

The Dorsal fin of Choreography

Writing performs - Notation and Spectatorship

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May 2012

Discursive Practice, ArtEZ Master in Choreography

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Preface

Ground for incongruous juxtaposition

What is it impossible to think?

I invite incongruous juxtaposition in the research process as a way to challenge the limitation of our system of thought. The enumeration of things generates links that are able to carry us beyond the impossible¹ (Foucault, 1966/2002, p. xvii). For this research, I invented a *ground* for links and transversal relations to happen. The *ground* is like a table, the surface on which objects encounters, and like the 'tabula, that enables thought to operate upon the entities of our world, [...] the table upon which, since the beginning of time, language has intersected space' (Foucault, 1966/2002, p. xix). The word *ground* holds the added value of a possible fertility for the un-thought or the unthinkable.

A prism-lens, Matryoshka dolls, some slime, and a Magic paper form the metaphorical *ground* of this research that relates to practice and theory of performance.

The prism-lens is a toy that simulates what one could see through the eye of a fly. It modifies the visual experience of space by multiplying perspectives. Other ways to multiply perspective are proposed by Murakami in his novel 'After Dark': 'our viewpoint takes the form of a midair camera [...] our angles change at intervals as regular as the blinking of an eye'² (Murakami, 2004, p. 10). In the frame of the research, and particularly in practical experiments, it manifests through the conduction of attention: mentally placing viewpoints inside or outside of oneself. For instance, the *ri-ken-no-ken* described by Yoshi Oida consists of an 'out of the body vision': 'when you play on stage, you must observe what you are doing from an outside eye'³. I use conductions of attention in the practice of *double-concentration* where one is brought to the awareness and attention to two opposite directions at the same time. The prism lens also resonates with spectatorship, one core interest of this research. The lens evokes vision; but a vision of a different kind, nurtured by

a curiosity for its own edges, a vision from the corners of the eyes, or from the back.

The Matryoshka dolls appear closed and polished, but reveal, like onions, multiple layers of skin. An outline is repeated and transformed (size, details of the drawing, colours). In this research, it evokes notions of appearance, layers and reiteration.

The slime is a material that is used to make gelatinous fluorescent and sticky toys. It combines fluid-like and solid-like properties and it is transformable. In practical movement experiments, it inspires the notion of latency, of constant movement and vibration. It connects with the action of breathing: a constant vibration, there, almost invisible. And although the movement of the slime is not obvious, it spreads and flattens on the table it has been laid on. It moves according to its surrounding; it responds to environmental cues. An interesting scientific experiment with slime shows how such response to the environment can complexify our thought of the division between the mind and the environment: a small inanimate drop of oil is deposited at the entrance of a maze, and finds its way towards the exit thanks to chemical reaction to the surrounding (Barras, 2008). The drop of oil appears 'intelligent'!

Magician Alexander Adrion invented the Magic paper that is the fourth and last object of this research's *ground*. It is a sculpture of paper with repetitive lines of folds. It can be shaped into a hat, a candy, an accordion, a fan etc. As one encounters the Magic paper, vision and touch perform together with it to operate folds in all possible ways. With regards to this research's interests, this object relates to the invitation to observe, look, appreciate a shape, and at the same time act and engage with it. It resonates with a consideration of spectatorship beyond the dichotomy of active and passive spectators.

Between the prism-lens, the Matryoshka doll, the Magic Paper and the slime, the link to be underlined is change: of perspective, of layer, and of form. Like incongruous juxtaposition, change aims to challenge our limitation of thought, and to move towards the un-programmable. This research is motivated by such a drive for change in particular for change in how we relate to each others, communicate with one another. The *ground* of incongruous juxtaposition was the soil for the emergence of the lexicon of this research, bringing together its keywords, key notions such as Dorsality, Choreography, Writing (in Print), Notation (concept of Double-Concentration), and Spectatorship (the Body of the Big Spectator). This thesis is the stage for the later lexicon to perform. Throughout the time of the research, the *ground* also allowed the growth of lexicon for the performance *The Dorsal Chance* (2011) and the book-performance *Sync* (2012) that initiated the project *Twist in the body of the Big Spectator*.

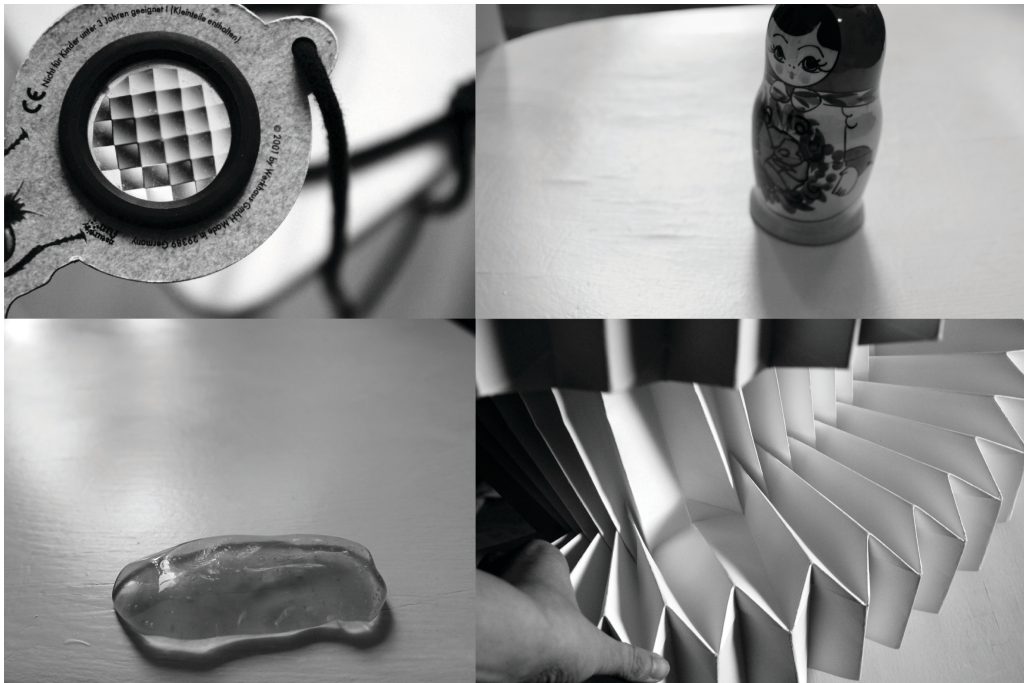


Figure 0.1: objects forming the metaphorical *ground* of this research

Lexicon

Dorsal turn

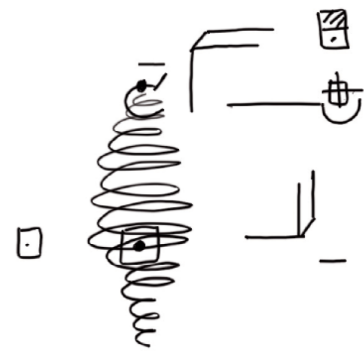
Out of a sensation at my back I turn my upper body. A spiral travels from my feet to my neck and head. Aversion? Projection? Immersion? 'glraffe, fixus' (Amir)

Dorsal turn



FISH/DORSAL FIN breathing x double-concentration

I have a bubble in my lower pelvis. It travels around from the inside, side to side, up to down, with a bouncy energy that spirals and leads to shifts of weight. The bubble swims from in to out, out to in. Outside it is not a bubble anymore but particles of air. I need to absorb them again through my mouth or skin. At the meantime, the top of my head points to an external spot. With movements in my neck, I rotate according to the axis given by the point in relation to me.



Print

I visualize the silicone's mould of a person passing through doorway (detailed in glossary). My whole body is caught by the mould. My skin touches it. Through tensions, I expand my envelope. I inhale. I find myself on the edge of my balance. I bring my attention to the state in which the print guides me, vulnerable. I suspend time as a hyphen between the front and the back. 'Living sculpture, tutto tondo, non finito' (Fabritia) 'Paste. Glue. Attached. Clone. Forms. Body, Character, scene, redone, caught.' (A) 'Silicone shape' (Ines)

Print on place



Print forward



Print backward



Levitating print

I inhale once more in the print and I bring my posture up, on my toes, I continue the levitation of the print through a jump of my organs.



TO MY NEIGHBOUR A quick sliding gaze. I send furtive looks at my neighbour.

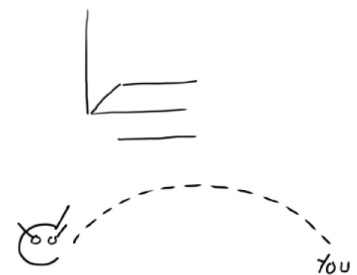


Figure 0.2: collage of keywords (mini-scores) from *The Dorsal Chance* (2011) and *Sync* (2012)

Notes

¹In his preface of 'The Order of Things' Michel Foucault gives the example of a Chinese encyclopedia where types of animals are enumerated according to an alphabetical list (a. belonging to the Emperor, b. embalmed, c. tame, etc.). He asserts that 'what transgresses the boundaries of all imagination, of all possible thought, is simply that alphabetical series (a, b, c, d) which links each of those categories to all the others' (Foucault, 1966/2002, p. xvii)

²In the novel 'After dark' (2004), Haruki Murakami enumerates in a very cinematographic way possible viewpoints that the mobile eye of the reader - his imagination - could adopt. (Murakami, 2004)

³Yoshi Oïda presents the *ri-ken-no-ken* ('out of the body vision') as a way to experience the shared world with an audience. (Oïda and Marshall, 2007, p. 98) (2007: 98).

Introduction

'Dyed pink and doped with acid, the small, inanimate drop of oil is deposited at the entrance to the maze, and immediately sets off towards the exit. A few minutes later, it emerges at the other end' (Barras, 2008). The simple oil droplet, little pink blob, navigates through the complex maze. 'It makes decisions. It goes left along the wrong path, decides there's something fishy with that and so it reverses', writes Bartosz Grzybowski, chemist in charge of the experiment. If it succeeds in such achievement, it is thanks to its alertness to its environment. At the exit of the labyrinth, a gel generates a difference in pH and affects opposite sides of the droplet unequally; the back of the droplet is less acid than the front. Thanks to this front/back tension, the pink blob moves towards the exit (Barras, 2008). In response to its chemical surrounding, it deviates from the constraints of the maze, it returns, turns back and moves around limitations, heading towards another kind of space. The interest of this experiment, in relation to what motivate this research, resides in the turns within the complex context of the maze. Let the artists and spectators of performance be as alert as this pink blob and adopt – borrowing the words of prof. Rosi Braidotti – 'the careful nonchalance of the encounter'⁴. Become the wanderer who turns to respect the complexity of our time.

The maze we currently (2011-2012-) find ourselves in, is marked by political economical crisis among the world of capitalism, revolutions in the Arab world, devastating natural-human catastrophe. With the civil war in Libya and revolts in Tunisia, the exoskeleton of Europe dissolved and a rise of migration takes place. Politics of austerity, cynicism and populism keep rising in Europe. A drive for change is palpable. Attentive to this context and to the role of communication into movements of change, I wish to reflect upon modalities of communication and norms of relation within performance. I hope to contribute, from the microcosm of my choreographic practice, to wider conversations that determine the society we live in, shape our path inside the maze and at the same time design the maze. I wish to propose ways, at my own scale, to counter the reactive closure to the neighbors. In countries of the spring's revolutions – now processing transition – cultural

practices increasingly turn to the other. With regards to performance arts, one observes a growth of participative works: 'it is not the time to take power over people but to give power to people' tells Christophe Haleb (choreographer) to the magazine *Mouvement* that investigates on current artistic mutations in Tunisia (Kahn, 2011).

The research *The Dorsal Fin of Choreography, Writing performs: Notation and Spectatorship* aims to re-think social norms between actors of choreography (makers, performers, spectators) by looking into an old 'friend': Writing. As a choreographer, my interest for writing scores developed from the experience I would undergo as a reader. Reading a book, it strikes me how unique can the relation to time be (time can stretch or reverse), and how are my thoughts moving with the book. Words have impact on my body: I sense the suspension of a slowed fall, the wind over my skin. A book can trigger an imaginary world that is very close to reality. In first encounters with scores, I realized I could sense the spatial organization, as if the score performed through me. It made me to participate as a reader in the interesting way of both acting and witnessing the performance. Moreover, I could understand the way of thinking of the writer: it was a private privileged meeting. When I heard that I could be taken by a living-book for the one-to-one performance by Mette Edvardsen *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* in Amsterdam, I immediately seized the opportunity⁵. I reserved a time-slot to have the privilege to encounter a living-book. We had a rendezvous. Arrived at the Pentohuis (old Amsterdam's library), I looked around and asked at the reception where was the book I should meet? 'I think she is upstairs' said the employee, 'I will go and tell her you are here'. A couple of minute later, *Answered Prayers* by Truman Capote welcomed me and suggested to follow her. We climbed the stairs and choose together two armchairs side by side facing the window. The living-book looked at me and told me with a soft voice: 'Hello, I am *Answered Prayers*, written by Truman Capote in 1958'. She started to introduce her author, and quickly decided to give me some time to take off my coat and put myself at ease. The performance had begun, and somehow it felt there had been no beginning. With excitement generated by this situation of encounter with a book/performer, and by the lovely mind twist that it offered, I made myself ready and asked her to continue. Here we started. The book was opened and read itself. I was spectator, and first watched her thinking, remembering, reciting. A little nervous, while reciting pages with a monotonous tone, her fingers danced with each others. Her gaze was lost in the foreground. She looked at me from the corner of her eyes. The flux of words, quick and heavy, in difficult English for my french ears, required concentration. It progressively made me to also look through this window and at the same time address to her at my side. It went on for 30

minutes, continuous recitation from her, multiple modes of attention from me. I lost track of time, at what page was I? I sometimes paid attention to the content of the book, sometimes to the situation of us, a spectator and a performer, sitting there. I appreciated the side by side mode of communication⁶ and she pronounced: 'it is as far as you can read today, this is the end of what I learned'. 'Thank you!'; and we continued talking while sending furtive gaze to each others. I learned that 20 pages of the book had just unraveled at my side. We talked about the process of learning, the motivation for doing that. She communicated her doubts about performing well and speaking with an understandable pace. She shared with me her fear of not being understood. I shared with her my interest for following other layers of 'meaning' and not bothering about understanding all of the content of the book. After a little while, I was again in the street with the thought of the book at the back of my head. The intimacy of the encounter was touching, and the blur of time stroke me. We went through several relational modes in this time of reading, from the spectator to the book, the book to the spectator, the performer to the spectator, two performers together. The experience of *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* reinforced my intuition and interest for modes of participation that would transform the ritual of participative performances, and would diverge from the absolute necessity of a fully complete 'contract' between performers and spectators.

