PHENOMENOLOGY OF DANCE

by

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ABSTRACT

As a phenomenological investigation this thesis is grounded in the primal reality of the body in motion. It begins with a belief that the underlying structure of dance rests in the subjective experience of the moving body, extending through a temporal and spatial organization. Structurally, the relational threads that interweave between the moving body, space and time are internally necessary to the fleeting form that is dance.

This phenomenological investigation is mediated through a paradoxical lens, which invites one to linger between the Western dichotomy of mind and body so that the depthful act of thinking in movement becomes a reality. A discussion of the relation of written language and notation to the subjective experience of movement reveals, that dance cannot survive denotative attempts. Dance as a form which reveals ‘being in the moment’ can only have this fleeting quality if the relational ties between moving body, space and time are maintained.

In relation to dance this thesis aims to use the word aesthetic to describe, that which is perceptible and felt. A consideration of the etymological foundation of aesthetic attunes one to the fleeting quality of dance, which takes place in an ever evolving moment of ‘now’ while attending to the reality of the body’s capacity to directly create meaning.
A subjective awareness of the body in motion is paramount to the form of dance. Knowing how it feels to move in a particular way allows a dancer the capacity to create and manipulate time and space. Systems of professional dance training tend to recognize and treat the body objectively, effectively constructing a body that looks like a dancer. This thesis maintains that a dancer must dance through the ties of the subjective body in motion. It is only in this sense that the body doesn’t become divided from the dancer and from the experience of motion.

Fleetingly dance vanishes the moment it is revealed. The visible dance is invisibly held together through a relational synthesis of moving body extending spatially and temporally. It is to these threads that the dancer must be fully committed.

KEYWORDS

Dance-Philosophy, Movement Philosophy, Aesthetics, Body-Human
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INTRODUCTION

Based on my experiences as a dance student, performer, teacher and academic, this thesis is my contribution to a discussion of dance as seen through a phenomenological lens. This thesis uses as its foundation the writing of Maurice Merleau-Ponty to explore dance as an art form that is fused with being in the moment.

The obvious and much avowed link between body, time and space are re-configured within this thesis to a discussion of a subjective moving/dancing body, which extends and expresses itself temporally and spatially. This re-configuring is the result of my experiences as a dancer, whereby; the form of dance becomes wholistically present when a subjective sense of self in motion is united relationally through a temporal and spatial awareness. I hold this contention in opposition to a formulaic sense of dance that relies on objectively held states and places of time, space, and constructed body. I want to explore dance as a wholistic and relational form, rather, than dance as a mechanized process.

My experience as a dancer has revealed that dance as it synthesizes the moving/thinking body temporally and spatially requires a conscious awareness of (an
internal commitment to sense and know, and feel) how one creates and takes part in a spatial and temporal reality. To only dance imposed steps, on specific counts, and in discreet locations reveals a mechanistic understanding of the subjective self in relation to motion. Dance, which I define as an art form that reveals itself as being in the moment, needs to acknowledge the reality of its foundation as being relationally interwoven between body in motion, the temporal and the spatial. These three aspects cannot exist apart from each other— they work interdependently, they are related, they impact and they inform each other.

As a moving dancer, the truth of these relations reveals that I must outwardly be aware of where I need to be in time and space. But, fundamentally I need to know (as in knowing in my bones and muscles, in body) what it feels like to move in a specific way. The qualitative and dynamic aspect of motion relates specifically to my understanding of the temporal and the spatial. Knowing what it feels like to move (as a conscious awareness) reveals that time is not measured, and space is not confining. To dance to the fullest demands the transformation of time to a felt temporal state (as a dimension of a being), and likewise, space to a spatial dimension that is not pre-given but, rather, created through the sculpting and carving of movement. As I extend and contract myself spatially, I am always moving toward a renewed moment of being. In this context the moments that exist between ‘here and there’, and ‘now and then’ become infused with a felt, dynamic sense, the moments in-between become essential to the flow of dance.
The consequence of dance being an art form that reveals being in the moment, is that the moment is upheld only if all moments in between are relationally intertwined. The structures of moving body, the temporal and the spatial cannot exist independently from each other if dance is to reveal itself. Dance is a form that is felt, and this necessitates that the moving dancer be guided by a subjective awareness of the self in motion. This thesis therefore explores the truth of these structural relations as a foundation to a phenomenological understanding of dance.

The original question of 'what is dance?' is for me a question worth asking, and worth discussing. Having established that there is much to be learned with an exploration of this question, I have also concluded that it is a question without a firm answer. It is a question that will never be satisfactorily or definitively answered. A direct approach to answering this question reveals a multitude of answers from many different points of view. This thesis therefore, begins with an attempt to circumvent the unanswerable question from a direct line of questioning to a different approach. My approach to the question of 'what is dance?' has forced me to re-frame my question to; “what are the underlying structure(s) of dance?” I describe this new question as an indirect one; because it is an attempt to move away from ‘a priori’ definitions of dance (such as historical, anthropological, social etc.), which, may offer competing understandings, and definitions, each serving its own philosophy, value system, and interests.

Transforming the question of ‘what is dance?’ to ‘what are the foundational structures of dance?’ and by extension how are these structures relationally
connected? creates the possibility for a new interwoven understanding of dance. It is acknowledged here that there are parameters surrounding this discussion. The parameters are such that I do not discuss the cultural or social viability of using a phenomenological standpoint. This thesis uses the Western forms of Ballet and Contemporary dance as the basis for its discussion and theorizing; whether the ideas presented here could have viability or applicability for other cultural dance forms is a task for a later time. I acknowledge that what is presented here is a 'Western philosophy that is applied to Western dance forms.' The possible bias of this discussion is acknowledged, but as well, what is acknowledged is the fact that as author I am speaking to my own experiences, and these have been strictly within the forms of Ballet, and Contemporary dance forms. The ideas presented here are my attempt to bring a respectable form of academic theorizing to my experiences as dancer.

This thesis begins its journey with a phenomenological point of view which is grounded in the primal reality of body. It takes as its point of departure a belief that the underlying structure of dance is first and foremost the interplay between: 1) the subjective body, and by extension 2) the temporal, and 3) the spatial organization of experience of the body in motion.

Chapter One brings us to the nexus and implications of the Western concept of mind and body as a dichotomy. The dichotomy is problematic because, it functions hierarchically, valuing the currency of mind over body. The hierarchy fails to acknowledge the body as the primary source of contact to the outside world, and
further, it fails to acknowledge that the body is in fact mindful as it senses, perceives, moves, and dances. Finding that it is simply untenable to dissolve this dichotomy, I present the notion of staying 'in-between' the constructs of mind and body by maintaining a paradoxical lens. The paradoxical lens gives one the means whereby the untenable and contradictory nature of the bifurcated mind and body can co-mingle through Merleau-Ponty's notion of incomplete reversibility. This unbounded space of in-between as mediated through reversibility makes possible the transformative and creative enterprise of new identities, understandings, such as that of the mindful body. The in-between creates a space of indeterminate possibility.

The notion of 'in-between' is meant to act subversively, effectively destabilizing the hierarchical function of binary as a form. Philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty, Drew Leder, and Susan Cataldi explicate ways of confusing the delineated boundaries of mind and body through the concepts of reversibility, and the 'visible and the invisible.' These concepts will be used as necessary conceptual tools for the overlapping and confusing of the discreet boundaries of mind and body so as to act subversively and create new possibilities for that which is deemed as bodily and that which is mindful.

A direct challenge to Descartes Cogito- 'I think therefore I am' is presented through the writings of Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Sheets-Johnstone (1999). First to be explored is Merleau-Ponty’s tenet 'I can', which, acts to subjectively reverse the order of experience as presented by Descartes. Merleau-Ponty’s tenet acknowledges the reality of lived bodily (sense, and perceptual) experience as being the primary
dimension of Being. Sheets-Johnstone (1999) takes this truth even further by questioning where the ‘I’ that Merleau-Ponty and Descartes speak of originates from. Sheets-Johnstone brings her challenge to rest acknowledging the subjective ‘I’ is created through movement.

By attending to Sheets-Johnstone’s (1999) explanation of the centrality of movement to the development of the subjective self, this chapter concludes that the moving body is central in establishing a sense of self, through pre-reflective conscious experience.

Chapter two will discuss how one stands in relation to the world via being a moving body. The nexus of this relation is grounded in the phenomenological notions of ‘immediacy’ and ‘Being.’ (as predicated by Heidegger) The threads of the relation are discussed as Spatial and Temporal and they act to organize the dimension of possibility within subjective experience. The Spatial and Temporal will be discussed as anterior to the experience of the moving body, rather than as outward forms of objective time and space. As anterior to movement the Spatial and the Temporal will be referred to as organizing relational structures that combine through timing in outwardly (and inwardly) forms of rhythms.

As chapter two focused on explicating the relational threads of movement experience (as body, spatial, temporal), chapter three will take this idea under consideration with regard to the form of movement notation. It will be seen that notation in the case of dance has serious phenomenological limitations, because of its deconstructive emphasis on all aspects of interrelated movement space and time. It
will be revealed that there is a gap between the experiential form of dance and notation. This gap cannot be transcended, as the deconstructive nature of notation dismantles the threads of relation so as to compartmentalize movement in symbol form. In this chapter dance as a form begins to define itself as a form entirely different than that of denotative language system.

Chapter four is a criticism aimed at returning the use of the word aesthetic to its rightful place in sense based movement experience. This chapter criticizes specifically the philosophy of aesthetics presented initially by Langer (1953), and subsequently by Sheets-Johnstone (1966). Both authors claim the realm of the aesthetic to exist within a Virtual realm, governed by illusory feelings. What I discuss in this chapter is that phenomenologically this form of aesthetics is untenable and not true to the lived/danced bodily experience. I contend with the support of Merleau-Ponty that the aesthetic relates to that which is felt (sense/perception). The relational ties discussed in the previous chapters that exist between body, space and time as revealed in motion (dance) further reveal the aesthetic of dance as being contingent on being in the moment. Perception as it relates to that which is sensed and felt cannot be divisible from experience.

Chapter five takes as its starting point a discussion of educational implications. There are of course many ‘educational implications’ for dance, as seen through a phenomenological lens. I have therefore settled on three implications that I believe to be paramount in conceptualizing a relationship between dance and education. The first implication is supported by philosophers: Pinar, Van Manen Aoki, and Snowber.
It is a question of whether language can return to the foundation of conscious experience. I purposely say 'return to' as language, which, initially grows out of the foundations of sense/movement experience, becomes divorced from actual experience- it comes to refer to experience in a secondary way. With the help of these philosophers I look for some way to bring language closer to the threads of experience.

The second implication is an important one as it states that dance is not analogous in form to language. This statement is explored through the notion that there is such a thing as 'thinking in movement.' This idea is discussed by Sheets-Johnstone (1999) through the medium of dance improvisation. Thinking in movement is upheld by Sheets-Johnstone (1999) and Merleau-Ponty (1962), as a kinetic process that exists in the space between mind and body. The claim by Merleau-Ponty (and shared by Sheets-Johnstone, 1999) that: 'expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 151), and furthermore that 'meaning is accessible only through direct contact' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 151) support the notion that dance is not analogous to language. It is not analogous because the body does not act/move/dance as separate from that which it expresses. The body in dance cannot act as a referent or a symbol.

The final educational implication takes a marked point of departure in this thesis. The implication moves away from conceptual ideas and turns toward the reality of the outwardly objectified construction of bodies that dance. The relation
between technique, physique and institutional process is discussed with the support of Foucault, Goffman and Illich.

