University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA.

The Society of Dance History Scholars is partnering with the Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) for our 38th annual conference

“Writing Dancing/Dancing Writing” which will be hosted by the University of Iowa, in Iowa City, a city designated as a UNESCO City of Literature.

June 4–7, 2015

Joint conference with CORD

Cut and Paste: Dance Advocacy in the Age of Austerity, Athens, Greece.

The Society of Dance History Scholars is delighted to be partnering with the Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) for our 39th annual conference “Cut and Paste: Dance Advocacy in the Age of Austerity” in Athens, Greece.

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