With the interest for Writing that connects to Notation, and the interest for Spectatorship, I began to wonder how does the position of reader inform the one of spectator. And would being a reader of Notation, a language that one needs to assimilate, inform possibilities of implication, learning and teaching from the spectator. Intrigued by detours Notation implies, and by non-obvious modes of communication, I encountered the concept of *Dorsality* developed by David Wills (2008) and decided to spend some time with it. This thesis studies *Dorsality* in relation to choreography. *Dorsality* is a philosophy, a gesture that invites to consider the out of sight, the non-straightforward, exposure and risk, in order to allow change to happen. It focuses on language and technology as outgrowths of the body that can allow a turn to something or someone other. Choreography is understood in this thesis as a practice of writing movement; it relates to scores and systems of notation, which gather conditions for the making of experience. The association of *Dorsality* and choreography raise issues of notation and spectatorship.

This research questions how to transform the matter of choreography through the *dorsal* perspective. In other words: How do choreographic writings perform and transform our consideration of notation and spectatorship? And how do choreographies in writings contribute to the *dorsal* thinking?

I wish with this research to better understand the *dorsal* perspective and how it informs our thinking of choreographic writings. Notation and scores are often qualified as tools and documentation. This research builds upon the concern that these features might limit the potential of scores and ignore their nature. If the score refers to the artistic work, if it represents the work, if it is merely its archive, it then becomes accessory. It is a tool that can be perceived as dusty and static, and that might constitute one of the multiple satellites around the planet Choreography. The main argument of this thesis is that writing is choreography rather than a satellite among others. Writing is already there, at the back. With the title *Dorsal fin of Choreography*, I wish to focus on choreographic writings as condition for change in performance. I suggest considering writing as choreography rather than only one of its tool. I claim in this thesis that the *dorsal* perspective challenges our thinking of choreography by looking into the writing as a way to generate experience; the *dorsal* posture is an invitation to implicate oneself. Writing performs and allows social norms, within the field of performance, to be transformed.

The first chapter *If choreography were a fish, writing would be its dorsal fin* takes an historic approach on choreographic writings and systems of notation to better grasp the inherence of writing to choreography and to understand its function. The second chapter *Dorsality, thinking back through Notation and Spectatorship* adopts a philosophical approach. It plays with the title of David Wills' book to examine the mutual influences of *Dorsality* and choreography. The last chapter *If we were together in print* develops stakes that emerge from consideration of writing as choreography. It approaches the question through case study of the book-performance *Sync* and examines how this practical example challenges how we think of audience participation.

Notes

⁴'The careful nonchalance of the encounter': words pronounced by Rosi Braidotti in her response to the talk of Jon McKenzie 'Disastronautics, Inc: Toward a Performance Consultancy', in the frame of the Camillo conferences, psi17, 25th May 2011, Utrecht

⁵ *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* is inspired by the science fiction book *Fahrenheit 451* written by Ray Bradbury, that tells the story of a world where books are forbidden, firemen's job is to burn books rather than to extinguish fire. The members of an underground resistance movement learn books by heart to preserve them for the future. In this performance, Mette Edvardsen invites people to learn a book and to recite it for one spectator, the performer's reader.

⁶Side by side position in space is according to Toru Higashide the best condition for a honest exchange between the two parts, this Japanese notion is a part of Butoh's conception (notes taken in the frame of the workshop *Beyond* in December 2010, at ICK Amsterdam).

Chapter 1

If Choreography were a fish, Writing would be its Dorsal fin

The dorsal fin is to the fish the vital body part that stabilizes it against rolling and that is responsible for sudden turns. This chapter focuses on writing and systems of notation, in order to investigate their relation to the ontology of choreography. It aims to deliver keys for understanding how is writing as crucial to choreography as the dorsal fin is to the fish.

In the first usage of the verb *Chorégrapier* by French notator Feuillet in 1700⁷, the assigned meaning was to trace or to notate dance (Louppe, 2010, p. 168). Notation was intrinsic to choreography, but then the term evolved and now often connects to the creation or composition in dance, leaving the essence of notation to archive or reconstruction. Turning back to the original bond between choreography and writing, and to the literal sense in Greek of *choreia - graphia* (dance - writing), this chapter studies how dance notation has been considered historically (Louppe, 2010; Franko, 2011) and observes the usage of notation and scores today (Burrows, 2010; Bleeker, 2010). With a better grasp of common understanding of the nature of notation and scores, it then problematizes their traditional subordinate role. If one acknowledges the presence of the reader, his/her movements of thoughts in writing and reading, couldn't one consider writing as choreography per se rather than only one of its tool? Examining how do choreographers overcome monsters of notation in their practice, and reconnect writing to the definition of choreography, one can begin to move towards one of the main argument of this thesis that is: writing performs, and allows changes in social norms of choreography.

1.1 Notation throughout history: lonely and unstable machine

In the times of Feuillet (XVIIth century) when *Chorégrapheur* referred to notation, and up to the end of baroque times (XVIIth-XVIIIth), dance notation was subject to an official interest in France. It was used to write court-dances (see ill. 1.1): the *gens de la cour* would discover and learn the movements in advance through the scores notated by renowned *Maîtres à danser* like Messer Domenico (da Piacenza) or Messer Guglielmo (Ebreo). They would then come together for the bal at the court and realize the dance. The masters of dance were the owner, author, of their *bali*.

Feuillet notation, which codified the step, the path of choreography through space, and its relationship to music, was much more comprehensive, and much more challenging to decode, than Renaissance tabulation. [...] The page itself becomes the floor one traverses in dancing, obliging the decoder to read, not only in a linear but also in a diagrammatic manner (Franko, 2011, p. 323).

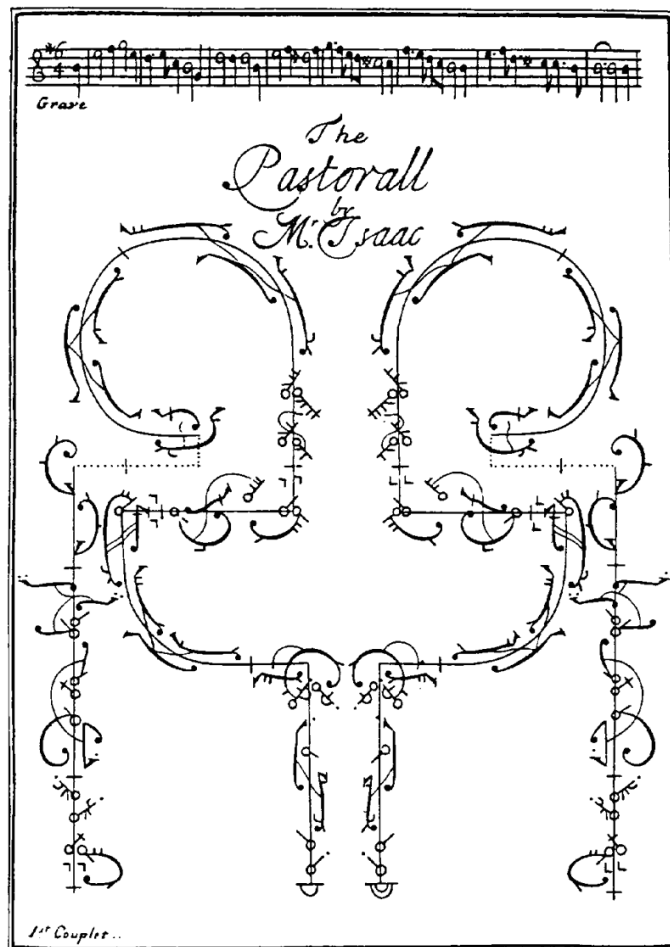


Figure 1.1: a page from *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de d'écrire la danse par caractères et figures* by Raoul Feuillet illustrates the notation system originated by Pierre Beauchamp

Such institutional interest for dance notation remains marginal within its wider historical development. Dance notation along centuries has been a 'lonely machine with no stabilizing power' (Louppe, 2010, p. 171). In modern times, along with structuralism, new systems of notation emerged. *Kinetographie Laban* was invented in 1928.

Kinetographie Laban or *Labanotation* was first formulated in *Schriftanz* (1928) and, though based in part on Feuillet, Laban's system analyzed and described movement analysis in body-centered terms (Franko, 2011, p. 327).

Kinetographie Laban was originally intended as tool for creativity and movement analysis (Andrien, 2010, p. 191), used by dancers (Mary Wigman and Kurt Joos were students of Laban), or factory workers (in order to lighten their physical charge). The system was meant to evolve and remain open. The *Benesh Movement Notation* was first published in 1955, aiming to offer a tool for dancers to write their movements. Both modes of notation are used to capture and archive choreographies of for instance Merce Cunningham, Doris Humphrey, José Limon, and William Forsythe. Some current companies have steady relation with their notator and notation systems in order to hold in scores the remains of a dance that ephemerally happened; Benesh is for instance used by the ballet Preljocaj, and Laban by the Carnets Bagouet (Bastien, 2010, p. 13).

In contemporary dance, modern forms of notation are not only used in such traditional ways, employed most of the time after the choreographic work. But for instance, choreographer Myriam Gourfink (Andrien, 2010, p. 190) realized the original motivation and use of *Kinetographie Laban*. Writing is to her the creative gesture, the very first step. (Andrien, 2010, p. 189). Scores are ways for her to think the body. She wished to use a writing system that belonged to her culture, and she was marked by the experience of yoga (that she associates to a symbolic system) and dance (that she describes as a corporeal system). Looking for existing modes of notation, she found in *Kinetographie Laban* the link she searched for between 'our occidental dancing body and the mental, the thinking of movement' (Andrien, 2010, p. 190). She appreciates this system for its dynamics thinking of movement, grounded in the observation of gravity. But some aspects of the notation diverges from her modes of composition and relation to space. She tells that, with encouragements of her teacher Jacqueline Chalet-Hass⁸, she choose to confront the guards of Laban's temple by reinventing a system more appropriate to her current concerns. She gets rid of the staff, that is the vertical structure framing a score of *Kinetographie Laban*; the staff also produces linearity in reading. She breaks this linearity, and adapts her score to preserve openness in the composition with the moment; she transforms signs to probe other divisions of space than in the famous kinesphere (see ill. 1.2).

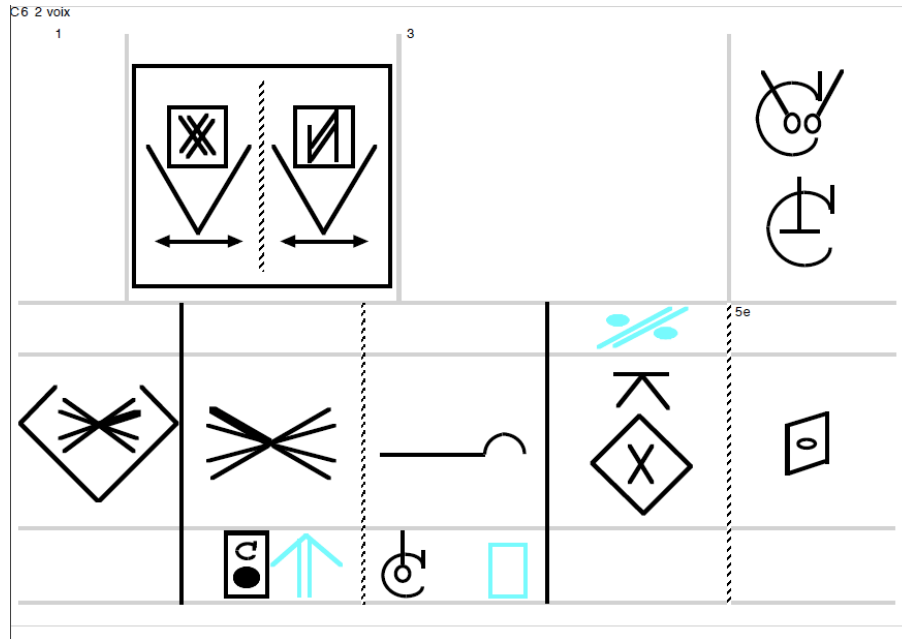


Figure 1.2: page 44 of the score *Les temps tirillés*, 2009, see <http://myriam-gourfink.com/partitionLTT.pdf>

★ ★

Although *Kinetographie Laban* became influential as the last example shows, no system of notation ever reached a dissemination among dancers that would be comparable to the broad dissemination of musical notation among professional musicians. ‘Dance notation has been specialized and not the subject of a universal professional literacy’ (Franko, 2011, p. 327). The specialization had the unfortunate consequence of separating writing from choreography, making them two different entities. After considering what she named ‘lonely machines’ of notation from the Quattrocento to now, historian Laurence Louppe asserts that history turned its back to notation (Louppe, 2010, p. 172). She justifies this nonlinear, irregular history with an unpopularity partly caused by the necessary detours that the adoption of signs requires. These detours are in conflict with the punctual nature of movement. Dancers have entertained a mystique presentness (Franko, 2011, p. 327) that fed their *graphophobia*. Dancers may reject signs that fail in transmitting, in contaminating. They refuse that their acts would suffer from delays and grids of translation (Louppe, 2010, p. 165). Quoting Mallarmé, Laurence Louppe recalls the dream dance once had of being an ‘art with no scribe’. She notices the incompatibilities of existing systems with current concerns of producing opened figures. Mark Franko concurs with this view: ‘it has been difficult if not impossible to think of notation in relation to composition: notation has become associated with reconstruction as a phe-

nomenon of historical interest' (Franko, 2011, p. 328). The fear of the script may originate in an even deeper concern from dancers: the disappearance of the body. 'The written sign is construed as the dancing body's tomb' (Franko, 2011, p. 329). Daniël Rovers points out:

One limitation of notation is the fear it inspires, the dancer's fear of being programmed, and perhaps the choreographer's fear of becoming no more than a programmer. That fear brings us back to graphophobia, the fear - frequently described, and even deconstructed (Jacques Derrida), but never laid to rest - that any form of writing, and theory-building or explanation, spoils the pleasure of practice (Rovers, 2012, p. 25)

Transmission of dance also remains predominantly a matter of oral tradition. Another responsible for the unpopularity of notation is more importantly according to Louppe, its strong connection with the Law⁹. It is this alliance that did damage to *Kinetographie Laban*, accused of having been used in 1936, in Berlin for a gathering of 800 people in favor of the regime (Louppe, 2010, p. 182). With regards to the ambiguous relation between notation and Law, Laurence Louppe questions: 'would all dance notations relate to the Law or to the deviation from it? Would dance figures represent the forbidden or transgression?' (Louppe, 2010, p. 173). There is something intriguing in these last questions: the fear that added distance from notation, becomes an interest, a curiosity that encourages for a closer look, a revision of imperfections, measuring the pros and cons. It is striking that modern modes of notation are marked by the acceptance of failure (Louppe, 2010, p. 176): an important feature of *Kinetographie Laban* resides in what is left unwritten – a lot is left to the responsibility of the reader. The failure of representation starts being taken into account in these systems. Wouldn't that acceptance of failure contain an important impact on performance norms, and on politics? In her essay, Laurence Louppe does support 'romantic' ideas about dancers, and was for this reason accused of delivering anti-notational prejudices. But remaining vigilant, one can read how it is not about condemning imperfections. She denounces and regrets the archaic fear at the source of the reject of notation: 'the dancer is prisoner of the 'innocence of the first act'¹⁰' (Louppe, 2010, p. 174). Although Louppe lists arguments in disfavor of dance notation, it is only to better claim its importance. In her essay, she progressively raises the appreciation of these 'imperfections in paper'¹¹. She asserts that dance can only become a poem with no scribe by absorbing the Graph, by intense immersion with it. She invites to see the paper as a field, a mobile surface. In her conclusion, she directly addresses to papers. She talks to them as bodies, mysterious universe, and unfinished virtual spaces. She proposes a crucial answer to problems of ethics and of representation, by highlighting the role of the reader:

Unfinished writings, you only partially exist without the body that will read you [...] if you provisionally desert the order of things, it is for a better transformation (Loupe, 2010, p. 185).