The end of this thesis presents transcripts resulting from three interviews conducted with leading Canadian dance practitioners and theorists. Mavis Staines- Director of The National Ballet School of Canada (Toronto), Anuschka Roes- Manager of the Teacher Training-Program at The National Ballet School of Canada (Toronto), and Kaija Pepper- a Vancouver based dance author and critic, present relevant dance issues which stand in relation, both directly and peripherally, to the conceptual ideas presented in this thesis.

Throughout each of these chapters there is a running theme or undercurrent, which, continually presents itself. Dance as form, reveals that the structural foundation of dance finds its nexus in the subjective moving body- and by extension a temporal and spatial organization. A subjective experience of movement is a non-divided process, which acknowledges sense/perception/consciousness as co-mingling in the unbounded space between mind and body.
CHAPTER ONE:
THE MIND/BODY DICHOTOMY

"I think" therefore I am.
*Descartes*

Consciousness is in the first place not a matter of ‘I think that’ but of ‘I can’.
*Maurice Merleau-Ponty*

*Movement forms the “I” that moves before the “I” that moves forms movement*.
*Maxine Sheets-Johnstone*

A discussion of the mind/body dichotomy as it is recognized within western philosophy necessitates that the below the surface ‘architecture’ or ‘scaffolding’ upon which the dichotomy is built be revealed. For this purpose Gilbert Ryle’s portrait of “Descartes’ Myth – the official doctrine” (Ryle, 1949) provides a useful departure point for an understanding of the mind/body argument.

Human bodies are in space and are subject to the mechanical laws, which govern all other bodies in space. Bodily processes and states can be inspected by external observers. So man’s bodily life is as much a public affair as the lives of animals and reptiles and even the careers of trees, crystals and plants.

But minds are not in space, nor are their operations subject to mechanical laws. The workings of one mind are not witness able by other observers; its career is private... A person therefore lives through two collateral histories, one consisting of what happens in and to his
body, the other consisting of what happens in and to his mind. The first is public, the second private...

The antithesis of outer and inner is of course meant to be construed as a metaphor, since minds, not being in space, could not be described as being spatially inside anything else, or as having things going on spatially inside themselves...

It is a necessary feature of what has physical existence that it is in space and time, it is a necessary feature of what has mental existence that it is in time but not in space. What has physical existence is composed of matter; what has mental existence consists of consciousness, or else is a function of consciousness... Thus there is a polar opposition (Ryle, 1949, p. 12).

The dichotomous architecture of mind/body, of private/public, of inner/outer, or subject/object and of time/space – although attributable in the above quotation to Descartes, actually finds its traceable origin in the shift that occurred in Greek culture from being that of an oral culture to that of a literate one.

The oral culture functioned through actioned speech. Rhythmic speech patterns and dance chorus were the heuristic means whereby information and traditions were performed and passed down, providing a means for shared (social) memorization.

In primary orality, the oral specialist, whether bard, priest, prophet, or seer continually clothes his memorizable instruction in designs that are contrived to please; so that the instruction itself is fastened on the social memory by indirection, as it is translated into active examples... Tradition in short is taught by action, not by idea or principle (Havelock, 1986, p. 77).
Important to the oral tradition was the “fastening” of information through actioned instruction, rather than the consequential bifurcation of thought and action that was the result of literacy (written/read documents).

“As language became separated visually from the person who uttered it, so also the person, the source of the language, came into sharper focus and the concept of selfhood was born” (Havelock, 1986 p. 113). The shift to ‘individual selfhood’ had a direct impact on the social aspect of oral culture. For now, there independently exists both ‘thinker(s)’ and ‘thought(s)’; where there had previously existed a shared social construct for meaning making and the transference of information.

To bring emphasis to the shift from orality to literacy is to bring one to the nexus of the mind/body dichotomy. It is the written text/visual artifact, which paved the way for the ‘independent’ and objectified existence of thought(s); thoughts, which are separated from action. “A static relationship between the “true” statement and its “knower” took the place of a mobile relationship between linguistic sound and its recipient” (Havelock, 1996, p. 115).

The oral, which expressed intellection in action/doing, was separated from the act of knowing (reflective, abstract) and in effect brought forth the dichotomous structure upon which Descartes later formed and wrote his Meditations.
In his search for truth, Descartes’ Meditations lead to several categorical inferences based on deductive reasoning: a) distinguishing the mind from the body, b) we are composites made from mind and body; he elaborates that c) the brain forms a working part of the mind (mechanistic), and lastly d) that truth pertains to the mind and not to the composite.

In the sixth meditation [9] Descartes claims:

I correctly conclude that my essence consists in this one thing: that I be a cogitating thing. And although I might perhaps (or rather, as I shall soon afterwards say, for certain) have a body which is very closely joined to me, because I have – on the one hand – a clear and distinct idea of me myself, in so far as I am only a cogitating thing and not an extended one, and because I have – on the other hand – a distinct idea of body, insofar as it is only an extended thing and not a cogitating one, it is still certain that I am really and truly distinct from my body, and that I can exist without it” (Descartes, 1990, p. 196-197).

The dichotomy of mind and body as described by Descartes expresses that the mind/intellect is the site of consciousness (the 'I'). (Cogito – I am thinking therefore I am) It is the mind as an entirely separate theatre from the body, which has the capacity to ‘cogitate’ upon sense data. As the mind is the spatialized location of a conscious “I”, Descartes also makes clear that the “I” refers to the composite of mind and body [6th meditation, 14] as a whole. However, he also states regarding ‘truth’ [6th meditation, 25] that it pertains to the mind alone and not to the composite.
This conclusion therefore presumes the *senses* (which are bodily) to incite confused modes of cogitating and furthermore to be deceitful. Although we are composite of mind and body, the “I” that thinks remains intact even when the body is altered or broken.

Gilbert Ryle’s (Ryle, 1949) attempts to dissipate Descartes’ dichotomy by delocalizing ‘the geography of knowledge.’ Or, as he states “to explode the myth of the dogma of the Ghost in the machine’(Ryle, 1949, p.15-16). He achieves this by placing the *mindful act* of intelligence implicitly *within action* itself.

‘Intellect’ cannot be defined in terms of ‘intellectual’ or ‘knowing how’ in terms of ‘knowing that’: ‘thinking what I am doing’ does not connote ‘both thinking what to do and doing it.’ When I do something intelligently, i.e. thinking of what I am doing, I am doing one thing and not two. My performance has a special procedure or manner, not special antecedents (Ryle, 1949,p. 32).

Despite Ryle’s attempt to do away with ‘the Ghost in the machine’, and to delocalize intelligence by democratizing the act of thinking with the moving body, the entrenched concept of mind/body remains with us today. The concept of mind and body has not (and will not) easily dissipate. It refuses to be explained away as Edward Cassey points out: “Given the forced choice between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, the live body has no place to go: still worse no place of its own. But like any good ghost, it returns to haunt its exorcists(Cassey, 1996, p. 23). Perhaps the reason for this is that the dichotomy serves a categorical function only possible within our written language system. Written language and documents allow for the organization,
separation, and the filing of thoughts, and this form of discreet inventory keeping has doubled back into our every day speech. Our oral speech (which was once derived through action) has been colonized by documentation and classification as made possible only with the advent of written/read literacy.

Because the entrenched concept of mind/body is embedded within our language system, it permeates how we conceptually think of ourselves as well as how we describe ourselves so that we simply cannot (despite the attempts of philosophers such as Gilbert Ryle) dispense with/dismantle that which is often perceived as a problematic relationship. To be clear, the mind/body dichotomy is a conceptual myth. As conceptual I specify that the mind/body dichotomy is an ‘idea’ (held in the mind). Although I state that this ‘dichotomy’ is firmly entrenched in Western thought and discourse, I believe that it does not reflect the realities of lived bodily experience. Having clearly delineated the mind/body as a dichotomous entity, requires that we must now become aware of how dichotomy works (as a structure) and, to find a way (of conceptualizing) through which one can work within the confines of dichotomous relationship.

**The Structure of Dichotomy**

The structure of dichotomy functions in two specific ways. The first relates to the numeral indication of binary, and the second to dimension. First the numeral dichotomy of mind/body is referred to as a binary. There are two specified
categories, namely: (1) Mind, and (2) Body. It is important to realize that within the
dichotomous relationship what happens is not the equal valuational status of each
category (1) and category (2). We are not dealing with a structure that equally
localizes two categories, but rather only ONE category. In terms of localization one
category is held in higher esteem than the other.

Dichotomous thinking necessarily hierarchizes and ranks the two polarized terms so that one becomes the privileged term and the other its suppressed subordinated/counterpart (Grosz, 1994, p. 3).

The mind/body dichotomy as a structure brings to the foreground ONE category (mind) and subjugates the second category (body). Therefore a dichotomous binary is really a hierarchical classification system.

Secondly, the dichotomous binary delineates two dimensions as: either/or. Each dimension is bounded by the fact that it encompasses clearly what the other does not (it is its opposite), as well as clearly stating what it is (not ambiguous in its self definition). The boundedness of a dichotomy is such that a clearly defined territory is recognized and guardedly maintained.

The mind/body dichotomy as understood as polar oppositional terms can play itself out in one of two ways: (1) unresolvable (we are left with two opposites, usually, in which one of the pair is held in higher esteem that the other). Or, (2) the dichotomy is resolved through a reductionist account. By ‘reductionist’ I am referring to theories that collapse the dichotomy into such an entity as a monism (i.e.
physicalism, mentalism, holism). To collapse the dichotomy is an attempt to dispense with that which is problematic (by reason of inconsistency, self contradiction, or logical impossibility) by attending to only one aspect of the argument, by simply reducing one to the other. To collapse the dichotomy is to deny the complexity of the mind/body dichotomy, which, further serves to limit the possibilities of meaning(s) that are to be found in a dichotomous relationship.

In navigating a way through the mind/body dichotomy, Elizabeth Grosz rightly maintains that “we need an account which refuses reductionism, resists dualism, and remains suspicious of the holism and unity implied by monism” (Grosz, 1994, p. 22). It therefore becomes necessary to find a conceptual mechanism through which one can uphold and view the dichotomy of mind/body, as well as by which each polar identity can maintain an equal valuational status. The conceptual mechanism through which I propose to achieve this is through that of a paradoxical lens.

The use of a lens works in two specific ways. The first is that a lens is a transparent mechanism that is placed between oneself and the idea(s) or object(s) being perceived. As a transparent mechanism, the lens allows one to clearly discern the object(s) or idea(s) being perceived without distortion. (Although the notion of a ‘lens’ affords some superficial sense of neutrality – it is understood here that the lens is used in conjunction with the subjective sensibility of the perceiver, and therefore,
will always present a specific perspective which defies any sense of absolute neutrality)- this means that the lens is transparent, but we are not. Second, because the lens is placed between the perceiver and the perceived, the lens acts as a mediator, by situating the idea so that it is well defined, and by further allowing one the ability to converge in on the actual center of interest.

Specifically, the lens, which is proposed here, is that of paradox. The paradoxical lens affords a sense of democratic possibility much needed with the dichotomy because it recognizes within itself a set of apparently incontrovertible premises. The dichotomy still exists as a scaffold (imprint), placing a " relational" tension between the polarities, which exemplifies a distinct relationship (based on the finding of the one in the other but never wholly, as predicated by Merleau-Ponty's concept of reversibility). The paradoxical lens further allows one to move beyond the circularity and hierarchy of the mind/body dichotomy by one of several ways. For example, there is the possibility of showing that in fact there is a flaw in the contraction of oppositional terms altogether, secondly, that the reasoning out of the premises may in fact be mistaken, or thirdly that the eventual conclusion can be tolerated, and may in fact create a new understanding (s). It is this last supposition which is of interest, as ‘being’ in the paradox may in fact function phenomenologically as a place of constant (re)/negotiation.
The paradoxical lens is creative by nature – leading to new understanding; the paradoxical lens is one that opens up space (between) and provides depth of dimension as it makes room for possibilities that lie beyond the finite boundaries of binary opposites alone. To some, remaining inside the mind/body paradox may seem ‘messy’ and perhaps even ‘indecisive’, yet as Howard Slatte maintains (Slatte, 1968) “it may be that those who embrace both sides of an apparent contradiction often will be nearer the full truth than those who surrender one or the other facet in favour of artificial consistency” (Slatte, 1968, p. 7). To regard mind and body as a true paradox is to:

Bespeak a dialectical reciprocation of opposites (without dissolving their polarity or distinctiveness.) To assert this is to defend the significance of mutual continuity and discontinuity within the fundamentals of thought (Slatte, 1968, p. 6).