The reader is at stake in the encounter with notation. Considering the reader, I wish to challenge the understanding of notation as a mere tool, document, and archive. To begin with, the examination of current practices of notation can inform on how to overcome fears. A comprehension of the role of the decoder in these practice and the attention for movement of thought can perhaps allow glueing back notation and writing to the body of choreography.

1.2 Overcoming graphophobia to re-glue notation and writing to the body of choreography

Writing is commonly regarded as a mere tool for choreography, as the brush is to the painting: it is useful but accessory. While systems of dance notation continue to evolve on a rocky road, one can observe how scores using other modalities found a bigger success. Current approaches of scores show the diversity of their form. While scores were traditionally composed with texts, drawings, and graphics, they increasingly became technological. Contemporary times came along with the development of other medias in constituting scores. Current scores can now take the form of text (Ambra Pittoni, *Meteora SP*, 2010)¹², drawing, notation system (Myriam Gourfink, *Les temps tirillés*, 2009), DVD (William Forsythe, *Improvisation technologies*, 2000), installation (EG/PC, *Capturing intention*, 2007). These examples are educative and creative tools. They can teach the audience to see complex organizations, make cues visible, and break the piece down in its different components. They communicate, vulgarize, capture the thinking, illustrate, complexify (Scott De La Hunta, October 2011)¹³. To these products, scholar Maaïke Bleeker interrogates: 'What If This Were An Archive?' (2010). She sees in the intermingle between technology and notation a response to the dissatisfaction makers have in capturing, archiving, documenting the work: 'dissatisfied with more conventional modes of noting down or documenting dance by means of dance notation like Laban and Benesh, descriptions, drawings, and video-registration, they set out to develop new tools to transmit analyze and interpret dance' (Bleeker, 2010, p. 3). Though Bleeker continues to name these hybrid scores archives, she points out their modes of operation. They 'become part of processes rather than last resting place for what is left over after the fact' (Bleeker, 2010, p. 4). These projects for documentation 'aim to make dance knowledge available to new audiences, and in ways that allow new types of interaction [...] they invite reflection on our mode of understanding dance'. Scores in their expanded form, operate as document, they turn into *Living Archives*¹⁴. The attribute 'living' adds a distinct role to scores: mediation. How scores act on the level of interaction between all actors of choreography (maker, dancers, audience) might be their escape from a secondary role. Jonathan Burrows in *A choreographer's handbook* (2010) defines the nature of scores as such:

It can mediate between the maker and the work, and also between the maker and the performer. [...] When a performer reads their score during the performance, it can help mediate between them and the audience. The score then represents, in a way, the piece itself. This can allow the performer to disappear

at times, giving the audience space for a more direct and personal relation to the dance (Burrows, 2010, p. 142-143).

In these lines, the 'in a way' with regards to the score representing the piece itself is of interest; is it a suggestion, an hesitation, or a fear? One can note that the score mediates and can somehow perform according to Burrows, but it still represents the piece. In earlier pages he writes that he sees two main kinds of approaches to writing scores: a representation of the piece on one hand, and a tool for information acting as a source for final realization on the other hand. What would be consequences of thinking the score not merely as representation (that fails) - and tool, but, as performance itself? What if the score is the piece? What does it mean to see/read choreography? At stakes are the possible disappearance of the performer, expressed by Burrows, and an implication from the spectator. As the dancer disappears and leaves the score in direct relation with the spectator, the later must engage with the piece. To what extent is the spectator spectator then, and to what extend would the spectator also be performer?

* *

The idea of the score being the piece sends us back to the times of Feuillet, when notation was so attached to choreography that it was its own definition. Are there, today, such approaches of scores as performance? Yes, Myriam Gourfink does think of writing as choreography. When asked whether she developed a writing that has a strong relation to dance; she answers with no. Her writing is not merely in strong relation to dance, but it is dance:

Writing is an active thinking, a thinking that moves within the concerns of dance, in the intelligence of dance, in its mechanisms and dynamism, in everything that allows us to say, this is dance (Andrien, 2010, p. 194).

She considers the score as the dance. The object is an *oeuvre* that in French also means 'to work' with effort, to strive. The score *oeuvres*, it works, in her practice, in her computer as she writes, within the group of artistic collaborators as it is being rewritten, and it continues to work in the spectator watching the performance (Andrien, 2010, p. 195). Franko asked: 'When we observe a dance, do we also observe (its) writing?' (Franko, 2011, p. 321). Having in mind the example of Gourfink's work, let us put the question upside down: When we read the writing, do we also observe a dance? In the case of her scores, at first glance one concludes that they are addressed to experts, who know the language and can decode it. But if one would take the time to immerse in the glossary, one could learn and gain the ability to experience the dance through the writing; or perhaps if one would accept not to understand it all (as we often do while watching a performance),

one would read what we can and observe the writing as a dance. Do we need to know the language to read the writing? Do we need to have a certain level of dance to be able to grasp the essence of a dance performance (Rovers, 2012, p. 23)? (see Chapter3). What can be learned from the account of writing as performance is - to return on the notion of mediation - its operation on relation: writing performs in challenging how actors of choreography relate to each others. Mette Edvardsen in her piece *Every now and then* (2009) invites the audience to read a book as a performance.

For the whole duration of the piece the audience can read through the pages and the spaces of the book at the same time as they follow what is taking place on stage. The book is direct, tactile and persistent, giving the audience another access to the piece. The reader of a book can decide for him/herself the reading direction, the tempo and the space (see www.metteedvardsen.be).

With mirroring effects between photos inside the book and actions/bodies on stage, the performance is at both places. One begins to think what came first? One ends up asking oneself where is the piece the most real, on stage, in the book, in one's choices, in one's head. The performance expands, and the role of performer is shared. In *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine* (2010), that I experienced in February 2012 in one old library of Amsterdam, performers are live books that are to encounter readers. Boundaries between the performer and the spectator were blurred. And as I was reading with the book-performer seating right next to me, both of us facing the window, I experienced a side mode of dialogue. I watched the performance from the corner of the eye. Mette Edvardsen's investigations on books in relation to performance show that writing performs and challenge our thinking of notation as satellite of choreography, and the dichotomy vision of spectatorship. When the score re-glues itself to choreography, it acts on its own social norms.

1.3 The Dorsal fin's Performativity

The idea of performativity of scores that would not merely represent or report on an event can find support in the origin of performativity with Austin (Georgelou, 2011). According to Austin, words, within serious-speech, perform as they produce something. In that regard one could already claim that scores perform as tools or archive: they produce a trace, they produce creativity. In their role of mediator, scores transform relation for instance; produce links that would never happen in the studio, or in the theatre. The argumentation on scores performativity then needs to further

grow through Derrida and Butler theories. What is at stakes in the thinking of scores that refer to themselves and perform resides in their most *dorsal* aspect (see Chapter 2): in the detours, in the iteration that characterizes them.

I would suggest that performativity cannot be understood outside of a process of iterability, a regularized and constrained repetition of norms. And this repetition is not performed by a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal conditions for the subject. This iterability implies that 'performance' is not a singular 'act' or event, but a ritualized production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint, under and through the force of prohibition and taboos (Butler, 1993, quoted by Georgelou, 2011, p. 49).

Writing – in allowing detours, in offering iterations to their readers, by giving a relation to time that stands at the opposite from the punctual-ephemeral time of the performance as an event – performs. Could writing even be qualified of superlatives, such as extra- super- or mega-performance? Like Laurence Louppe's intuition suggested, 'the body that will read you' (Louppe, 2010, p. 185), iterative operations of the score will always be the slave of their reader. 'We know that in order to restore writing to its future, we must reverse the myth: the birth of the reader must be requited by the death of the author' (Barthes, *The death of the author*, quoted by Georgelou, 2011, p. 55). Choreographic writings perform, but rather than condemning the author as proposed by Barthes, writings act in an invitation to converse. Roland Barthes' turn to the reader is though an important influence. Regarding dance notation, the first experience one has of them is from the position of their reader. From her reflections on the processes of learning Laban and Benesh, Bertha Bermúdez (Bermúdez, 2010, p. 28) shares: 'I was surprised with the amount of information one could get out of it. But I was also surprised by the amount of prior knowledge needed to understand it'. 'A fair amount of mystery is left for the reader of the notation when reconstructing the score'. She points how much the reader matters in notation processes: 'their needs must be anticipated. Not too much, not too little: the right measure must be found'.

Notes

⁷ *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de d'écrire la danse par caractères et figures* was published in 1700, in France, by Raoul Auger Feuillet. The misspelling 'de d'écrire' (instead of d'écrire) in this title is an interesting accident that proposes both meanings of writing and describing dance. John Weaver translated the book in 1706 entitled: *Orchesography or the art of dancing by Characters and Demonstrative figures*.

⁸ Jacqueline Chalet-Hass is notator, and teacher. She studied with Kurt Joos, and Albrecht Knust. She was a disciple of Laban, who entrusted her with the development of *Kinetographie Laban*.

⁹My insistence, in the beginning of this section, on the baroque times, had nothing to do with nostalgia but rather intends to show proximity between Notation and the State, the Law, politics

¹⁰Laurence Louppe here quotes Trisha Brown, postmodernist American choreographer who kept rejecting notation while she had an extensive use of scores in drawings and graphics

¹¹*Imperfections in the Paper* is the title of Laurence Louppe's essay, and reference to Cunningham who searched for asleep choreographies in these imperfections – immanent writings in his notebook

¹²see http://www.everybodystoolbox.net/files/Meteora_SP.pdf

¹³Scott De La Hunta, keynote lecture, *Production of Scores: a reflection on composition*, 24th October 2011, HZT Berlin

¹⁴*Living Archive* (2011) is a performance in which dance historian and dramaturge Myriam Van Imschoot brings her personal archive to the stage. In *Living Archive* she appears alone on stage and takes up the challenge of literally 'giving a voice to' her collected archives. It comprises a professional legacy of interviews and conversations with dancers and choreographers, but also of very personal audio relics.

Chapter 2

Dorsality, Thinking Back through Notation and Spectatorship

Turn, detour and iteration are core traits of *Dorsality* (Wills, 2008). Applying these traits to the title of the book by David Wills, and immersing this title into this research's pool of incongruous juxtaposition (see Preface with research interests), I propose to rephrase *Dorsality, Thinking Back through Technology and Politics* for *Dorsality, Thinking Back through Notation and Spectatorship*. *Dorsality* can then be for this chapter the lense through which Choreography is re-thought. How does the *dorsal* posture inform our thinking of Notation and Spectatorship?

This chapter investigates what are the significant characteristics and conditions of the *dorsal* posture. It then studies Writing in the comparison with Technology (as defined by Wills). Building upon Roland Barthes' theory of *l'empreinte* (Barthes, 1980), Lawrence Halprin's *RSVP Cycles* (Halprin, 1969/2010), and examples from my recent works (*The dorsal chance* 2011, *Sync* 2012), the concept of Writing in *Print* will be discussed. The chapter draws benefits in taking the *dorsal* chance, the chance for change in norms of relation between actors of choreography (maker, performers, spectators): Spectatorship is brought in relation to Politics, and the impact of the *dorsal* posture on performance's social conventions is measured.

2.1 Let yourself get caught by the dorsal posture: Turn

The adjective *dorsal*, from which David Wills invented the term *Dorsality*, refers to the back. Looking into definitions of the back, one can already guess some characteristics of the *dorsal* posture. With regard to space, the back defines a position that is behind someone or something, and more importantly, it defines itself in reference to a front. David Wills states that we should not only approach the world frontally. What happens if one gives attention to the back? What happens if one turns *dorsal*? How does the back inform what is in front?

[*Dorsal* is] whatever falls outside frontal knowledge and visibility (Wills, 2008, p. 159).

While one could think that the back is a form of reject, for instance ‘history having turned its back to Notation’ (see Chapter 1), the *dorsal* posture is on the contrary qualified as affirmative.

[It says yes,] yes to what beyond knowing is still to come (Wills, 2008, p. 241).

Taking a *dorsal* posture means moving towards the limits of our ‘visible’ thoughts, or as Daniël Rovers suggests in the title of his essay: unveiling ‘views from the back of the head’ (Rovers, 2012). The back, from the perspective of the human body, is the rear surface, an enveloping skin that opens to the outside. *Dorsality* – concept for the expansion of edges – requires to say yes: yes to other senses than sight.

What is behind will come to us first of all through other senses: perhaps still sometimes through that of smell [...] but more likely through hearing, [...] and more importantly still through touch (Wills, 2008, p. 12).

The *dorsal* attitude favors touch. One gropes one’s way along through the darkness. Through the value of touch over vision, one can observe how *Dorsality* reaches for the non-obvious; it moves away from straightforwardness, ‘operates as a form, or forms, of resistance [...] to straight and forward, straight ahead linear advance’ (Wills, 2008, p. 6). The *dorsal* posture is a process-oriented position. The back – whether it refers to a person, or an animal, or a book – can also allude to the spine. The spine is the technology within the body: would *Dorsality* re-assemble technology with the body? David Wills argues that because human is not self-enclosed, it opens ‘the space of the technological’ (Wills, 2008, p. 105). Wills defines technology as a human outgrowth, and asserts that technology is to begin with at the back. He finds support in anthropological studies of André Leroi-Gourhan where the human upright stance – that evolved out of a strengthening of the

spine – is responsible for the human's ability to make tools and to speak (freeing the hands from their motor function and widening the cortical pan, making some space for brain and tongue to develop language) (Wills, 2008, p. 8). From this last example, David Wills states that the body has expanded, and can further expand, through technology and language. *Dorsality* has been and is a condition for the outgrowth of infinite bodies.