Paradox is both diasporatic (makes room for multiplicity) as well as cohesive in its structure, and inherent within the conceptualization is the notion that multiplicity and unity are relationally interwoven through a mediated space between. (This notion is further predicated on Merleau-Ponty’s notion of reversibility).

Howard Slatte (1968) in asserting that paradox is a form claims that there are two major types of paradox in ethical/metaphysical problems. The first type he names ‘coincidental’, it is an ‘either/or’ type of paradox that places emphasis on the
opposing elements rather than on their meeting. The second type he names ‘elemental’ and this type of paradox:

... is said to reflect the meeting of opposites as something essential to the understanding of things. Posing a vital relationship and mutual relevance of opposites such a paradox is a ‘both-and’ type (Slatte, 1968, p. 5).

The ‘elemental’ type paradox is precisely the lens through which I propose to view the mind/body dichotomy because it takes into consideration both opposites in their own right, as well as conceding that ‘something more’ is possibly made known either in their meeting or through their mediated/reciprocal relationship. Paradox allows one the luxury of staying ‘in between’ and therefore mediating infinite possibility.

The use of paradox as a mechanism is understood here to provide a sense of ‘dimension’ to an otherwise flat, unmoving language, and as a ‘dimension’ it is hoped that the possibility for creative meaning has depth.

In the effort that is exerted in the negotiated meeting of the polarized concepts of mind/body the possibilities for continuity, discontinuity and even ambiguity are of extreme relevance – and are embraced. Previously, space was demarcated by the confines of its own impermeable boundaries. Now, space is understood not as a place to be demarcated, but rather, unbounded and less discreet.
Unbounded space is a conceptual ideal that gives us much more room to create/discover alternate identities, realities/understandings. This unbounded space is an ‘in-between’ of sorts.

**In-Between the Binary**

The notion of in-between (mind and body, or any other binary) has implications both in terms of an ethical dimension, as well as displaying a particular understanding of space bound versus permeable space. First, the space in-between binary opposites (such as mind/body) does not function as a way to dissolve or collapse the binary as a structure. However, the in-between does function *subversely*, so that, the binary opposites may become de-stabilized and less bounded to the rigidity of their oppositeness. The in-between destabilizes by way of requiring two polarities (or more) within which to position itself. The mythical structure of the binary is challenged because the focus moves from the valuational/hierarchical status of oppositions to the possibilities that lie between. The in-between destabilizes precisely because it cannot function on the premise of privilege. By attending to the in-between, the binary, which falsely claims to be equally predicated on the number two (two oppositions, or more), actually reveals that the binary is based on the privileging of the *one* over the *other* (mind over body). The in-between reveals itself as processual/creative in nature because it is in this space that new identities become possible and emerge into being through the process of becoming. It is also the space
where identities may be challenged or destabilized, therefore presenting a challenge to
the privileging of one identity at the expense of another.

The space in between things is the space in which things are undone, the space to the side and around which is the space of subversion and fraying the edge of any identity's limits. In short, it is the space of bounding and undoing of the identities which constitute it (Grosz, 2001, p. 93).

Ethically, functioning in-between can serve to contest traditional Western/Eurocentric/Partriarchal thought. Although, this chapter is primarily concerned with how to work within the binary structure of mind/body, it is acknowledged here that to do so delineates a particular ethical stance towards both conceptual ideas, as well as the making and delineating of artistic, cultural, social, racial identities etc... predicated on positions of privilege, colonization and the designation of otherness.

Secondly, an understanding of how the in-between functions spatially requires an alternate description of space to its traditional understanding. Traditionally, space is constituted as “an interval between one or two... dimensional points or objects.” (Concise Oxford Dictionary, p. XX). Space constituted through intervals and measurement is not what is being referred to here as an in-between. Rather
The space of the in between is that which is not a space, a space without boundaries of its own, which takes on and receives itself, its form from the outside, which is not its outside (this would imply that it has a form) but whose form is the outside of the identity, not just of an other (for that would reduce the in-between of the role of object, not of space) but of others whose relations of positivity define by default, the space that is constituted as in-between (Grosz, 2001, p. 91).

Understood here as a malleable, depthful space, the in-between presents one with an infinity of movement through which to re/negotiate between the binary of mind/body. Of use to navigating the “in-between” of mind/body is Merleau-Ponty’s notion of reversibility.

The “in-between” being a space without boundaries of its own acts subversively to reconstitute boundaries, making alternative realities/identities a possibility. Although subversive in action the in-between is not a space housed in anarchy. Rather, the space in-between is journeyed by means of incomplete reversibility. And the logic of the visible and invisible.

**Reversibility: Merleau-Ponty and Cataldi**

Reversibility is a conceptual tool that allows two opposing sides of a binary structure to overlap each other. Reversibility as it intertwines means that both sides of the binary can experience the other, or be as the other (but never completely). That both sides of a binary can never fully become the other is a structural limit which must be acknowledged- otherwise the binary would collapse. The value of reversibility is not in the ‘one’ becoming the ‘other’- but rather in the act of intermingling what becomes newly possible between two terms.
The notion of *incomplete reversibility* belongs originally in thought to Merleau-Ponty (Merleau-Ponty, 1964). Merleau-Ponty’s writings on reversibility were specifically tailored to give insight to the double act of perceiving and being perceived. For the purpose of this chapter I am imprinting the manner in which Merleau-Ponty structures reversibility and applying it to the mind/body dichotomy. By doing so I am maintaining Merleau-Ponty’s paradoxical stance by defining a binary (namely mind/body) in order to arrive at a site of in-between co-mingling. The notion of reversibility has several connotations (at least three according to Cataldi):

One sense construes reversible flesh on the model of reversible fabric. Another construes reversibility as ‘becoming’ – as a relation of partial or complementary identification between ‘sides’ of perceptibility as a translation – as a communication holding between different realms or modes of perceptual experience (Cataldi, 1993, p. 70).

The first possibility for reversibility is that of ‘reversible fabric’. This is best understood when one puts his or her hand inside a glove, the notions of inside and outside, of touched and touching become intermingled. The second possibility of reversibility belongs to the notion of ‘becoming’. This is best understood by the touching of hands. At any point one hand can be touching, while the other is touched, and they can shift their relation to each other so that they reverse and shift sides. And lastly, reversibility can be understood as a communication between different realms or modes of perception.
That reversibility is considered to never be complete, (meaning one thing never becomes the other completely), points to an overlap, whereby there is always a gap in the translation of one particular mode to another. This 'gap' is also referred to as an 'eclipse at the moment of realization' (Cataldi, 1993, p. 72).

For example, although it is true that my left hand can touch my right hand and that I can reverse this relation so that my right hand touches my left, as I do so I experience a breech in the hold that one of my hands has on the other — and this despite their remaining 'in touch' with each other throughout (Cataldi, 1993, p. 72).

The breech which Cataldi refers to is not problematic according to Merleau-Ponty: "this is not a failure for if these experiences never exactly overlap, if they slip away at the very moment they are about to rejoin, if there is always a "shift" a "spread", between them, this is precisely because my two hands are part of the same body..."(Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 148).

This process of incomplete reversibility is an important one in the navigation between mind and body for it delineates the notion that boundaries between discreet parts can at times be less than determinate and rigid. At the point where there is an 'eclipsing' - the boundaries have become diffuse and permeable/confused —this is the 'in-between'. This is a window of opportunity as such, which points to the transitory nature of that which is defined as bodily and that which is defined as mindful.

The Visible and Invisible

If the phenomenological standpoint is viewed with a paradoxical lens we find that the greatest space for possibility and new meaning lies 'in-between. This space
may be defiant to an understanding of objective space because to grasp it, is only to do so partly.

Two authors, Drew Leder (1990), and Sue Cataldi (1993), put forward views of ‘space’, which literally entail how body and mind become connected interrelationally in the space ‘in-between’. Their writings metaphorically point to the space ‘in-between’ that is created in the contrasting polarity that is paradox. Leder says that:

While in one sense the body is the most abiding and inescapable presence in our lives, it is also essentially characterized by absence. That is, one’s own body is rarely the thematic object of experience (Leder, 1990, p. 1).

In this sense the body becomes absent (This absence does not mean that the body doesn’t exist, rather, absence refers to the invisibility of the body to itself as it moves or does). The absence is a form of reciprocity that goes on between the body and the outside world – or that which is other. It is a doubling back action (reflexive), revealing, that which is other, precisely because the body recedes from perceiving itself. An example of the absence of the body while it is kinesthetically in action is the saying “the eye cannot see itself seeing” (Eisenberg, 1992, p. 7). We have sight because we cannot see ourselves seeing. To see ourselves seeing would entail a never-ending cycle of infinite regress to which the only possible outcome would be that one would not see.
Gilbert Ryle further applies this notion of invisibility to the concept of intelligent action.

The regress is infinite and this reduces to absurdity the theory that for an operation to be intelligent it must be steered by a prior intellectual operation... ‘thinking what I am doing’ does not connote ‘both thinking what to do and doing it’. When I do something intelligently... I am doing one thing and not two. My performance has a special procedure or manner, not special antecedents (Ryle, 1949, p. 31).

In the space in-between body and mind the notions of *incomplete reversibility* and *invisibility* allows for the intertwining of mind and body to act in unison while maintaining that each of the polarized terms can never wholly collapse into becoming the other. To act in unison does not signify that mind collapses into body, nor that body collapses into mind – but rather unison is understood to be harmonious.

Extending the train of thought between what is ‘the visible and the invisible’, Leder (1990) develops her own phenomenological understanding of ‘body’ beyond its outside surface (shell). She takes into account that which is ‘inner’ to us, as in the visceral organs and brain. Leder’s thesis posits that the implicit absence of the body perceptually to itself is precisely what allows us to connect with that which is outside of ourselves/to move. This thesis is then brought further deep inside the body to all that is naturally hidden from the surface.

She maintains the brain as an inner visceral organ remains absent in its own action of thinking, and as such becomes central to lived experiences (thinking becomes dynamic – an action in itself). In this case absence/invisibility is found on
two levels. Firstly as an inner visceral organ the brain remains unseen, physically absent; it is safely guarded and hidden within us. Secondly, the brain’s actions are invisible to itself (except for in reflection and even in reflection the awareness of the brain is not with “its” own functional actions but rather with the ‘object(s)’ of its thoughts and actions. The brain doesn’t think a-priori in order to think..

Leders’ concept of absence as a form of invisibility is in some sense an attempt to dispense with the notion of the mind and body as dichotomous, by forming ‘one’ thinking-body; but, Leder asserts, “to bespeak of forming one body is then never meant to deny difference, but to assert the truth of relations (Leder, 1990, p. 162).

Within the scope of this chapter the use of paradox as a mechanism by which the mind body dualism is to be looked at is also linked with a phenomenological framework. In the most specific understanding, phenomenology, as stated by Husserl, is an attempt to ‘turn to things themselves’ (Husserl, 1960). There is a pronounced desire to experience/understand the world in its felt immediacy through the senses by extension of movement and perception. With this in mind the phenomenological method is primarily descriptive in its attempt to bring forward “the way the world makes itself evident to awareness, the way things first arise in our direct sensorial experience” (Abram, 1996, p. 35). This ‘turning to of things themselves’ is the elucidation of a philosophy which places emphasis on sensory
experience as a primary dimension of being, and, which furthermore places science as a quantifiable and objective measurement and thus secondary in nature.