From a psychological perspective, and due to many features listed above (out of sight, unknown, tactile), the back also inspires fear. For the first team meeting of the project *Sync* (2012), with poet Jannah Loontjens and writer Daniël Rovers, we discussed the concept of *Dorsality* together with the one of Synchronicity (how to be together). Fright turned out to be omnipresent in this meeting: in the content of our talks about the subjects, and in the feeling of working with collaborators chosen by a third part, working with artistic fields unusual for each of us, we feared not knowing how to be, how to behave, being misunderstood, uncertain, loosing track, fail. The subject of *Dorsality* directly inspired fear and suspicion to the poet:

Behind me the stairs. I have climbed them
The fear of tumbling down stands here
Right behind me. It slides into me. What
Might have happened. That is me. I am
Now. Here. I am suspicious of what
Might have happened.
I have to fear the fear. And myself? (Loontjens, 2012)

Turning one's back to, talking behind one's back, being stabbed in the back etc.; negative aspects of the back were talked about. Fear, risk, and doubts finally found their place next to trust. This project that was about examining *Dorsality*, helped understand that it is not that much about running blind into the void, but rather letting oneself to be exposed to one's edges and to be willing to expand beyond these borders. It is not about rejecting the clarity and safety of the frontal, but rather increasing the curiosity and consideration for the *dorsal*. In recent works, and as one element of response to the fear of loosing face, I proposed *double-concentration*: it is a simultaneous attention to both frontal and *dorsal*. A daily event can describe very well how *double-concentration* can be experienced. *Waiting for my train, I sit by the platform. A freight train passes behind me. I can sense its vibrations in my back and I see in front of me its reflection on the window. The moving reflection of the freight train is superposed to the passenger's train that is docked.* This is an example of situation that places the body in the experience of *double-concentration*. To materialize this concept of projection simultaneously sent in two opposite directions, one could think of a

lighthouse, or of a body standing on a threshold. On a spatial threshold, one is exposed to in-betweenness and – if tuned into it – to *double-concentration*. One is ‘the sojourner’, the ‘someone passing through a frontier, [...] a wall that is both front and back’ (Wills, 2008, p. 67). You need to let yourself get caught. Exposure to what is there is necessary if one wants to move away from goal-oriented practice. One must listen to what is already there, behind, and observe what is already moving. On a spatial threshold, one is exposed to risk, ‘traumas and vulnerability’ (Wills, 2008, p. 67). A frightening Gorgon could stand in the obscurity of the out of sight. ‘Potential accident and catastrophe’ (Wills, 2008, p. 33) might be waiting beyond the threshold.

[Taking the *dorsal* attitude is] an act of trust, trust required to let that come, behind one’s back, unable to be known, in the confidence of an unrestricted hospitality, in a fiduciary relation in the world (Wills, 2008, p. 34).

I developed exposure through the spacial set-up of *The dorsal chance* (2011). *The Big Spectator* (audience sitting in the center of the stage), is exposed to *The Eye* (smaller group of spectators sitting in the tribune), and dancers are exposed to the audience and to a camera. Both performers and spectators can experience *double-concentration*. First during the process of making the performance, dancers invited to engage with *double-concentration*, reacted with increasing relational gestures. These relations are displayed in the score through the *moments* – transversal lines that indicates shared time and events (see ill. 2.1). During the performance *double-concentration* was illustrated by the door/video-installation, device involving a double door in front of *The Big Spectator* (see ill. 2.2). One side of the door is closed, and one way is open. As the dancer stands on the way, turning her back to the audience, the image of her front is simultaneously projected on the surface of the closed door. Her physical back stands next to her virtual silhouette (see ill. 2.3). *Double-concentration* is experienced by spectators within the body of *The Big Spectator*. This group sits in the middle of the stage, facing the left side and turning its back to the right side. The group fills in what would be the outline of a giant person seen from above. Placed in a situation of *double-concentration*, members of *The Big Spectator* can see what happens in their field of vision, and sense simultaneously the movement at their back. The situation invites them into a state of active contemplation – the possibility of welcoming what is in front, immersing themselves in it – but also the opportunity to acknowledge the partiality of their perception and to turn back, adopting a more participative attitude. *Double-concentration* is a way to develop ability to change perspective.

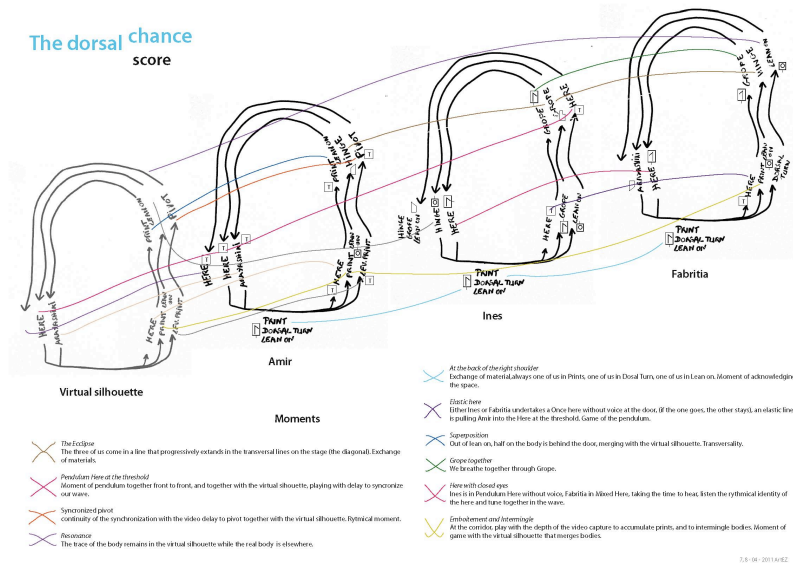


Figure 2.1: score of *The dorsal chance*

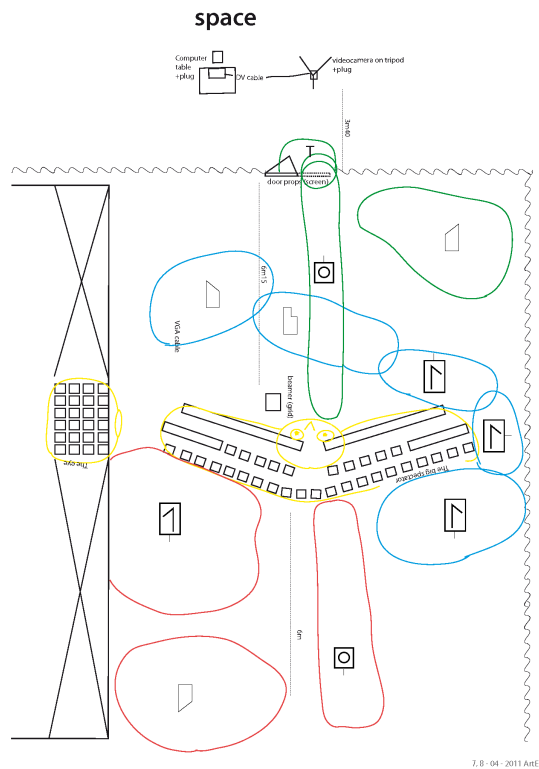


Figure 2.2: in the score's booklet of *The dorsal chance*, the last page depict the space-distribution; in yellow *The Big Spectator* and *The Eye*



Figure 2.3: *The dorsal chance*; door-video installation

In the example of *The dorsal chance* (2011) one can observe that features of *Dorsality*, exposure and *double-concentration*, generate relation and turns (physical and in perspective).

* *

Most of the characteristics of the *dorsal* posture are gathered in the first chapter of David Wills' book (2008). The chapter *The Dorsal Turn* already gives in its title motivation for giving attention to the *dorsal*: risks that come with *Dorsality* are worth taking for the *turn* to take place. *Turn* is in David Wills' term to be understood as on one hand the gesture to the other (as the other person), and on the other hand as change.

Where has the potential for change gone? How does a body perform its way out of a definitional framework that is not only responsible for its very construction, but seems to prescript every possible signifying and counter-signifying move as a selection from a repertoire of possible permutations on a limited set of pre-determined terms? How can the grid itself change? (Massumi, 2002, p. 3).

We should maintain *The dorsal chance*, the dorsal as the chance of what cannot be foreseen, the surprise or accident that appears, at least to come from behind, from out of range or outside the field of vision (Wills, 2008, p. 7).

David Wills proposes *Dorsality* as a chance for change. In his investigation and line of argumentation for the benefit of the *dorsal* posture, Wills takes his reader to the darkroom¹⁵ – the camera obscura – to show the revolutionary potential of *Dorsality*. The darkroom is 'a space of invisibility through which the real comes to representation' (Wills, 2008, p. 164), the darkroom of inversion,

'the inversion whose truth cannot survive the light of day' (Wills, 2008, p. 169). The photographic darkroom connects in many aspects to the one of the theatre. In the darkness of 'into the night' (Müller, 2007/2010), performance artist Ivana Müller finds:

a chance to get lost,
a chance not to know, [...]
a chance to forget what is there to be
forgotten,[...]
a chance to just sit here and be, a chance to feel the excitement in the stomach,
a chance to be together in this big dark room.
In this big dark room, [she finds a]
necessary space and time to switch
concentration and attention from one kind of
here and now to another kind of here and now'(Müller, 2007/2010)

Such 'nights' of performance are moments of *Dorsality* for each spectator, if they seize the chance and take the *turn*, engaging as Ivana Müller does in this text, with their thoughts, imagination, expansion of the mind.

'The *turn* is first of all an inflection, a bending, the movement of a limb, that is the sense of articulation', writes David Wills (Wills, 2008, p. 3). The *dorsal turn* begins with the first mitosis, the first division of a cell. The importance of the *turn* is in 'its sense of departure, that is also a detour, a divergence into difference'(Wills, 2008, p. 4).

The dorsal turn refers [...] to operations of reversal or reversibility(Wills, 2008, p. 15). [It is a rule for] speculative thinking. As if it were a matter of saying: let's try it another way, the other way around. Imagine, try, at the risk of a crick in the neck, or a slipped mental disc, to see it from a impossible perspective, one that, however much it falls in the shadow of our everyday viewpoint, nevertheless is not entirely unknown to us, in fact intimately belongs to us, indeed constitutes the expansive scene and fecund scenarios of whatever happens behind our back (Wills, 2008, p. 16).

The impossible gathering in one view of the body's front and back (*double-concentration*), that the installation of *The dorsal chance* played with, embodies this wish to take an impossible perspective. *Double-concentration* joins the concept developed by Michel Foucault (1967), called *Heterotopias*. *Heterotopias* are spaces that juxtapose in themselves incompatible sites; theatre and cinema are examples of such places. The mirror as both a real and an unreal space is another instance. *Heterotopias* are spaces of otherness, which are neither here nor there, impossible to seize; spaces that have more layers of meaning than immediately meet the eyes (Foucault, 1967). Foucault defends *Heterotopias* as necessary means to escape from repression. They are, just as

double-concentration, ways to *turn* and construct sideways. They are conditions for change. In Foucault's poetic, *Heterotopias* are like wandering ships. They allow movements and relations: 'In civilization without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates' (Foucault, 1967). The influence of *Heterotopias* brought the choreographer William Forsythe to the creation of the homonymous piece in 2006. The reference to Foucault manifested itself in the unusual mise-en-scene in which the audience could move within two playing spaces; the one small and traditional, and the other arranged in a grid of tables. Forsythe's performance-installation is a *turn* in that it challenges the conventions of theatre. The choreographer took the risk of producing a work that would not circulate much because of unusual technical demands. In return, the audience was offered the experience of *Heterotopias*, of their own movements and juxtaposed attentions.

Binaries – front/back, real/unreal, traditional/untraditional, etc. – are components of *Heterotopias* and *double-concentration*. If the *turn* occurs as a consequence, it is to surpass these dichotomies. The *turn* intermingles. The mixed attentions that result might also be called 'misattention' or distraction. In *Looking Away* (Terada, 2009), Rei Terada is interested in distraction: 'the giving of one's attention to [...] things that appear to appear as it were apart from the main scene' (Kelleher, 2010) at the back? Misattention would then act as 'a means of turning away from the felt obligation to accept the world as is' (Kelleher, 2010). In the giving of attention to pointless phenomena, Rei Terada also argues for means to move sideways. In choreography, this move sideways can have various manifestations like challenging theatrical codes in the example of Forsythe's *Heterotopias*. For this research, the interest is on the practice of writing as a condition for the *turn*. The underlying thought is that the *turn* in writing is a tool to re-invent the experience of choreography. Writing is the *dorsal* of choreography: it opens to the other, accesses to private intimate spheres, and contributes to the circulation of ideas. Foucault wrote: '*Heterotopias* are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, [...] because they destroy 'syntax' in advance. [...] *Heterotopias* desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences' (Foucault, 1966/2002, p.xviii). In this excerpt, Foucault communicates the power of *Heterotopias* within language. The experience of choreography can be re-invented thanks to its writing. The language can be re-invented through the invention of new writings. And as we think with words and language, if language is re-invented, one begins to think differently.

2.2 Thinking back through Notation: Writing in Print

Writing is at the back of choreography, it brings closer choreography to philosophy. Philosopher Alva Noë (Noë, 2011) writes:

Choreography is a philosophical practice, and philosophy is a choreographic one¹⁶.

Like philosophy, the role of choreography is to raise transformation in their audience. As we noticed from the example of the darkroom and the 'night' of Ivana Müller's performance, choreography starts with a *turn*, 'choreography twists you, it begins with puzzle, it says: *first I twist you within a state of awkward confusion! I send sand in your eyes! See me if you can!*' (Noë, 2011). Choreography creates the environment for an experience. Alva Noë considers choreographers as experts in the making of experience – experience as something we achieve, we do, and we perform (Noë, 2004). Both philosophy and choreography are practices of inventing writings methods. Choreography re-invents experience by inventing new writings. Such engagement with language is *dorsal*:

The *dorsal turn* involves a turning back to language as primary technological system (Wills, 2008, p. 15).

One critique David Wills articulates in '*Dorsality*' is that language is too much forgotten as technology itself, it is not 'subjected to the same examination and remains instrumental' (Wills, 2008, p. 15). Language does remain instrumental to choreographers when they negate pre-existing modes of writing, when they reject the technology of Notation. Out of a fear of pinning, and losing movement, choreographers may neglect language and writing. But, in line with the *dorsal* posture, one should not let the fear drive. One needs to face the risk of fixing in order to understand that Writing is not a break to evolution. On the contrary, Writing is a catalyst for change. Studying other fields and specifically music – where Notation has a long lasting history – the role of Writing in the re-invention of composition in occidental music appears obvious. Thanks to writing, musical composition kept turning and stretching from original systems. The composer Kasper Toeplitz writes in the essay *Ecriture vs. Composition* (Toeplitz, 2002, my translation): 'It is the writing that permitted the thought of systems such as counterpoint, canons or fugues, but also that organized the deconstruction of preexisting systems. The serial composition (Schoenberg, Stockhausen, Boulez) or the stochastic music (Xenakis) would not have been thought of without the recourse to writing'. Through the acknowledgement of a 'technologized' language, choreography can twist not only its

audience but also itself. It self-reflects, re-invents its own modalities.

Motivated by the *turn* (gesture to the other, and change) facilitated by the *dorsal* posture, I developed with insistence since 2008 a practice of Writing at the heart of my choreography. For each project, I juxtapose interests (see Preface, *incongruous juxtaposition*) and let a lexicon of keywords to emerge. The keywords are mini-scores, a set of instructions that define a movement and its qualities according to different parameters. I pay attention to compose instructions with several modes of writing: with a single word (the keyword), text, signs from *Kinetographie Laban*, from Mathematics, and/or with drawings. Such writing with multiple faces allows me to communicate to different audiences, and on different layers, subjective or objective. For each project I select for the score the parameters that are the most appropriate to the project's aim and vision. For the research *Horizon* for instance (2009)¹⁷ it was about giving to see and experience limits of perception (of a movement or of a sound); therefore, the core parameters used within the score were signs from *Kinetography Laban* describing the amplitude and the possibility of shifts of weight in space. In my practice I discern how writing operates for self-reflectivity and invention of modalities. It is a turn to the other, it mediates. These characteristics are *dorsal*, but they do not help yet to save scores and writing from their instrumental place (see Chapter1). Notation and Writing, as David Wills putted it with regards to language, are too much forgotten as technology. Searching for ways to overcome this oblivion, and the separation between choreography and writing, I began to question how could the score refer to itself rather than to an external event (that then confuses and steal the 'label' choreography). How could the score be the choreography itself, be the body? These were source questions for *Sync* (2012). It is a book-performance in which all writings are addressed to spectators; they were invited to be the reader, the theatre of the performance, and its performer (see Chapter3).

★ ★

Writings are the darkroom, the most exciting place to experience choreography: intimate tactile experience, holding the power of revolution for their readers. In order to let my trust and interest for writing to contaminate my collaborators, and in order to calm their fear or boredom for Writing, I suggested the concept of Writing in *Print*. In *The dorsal chance* I developed this concept through one movement material, but also through the drawing of the score, and through the principle of writing¹⁸. In regard to the movement material, the keyword *Print*: I captured ten positions of people passing through the threshold of a door; I then transmitted these postures to the dancers by means

of verbal description, for them to engage in mental visualization: *Hesitation. The centre of gravity is in tension between the left foot that is widely spread on the floor in front, and the right toes. The right leg keeps some weight, folded articulation ready to return. Pelvis shoulder and head orientate 5° to the left, and slightly tilt forward, aligned. The right arm is a little bit folded to the side, elbow slightly behind* (excerpt from the Lexicon of *The dorsal chance*, glossary). Later on, having learned the ten positions, the dancers could embrace *Print*:

I visualize the silicone's mould of a person passing through doorway. My whole body is caught by the mould. My skin touches it. Through tensions, I expand my envelope. I inhale. I find myself on the edge of my balance. I bring my attention to the state in which the Print guides me, vulnerable. I suspend time as a hyphen between the front and the back (excerpt from the Lexicon of *The dorsal chance*).

The *Print* is not-finished. In the case of the keywords it opens to the engagement of the dancers through their affects. *Print* as a movement material followed a translation from a first subject passing through a threshold, into technology (the verbal, anatomic-analytic description), and finally into the subject of the dancer. In the score of *The dorsal chance*, the *Prints* were the designs of curved silhouettes. They allowed the distribution of individual scores to the three dancers (see ill. 2.1). As a movement material, the *Print* involved affect, and as a design, it implied individualities. As a principle of writing, the *Print* allows the pinning down to be less dramatic because it is connection to a reader who will constantly allow its movement. This principle of writing considers the reader; it relates to touch, it leaves place for intensity, sensation and affects of the other. The writing is then always different; transforms through reiteration. Codes are not threat anymore but they enable detachability from representation and turn to the other.

*L'empreinte*¹⁹ is for Roland Barthes this non-static view on Writing. The *Print* is the outgrowth of a once-exposed subject. It carries the personal but does not confine in it. The *Print* accompanies a continuous movement from the individual body – not enclosed, opened to the other – to the collective. In line with the photographic model, the *Print* conveys the logic of detachment from representation. As a student in Art History and Archaeology, I once had the task to investigate on *The Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-Daro* (see ill. 2.4), a 4500-year-old sculpture discovered in Pakistan. I studied what archaeologists had read from the 10,8 cm high statuette. Their deductions stretched from essential information about the civilization of Indus to the possible psychology of the figure: 'A girl perfectly confident of herself and the world', suggested British archaeologist Mortimer Wheeler in 1973 (Hirst, 2002). Archaeology teaches how to read or perhaps misread. It is not about codes

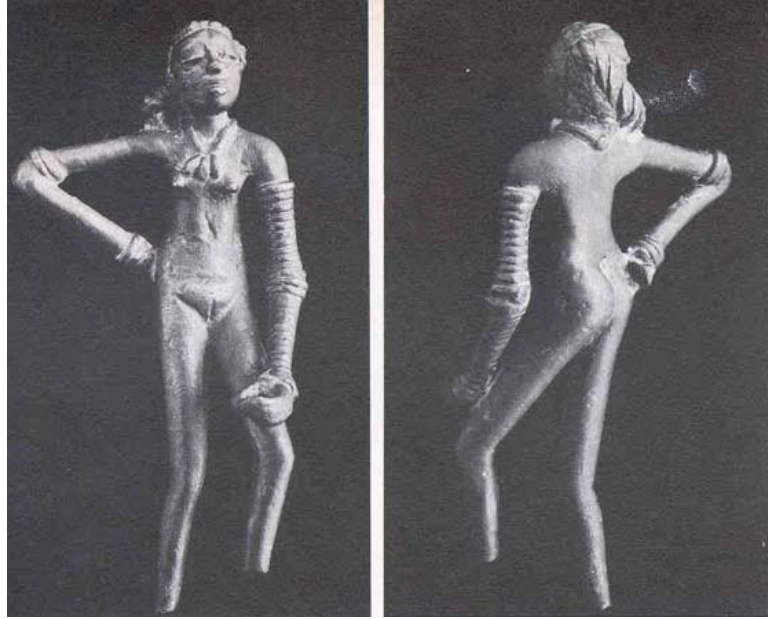


Figure 2.4: The dancing girl of Mohenjo-Daro; bronze Indus Valley Civilization statuette, some 4,500 years old

(Pearson and Shanks, 2001). Or codes can be detached from their meaning and produce poetic images. One can for instance read Brian Massumi for his poetry rather than for his philosophical arguments towards Hegel. The *Print*, as a mode of writing, avoids the enclosure of codification by preserving sensation and intensity. Intensity is contained in the skin:

[The skin is] faster than the word (Massumi, 2002, p. 25) [...] Intensity would seem to be associated with non-linear processes: resonance and feedback that momentarily suspend the linear progress of the narrative present from past to future (Massumi, 2002, p. 26).

The *Print*, as a mode of writing, refers to a tactile modality, where one can let the imaginary, sensations and affects alter.

Take joy in your digression, because it is where the unexpected arises. [...] If you know where you will end up when you begin, nothing has happened in the meantime. [...] Letting examples burgeon requires using inattention as writing tool. You have to let yourself get caught up in the flow of your writing that it ceases at moments to be recognizable to you as your own (Massumi, 2002, p. 18).

★ ★

The problems of Notation and Writing within the choreographic field are very similar to the ones triggered by the *dorsal*. The latter then informs our thinking of Notation and Writing by giving the

motivation of the *turn*, and more importantly by arguing for Notation and Writing to be technology inherent to the body, inherent to choreography. The reading of *Dorsality* in choreographic practice, participates to David Wills' conversations that related to philosophy, literature, photography, and cinema. It contributes to the thinking of the *dorsal* with as proposed in this chapter the concepts of *double-concentration* and *Print*, offering responses to the question 'why should one take the risk?' by de-dramatizing the fear. Not afraid of scores, but on the contrary nurtured by a fascination for them, landscape architect (and husband of choreographer Anna Halprin) Lawrence Halprin undertook the writing of the *RSVP Cycles – Creative Processes in the Human Environment* (Halprin, 1969/2010)²⁰. The first *dorsal* trait of the method presented by Halprin resides in its intention to give access to what is hidden, behind, not understood and always here (Halprin, 1969/2010, p. 13). I don't know in advance whether I am making an apple or a peer, but I must train my sense of listening to what is there, let the material to take shape and find a form. The process-oriented posture corresponds to the move away from straightforwardness. The worst danger for Lawrence Halprin consists in following a straight goal that would become a trap and generate simplistic approaches. He locates examples of devastating straightforward approaches in extreme politics. He asserts that straightforwardness results in the destruction of resources (education, welfare, culture); it hides potentials and inhibits change (Halprin, 1969/2010, p. 14).

The technological disruption of temporality is what conditions the political as motor of change, and what provides the terms of reference and argues for a type of retro- or controversion as political strategy. (Wills, 2008, p. 11)

2.3 Thinking back through Spectatorship: Politics in relation

Dorsality is the opportunity to re-arrange, re-organize, re-time the practice of performance: 'take time for immobility' (Cvejic, 2008). Participants of the project *Continuation, 6 Months 1 Location* adopted a *dorsal* posture. They experimented the change in time (6 months without fragmentations is an unusual duration for one artistic project). They experimented the change in space (no displacement, only one location), the change in modes of exchange (open-sources), in togetherness:

We would prefer not to call it a collaboration, but working with others who intercede, interfere, fold, twist, translate and transform the work, so that it's never calculable how it changes and affects (Cvejic, 2008).

They also tested the change in the call for participation (participants invited their friends, a 'politic of friendships'). The resulting change of *Dorsality* applied to performance is an expansion beyond borders, and a contribution into Politics. The artist group *WochenKlausur* is a literal example of intervention into society. They 'develop concrete proposals aimed at small, but nevertheless effective improvements to socio political deficiencies²¹. For example, the project *A Vacant House for Students* (2010) consisted in activating one of Porto's vacant building for students in need of housing opportunities. In these examples, artists challenge conventions of their practice, and as for the second example, they particularly suggest a conception of art that feels responsible for the social, political and economic conditions under which we live'²². The impact of the *dorsal* posture measures itself on changes in norms of relation, challenging the common understanding of art, artists, and – with relation to Notation and Writing – of Spectatorship.

A performer appears onstage, her back turned toward the audience [...] she never turns to face the audience for the duration of the solo (Durkee, 2010, p. 38)

Trisha Brown rejected Notation, because of the fear of being attached to one philosophy of movement, but she embraced Writing scores, and she took a *dorsal* posture in dramaturgical choices for her piece *If you couldn't see me* (1994). Never facing the audience for the whole duration of her solo, Trisha Brown gives quite some consideration to the back. She unveils the unrecognizable, unidentified, freed from representation. She lets pure materiality to manifest. In so doing, she favors touch to sight. Her back generates 'pure communicability' (Durkee, 2010, p. 43). Trisha Brown complicates the division spectator/ performer. She opens a space for the audience to develop a tactile gaze, and to dwell into sensation and imagination instead of choosing the straight

line of representation and meaning. In *If you couldn't see me*, Musetta Durkee reads the chance of 'returning appearance to itself', 'freed from political control'(Durkee, 2010, p. 43).

Appearance ceases to be representative and becomes real (Durkee, 2010, p. 47).

Trisha Brown rearranged relational protocols, she invited spectators to step in with their imagination. Their entrance in the game killed representation of appearance and made it real – the reality of thoughts.

* *

The acronym *RSVP*, before expressing Resource-Score-Valuation-Performance, means in French Répondez S'il Vous Plaît: it calls for an answer. In the encompassing score that is the *RSVP Cycles*, Lawrence Halprin sees a participative force. In his architectural work, Halprin used the cycle to seek inputs from diverse points of view²³. The method of the *RSVP cycles* calls for implication as a solution against inequalities, secrets and manipulation of people (Halprin, 1969/2010, p. 11). Lawrence Halprin reacted to its time: tensions of the cold war, contestation against Vietnam, reject of mass productions of the society of consumption, condemnation of excesses. He denounced the passivity of audiences, 'receptacles for works that are made by others' (Halprin, 1969/2010, p. 24). He criticized a society where information are pre-chewed, where one is told what to think and how to react. Expertise is profitable when it remains an 'invitation to think, to travel, to dream, to activate something in the receiver' (Halprin, 1969/2010, p. 24). Influenced by ideologies of the 70's, Halprin fought for equality. Today, the fight is of a different nature, or perhaps the equality should be more precisely defined in order to let differences to rise. Spectators of choreography share one thing that is intelligence (Rancière, 2004/2007). Expertise must be shared. How to communicate, to teach each others, to share knowledge, to accept complexity, are the stakes that the *dorsal* posture carries today.

In *The dorsal chance* (2011), spectators found themselves performing in turning, spiraling in synchronicity with their neighbors, being looked at by other neighbors; and they realized it was not that dangerous, it was even rather easy. With the book-performance *Sync* (2012), spectators are readers and performers at the same time with their movements of thoughts. Such reversal of role resonates with Janez Janša's participative work *The Wailing Wall* (2011). The installation is composed with two intimate spaces in which the spectator is invited to cry. The two rooms evoke memory, from an individual approach on one hand, and from a collective one on the other. As a

response to Giulio Camillo's design for a theatre of the memory, the installation plays with the idea of the 'terminal spectator'

a spectator that is at the same time a creator, a performer and a witness. [...] (The spectator) is brought to a wholly intimate situation in which the theatre changes from the institution of a public event into a situation of an intimate questioning of emotional memories (Janša, 2011).

Behind this work lies the idea that there are performances without performer, but certainly no performances without spectator. Lawrence Halprin asserts that a score cannot be confounded with its event (the music score cannot be confounded with music). Taking into account the communicability and the power of 'terminal' spectators in relation to scores, one can contest his argument. Scores can perform without performers through the eye of the 'terminal spectator', their reader. Does the position of the reader teaches us new ways of thinking Spectatorship and in particular participation? Readers are equal in that they are intelligent, but their fields of expertise differs; communication, translation are once again are at stakes and the production of experience and knowledge.

Notes

¹⁵In the 6th chapter of *Dorsality, Thinking Back through Technology and Politics* entitled *Revolutions in the Darkroom: Balazs, Benjamin, Sade*, David Wills uses the darkroom – the camera obscura – to argue for the revolutionary potential of *Dorsality*. Real change can only manifest passing through the darkroom, a particular threshold where all becomes possible (inversion, reverse, revolution): 'photography's language of light is first spoken in the dark' (Wills, 2008, p. 169). Wills reads the *dorsal* in Sade transgressive, oppositional practice.