Taking his departure point from Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology requires that we acknowledge the body as the primary source of contact with the world. Specifically, Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of phenomenology is such that he advocates a counteractive philosophy that aims not to dissipate the dichotomy of mind and body, but rather upholds a lived dualism without the manifestation of a metaphysical dualism. “The lived-body concept attempts to cut beneath the subject-object split, recognizing a dialectical and lived dualism but not a dualism of body-soul or body-mind. A phenomenological (or lived) dualism implicates consciousness and intention and assumes an indivisible unity of body, soul, and mind” (Fraleigh, 1987, p. 4). Merleau-Ponty upholds the distinction of body and mind relationally as body (sensory experience) preceding mind (reflective).

To return to things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always speaks, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. ix).

The positing of body as preceding mind is upheld not in a hierarchical sense of function/value, but rather, through a logical sense based on lived immediate experience, which is embraced in being and becoming.
To ‘turn to things themselves’ is an inner turn that places each being’s subjectivity as the place of departure, from which all experience with the outer world is grounded. As an ‘inner-turn’ each being’s subjectivity is spatially determined. As each being acts/moves he or she establishes an “I” or a subjectivity of self that is forever renegotiating itself. The ‘I’ can only exist in relation to a horizon in which all things perceived are located.

The relational connection between the subjective being and the horizon is one which is characterized by perception, based on the senses. Elizabeth Grosz further corroborates this proposed understanding of Merleau-Ponty’s work. She states that:

Merleau-Ponty’s work... attempts to utilize the space in between, the ‘no man’s land’ or gulf separating oppositional terms. This impossible, excluded middle predates and makes possible the binary terms insofar as it precedes and exceeds them, insofar as it is uncontainable in either term. Perception (my italics) is, as it were, midway between mind and body and requires the functioning of both (Grosz, 1994, p. 94).

In displaying the ‘in-between’ Grosz states further that experience which has an epistemological connection to knowledge and a direct relevance to philosophy “can only be understood between mind and body – or across them – in their lived conjunction”.

The first point that Grosz refers to is that of perception, and perception implies that we are our bodies, that we act our bodies. As such, we are continuously in a state of relating to the world (and to each other), and the manner through which we do this is through the senses. We perceive the world that surrounds us, and by
doing so we locate ourselves against a backdrop and in relation to a horizon. The body is not limited to its objective outward form\textsuperscript{1} and reach. The body acts as an open form with a permeable membrane, thereby permitting a dialectical relationship between the inner as well as the outer being. The body as governed through perception is thus understood to be a fluid site of interchange. “Perception in this sense is an attitude or synchronization between my own rhythms and the rhythms of the things themselves, their own tones and textures...” (Abram, 1996, p. 54).

As an attitude of synchronization, perception is an active form of thought. Perception is not reflective thought, it is not itself an object to be cogitated upon. Perception is a mode of being which is essentially active and tied to an ever-changing present.

The perceptual something is always in the middle of something else, it always forms a part of a ‘field’. A really homogeneous area offering nothing cannot be given to any perception. The structure of actual perception alone can teach us what perception is. The pure impression is, therefore not only undiscoverable, but also imperceptible and so inconceivable as an instant perception. If it is introduced, it is because instead of attending to the experience of perception we overlook it in favour of the object perceived (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 4).

When we perceive we perceive not the sensations themselves but rather, the qualities of the things sensed. What one senses and further perceives are qualities that belong to an object or to a situation. Perception therefore is much like what is described in

\textsuperscript{1} Form is used here in an ironic sense to indicate both shape and structure. Yet as an open form the body is not limited to its outline, it extends as a site of interchange between person and world. The open form does not only indicate the outward appearance or outline, but also to the content; all the interrelated patterns that create an organic being.
the earlier discussion that states that 'the eye cannot see itself seeing' (Eisenberg, 1992, p. 7), the same logic must be applied to perception. "We are caught up in the world and we do not succeed in extricating ourselves from it in order to achieve consciousness of the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 5). Perception as such is an action; it is continuous, and non-objectifiable. The mediation between mind and body happens initially as we perceive through our senses- our 'body data' (Snowber, 2002). The implication of the senses in perception affirms that the body and its propensity for movement is an integral component extending into consciousness and meaning making.

Phenomenology regards the difficult concept of consciousness as pre-reflective, and, indelibly tied to the notion of intentionality. As pre-reflective, consciousness is understood as a connection between person and world. It is our subjective tie to our objective understanding of experience. It (consciousness) presents itself at the precise moment one acts - moves in the world. And, as such it is characterized by the notion of intentionality and motivation.

Merleau-Ponty explicates two possibilities that distinguish intentionality. The first is termed 'intentional act' and, it is based on judgments made, or a decisive point of view that one takes up. The second possibility is termed 'operative intentionality', which is said to lie beneath our evaluations and sees the world as it is (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. xviii).
'Intentional act' refers specifically to the objective question *what*, and therefore relates to the outer manifestations of our actions and thoughts. 'Operative intentionality' refers to the question *how?* It refers to "responsible and irresponsible modes of subjectivity that relate to the how of the matter." (Senyshyn, 2003, p. 115). Consciousness thus reveals itself in *immediacy* and *being* through the process of *becoming*. "Consciousness is an activity, not a passivity" (Fraleigh, 1987, p. 7).

That consciousness is characterized by intention is to point further to the mode(s), by which consciousness is made known; these are specifically the body, and the body in motion.

The sensing body is not a programmed machine but an active and open form continually improvising machine continually improvising its relation to things and the world. The body’s actions and engagements are never wholly determinate since they must ceaselessly adjust themselves to a world and a terrain that is itself continuously shifting (Abram, 1996, p. 49).

The body acts as an open form, which allows for a dialectical relationship to occur between body and world- between our inner experience and perception and our outward actions. That which is rational finds roots in everyday experience, connecting sense and perception to experience. That which we find to be rational is the result of a dialectical relationship between our inner perceptions and our outer actions. Consciousness thus mediates the inner world with the outer world and can therefore present us with an indeterminate philosophy – it is here that both the subjective and the objective constitute knowledge.
The second point, which characterizes consciousness, is that of the moving body. This fact alone sets phenomenology on a very different tract to that which is proposed by Descartes' Cogito. The moving body assumes from the very first instant that the body is an active site for meaning(s) to be made and understood. This view challenges the body as a mechanistic entrapment housed by mind as a receptacle of information. “Consciousness is in the first place not a matter of ‘I think; but of ‘I can’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 137).

Sight and movement are specific ways of entering into relationships with objects and if, through all these experiences, some unique function finds its expression, it is the momentum of existence, which does not cancel out the radical diversity of contents, because it links to each other, not by placing them all under the control of an ‘I think’, but by giving them towards the intersensory unity of a ‘world’. Movement is not thought about movement, and bodily space is not space thought or represented. Each voluntary movement takes place in a setting, against a background, which is determined by the movement itself... We perform our movements in space which is not ‘empty’ or unrelated to them, but which on the contrary, bears a highly determinate relation to them: movement and background are in fact only artificially separated stages of a unique totality (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 137-138).

The question of whether perception and consciousness together form a sort of knowledge – “knowing in my body, in my bones”, can be answered positively; as long as consciousness and action remain in the domain of the pre-reflective. For Merleau-Ponty, knowledge is not necessarily divorced from action itself; action itself has its own logic. The ‘logic’, as has been discussed (especially by Leder) is primarily
understood as: lived-body is formed by two realities, precisely that which is seen, and that which is absent.

**Locating the ‘I’**

As previously discussed Merleau-Ponty presents consciousness as an ‘I can’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 137): action and thought are mediated so that the binary of subjective (inner being) and objective (outer reach) meet conjunctively as consciousness. While Merleau-Ponty’s ontological argument does present a challenge to Descartes’ Cogito, it challenges by affirming the order of experience as being that of perception/action followed by reflective thought. Merleau-Ponty’s descriptive phenomenology which grounds consciousness in action does have a logical limitation. As ontological, it provides a descriptive analysis of movement and its relation to consciousness by stating ‘I can’. What we are left to question is the epistemological foundation of one’s subjectivity. Sheets-Johnstone aptly states that we “must ask ourselves what comes before I can, is the I a-priori to ‘can’? (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, chapter 5).

In her critique of Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and methodology Sheets-Johnstone declares Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy as both ‘adultist’, as well as being one which “evokes the body but does not experience it” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 313). Her claim that the philosophy is ‘adultist’ in its focus is based on his descriptive metaphysics pertaining to the experience of adults. As ‘adultist’ the stance is problematic for Sheets-Johnstone because it leaves one questioning what comes ‘a
priori' to the 'can' in the statement 'I can'. The adultist stance provides no clues to where the 'I' comes from, or how it is formed. Sheets-Johnstone’s claim of an adultist stance is in fact part of the structural limitations of presenting a solely ontological and descriptive account of bodily experience- Merleau-Ponty focused his methodology primarily on descriptive accounts of both normal and disturbed sensory and motor states.

Sheets-Johnstone (1999) delves into the current research on infant motor and psychological development using dynamic systems\(^2\) approach as a guiding structure. In doing this she is able to put forth an epistemological argument that accounts for the origin of the 'I' that can.

By focusing on movement Sheets-Johnstone is doubly attending to what Merleau-Ponty did not. She is trying to account (first) for the origin of the 'I', and (second) she wants to close the gap between one’s descriptive account of movement and movement itself. She states, “we come into the world already moving. We are

\(^2\) **DYNAMIC SYSTEMS THEORY**

For Sheets-Johnstone (1999) the application of 'Dynamic Systems Theory' provides one with a possible gateway to attend to what she terms “a standard disregard for movement.” The use of what she terms Dynamic Systems Theory is a conceptual tool used to visit the findings of psychiatrists, psychologists. Sheets-Johnstone goes over some key studies with regard to infant development with the intent to pay attention to the role that movement plays in the development of the subjective I. Looking to create connections between the findings of different sciences she is able to put together what she terms a Constructive Phenomenology. It is constructive because it ultimately attempts to look at the foundational development of subjectivity. She attempts to understand how it is that we come to be who we are by how we learn to move ourselves. Dynamic Systems Theory functions through both the maintenance of discreet areas of interest (such psychology, and psychiatry), as well as more importantly acknowledging the *seam* where discreet areas of interest co-mingle or co-exist. What is of extreme relevance to the view point that dynamic systems approach entails is that although some areas are discreet they are only defined as such by the fact that they are intertwined with other discreet areas. A Dynamic Systems Approach is about the dependency of connections, (much like an ecosystem)

Structurally, a system is a divisible whole, but functionally it is an indivisible unity with emergent proper-ties. An emergent property is marked by the appearance of *novel* characteristics exhibited on the level of the whole ensemble, but not by the components in isolation. (pg.6/23 Alexander Lazlo/Stanley Krippner, online 1997)
indeed either movement –born or still-born” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 232). With this as her salient beginning point she further states that:

The task is to elucidate movement as a natal phenomenon, and this in a double sense: the phenomenon of being movement-born and the phenomenon of self-movement as it emerges from the phenomenon of being movement born (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 233).

In The Primacy Of Movement (1999), Sheets-Johnstone places great emphasis on the fact that we are movement born. She aptly states that although movement is often acknowledged as an integral part/ or coincidental to motor and psychological development, it rarely gets the attention it deserves as the epistemological gateway to subjective development and understanding. What follows from The Primacy Of Perception (1999) is an excerpt, which clearly depicts Johnstone’s position.