¹⁶From the abstract of *Philosophical scores*, talk given by Alva Noë at the Performance Studies International 17, 25th May 2011 (Noë, 2011)

¹⁷For *Horizon* (2008) movement materials were written with keywords (for example 'Fourmi'), with text ('an ant travels on the peaks of my body, I accompany it with movements of rotation, light gestures), and with signs from *Kinetography Laban* defining the amplitude of the whole body (from very small – a double cross with dots – to small – a single cross – to big – an inverted N – to very big – a double inverted N with dots) the possibility of shifts of weight in space (a cross for displacement a circle for maintaining a situation) and the *Mobile State* (*effort* in Lan theory) defining the relation to time (sudden or sustained) and space (direct or indirect).

¹⁸The principle of writing refers to how I understand what is Writing, and its movement, in *Print*.

¹⁹*Empreinte* is the french word for *Print*. It also refers to the footprint, the trace left after one's exposure. After the exposure to a photo-camera, the *Print* shows for Roland Barthes that: 'that has been'(Barthes, 1980, p. 115). The *Print* is the outgrowth of a once-exposed subject.

²⁰The acronym *RSVP* stands for Resources (as materials with which one composes), Scores (closed or open), Valuation (mot-valise for evaluation and action) and Performance (as execution)

²¹The group *WochenKlausur* was presented by Bojana Cvejic during the conference *Hired Bodies and Dancing Nomads*, February 17th 2011, Theatre Studies Utrecht University. More about *WochenKlausur* on <http://www.wochenklausur.at>

²²see <http://www.wochenklausur.at>

²³When Lawrence Halprin designed a gymnasium on a portion of Morningside Park – situated between Columbia and Harlem, in an economically depressed neighborhood with conflicts of interests – he invited interested parties to participate in a group exercise to voice their opinion. This practice, connected to the Resources stage of the *RSVP*, was a means for him to better understand the inherent difficulties of the sites. 'This dialogue enabled everyone involved, to comprehend the scope of the problem. This interaction, while not necessarily producing the solution desired by each individual group, helped to create a solution beneficial to all participants, without alienation. In addition, the dialogue fosters a sense of community for the neighborhood' (Halprin, 1969/2010, p. 56)

Chapter 3

If we were together in print

'If we were together in print' refers to the situation of being together through reading a score or a book. This third chapter investigates – from the case study of the book-performance *Sync* (2012), the research on New Media Poetics by Adalaide Morris (2006) and Rancière's theory of emancipated spectator (2004/2007) – what are the consequences of a score that does not represent anything but instead refers to itself. To what change does the book-performance lead to? Informed by the historical paths of notation and traditions of writing score, and by the philosophy of *Dorsality* (Wills, 2008), the chapter unravels observations about the reading of movement and the movement of reading; rituals at stakes; and the question who is dancing? It proposes a definition of choreography moving from its Dorsal Fin (Writing) and constituting swarms of intelligences: choreography as space/time/opportunity to think together.

3.1 Sync: reading a book as a performance

So, the performance is only the reading of the book? (Doron, see Appendix 3.3)

Sync (2012) is a book-performance. It presents itself in a format 13 cm x 18 cm. The beige cover, with its rough texture and slight transparency, reminds of a skin that is so pale that it gives to see the veins and nerves running behind. Thanks to well-placed folds, this fragile skin carefully envelops the booklet. Reversing the folds, the cover gains volume and the flat booklet transforms into a sort of octopus with red arms. As it folds and unfolds, the octopus breathes and swims around (see ill. 3.1). Peeling the skin of the booklet, a second cover arises. It shows the same text as the skin did 'sync, a choreography on paper by emilie gallier, a poem by jannah loontjens, an essay by daniël rovers'; but veins and nerves let place to crumpled paper. Right behind, as the page is turned, the crumple paper is next to a bright red page: is it the blood's layer of the book? Beyond that layer are pages with silent voices. The one tells about what and how this book-performance came to life. The other recites a poem in five parts; where stairs intermingle, scales and references are moving, and a neighbor is omnipresent. Another silent voice proposes a choreography on paper. The choreography on paper itself seems to hold a multiplicity of voices: someone tells intention, someone else teaches a warm up, someone else lists keywords (their categorization and meanings in words, mathematic equation, notation, and drawings), someone else proposes to test knowledge into a fill-the-blank diagram, and one last gives the key for decoding it all. Along these pages are red dots. Did they escape from the blood's layers at the edges of the book? The red dots bleed through the pages. A last silent voice explains what all of this really questions, and engages an elegantly driven discussion about notation and spectatorship, he unveils 'views from the back of the head' (Rovers, 2012). At the end, just before one more blood-layer there are whisperings, giving names of people who facilitated this thing. The booklet is naked and yearns for its cover to return. The latter does, after having shown its inside: some more mysterious patterns of red lines, dark drawings, the outline of a body of the big spectator that is also the body of the reader that is also the body of the performer, and some more red dots, points of encounter. To be able to make such description of the book-performance, one needs to have had the performance in hands, to have 'seen'/touched it. But before having experienced *Sync* (2012), there are things one can already know, that influences the reception to come. On a webpage²⁴, through an e-flyer, or a program, one can learn that:

The book turns into performance from the moment one reads it; when the



Figure 3.1: participants of the workshop *Sync* turning the book into a swimming octopus, 5 February 2012, Amsterdam

space and time that are inside come together with the body of the reader. The book introduces you to a movement vocabulary made of poetry, keywords, instructions, mathematic equations, Laban notation, drawing, and discourse. Stairs, air, red dots, triangles, lines, form the imaginary landscape of the piece. In the theatre, *Sync* is a performance with no other performers than spectators themselves. Step on stage, take the book, choose your space, compose your reading, test a manipulation of objects, test the movements (movements of thoughts, breathing, shifts of perspectives, gazes, mechanisms of expansion-retraction), connect with your neighbor. Experience the intimacy of individual reading within the collective.

In the studio, *Sync* is a workshop about reading choreography (see video Appendix 3.3). It is like a book-club where experiences of reading are shared. We will exchange our personal interpretations, and re-name/re-write/re-invent the score with newly generated movements of thoughts, imagination, and actions. In your hands, the performance can travel from home, to the train, to the library etc.



Figure 3.2: 'Skin' of the book-performance

Looking at the project *Sync* (2012) from the perspective of notation, and writing scores (see Chapter 1), the book can be defined as containing a minimum of 3 scores (cover, poem, and diagram) and up to around 15 scores (including all keywords that are small scores using symbols of *Kinetographie Laban*, text, drawings, and Mathematics). *Kinetographie Laban* has been deconstructed in order to be able to communicate only what it needed to communicate (effort²⁵, levels, amplitude, body part, actions – see ill. 3.3). The compilation of scores does not refer to anything outside itself, but the score(s) refers to itself. In this book, choreography recovers its original meaning, it is writing. Like in the time of Feuillet (XVIIIth), where scores were choreography par excellence (see Chapter 1), this book is the choreography. While the degree of explicitness of the book must be much lower than in Feuillet's notation, it has one action in common: it invites to gather²⁶.

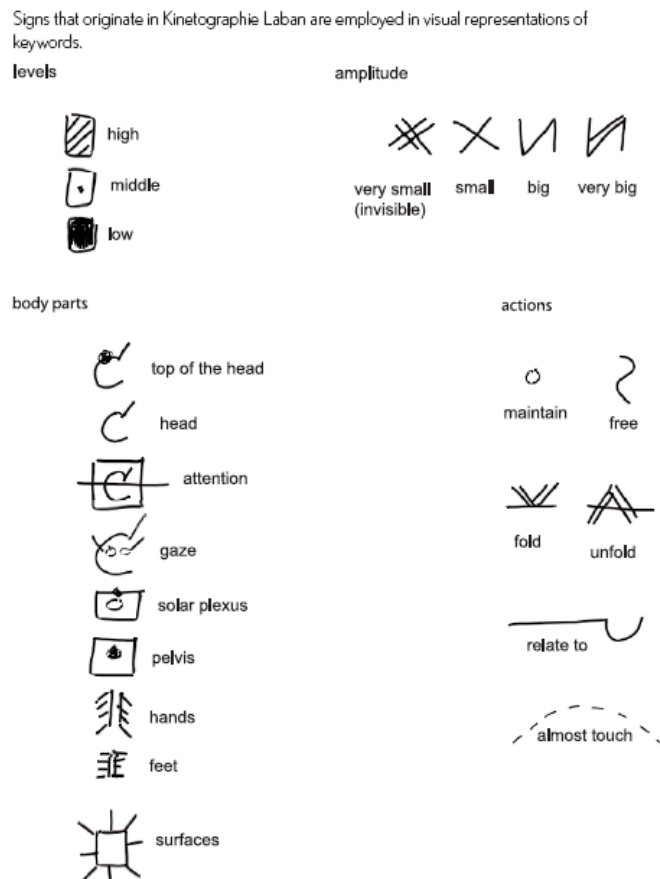


Figure 3.3: glossary of the choreography on paper in the book-performance *Sync*

From the *dorsal* perspective, *Sync* (2012), the book in its own description (book-performance) is a turn to the limits of common thinking of choreography and writing. The anatomy and content of the book show non-straightforwardness in the multiplicity of layers it presents, and reversibility (recto-verso). The book-performance is imbued with the concept of writing in *Print* (that derived from my reading of *Dorsality*). It exists in relation to its reader. It aims to challenge the role of the spectator - the spectator is reader, he/she acts and knows, links what he/she sees/reads/touches with what he/she has seen and told, done and dreamed (Rancière, 2004/2007). In terms of New Media Poetics, *Sync* (2012) is made of differential texts, 'that is to say, texts that exist in different material forms, with no single version being the definitive one' (quoting M. Perloff Morris, 2006, p. 32). It can find its place in the category of 'procedural poem', 'generated by the interplay between a body of information and a sequence of steps or, in new media terminology, a database and algorithm' (Morris, 2006, p. 24); and/or in the category of 'reiterative programmable poems' (Morris, 2006, p. 26). In some extend, *Sync* (2012) has common points with poem-games 'rule-driven ritual spaces dependent on an engaged player' (Morris, 2006, p. 22).

* *

The book aspect of the book-performance *Sync* (2012) is very clear, but what is the performance? Participants of the first edition of the workshop had various conceptions of the performance. For dance-informed participant, it was the cover, because it had the name score.

Julian: And I found myself then afterwards, taking off the cover. Sort of peeling this additional layer.

Joseph: I still want to do that because I didn't know.

Fransien: That was the performance? I though that, that was the performance?
(see Appendix3.3)

For a computer science researcher, who had not unfold the cover and had resisted to fill in the diagram, the impression was of having prepared very well for the performance but not having seen it yet. Although the poem turned to be for her the performance (the experience of reading the lexicon made her second reading of the poem; keywords had a new resonance in her body).

Amalia: So what I actually feel is that I haven't seen the performance. I have been reading about it and preparing myself for it, but I haven't seen it yet. And you (referring to Doron), peeling it (the cover) off and showing me that there is all this world out there that I had not even realized. And also the fact that we had this puzzle exercise, which I was looking at and thought: 'ok, I am not going to trace it yet. I am looking at it, I recognize the words, the elements, but I am not going to run it yet', so I haven't executed it. So these two things add to my

experience that I haven't yet seen the performance. But I have been preparing for it. I went through the book once the whole part, and twice through the symbols of the glossary. [...] What I also wanted to see is whether they (symbols) would be more recognizable afterwards, or whether they would actually trigger more things, movement, images in my head afterwards. So what I also did: I also read the poem twice [...] I read the poem again to see if the words in the poem would connect with the words of Emilie's vocabulary and see if that would trigger different images. And that was for me fun to do, it was a different reading of the poem after having assigned different meanings to the word 'neighbor' or to the word 'here'.

Emilie: So wouldn't it be possible to consider the poem as being your performance?

A: yes, that was the most engaged experience. (see Appendix3.3)

For a writer the performance was the book.

Jet: I see the performance, in the sense of the book, as something that is composed there; the conscious choice of putting the essay there, the poem etc. in that particular order. I felt like a spectator, didn't feel the urge to precisely unravel. (see Appendix3.3)

For a dancer, the performance was his encounter with the book, his reactions.

Joseph: I am not sure I can compare it with an other dance performance or something visual because for me that was more like I was the performance myself or the performance was in my brain. [...] It's a book and I was the only one with the performance. My reactions were the performance. (see Appendix3.3)

So, the performance is the reading of the book: a reading that plays with movements of reading, and with the reading of movement. It aims to to give space for active contemplation, possibility to receive, perceive and decipher.

Julian: There was one moment where I was just taking in, receiving, whereas later on I had to decipher. (see Appendix3.3)

To read, for New Media Poetics, is reformulated into 'to sample', 'to morph', 'to infect', 'to inflect', 'to aggregate', 'to amplify'. It acknowledges the actions of exploring, interpreting, interacting with, and using. Such understanding of reading allows a transformation from mere object to event: 'In the process of turning an object into an event, a digital image is not just activated but also augmented, amplified, and filtered by the user's body' (Morris, 2006, p. 17). When the object is a book, the movement of reading opens new possibilities for the reader.

When reading this book, please take your time. Remember that you do not necessarily need to start at the beginning. Start anywhere; stop anywhere. Don't worry about reaching the end. Don't read the whole book if you don't want

to. Look through the table of contents, and start at the point that sounds most interesting to you. Read one line repeatedly for two days. Do whatever you need to with this book, and, if possible, do not let it damage your thoughts. Put it down, and read something else. Read this book as a creative act (Goulish, 2000).

Reading a book as a performance gives a chance to change the relations to time (duration, order of sequences, divisions), a chance to choose an environment (the performance unfolds on the stage of reader's imaginations), to decide one's role in it (what spectator to be).