Sheer movement is thus of moment. Sheer movement is the ground on which intentionalities initially develop. They develop coincident with motivations… Primal animation is a field of kinetic play from which our initial interests, tendencies, habits, and dispositions arise; our initial turnings toward the world emerge from the background of sheer movement… That body is itself the object of motivations and intentionalities- in the form of head turnings, stretchings, and so on. In such ways, the kinesthetic body is itself constituted: we put ourselves together; we learn our bodies… On the basis of movement, we develop an inchoate sense of ourselves as animate forms. Clearly, in the beginning, there is movement in the process of forming an “I” that moves, movement in the process of solidifying agency, motivations, intentionalities, regularities, all by way of a tactile-kinesthetic body and kinesthetic consciousness… Our tactile-kinesthetic bodies are an epistemological gateway for making sense of ourselves and the world through movement (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 252-253).
The attention Sheets-Johnstone pays to our very beginnings in movement is foundational. The constructive phenomenology which she proposes acts as a counterpart to Merleau-Ponty’s descriptive phenomenology—bringing clearly into sight the entwined nature of thought and action.
Chapter Two:
Time And Space

Introduction to Time and Space and Being

Time, space, and movement are never separate except in analysis.
Sondra Horton Fraleigh

A phenomenology which attempts to explicate the essence of how one stands in relation to the world finds its nexus in the moving body. To clarify this point I return to this idea from Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1999): “Sheer movement is the ground on which intentionalities initially develop. They develop coincident with motivations…” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 252). The claim that movement is the ground upon which intentionalities and motivations develop is an important one, because, it broadens the discussion of the underlying structures of dance to include that of time and space.

Intentionalities and motivations are intrinsic to our everyday movement- they are present in both simplistic and complex movement patterns, as well as reflex based movement. They specifically function as a network which serve to: firstly- assert one’s relations to outside objects (a spatial relation), and secondly, to further assert
dimensions of being (a temporal relation) delineating becoming, being, and to have been.

For the purpose of this Thesis I hope to make clear the very necessary distinction between defining what is time and space, and how that which is understood to be spatial and temporal functions. As nouns time and space are conceptually static objects of contemplation— they designate measurement and containment. For example, time may be defined as: "an allotted, available, or measured portion of time…. Hours and minutes… Durations" (Oxford Dictionary, p. 1459). Space, likewise is often understood in much the same way as: “a continuous unlimited area or expanse which may or may not contain objects etc… an interval between one, two, or three dimensional points or objects.” (Oxford Dictionary, p.130) These contained understandings of time and space prevail in our daily lives. They function as controls for the purpose of efficiency and coordination. *Kronos* time is the outward chronology we impose on our daily experiences, while space is the measurement and the extent of distances between oneself and other objects.

These outward forms are static because they remain constant in their measurement and containment. An inch is always an inch, likewise an hour is always an hour. The static outward boundedness of time and space have adjacent counterparts pertaining to lived experience, which are of relevance to this Thesis. The task of the phenomenologist is to peel away the layer(s) of objective experience to arrive at an understanding of subjective experience. Therefore this necessitates the
acknowledgement that both time and space can be subjectively experienced in ways that go beyond the confines of containment and measurement. A phenomenological investigation of the time/space aspects of experience finds it necessary to be concerned not with a descriptor of experience such as up/down/in twenty minutes etc... but rather, with an operative understanding of how we function spatially/temporally. It is important to realize that in transforming time and space from descriptors (nouns), to verbs (temporal/spatial), the words now function actively- they have become words that move. The phenomenologist is now concerned with Kairos time (unmeasured time), and with Kinetikos (motion, to move) and more specifically with kinesphere (the space our bodies takes up).

“Part of the heritage of Western Culture and its philosophy has been to portray human beings as helpless before a host of forces that stand in opposition to us... Time is portrayed as something ‘outside’ and ‘beyond’ us....” (Mazis, 2002, p. 35). I wish to add to this statement that space is also seen as something outside of us- in fact space is usually understood to be some ether in which we are deposited. In attempting to provide an alternative to this antagonistic relationship, I propose that in fact we do not stand against time and space, rather, we make the temporal and the spatial manifest by the fact that we have/are moving bodies.3 (note concerning what constitutes a moving body).

3 A moving body is constituted in at least these two manners. First, a body that moves through conscious intent (it stretches, reaches, twirls etc.). Second, a moving body is qualified by the fact that the internal visceral organs move vibrationally and rhythmically. Generally this second understanding does not happen with conscious intent; yet the conscious manipulation of breath for example (inhale and exhale) does manipulate
I ground my ‘alive’ and ‘moving’ understanding of the temporal and the spatial in Heidegger’s concept of time (based on his concept of history). Heidegger wanted and saw that it was necessary to transform the question ‘what is time’ or ‘what time is it?’ to a question that asks ‘how does time exist?’ ‘how does time work?’. The transformation of the question that traces time as a ‘what?’ to time as a ‘how?’, permits the phenomenologist to ask whether we ourselves constitute time?

Heidegger’s understanding of Daesin (being) is such that “Daesin always is in a manner of its temporal being. Daesin is time, time is temporal. Daesin is not time but temporality” (Heidegger, 1992, p. 20E). This idea, though somewhat initially confusing places ‘being’ (in immediacy, pre-reflectively) as temporal, as non-divisible from the world we move ourselves in and through. Being temporal is active, and furthermore asserts that there is no divorce between being and the world itself. Our being’ness enmeshes the temporal and the spatial.

As an active state, being necessitates that we perceive, act, move in the moment. Being is implicit to the moment that is now. Thus understood, being implicates immediacy – a ‘now’ which is never complete and ever changing. Attuning to an ever changing ‘now’ or present doesn’t dissolve into fragmented chaos, but rather functions semantically to organize moments and durations of time which are immediate and particular, and more importantly grounds our subjective experience of motivation and intention. Being, which reveals intentionality through our actions both temporal and spatial dimensions of being. Making the spatial and temporal manifest happens with the interplay between consciousness and movement.

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delineates both: being (of the moment), as well as becoming (futural, processual), and further implicates a state of having been (of the past). Intention and action are linked together processually in becoming, and, are accessible only in the moment, while having been is tied to an irretrievable past that is accessible reflectively through memory (mind and body). The reflective moment is a doubling back action that takes place in the present. In this present moment I can attend reflectively to my past, as I do this, the past takes up the time that is the present without actually displacing the present—this means the past is not relived anew, but remains tied to its proper place and time. Having said this—it is acknowledged that one can experience past events reflectively with the same emotional/physical energy as they were initially experienced, but one cannot reflectively experience moments without acknowledging their tie to the past. To do otherwise would disrupt temporal continuity.

The temporal aspect of being is important because it affirms that knowledge can be of the present and that it is of a processual nature. Shapiro (1999) describes Heidegger's ontological quest in this manner:

Heidegger reattaches thinking to being. He turns us away from thinking as a kind of gathering of knowledge that can be separated from that which gathers. Thinking, he argues, is to be learned; and to learn is to address oneself to the relatedness between oneself (as subject) and the world within which one is living-being-in-the-world (Shapiro, 1999, p. 33).

The understanding that Shapiro brings forth with regard to Heideggers' view is twofold: First, stating that 'thinking is reattached to being' asserts that being as we
act and move in the world constitutes both thought and knowledge. Thinking and knowledge are action based—mind and body working conjunctively. That thought is actively based and of the moment is in sharp contrast to the Cogito, which claims that that thought and knowledge exist independently of action. Second, the light that is shed by 'thinking is to be learned' lays the necessary groundwork for Sheets-Johnstones belief that 'we learn ourselves (as subjects) through movement.' For both Heidegger and Sheets-Johnstone the development of the subjective 'I' is processual, and it is learned. Understood in this manner the subjective 'I' does not exist as an a priori bifurcation to thought (action/movement always implies thought).

The Temporal

*There is nothing 'actual' about time. If it seems long to you, then it is long, and if it seems to pass quickly, then it is short. But how long or how short it is in actuality, no one knows.*

_Thomas Mann, The Magic Mountain, p.63_

As discussed in the introduction to Time Space and Being, time as a phenomenal event is better termed as that which is temporal. Temporality as a dimension of being focuses on a network of relations that rise out of our everyday movements and interactions. For Merleau-Ponty temporality is not a clear measured succession of past/present/future. He states that:

it is not the past that pushes the present, the present that pushes the future into being; the future is not prepared behind the observer, it is a brooding presence moving to meet him, like a storm on the horizon. If the observer sits in a boat and is carried by the current we may say that he is moving downstream towards his future, but the future lies in
the new landscapes which await him at the estuary, and the course of time is no longer the stream itself: it is the landscape as it rolls by for the moving observer. Time is therefore, not a real process not an actual succession that I am content to record. It arises from my relation to things (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 411).

Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of the temporal dimension of being makes clear that the temporal is not a standard of measurement, it is not a superimposed organizing structure, and lastly it is not a linear succession of unrelated moments. For Merleau-Ponty the most definitive attribute of the temporal is that it never presents itself as complete.

It is of the essence of time to be in process of self-production and not to be; never that is, to be completely constituted...It is true that I should be incapable of perceiving any point in time without a before and an after, and that in order to be aware of the relationship between the three terms, I must not be absorbed into any one of them: that time, in short, needs a synthesis. But it is equally true that this synthesis must always be undertaken afresh, and that any supposition that it can be anywhere brought to completion involves the negation of time (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 415).

Merleau-Ponty’s conceptualization of the temporal dimension of being provides one with a tenable way to describe the ephemeral nature of dance. A dance is held together structurally by a relational synthesis, which, is constantly re-negotiated. At no one particular point in a performance does a dance reveal itself. It is at every moment the sum of all its parts. More specifically ‘a dance is’ because of the ties that bind all the parts together. A dance does have moments that may be highlighted, or moments that stand out against others, but, in terms of the temporal life of the dance,
it is the relationships between the moments that are of relevance. Moments themselves are devoid of full significance without any relational network to support them. Following Merleau-Ponty’s claim that it is the nature of time to never be fully constituted, it is fair to say that a dance never comes to an end. The performative existence of a dance in the present does move into the past. Chronologically it does come to an end. Temporally, the dance persists for the creator, the dancer(s), the audience and the musician(s). It persists through revisions, in reflective muscle and body memory, in re-creation, as well in trace form through notation.

Grosz (1999), advocates current writing which:

...affirms time as an open ended and fundamentally active force— a materializing if not material force whose movements and operations have an inherent element of surprise, unpredictability, or newness. It is significant that this future-oriented temporality brings with it the centrality of the concept of chance, of what is in principle unpredictable... the concept of the random or unpredictable, is of the essence of time that is not regulated by causality and determination, but unfolds with its rhythms, and logic, its own enigmas and impetus. Chance is that which signals openness of the future, its relative connection to but also its relative freedom from the past, the possibility of paths of development, temporal trajectories uncontained by the present. Chance here cannot be regarded as indetermination, as the absence of a cause; rather, it is the excess, superfluity, of causes, the profusion of causes, which no longer produces singular or even complex effects but generates events which have a temporal continuity quite separate from that of their ‘causes’ (Grosz, 1999, Becomings, p. 4).

The openness to chance is what gives the temporal dimension of being necessary windows of opportunity and possibility for each subjective and intersubjective
experience to be unique. Being as such does not dissolve into disconnected moments of chaos, and conversely does not package itself neatly into a contained state of 'pre-givens', but rather, organizes itself through a cross section of intentions and chance potentials.

Maintaining the spirit of how Grosz uses the word 'potential' I wish to use the word 'possibility'- because I wish to stress the indeterminate nature that possibility surrounds itself with. 'Potential' although it is a democratic term stills houses within itself an a priori set of capacities that are inherently bound to circumstance. Possibility on the other hand points to the infinite (in terms of regression and progression). This less deterministic stance is one which I opt to incorporate.

The temporal organizes itself through a cross section of possibilities and chance intentions. Possibilities and chance intentions explicitly reveal themselves through action/movement/being in the moment. The temporal therefore, is not (as was previously discussed) about Kronos time, rather, it is about the indeterminate nature of one's experiences of time.

While not being measured in the same sense that kronos time is, 'timing' does not collapse into unrelated successive moments. Rather, the temporal makes use of an implicit understanding of 'timing'. Implicit timing is not primarily concerned with the notion of 'being at the right point in space at the right time'. It
does however concern itself with the synchronization of thought and action as the extension of potentials and chance intentions. Mazis (2002) maintains that:

If the constant “fitting together” didn’t happen, the “moving forward” wouldn’t happen either. There would be no coming together, no dance, and so no real movement. Everything would meet at colliding angles, at nonsensical juxtapositions, instead of “moving”- which means having a “step” or unfolding pattern, which can be seen as the sense of a “succession”. Without timing as the coming together of the dance resulting from the meeting of all its participants, all would be “frozen” or “suspended”, as out of touch like a jingling cacophony of noise. Time is the coordinated connecting of all beings, each of whom is just this unfolding process (Mazis, 2002, p. 36).

In agreement with this view of synchronization is Edward Lippman (1977), who further asserts the linked derivatives of the qualities of passage and duration. “These qualities rest on the unity of consciousness and therefore on the temporal nature of this unity, on a moving awareness that has a continuous identity” (Lippman, 1977, p. 89). The ‘moving awareness’ that Lippman discusses is understood as being an ‘immediate’ quality, and it envelops within itself both the sense of recollection as well as anticipation. Synchronization therefore acts to unify present to past, and present to future, while revealing the present. The temporal is thus ordered by sequencing. Intervals of time reveal themselves not as discreet or dislocated moments of ‘now’ or then’, but rather, as a ‘relation between events’. Intervals create and reveal patterns that I define here as Rhythm(s).

Rhythm is not about the outward patterning which may be audible or visually attuned to. Rather, the implication here is a deeper one, which aims to propose an
awareness of the tensions, synchronizations, contractions and releases that take place between moments and sequences. Generally, the link between time and rhythm asserts that time performs a regulatory function, while rhythm remains bound within the confines of that regulation. However, as we are concerned here with that which is temporal (rather than time itself as object), the implication for rhythm is that it is afforded full independence, as its only regulating force is that of inner impulse.

Janet Goodridge’s comprehensive book on Rhythm and timing (1999) calls upon the choreographic legacies of two contemporary choreographers, namely Doris Humphrey, and Merce Cunningham to explore the temporal notion of rhythm as internal impulse. Goodridge describes:

Humphrey’s notes for a lecture on rhythm stipulated ‘it [rhythm] must be sensed in muscular effort, not as mathematical beat imposed from without’. Furthermore, she insisted that for her, phrasing and rhythm was essentially centered in body movement, rather than derived from any given music. Her choreography was designed in relation to the music but not necessarily determined by it: ‘The rules of movement do not always coincide with the music and it is a matter of judgment as to how to treat it so that both keep their integrity and both keep the dance moving forward’ (1951) (Goodridge, 1999, p. 119).

Humphrey’s narrative choreographic legacy is further supported by Merce Cunningham who also saw it as necessary to make clear a very necessary distinction between inner impulse/rhythm and superimposed metric regulation. In conjunction with John Cage, Cunningham promoted the idea that dance and music are in fact independent of each other- that they stand apart from each other relationally. As such, “Cunningham’s dance structure is based on duration: the common feature
Cunningham and Cage recognize in the dance/music relationship” (Goodridge, 1999, p. 121). Cunningham’s demanding awareness of duration/rhythm brings to attention the explicit use of force and energy shifts as being related to internal impulse(s). He said that:

Dancers can depend on their own legs, instead of music. So I let them dance, instead of coming from an outside source- prompted by music- the dance comes from the movement itself. Or from a sequence of movements, each of which is built upon another. And rhythms come out of that, rather than from dependence on musical structure. (1979 May 9 Interview) (Goodridge, 1999, p. 121).

The practice that is the result of Cunningham’s work is that he created and developed with his dancers a discreet physicalized understanding of measures, phrases and sequencing by grasping the time that movement creates/takes up. This description is an outer revealing of that which originates in inner impulse. (This is why Energy and Force play so prominently in Cunningham’s work.)

Both Humphrey and Cunningham put into motion the fundamental translation of inner impulse to that of synchronized pattern and rhythm mediated by force and energy. As such they exemplified the autonomy of dance as form, and its ability to logically order and move itself forward. This characteristic of dance clarifies Merleau-Ponty’s (1968) notion of visibility and invisibility, precisely because the outer visual fact of movement is tied to the inner invisible vibratory/rhythmic nature of our internal organs. For Humphrey rhythmic organization relies on “breathing, heartbeat, peristalsis, action of legs supporting the body traveling through space, and
emotions” (Goodridge, 1999, p. 118). A relation to internal rhythms dictates that movement is always present in some form, even when the body is at rest. The fact that each of our internal organs which is hidden in the depth of the body, has its very own distinct frequency and vibrational quality (rhythm) is essential for one to make the move from inner impulse to outward motion. With regard to this, Humphrey states:

[We may consider] the breath rhythm as the one principle of all movement... a filling and expanding followed by a contraction in the dynamic sense, a continuous movement growing in tension followed by a letting go of tension, which finishes with an accent. By combining these (three) elements of the breath rhythm consciously in various ways the whole dance may be evolved (1934 unfinished manuscript) (Goodridge, 1999, p. 118).

Natural internal rhythms provide the imprint for outward expressions of rhythm as made manifest through action. It is in the depth of the body that the inner makes possible the outer exploration of the temporal aspect of movement.

The Spatial

Depth and Dimension

The phenomenological interpretation of space is such that it is best understood as ‘geometric’ (a system of relations). It is in this manner that space constitutes itself against a ‘background’, as well as through time. Thus understood space is the superimposition of dimensions crossed with time; in fact, space understood in this
manner is beyond the scope or limits of borders- it points to a notion of space that is infinite.

We need an absolute within the sphere of the relative, a space which does not skate over appearances, which indeed takes root in them and is dependent upon them, yet which is nevertheless not given along with them in any realist way, and can... survive their complete dislocation (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 248).

Conceived as a structure of interrelatedness space goes beyond the common configurations or designations of 'up' and 'down' or 'here' and 'there'; it points to the manner in which such points of reference are related to each other. It also signals that space can be constituted in a more malleable understanding- other points of view become possible.

Earlier I referred to space as geometrical, such that it is the relation of dimensions. In a paper titled 'Bodies of knowledge: Beyond Cartesian views of persons, selves and mind' (1998), Ian Burkitt builds his moderately phenomenological understanding of time and space from Merleau-Ponty and the notion of geometrical space. He claims, for example, that there are five dimensions- namely, breadth, width, height, time and symbol (Burkitt, 1998, p. 73). He further explains the usefulness in exploring the world with such dimensions because:

It allows us to think of different dimensions of human life, none of which can be separated from the others, yet at the same time they are distinct and cannot be reduced to one another... human life is irreducibly multi-dimensional (Burkitt, 1998, p. 73).
We will return to some of Burkitt's ideas soon- but for now what is important is that he provides us with a moderate understanding of dimensions. He still maintains them as somewhat static, in that they all occur in relation to the other, i.e., height is relational to width etc... What happens when we turn space upside down or sideways? The relations of height to width invariably change, so that we are still on some level dealing with space as a discreet understanding of 'where' points (rather than relational). Burkitt does not give us a way to deal with space as a structure that changes the relations between objects and people.

Sue Cataldi in her book Emotion, Depth and Flesh (1993) takes up the notion of depth further than we have seen so far. She manages to elaborate and break down the finite boundary of what we normally deem depth to be.

Depth is neither here nor there, neither past nor future, but the bond that lies between them and the source of their 'reversabilities', Depth is not simply the 'background', and neither is it simply a 'hidden dimension'. It is best understood as a source of 'reversabilities', as the process that generates the backgrounding of the foreground and the foreground of the background we can perceive whenever we perceive one or another of the ways in which ambiguous figures can come to the fore or unfold (Cataldi, 1993, p. 3).

That depth for Cataldi is neither here nor there, but rather a bond, permits space to become somewhat altered or de-bordered. Depth, and more specifically the spatial and the temporal can survive a complete reorganization through Cataldi's understanding. Depth and the spatial is best understood not as a segment of

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bordered space, i.e. as in the sides of a block, but, rather as layerings superimposed. This notion thus leads to both the quality of revealing, and of blind spots—this purposeful confusion allows for our sensory perception and our intellectual understanding to cross over into each other, constantly renegotiating understanding.

So that there is a ‘double’ or a ‘cross-situating’ of the one in the other, so that these ‘maps’ are superimposable— but are never entirely so. Because ‘reversability’ is always incomplete (Cataldi, 1993, p. 114).

On the other hand Burkitt places ‘symbol’ as a dimension, and he does so with the intention of delineating an extension between our acts in the temporal/spatial dimension, and that of language (intellect). His borders are somewhat more concrete than the ones proposed by Cataldi. His premise is also built up from Merleau-Ponty, who believed that language is to find its roots of primary existence in our gestures and movements. Burkitt’s designation that there is such a thing as an objective world of thought is such that language must first be linked to an outer world of sensory perception and action. By linking symbolic language to the body through an extended dimension, Burkitt makes it clear that: "words persist with us rather than being stored in a place called ‘the mind’ and in this way belong to the body as much as they belong to any intellectual capacity" (Burkitt, 1998, p. 74).

Although it can be said that Burkitt and Cataldi are on the same wave length, it can also be justified that Cataldi presents her readers with a more dispersed view of dimension, space and depth (and time), in that she fully aims to maintain the
dichotomy of the mind and body, and then through the process of ‘reversibility’ is able to further confuse the boundaries which belong to each.

By understanding that time and space reveal themselves as dimensional, consciousness and reality manifest themselves in such a way that human thought and action are in fact non reducible- that we are more than the sum of simple reflex and action. The body therefore is an active site in the making of meaning, and the intellect is always in extension and relation to sensorial experience.

Creating Space Through Movement

Heidegger’s understanding of the temporal aspect of being reveals within itself a directional sense or a momentum, which is based on spatial awareness. He says that:

This time of the present is explicated as a sequence constantly rolling through the now, a sequence whose directional sense is said to be singular and irreversible. Everything that occurs rolls out of an infinite future into an irretrievable past (Heidegger, 1992, p 18E).

Thus understood, temporality constituted in becoming and being finds within itself directional force. Being (in the moment of now) is an anchorage, from which we always move forward (futural) by means of motivations and intentional action. One can also refer back (through recollection and/or reflection). Moving forward and backward are directional forces, which are interrelated with the dimension of space.
The fact that one is always in the process of moving forward, as well as having the capacity to go back to past experiences through memory (both brain and body memory) points to the intersecting of the temporal with the spatial. At their intersection they each have the ability to reveal aspects of the other.

Directional forces, such as forward and backward are interrelated with the spatial dimension of being. As in the previous discussion relating to the temporal— that which is spatial is not about confines or containment. Merleau-Ponty claims that:

Space is not the settling (real or logical) in which things are arranged, but the means whereby the position of things becomes possible. This means that instead of imagining it as a sort of ether in which all things float, or conceive it abstractly as a characteristic that they have in common, we must think of it as the universal power enabling them to be connected (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 243).