Joseph: I am trying to remember how it began, but
 Ah yes the poem
 I was trying to imagine in my head what I was reading
 With pictures. And then, later on, when this part came with the drawings
 I really started to have this consciousness of my chest, the breathing. (see Appendix3.3)

Reading the book as performance causes inner moves, as writing does to speech. Mathematician and philosopher Brian Rotman, using Gilles Chatelet's understanding of diagrams (as they are related to gesture on the one hand and to symbols on the other) argues that diagrams are captured gestures and that therefor they relate to movement (Rotman, 2000). In the same way that diagrams are not representative of knowledge but they are action and experience, this book as score does not represent but aims to be action and experience. Lucinda Childs simplified score of 'Interior drama' (1977, Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York) (see ill. 3.4) is action and experience. There is an inherent dynamic in her scores that immediately takes the reader into an inner dance. As

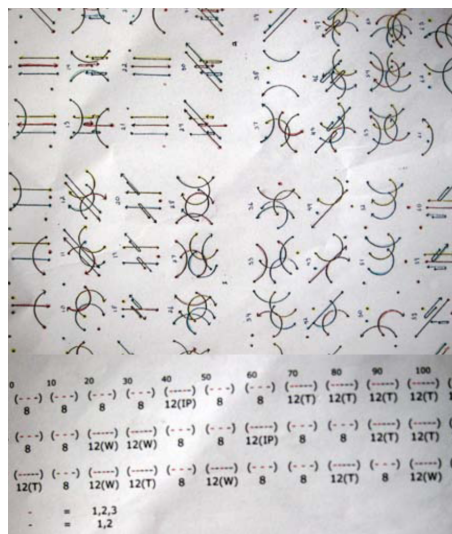


Figure 3.4: fragments of score from *Melody* and *Interior Drama*, Lucinda Childs 1977

the title of her 1977's piece suggests, her scores touch the intimate by provoking interior dramas. Scores are open doors to private, intimate and individual spheres. They touch. 'Touching shakes up and sets in motion' (Nancy, 2011, p. 1).

3.2 Who's dancing?

Dorsality exposes language as technology within the body (Wills, 2008). The book-performance is a body. It further expands when it encounters the reader. Interactions between the two make them to grow through each others. Boundaries construct, reconstruct, and move beyond the individual (reader) who turns to the *neighbor*. The *neighbour* is omnipresent in the poem *Sync*, as 'someone', a neighbour whom *I, me the reader* might also breathe: 'Could somebody else have had that same air? Inside of him? The air swims shamelessly from one body into another (Loontjens, 2012)' The *neighbour* exist in the poem as micro-organisms, or the other: 'My body exists because of the climbing of the other (Loontjens, 2012)'. Or perhaps is the *neighbour* the 'I' of the poem. In the choreography on paper, the *neighbour* is a category of movement in relation to others (another person physically present in the surrounding of the reader, or the someones inside the book'. The neighbour is he/she/it to whom 'I send furtive looks', 'A quick sliding gaze', he/she/it asks *me the reader* 'Can you see me?'. 'Invisible rays connect me' with others (see keywords 'To my neighbour, in Preface). *I, me the reader* communicate with my *neighbour* with breathings that coordinate with gesture of crumpling/opening a paper. *I* am caught by the *point of encounter* of my neighbour. *I move back and forth* with him/her/it, 'here together' (see ill. 3.5). So it is probably the book, the reader ('terminal spectator', see Chapter2, spectator and and at the same time creator, performer, theatre), and all these neighbors (both inside the book and beyond it) who dance. When asked who were the performers of *Sync*, while talking about it as a performance, participants of the workshop sometimes said they were the performers, or some 'strangers without face' were performers, or people sitting next to them in the train.

Julian: Something that I noticed particularly was the neighbor. And how I became very conscious of the eyes, I mean in this circumstance you know 'I'm not really looking at you but I know you're there [...] if I really look at you there is this whole shift of perception yes but hum, connection maybe. So even on the train I found myself sort of connecting to all these strangers. It was a very

SQUARED SUN $\sum_{i=0}^{\alpha} \text{neighbour} + \text{Me}_i$

$$\alpha \in [0, \infty [$$

$$\text{Me}_{i+1} = \text{Me}_i \times x$$

$$x \in \mathbb{R} (0, 2\pi)$$

Invisible rays connect me with others.
I play with them by slightly shifting my orientation and letting the change affect our relation.



Figure 3.5: page 10 of the book-performance *Sync*

crowded train this morning.

Jet: I also had the experience of the neighbor being very present, picking a little bit in the book that I was reading or looking.

Fransien: Thinking of it as a score all the time, I was looking for my performative mode. With the text I could, and with the images, I think it is so aesthetic that actually it encourages you not to go in there. It also gives you maybe the comfort to stay there although you don't understand. (see Appendix3.3)

* *

As performers, some of the readers and participants of the workshop *Sync* felt responsible and issues of assimilation arose; the need to understand to be able to perform well.

I really, I really wanted to understand. I really wanted to, maybe find a deeper understanding. (see Appendix3.3)

With complex, non-obvious modalities of writing – like for instance the notation *Kinetographie Laban* and the mathematic equations – difficulties came along for readers.

Then I was more interested about the symbols, the drawings. I couldn't figure out everything cause I'm not so much into Labanotation or I don't know so much about it yet but, hum [...] Then it came a bit too mathematics and I thought I was too tired to go deeper into that, to really understand (see Appendix3.3)

It is interesting to think of such situation and question of understanding in a more common format of performance. Do we always understand it all? Thinking of participative performances in particular, similar issues emerge. When one knows one is engaged 'actively', the wish to do well can become a pressure. There are then specific contracts established between makers and spectators (growing from the basic one of regular theatre situation – the ritual allowing the event – buying a ticket, sitting in the darkroom, lights on, lights off, clapping, etc.). The book-performance, the score referring to itself, placing the spectator literarily in the position of reader suggests to deal with this pressure differently. Holding in hands the performance, all its components being understandable or not, gives the possibility to accept not knowing, or to do what it takes to assimilate. Some participants like Joseph in the quote above just accepted with serenity their partial perception, some others choose to find their interpretation of codes they did not know, to guess the code (as one does with mathematic equations) or to assimilate the code thanks to the glossary.

Amalia: I am actually very positive that they (symbols) can become part of my cognition, if I just continue doing it. So I don't think it is that hard to follow the instruction after all. Once you just have to get the instructions right and then you have to get familiar with it, and then you can get them, and then you can

perform them and then you can alter them of course. [...] I was annoyed that the key (glossary) was given just like that without any warning, it is too easy! (see Appendix3.3)

Taking performance beyond its usual border, or perhaps even more correctly returning to the core of choreography with writing, induces the possibility of learning for the spectator: learning by means of repetition, reiteration, translation. In the recent exhibition of Xavier Le Roy *Retrospective* (February/April 2012) in Barcelona, visitors of the museum saw the possibility of asking to performers: 'Can I learn the exercise?'²⁷. The space of exhibition made it conceivable to ask. The ritual of the exhibition's space, coming in, taking the ticket, not too speak too loud, has similarities with the ones of theatre; but some rules diverge, spectator move around, take pictures, talk with performers and express association of ideas, impressions etc. The sacred aspect of theater's ritual is broken. Inspired by the book-performance making of the reader a spectator-becoming-performer, and with this break of sacred sides of the ritual, I questioned the position of the dancer: a performer-becoming-spectator²⁸?

3.3 Together intelligent, thinking, knowing

In the project *Twist in the body of the Big Spectator* theatre is proposed as a place to think together. Spectators gather at the theatre; they have various degrees of implication into the project. All are readers of the choreography, the score. The performers are expert readers, expert spectators; they understand the code of the score and own a way to translate it. Very implicated spectators know the key of the score, they can also read it, and see how experts translate it. Implicated spectators had access to the score, and new-coming-spectators discover it for the first time (their only implication is then their access to the publicity texts, images, and program). Daniël Rovers wonders in the beginning of his essay whether one needs to be dancer to appreciate choreography, what is the required degree of expertise (Rovers, 2012)? Along his essay, he demonstrates that we can all become dancers in our minds, which is the aim of the book-performance *Sync*.

So can we watch dance without ever having been dancers ourselves? The foregoing suggests that the answer may not matter much, since we can at least become dancers in our minds, and the point is to be receptive to what lies behind you. (Rovers, 2012, P. 26)

Bertha Bermúdez while learning systems of notation Laban and Benesh observes their qualities and potentials and also warns about the required knowledge 'the right measure must be found' (Bermúdez, 2010). For *Twist in the body of the Big Spectator*, each spectator chooses his/her own measure. They ask themselves how experts are they, and how expert do they wish to become for the piece. Then, the iterative mode of composition of the piece invites everyone to recognize appointments and series of actions that they can choose to receive from a different position each time it repeats. Composed according to the trope of long inhales and long exhales of the *Big Spectator* (movements of spatial expansion and retraction), *Twist in the body of the Big Spectator* uses movement and reiteration for spectators to be able to exchange, teach, learn, and imagine.

What we call repetition presents an instability of differences. What we call repetition presents a permeability of identities. The individual meets the collective. A repetition that touches its limit may constitute a learning (Goulish, 2000).

Twist in the body of the Big Spectator is a score being translated in loops. With repetition, the piece self-reflects and hopes to become a machine for cognition, 'Thinkertoys' (quoting Ted Nelson's term for their digital imaging Morris, 2006, p. 2). Spectators are to think together and to witness others in search. The project proclaims the equality of intelligences (Rancière, 2004/2007, p. 171) and calls for intellectual emancipation building upon differences in knowledge, experience, and

implication. Asking 'what if we were all spectators?' with this project is motivated by a search for norms of relation that would accept complexity.

* *

We learned from David Wills (2008, *Dorsality*) that the *dorsal* posture is affirmative. It is *double-concentration*, an attention sent to both the front and the back, an attention to both what we know and what we do not know, an attention to what we can think and what we cannot think yet (see Chapter2). To accept the complexity of our time is to accept not knowing what the neighbor might know, to agree with not understanding. In a performance that grew from a score that refers to itself and where all actors of the choreography are more or less implicated spectators, accepting complexity may mean saying yes to our very partial perception, accepting knowing less, or more, or different than the neighbour. Knowledge is here understood in a wide sense that encompasses both intellectual and sensorial aspects. The common understanding of audience participation is at stakes. The dichotomy active/passive spectator cannot work. Passivity is somehow impossible. Spectators, in any case, make the performance. They contribute to it in thoughts.

Spectatorship is not a passivity that must be turned into activity. It is our normal situation. We learn and teach. We act and know, as spectators who link what they see with what they have seen and told, done and dreamed (Rancière, 2004/2007).

There is no good answer in such performance, and therefore, the pressure of performing well, of doing as one should, is a fake obstacle. Participative performances can sometimes be so directive that they reproduce the system they might vividly criticize, a mode of participation that places again the spectator in a place of follower, who can sometimes be less participant through association because of the energy spent in executing well the task. I wish for participative performances where one accept not to have clear fully complete contract from the beginning, and where spectators are the one inventing it together.

Notes

²⁴see <http://www.post-cie.com/en/sync.php/>

²⁵Effort is a system for understanding subtle characteristics about the way a movement is done with respect to inner intention. Effort has four subcategories, each of which has two opposite polarities. Space: Direct / Indirect. Weight: Strong / Light. Time: Sudden (or Quick) / Sustained. Flow: Bound / Free

²⁶A score by Feuillet was the choreography. It was decoded by the court people, who would then come together to dance. The book can trigger such an impulse, come together to speak about it, come together to dance it.

²⁷Xavier Le Roy talks about the exhibition in an interview available online: <http://www.macba.cat/en/rwm-sonia-xavier-le-roy->

²⁸Jacques Rancière in the *Emancipated Spectator* writes about science as the art of not knowing the answer, the vanishing of the omniscient teacher for the concepts of 'teacher-becoming-student, and student-becoming-teacher' (Rancière, 2004/2007)

Conclusion

Dorsality operates on choreography by sewing the writing back to its body. However long might be the threads, writing is there, *dorsal*. In the forms of scores, and scores that may employ notation, writing first of all guarantees experience. Yes, it is a document, an archive. But its crucial role in making experience stands too often in the out of sight; writing falls into oblivion when it lays or is destined for laying in accumulated piles of archive. This would be the wrong purpose. Writing, at first, generates experience. A book, a piece of writing, is a body. As spectator who encounters this body, I can watch the dance; when I read it I can visualize a performer doing it. I can also identify and be the one who dances. Re-glueing writing in print to choreography makes it an art that 'everybody knows' even though we might not know we know (Morris, 2006, citing Gertrude Stein). Perhaps is the dance precisely there in the 'unknown known' (Gansterer, 2011) that burns to come to the surface again. Embracing sensorial and cognitive modes hand in hand, taking the risk of detours, we acknowledge our own ignorance, we expand, we learn. Individuals weaving through the choreography in print, we own the power to translate in our own way what we are looking at; 'the common power of spectators is the power of equality of intelligences' (Rancière, 2004/2007). In *print*, we hold the possibility to re-invent, design the maze we are to move in, re-invent the future.

Dear Writing, dear Choreography, will you separate or not after all this?

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Appendix

Sync: the book-performance

The pdf version of the book-performance is available online <http://www.post-cie/downloads/sync.pdf>.

Workshop Sync: the book club discussion

Data from the workshop *Sync*, 3,4,5 February 2012, ICKamsterdam Dance Notation Series.

Workshop participants talking about the book as a performance, as a performance they had 'attended' to.

The discussion was video recorded. The numbers below refer to the number of the original video-files; blanks and empty lines try to convey the rhythm of their phrasing, silences. In *italic* are some intrusion for the report, giving some thematic title/indications. A montage of this 'book club' discussion is available online <http://vimeo.com/40356282>.

Participants to the conversation were Joseph (dancer), Julian (choreographer), Fransien (dramaturge), Amalia (computer-science researcher), Jet (writer), Eline (student in History), Astarti (dancer), and Doron (choreographer). Some of them had learned some notion of notation or movement reading before they read the book, some did not, and Doron was the only participant who did not have the book before the discussion.

2.

Joseph – *Performance in the train* J: I saw the performance, this morning in the train

Hum

And I started upside down. And then I had to turn it around

56

Yeah

I was a bit tired, so I had to keep concentrated

I am trying to remember how it began, but

Ah yes the poem

Was trying to imagine in my head what I was reading

With pictures. And then, later on, when this part came with the drawings

I really started to have this consciousness of my chest, the breathing

Then I was more interested about the symbols, the drawings

I couldn't figure out everything cause I'm not so much into Labanotation or I don't know so much about it yet but, hum

I could see that there was a play with the symbols

It wasn't just being used but

Sometimes it looked like there were little smiley

But they were being manipulated, changed, transformed

Ad it was nice, to see

Then I,

Then it came a bit too mathematics and I thought I was too tired to go deeper into that, to really understand

But I realized there are different layers to go deeper into, that I would want to see the performance again

Yes,

And I finished with the essay, which was, very nice reading. Because in some way it was clarifying some things about the choreographer, and how it all worked.

3.

Emilie: What about the duration of the performance?

Joseph: It took from Arnhem to Utrecht. So I don't know, about 20 minutes.

Julian: Perhaps there is this shared relationship of reading it on the train. So there is already this context that seems to be established,

cause I read it as well on the train. And I sort of had myself an intermission. I read the first half last night and then the second half this morning. So I kind of divided it up.

Fransien: When did you stop?

J: I stopped when I started to see the red. Whenever that was, page 12 or something.

4.