Acknowledging a spatial dimension of being is not about locations or places, it is rather, an acknowledgment or attunement to the connections that are to be made regarding our moving selves and the world, which we perceive and create. The aspect of being which is futural or forward moving is not concerned with moving from point A to point B, or from now to then etc… Rather, the spatial dimension of being places focus on the moment that is now, or being in the moment. The fact that one moves from becoming to being to have been is enmeshed and intrinsic to action itself. The Spatial understanding of being therefore does not dissect each moment of ‘now’; rather it looks to connect them. A Spatial sense of being is predicated on
attuning oneself to the moments that exist between now and then, and how they can be related to each other.

This particular understanding of the spatial is perhaps easier to understand when related to the art of painting or drawing, and the consideration of positive and negative space. The positive space will always be visible against a horizon of negative space. The positive and the negative are relational in the sense that the one conditions the other. We cannot attend to one dimension without the presence of the other. However, we can pull one dimension to the foreground so that it stands out against its horizon. The importance of discerning positive from negative space is not so much the ability to distinguish the one from the other but rather the ability to see that there is a contextual relationship that is created between the two. This assertion does not qualify space by measured expanses, or by filling voids, or simply by occupying space, but more importantly strives to capture the threads of the relationship(s) that create the positive and the negative space.

It has been my experience in teaching non-dance students (at the university level), that they arrive to class with a pre-given understanding of what space is. They enter a rectangular classroom, of which they take up little bits of space. They often feel bound and confined within the space they find themselves in, and generally do not see themselves as active generators of space. They are in fact (in their initial understanding) standing inside a big empty void over which they have no control. With this initial understanding their manipulation of space consists of (1) directions:
up/down, sideways, front/back, (2) shapes: curved, straight, angular etc. Although this preliminary understanding of space is a good start from which to begin moving, it is still quite limited by the fact that it remains statically contained and measured at all times. The task for me as a dancer/teacher is to present to my students an alternative understanding of space. What I hope for is to bring a new understanding, which transforms space from an outside force, which we find ourselves contained in, to a dimension of being which is alive with possibility through movement itself. The spatial as a dimension of being does not stand outside of oneself, but rather is made manifest once one moves. As students begin to explore and experiment with the discreet units of space, such as: pathways, directions, place, size, level, and focus etc, it is hoped that they gain an understanding of the units, but more importantly that they attune and become aware of the relationships (and possible emotional implications/tones) that come into play when they move in certain ways. When students become cognizant of the relationships that are created when they move, their understanding of the spatial is active and not pre-given. The student then becomes in control of how space is to be molded and sculpted. At this point the room the student finds him/herself in may be a rectangle, but what the student can do is create movement that is not limited to this bounded shape. Space that is molded and sculpted, and not resigned to containment and measurement is both relational and alive. Space, conceived in this manner literally becomes alive because it is combined and brought forth through movement itself.
Viewing the spatial and the temporal as active dimensions of being shows that space is the superimposition of relations with temporal intentions, and as such, the phenomenological limits of space and time are seen to be infinite and experientially unique.
CHAPTER THREE:
NOTATION AS TRACES OF DANCE

Scattered Papers, tiny surfaces of life, memory-bodies, mirror-bodies, to what mysterious universe does the multitude of your traces refer? Unfinished writings, humble springboards of virtual space, modest advances beyond the possible, you exist but halfway, in the absence of the body alone that can read you. Incomplete objects, intermediaries between nothingness and life, you are not content like other objects to be the furnishings of reality or to impress yourself in the imaginary: you leave the order of things but provisionally, the better to transform it. And this without revolution, without fury, content to return, with unflagging patient labour, over the minute traces you have laid down at the limits of writing. (Laupe, 1994, p. 33)

Dance is an art form that moves. As discussed in chapter two, the phenomenological limits of the moving body, and its spatial and temporal extensions are described as infinite and experientially unique within dance. The attempt to capture the fleeting experience of dance to the objectified status of text or score through notation has implications for the relational ties of the moving body and its spatial and temporal extension. Speaking to this issue (with regard to music) Merleau-Ponty says:

The musical meaning of a sonata is inseparable from the sounds which are its vehicle: before we have heard it no analysis enables us to anticipate it... During the performance, the notes are not the 'signs' of the sonata, but it is there through them, it enters them... The meaning swallows up the signs... The process of expression brings the meaning into being or makes it effective, and does not merely translate it (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 182-183).
Likewise dance as an art form of expression carries within its interrelated steps its own meaning(s). The meaning(s) of a dance are inseparable from either specific steps, or transitory moments linking between steps or phrases. The non-discreet location of meaning in dance recognizes that meaning is imbued or saturated throughout the dance. It is in performance that expression brings 'meaning into being'.

Phenomenologically this claim is an important one because it places expression and immediacy as the primary dimensions of dance. This claim further implies ramifications for the translation of dance to the realm of symbolic notation. This chapter will explore the implications of capturing a sensing/moving experience to that of a denotative and symbolic one.

To denote something is to designate the meaning of a term by marks or by symbols (Oxford Dictionary). And, logically "dance notation is the translation of four-dimensional movement (time being the fourth dimension) into signs written on two dimensional paper. (Note* a 'fifth dimension' - dynamics - should also be considered as an integral part, though it usually is not) (Hutchinson-Guest, 1984a, p. xiv).

The concept and placement of value as it is related to the act of dancing when it is correlated to a symbol system or text is an integral part of the discussion of notation in dance. It must be determined whether, in the recreation of dances through scripts, that value be placed on the process of the dancing itself.
(performance), or, on the product of the script itself. The essential question to which this chapter is devoted, is whether, the script or score acts as a determinative plan designated by limits and specified conditions which must be followed in such a manner as to reproduce the dance with a sense of fidelity to the choreographer’s original intent. Or, does the score function within a set of minimal constraints, allowing for some changes, innovations, or reinterpretations?

In an attempt to discover where the value of the score is to be placed with regard to dance, this chapter will discuss the following three specific points of interest: 1.1) to inquire as to what it is that makes a notational system successful, 1.2) to question what the function of the score is in dance, 2) to decipher whether the art of dance is essentially allographic or autographic by nature, and how this may affect the meaning and purpose of notation in dance, and lastly, 3) to look at the promise of technology to see what it has to offer the realm of dance notation, and whether the computer, and programs have the capacity to change the way we have been conceptualizing and using notation.

What are the Requirements of a Notational System?

A notational system (for dance movement) is a language in itself. It is a system of translation, whereby bodily movement is represented by a denotative symbol(s), or character(s). Inevitably, as is often the case in the translation of literary texts in different languages, ‘something’ is understood to be ‘lost,’ because, there is no direct transfer of meaning to words or characters in one language as there is in another.
This is also the case in dance notation. Put quite simply, there is often a gap to be found or a discrepancy between the function of denoting symbols of the notational system, and the related act which the symbol, placed in an organized structure is meant to represent. This ‘space’ that is occupied between ‘text’ and ‘act’ is the hot spot of current and past debates—whether it be with regard to music, drama, or to dance. The space that one finds between the text and the act is for some theorists a limitation, and for others it is a space of liberation. For Peter Kivy, who models his argument on that of Collingwoods’, the space becomes one of liberation as he asserts that “the composer wants this gap because he wants the performer to be his ‘collaborator’, or to be an artist in his own right” (Kivy, 1995, p. 266). Like Western musical notation, which forms its basis and structure on the use of the keyboard, dance and human movement is based on the outside view of the body grounded in three dimensional space, while traveling and occupying the fourth dimension of time. (Note that these dimensions refer to time and space not as spatial or temporal— they are objectified states) It is, therefore, not surprising that many different systems have come to pass in and out of currency in an attempt to capture and reconcile the complexity of movement, space, and time, on a limited surface of two dimensional paper.

Today the methods of choice for dance notation appear to be that of Labanotation (copyright symbol insert 1928 Method of Kinetography) and Benesh (copyright symbol 1955) notation. The systems differ drastically in appearance and in theory. Labanotation, which was devised for the capturing and the analysis of
movement appears on a vertical staff, the symbols are abstracted and chunky, and the system allows for a vast amount of information and detail to be included in a concise and quick reading pattern. On the other hand, the Benesh system, which was originally designed for the capturing of (classical) dance sequences, is found on a horizontal staff (like Western music), it is quite pictorial, and it is light in terms of the markings (which may make it more amenable to balletic technique), and strives to consolidate itself to essential detail only by not overloading on peripheral information. Both systems are considered to be successful by today’s standards for the uses for which they were invented and structured. It is important to note that, as the systems were created for different purposes, they may yield different possibilities for the understanding of movement.

In her comprehensive book, *Dance Notation*, (1984), Ann Hutchinson-Guest puts forth an exhaustive list of criteria for a good system of movement notation. She says,

Put quite simply a system of movement notation must answer these basic questions: ‘who?’, ‘what?’, ‘where?’, ‘when?’, ‘how?’, and ‘why?’, at different levels of specificity. ‘Who?’ translates into the part or parts of the body involved in the action; ‘what?’, is the kind of action occurring; ‘where?’ deals with directional matters, both in relation to gestures and to the performer’s location on stage; ‘when?’ deals with timing, the moment an activity takes place and its duration; ‘how?’ involves the manner of performance, including dynamics, the level of energy used; ‘why?’ deals the intent of the action, its relationship to the environment, to other people, etc. (Hutchinson-Guest, 1984a, p. 191).
As criteria, one may think that these five questions are inclusive, and even working on in-depth levels of specificity, do well to define and capture movement. However, from experience I am somewhat skeptical of such a simplistic view of the working structure of a notation system. It seems at first glance a very neat and tidy package, yet, there is upon closer inspection no reason to limit the scope of the five questions to the areas which Hutchinson-Guest attributes them.

I am curious, for example, about what would happen if we intermingle the questions with each other, for example: Hutchinson-Guest attributes the ‘who?’ question, to part(s) of the body moving; but what if we were to relocate the ‘who?’ to question who is moving at what beat, i.e.: interrelate it to timing and to body part (what if timing and body part can’t be thought of as separate happenings?). And, if I were to relocate and interconnect all the five questions in a (thought out) hodgepodge manner, it would become obvious that a notation system absolutely must answer those five questions - but it must answer them not only on ‘different levels of specificity’, but also with an understanding that the five questions are inextricably linked and in reality non-divisible.

It is the attempt to acknowledge the links between the discreet questions that has the tendency of being problematic and ignored in notation systems. For example, although the question ‘where?’ is indelibly tied to space, and ‘when?’ to time- what if we combined them or mixed them together? It must be seen that, as a dancer carves out space, time has been passed, or conversely that, as a dancer fulfills time through
movement, he/she can attest to this through the carving out and sculpting of space. Although I understand that time and space are discreet aspects of dance notation, it becomes difficult to see how they can be dissected and transformed to symbol form without allowing each to reveal a bit of the other. There is a phenomenological impasse between lived temporal and spatial experience, and the need for notation and symbols to be specific in meaning. There is only so much that one symbol can disclose, and its (the symbols') limit is felt when the conjecture of time and space takes place. Symbols and notation cannot reveal the ties that interconnect spatial and temporal organization, nor that which is revealed through lived expression.

Time takes place through the manifestation of space, and conversely space through time, surely each aspect is not reducible to the other, but the impact and interrelatedness of the one to the other is imperative to the form of dance. For example: the actual text or score of a dance is flat, it doesn't dance all by itself, it has no capacity to make meaning come alive, nor does it express anything in particular. The score exists as a flat document of symbols and signs, which carries within it the capacity for expression but only through its physical interpretation. It is not until the score begins to move through the dancers' body does the dance reveal meaning. Expression of symbols in a corporeal manner is integral to the making of meaning and the form of dance. It is not until the dancer dances the interrelated moments that exist in-between all aspects of time, space and body that the dance is made manifest. An attunement to the interrelated moments in-between the objective symbols of time space and movement can only phenomenologically exist in direct physical expression.
The moments in-between all aspects of the objective elements of a dance remain ambiguous to direct symbolic translation; those moments belong to the body and its corporeal logic which is housed within experience as the primary dimension of being.