Julian: I wonder whether you and I were the only ones sharing this experience in the train. Something that I noticed particularly was the neighbor. And how I became very conscious of the eyes, I mean in this circumstance you know 'I'm not really looking at you but I know you're there – related to what we did yesterday (pre-phase of the workshop about the movement of reading) – if I really look at you there is this whole shift of perception yes but hum, connection maybe. So even on the train I found myself sort of connecting to all these strangers. It was a very crowded train this morning.

I think my first experience □ To be accurate I had to begin and I had to begin multiple times. I could not read it straight through. And I think it's partly cause I really, I really wanted to understand. I really wanted to, maybe find a deeper understanding.

So I had to keep rewinding over and over again. So it never really began, until I moved on. I had multiple beginnings.

What stood out for me was the moment of the neighbors particularly.

And the body folding, folding upon itself.

What was very resonant was the poem. The poem was quite beautiful. I did have to read it again multiple times. But I loved this idea of this kind of endless stairs that led up down sideways. It gave me the sensation of possibility, the sensation of potentiality.

Anything was possible in a way, even though it was coming from this sort of internal, questions of the self.

But I had a similar experience than Joseph when I went to the Math and some of the symbols, cause I have a minimal knowledge of Laban, only from you basically (reference to pre-phase of the workshop). So I recognized that it was Laban, but first I had to know if it was Laban for sure because they do look like faces, they look like familiar symbols, not something as distinctive as Laban.

I agree that the essay sort of contextualized it in a nice way.

– *the cover discussion:*

And I found myself then afterwards, taking off the cover. Sort of peeling this additional layer.

Joseph: I still want to do that because I didn't know.

Fransien: That was the performance? I thought that, that was the performance?

Julian: the climax, sort of.

Eline: It took me a while to find out that I could actually take off the cover.

– *Amalia wondering 'did I see the performance'?*

Amalia: I just found out! So what I actually feel is that I haven't seen the performance. I have been reading about it and preparing myself for it, but I haven't seen it yet. And you (referring to Doron), peeling it off and showing me that there is all this world out there that I had not even realized.

And also the fact that we had this puzzle exercise, which I was looking at and thought: 'ok, I am not going to trace it yet. I am looking at it, I recognize the words, the elements, but I am not going to run it yet', so I haven't executed it.

So these two things add to my experience that I haven't yet seen the performance. But I have been preparing for it. I went through the book once the whole part, and twice through the symbols of the glossary. I wanted to have the deeper understanding that you said.

What I also wanted to see is whether they (symbols) would be more recognizable afterwards, or whether they would actually trigger more things, movement, images in my head afterwards. So what I also did: I also read the poem twice (first when you open the book, you start and then I went back yesterday, after studying the symbols multiple times).

I read the poem again to see if the words in the poem would connect with the words of Emilie's vocabulary and see if that would trigger different images. And that was for me fun to do, it was a different reading of the poem after having assigned different meanings to the word 'neighbor' or to the word 'here'.

Emilie: So wouldn't it be possible to consider the poem as being your performance?

A: yes, that was the most engaged experience.

5.

– *Fransien*

Julian: There was the one moment where I was just taking in, receiving, whereas later on I had to decipher.

That is why I had to read multiple time. Maybe it is something connected to my nature, I did not want to read it incorrectly. With the keywords, I wanted to understand because I didn't want to misinterpret.

Fransien: I went from the back, which is interesting. I have the tendency to always start from the back of the book. So I read the back, the essay first. Knowing I had unfolded already the, the cover. It was late, and I thought 'ah, I still have to look at Emilie's book'. And it was like quarter to twelve, very quiet, and I really remember that I really picked up the book in a different way as if I was with, now I was with the book! As if there was I don't know like a secret. I was really performing because of all this preparation (Fransien took part in the pre-phase of the workshop, movement of writing, and movement of reading).

I didn't start at the beginning, which is like my tendency to rebel. I always look at the back of the book and I always go my way first and then I will follow the rhythm. And, I didn't know Daniel Rovers. I thought it was really nice, and I liked his essay / also at the same time a bit strange, what was the relation of all this to...

Then I went to the poem, and I liked it a lot and then I didn't like the ending. I found it a bit strange. The essay is very articulate but also kind of light, elegant. It feels like it is really a statement the poem but it ends in, there is no grip.

And I didn't think about movement in terms of the stairs, I did not experience the chest. I really only thought about watching them, like a Escher kind of image.

And then there was the puzzle in the middle.

And then I read the introduction so I know who is who.

Then I got really interested, I had to really perform now, there was no way of just watching it and having a judgment. I had to enter so to speak. And I had a hard time in a way. Not with the triangles. Not with everything that was in terms of words, I could imagine. But I understood there was more. I thought 'oh god, you have to go to this boy scout attitude' I had to really tell myself to be disciplined enough to understand that these were instructions. And I remembered Math at school, I was just not prepared to stick with x and a . I needed physicality. So what I got later on from the map is that I could see the space. But the actions, they were too much of 'I could do anything with it' because just like you (Julian) I wanted to be precise with it. And then I had to do a sort of study into a language like if I had to learn Russian. But you cannot learn from yourself alone. I don't want to invent Russian, I want to know it. So there is this moment where you need other.

I saw the space, and it was rather huge

You feel that you have to work with your mind

It is like a key you have to crack.

It felt like a huge tent. It reminds me of the beauty of the relations in space. But it is very static like a grand landscape, with a ceiling. It was a landscape with a ceiling. So, a tent. Clearly a circus

60

tent. So, I ended up in a circus tent.

It took half an hour yesterday and then this morning. Training, this morning.

6.

Amalia the exam / codings, the key

Amalia: I went over the book all over again in a very funny environment while supervising an exam yesterday morning in the university and I was thinking of trying this neighbor thing but I was afraid of what my students would think if I was making contact.

7.

Amalia, assimilation

I am actually very positive that they (symbols) can become part of my cognition, if I just continue doing it.

So I don't think it is that hard to follow the instruction after all. Once you just have to get the instructions right and then you have to get familiar with it, and then you can get them, and then you can perform them and then you can alter them of course.

8.

Jet, eclectic experience of reading

Jet: I find interesting that the three persons we've heard have had an experience of wanting to be precise and really discover what do the symbols mean and for me personally it was a very different performance.

The performance for me started or is still like an eclectic experience. I was here yesterday, so it started with a meeting and an introduction and a lot of new information came to me since I am not familiar at all with Laban notation neither with Mathematic lexicon which I have never been very successful with. So for me it was merely a journey of being surprised. Being open to new language, which I did not feel at all the need to understand fully or even study or being able to fully grasp.

For me it was interesting to just read the book eclectically, taking just what spoke to me. I noticed that the words first spoke to me since they are the things I am the most familiar with but then other elements came in with the symbols and the mathematic lexicon. I was surprised and interested how I could see that in a different way and that it made sense to me although I didn't understand it. I feel a kind of gratitude for experiencing that. Like you can have an admiration or being inspired

by a composer for example although you cannot compose yourself or you cannot read notes; that does not keep me from being able to enjoy a composition for instance. The book felt that way. In that sense there was not many differences between the negative time and space in between and the actual time of the performance since it is an ongoing process of searching and trying to be open for meaning, the meaning that it could have for me.

I see the performance, in the sense of the book, as something that is composed there; the conscious choice of putting the essay there, the poem etc. in that particular order. I felt like a spectator, didn't feel the urge to precisely unravel.

It was just for me a nice eclectic experiment to be and also take the train in between, sleep in between, trying to explain to two persons what I had been doing yesterday which was hum, not easy! And where my own language left me at that point.

9.

Fransien, performative state

F: Thinking of it as a score all the time, I was looking for my performative mode. With the text I could, and with the images, I think it is so aesthetic that actually it encourages you not to go in there. It also gives you maybe the comfort to stay there although you don't understand.

I was looking for my performative mode although when I read the text about stairs I don't even consider the fact that it would affect me physically.

10.

Jet, the neighbors

Jet: It (the performance) started with a meeting here being very unprepared, very open. Then I walked through Amsterdam. I tried to describe to my friends what I had been doing. I hoped I could read the book in the train, but due to circumstances that was not technically possible (packed trains due to snow). Then when I did spend some little time with it in the train,

I also had the experience of the neighbor being very present, picking a little bit in the book that I was reading or looking, and it made me aware of the fact that he or she might have been thinking that it would make perfect sense to me, which was not the case. I was in the position where I was reading something that I was still discovering. With the eye of a third person, it became an experience as if I was an expert.

This morning I also 'train-wise' opened the performance. The circumstances were very different, much quieter, and much lighter. The landscape in my surrounding was nice, quiet, light. That af-

pected what I read.

11.

Eline: I received the book Tuesday.

I was on my way to University and that felt a bit like a ticket to the theatre. You have bought a ticket to a concert or to a performance and, hum.

But you still have to wait for a few days or a week to see it. You are really excited.

I had this feeling and although I had to meet a professor, I couldn't help myself, so I opened the book and I started reading and then hum,

A fellow student passed by and she asked, 'what are you doing?' And I said, 'I think I am reading a book'. So I understand having to explain what you are doing but having no clue whatsoever. I ended up saying 'I think it is a book with words, and dancing'. I put the book back in my bag and carried it with me for several days, really like the concert's ticket. And yesterday evening was the actual time when I took it out, I was in my room all alone, it was quiet and I took the time to read it. First I read it through and I took notes of what I associated the book with or what I saw or what I felt.

The second time I tried to translate really what was there. Taking the map, writing down the words I found in the book because the symbols were confusing me. I created an overview with my own ideas.

You (Fransien) said something about the circus tent. For me it was a maze. When you are in a maze, you go in and at some point comes the end of the maze but you have no idea what corner to turn and there can be somebody else around the corner and you arrive to a point of encounter, do not know what happen and you also feel that there are other people in the maze you can feel that they are there but you don't always see them and you can also have the feeling of somebody walking behind you in the same direction.

Size, amplitude and distance Fransien: It remained at the beginning a small perspective, staying together with the symbols, restricted to them. Then looking at the map, at the line, it became bigger, and it became a platform with a roof.

Julian: I am curious, who were these other people in the maze?

Eline: Random strangers with no faces. There are people there, and I don't know if they are males or females. Physical people with no face, they were unknown to me. I felt their presence, I knew

they were there.

Emilie: What was your place among these bodies in the maze?

Eline: I was trying to find the exit!

I think it is due to the wanting to understand what is there, what is going on, what it is about. I was not getting it all, therefore this felling of hurry, urgency 'I need to get it, I need to get it'.

12.

Astarti: I joined the first part of the workshop yesterday. I then went back home, it was full of snow and very cold and everything I had for the rest of the day got cancelled. I had a day to stay home which is not usually the case. I did all I had to do until 21h. (Identification) I shut down the computer and even my phone, and I lie down on the coach and read the book. I read it from the beginning to the end. Maybe I went back a few times.

I thought it was funny because at the beginning it says 'yes you lie down in a comfortable relation to the book' and I thought 'yes this is me!!' and with the lamp behind you and I said 'yes this is really me!'

I did not have trouble finding out what it was about. It started with the poem. It caught me, developed some memories, some familiarity, the language was very simple and I could really relate to it. I read it over and over again.

When the symbols came – I have read a couple of books from Laban, and when I read them I never saw humanity the same way again, I fell the shift, and highly appreciate him, but I never fully understood; or I understand but could not explain it to someone – reading the symbols, I had an idea what it was about.

The way I was reading the book was not that I would transfer it to someone else but pretty much to just go through my own experience.

And when the map came that was quite a challenge! I found the relation with the language quite relieving and again it was all connected.

I kept two points from the last part, the essay. The first is this intention to be a writer through a book of performance and the way of the poet wanting to be a dancer. I found it to be a beautiful metaphor.

13.

Doron, conclusion. Comparison with other performances

Joseph: It is like handmade. I did not want to manipulate it or destroy it. I wanted to preserve a very respectful attitude.

Doron: it was quite intuitive to do this and that. It is not like I wanted to destroy it but of course I was very curious once I did this (unfolding the cover) unfold the rest. I did not open it completely although. It felt a bit cheating if I would do that.

I can now fantasize what is the content of the book, from what I have heard (Doron received the book and did not read it yet). I can see there is a choreography on paper, which I can only imagine that it is a score of some sort with Laban notation. The poem I understand is a spatial experience as well and I heard these different versions of the stairs and I try to make my own idea of stairs going in different directions. Is it a circular space? Or are the stairs actually like in an Amphitheatre? Is it like Escher's? Do stairs actually have a direction?

And then the essay stays the most vague to me. I only heard it was written very elegantly. It is probably the most logical thing in the whole package.

For me it is a performance that three people worked on and from a different approach and I also understand that we as a reader have □ I guess there are some parts where you combine the reading of words with movement and somehow with a very systematic way to combine. Yet, no one here actually knows how to read it yet very well. So I can imagine this play where people are reading where the actors are still with the text on the stage reading.

I saw few things like that in my theatre background. I find it fascinating this reading as a character as also for the first time and how you have to react on all your partners.

Sometimes it is actually a lot more interesting than when they actually do it with the costumes, with the set, with the objects because it is then one person's interpretation and it shuts you out as a spectator or you have a more limited imagination because it is given.

Eline: based on what you've heard would you be looking forward to see the performance?

D: It is now the paradox between something that nobody knows how to interpret and a very clear system that someone has intended. I would look forward to see how this gap unravels. How it is performed? I choose to remain not knowing, because that's my fun.

I imagine lines, patterns.

You don't know who's going to be reading, who is going to be moving, who is going to do both. Would it be separate groups?

Sudden realization, only the reading of the book! D: The performance is only the reading of the book?!

I imagined a whole interpretation.

Emilie: Could you all try to compare this book to a performance you have seen?

Julian: I see animation. Like a Miyasaki Princess Mononoke, landscape, colours.

14.

Joseph, I was the performance Joseph: I am not sure I can compare it with an other dance performance or something visual because for me that was more like I was the performance myself or the performance was in my brain. It was a process of self-observation with those ah-ah moment, and those moments focused on my breath. So it was more personal, it's a book and I was the only one with the performance. My reactions were the performance.

15.

Fransien: I was looking for a way to be able to say it aloud, to perform it, not necessarily as a dancer but as a spectator.

Acknowledgements

I thank all interlocutors who allowed the development of this research, and in particular: Thibaut Prod'homme for his constant support and inspiration, Prof. Richard Allsopp, Dr. Konstantina Georgelou and Joao Da Silva for their feedback and guidance throughout the research, Thomas Körtvélyessy and Bertha Bermúdez for accompanying the projects *The dorsal Chance*, *Sync* and *Twist in the body of the Big Spectator*, Suzy Blok, Eve Hopkins, Jannah Loontjens, Daniël Rovers, my colleagues Tomaz Simatovic, Julian Barnett and Valasia Simeon, and all collaborators and spectators.