Therefore, I find it is not possible to take the questions of time and space as separate; but they should be taken, rather, as enmeshed and therefore not as separate. The same can be said for the question of ‘what?’ and ‘how?’ What body part moves, and how it is moved are also indelibly tied to each other. By interconnecting the five questions together in various combinations, I find that only one conclusion can be arrived at: although it is necessary to have criteria for the determination of the notational system, it is virtually impossible to separate all the parts of the dance (a choreographic form) into discreet packages or questions (with answers); not all aspects can be captured in singular form. To separate a dance in this manner is to actually dismantle and loosen the connections between all the aspects that give the dance its distinctiveness. This process reveals the limit of symbol in relation to bodily expression in dance.

Although it is possible to breakdown and analyze movement itself, it can only be done at the level of physical action. Discreet movement(s) is/are a part of a dance, but do/does not constitute the whole of the dance; therefore, to break movements down to their atomic or biomechanical level surely is possible, but does not constitute
all that is a dance. However, to try and capture the dance at this minute level I believe is not possible within the notational systems currently in use, because, the notational systems do not account for the interconnectedness of movements and transitional moments between movements in a wholistic manner. The difficulty is necessarily with intent, and its translation into symbolic meaning. Intent (or rules governing the dance), is saturated within the whole-not within the parts only, and more specifically intent is never to be found in one place- rather it weaves its way between and through all aspects of a dance. Intent, as such, is an aspect of a dance that reveals itself in qualitative terms; it is an ingredient which cannot be divisibly removed, nor can it be re-inserted - it is intrinsic to the dance.

The interrelated complexity of dance is related here in the experiences of Peggy Baker as she recalls the transformation of her learning/rehearsal process from perfecting discreet steps, to looking at the overall connections in a dance.

I think very often the approach to learning a dance is that we learn the steps and then we work on perfecting them... I experimented early on in my solo dancing with looking at each one of those issues separately as opposed to going step-by-step and working on each element in that step, I started looking at the dance overall. For example, I looked at choreography in terms of simply the vocabulary and began to draw connections of kinship-like putting together families of movements inside that choreography, until I came to understand how every step related to everything else in the dance. There were kinds of groupings of material that made themselves known. I could distinguish variations and resonances from other kinds of vocabulary which presented a kind of aesthetic realm in which the dance took place. Then I would look at, in separate rehearsals, all the spatial components of the dance and I would attend to nothing else but the floor pattern, the levels, the facings, the facings of my body, the internal lines of my own body, the external lines in space. I would go through the whole thing until I understood how I could distill just one element of the dance. And
then I would go and do the same thing with rhythmic ideas and be able to get through thing simply as a rhythmic expression. Then I would do the same thing with imaginative thinking, attaching a metaphor or an image to every single movement and not do anything that didn’t have a very clear imaginative thought attached to it. For me this creates stratas of interest in the dance. So, instead of the steps being a kind of surface that gets burnished and perfected on top, the steps themselves are a kind of permeable membrane and the shape that those steps take is produced by the structure and the process that underlie them....My idea is not to go for a kind of rigid perfectionism that addresses a superficial idea about what the steps are, but to let the choreography itself be a world I enter and explore during a performance ... That process of addressing a task inside the structure of the choreography itself can also lead to a very deep personal experience which I feel is a parallel experience. I can look with great objectivity at any element of the choreography and then engage in it fully as the individual I am, which changes constantly.... I want to leave room for spontaneity, to be myself inside the work, understanding that I know very truly what the structure is. This is a process that I use through my rehearsal and performance. It is very much a spontaneous attitude that I take. I have a sense of curiosity about what is going to happen, as much as I have a sense of direction that I go into the performance to begin with (Baker, 2001, p. 113).

Peggy Baker describes in this narrative the great complexity that goes into dancing beyond the surface of the steps of a dance. The infinite capacity for the dancing body is explored both in terms of infinite regress, as well progressively. In terms of infinite regress it appears that her process places an immense focus on deconstructing the dance to all essential minute elements, but this process does not remain at the atomic level. Rather, her process then turns to progressively develop (through physical experience) the ties in-between all the objective elements. Through her process (which I consider to be a form of theorizing in movement) the dance comes to have a sense of depth and asserts truth and meaning in movement form. Peggy Bakers’
process makes explicit the network that develops between the dancer and her ever changing self, and her understanding of structure, and spontaneity. It is these intertwined and developed connections, which by all accounts cannot be singularly brought down to the level of a symbol. The notation may catch the surface of the steps but it cannot hope to catch the threads that begin to grow between them and the dancer. This limit must be acknowledged.

As a language system at its most basic level, notation must consist of two requirements, which Nelson Goodman makes clear in his book *Languages of Art*. The first requirement is syntax and the second is semantics. Syntax is understood to produce a structure with accompanying governing rules. Goodman claims that “In short, a character in a notation system is an abstraction-class of character-indifference among inscriptions. As a result, no mark may belong to more than one character. The characters must thus be disjoint… it is absolutely essential” (Goodman, 1968, p. 133). The notational system must, therefore be organized in such a manner as to have specific symbols representing specific movements, or specific symbols representing specific pathways etc… For as in language, everything that the letter ‘A’ represents cannot be understood to include the letter ‘B’.

Semantics, on the other hand, is defined as the process whereby meaning can be produced and understood. Goodman therefore goes on to claim that the “second requirement upon a notational scheme, then, is that the characters be finitely
differentiated, or articulated” (Goodman, 1968, p. 133). The characters therefore must be discreet and unambiguous in order for their meaning to be clear.

For dance forms, which are developed in such a way as to have common (known) movement vocabulary, such as ballet, it is within the reach of a notational system to capture clearly both patterns of movement and steps within conventional groupings of symbols and signs. For example, whether one is trained in Canada, Europe, or the United States, or whether one is trained in Cecchetti or Vaganova technique, a particular step will always be referred to in the same way notationally, with minor exceptions for style and quality- a ‘pas-de-chat’ will always be a ‘pas-de-chat’ notationally. It is understood in this sense that the notational system can allow for conventional usage (to save time, and for economy of space), conventional symbols “assume certain knowledge on the part of the reader, thus avoiding inclusion of unnecessary detail” (Hutchinson-Guest, 1984a, p. 191).

Although this notion of conventional usage is useful for ease and efficiency in the reading of notation, and for easy transference of material, the problem inevitably arises when one is left to assume for oneself, and, conversely when another assumes for us, just what ‘certain knowledge’ is to be known. How is one to know that there is specific knowledge that is assumed within a score? This requires a certain and definite amount of research, as well as possibly a very high level of knowledge within the art form of dance, and it leaves a door open to improper interpretation and misunderstanding. Notation, therefore, begins to show itself as a structure, which
needs to be defined within a context, which demands that either the assumed knowledge is known, or that proper research will be conducted in order to find out what is needed. In this light, the notation score cannot stand on its own without the very possibility of loss or misunderstanding of movement or any other important aspect of the dance.

It is especially noticeable when we turn out attention to more complex dance forms (such as modern dance, or newly emerging styles) that notational schemes may run into particular difficulty. When convention is that which one strives to avoid (as is often the case in new dance works), symbols and signifiers must reassert themselves in order to accommodate new meaning usage. For example, in specific styles that develop movements such as turns or jumps, or any other movement with a particular emphasis, the denotative symbol in the notation must be able to accommodate the particular emphasis. It is here that the educated and experienced understanding, the interpretation, and the ability to anatomically break movements down, becomes some of the most valuable skills and tools of the notator. It is at this point that the symbols as signifiers must acquire a new version of their antecedent meaning. The symbol acquires new tones or shades- or an extended vocabulary for its particular meaning. Nothing can be left to assumption or guesswork when it comes to denoting the movement itself. This much is possible within the realm of notation at the level of specified movement.
The action of literacy in dance notation, then, becomes an ever-evolving process, in which one who learns the language may become fluent within certain dialects. Ferrucio Busconi (1866-1924), states that:

Notation...is primarily an ingenious expedient for catching an inspiration, with the purpose of exploiting it later. But notation is to improvisation as the portrait to the living model. It is for the interpreter to resolve the rigidity of the signs into the primitive emotion (VanZile, 1985-86, p. 45).

This idea of Busconi’s rings true for the realm of dance notation, as I am sure it does for music and dramatic text.

However, in dance the role of the interpretation is not a clear-cut role, definable by one person, and, certainly not even by two people. ‘Interpretation’, just as in the telephone game, must hold on to a bit of the message from the old, only to capture a new meaning from the next person in line who touches it. The intention of a piece of dance work finds its place of departure within the choreographer. However, it must be understood that the intent cannot itself remain static and precise to its originating form when so many people are putting themselves into the process of the making, and the product of performance (those who believe that the text or score contains the original intent may disagree with me here).

The process and re-construction of the dance with regard to notation is guided and manipulated by a chain of people. In the construction phase, the chain begins (in most instances) with the choreographer (as initiator), the notator (if there is
one), copying out and transcribing the dance, the dancers in rehearsal, and lastly the
dancers in performance (somewhere in here there may also be the introduction of
composer and musician(s)). After the first performance the choreographer may
institute some changes to the choreography, while the dancers will affect the
movements with their own physical understanding and movement style.

For the most part, the process of re-construction begins with ‘time’ (a period
of time passes between the original performance and the re-construction). Once in
possession of the notated score, the preliminary job of the interpreter is to attempt an
understanding and a decoding, not only of the movement and its particular style and
nuances, but also its original understanding. He or she then must transmit this
information to the rehearsal master as well as the dancers in rehearsal. The
choreographer (if alive), or an ‘assistant’ usually will take a look to make sure that the
piece has been interpreted in a suitable manner. If the choreographer is not able to
partake in this process, a Trust may be instituted to overlook the subsequent
productions. It is the job of either the Trust, or the live choreographer to alter or
make whatever changes are deemed necessary, or to clarify any points of confusion in
order to render the piece and performance as closely as possible to its original intent.

Within these intricate webs of communication the identity and authenticity of
a work inevitably comes into question. But before it can be decided where such
authority can be found we must investigate this particular question: what is the
function of the notated score?
WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF A SCORE?

A set score can be viewed both prescriptively and descriptively. Prescriptively it offers the reader a set of definitive and organized steps, while descriptively it offers a basic diagram that can be interpreted, and innovated upon. The score can be understood to encompass the entire structure of a work- providing boundaries and guidelines which must be strictly adhered to; or, it can provide at a minimal level a structure upon which a few sufficient conditions must be met in order to produce the work (which one has the authority to elaborate on in the process of interpretation).

There is considerable debate on this issue between opposing points of view, the essentialist point of view and the more liberal approach of co-authorship. The essentialist argument is that authenticity is to be found within the notational score alone. It is the prerogative of the score to function as the authoritative voice. The more liberal position of co-authorship considers the score as a structure that one may interact with subjectively.

While Nelson Goodman concedes that the dance is a complex system that may in some ways be beyond complete notationality, he also believes that this is not a problem. A score is objectively definitive for a dance work as long as it consists of sufficient conditions that it may be used in order to advocate its authority.
The dance, as a visual mobile art involving the infinitely subtle and varied expressions and three-dimensional motions...is far too complicated to be captured by notation. But of course, a score need not capture the subtlety and complexity of a performance that would be hopeless even in the comparatively simpler art of music (Goodman, 1968, p. 212).

For Goodman it is clear that the essential ideas of identity and authority lie within some ‘sufficient conditions’, which the notation has patterned. As long as the subsequent performances (although now independent of the first) still contain enough of a resemblance, based on the translation of symbol into act, they can be considered to be constitutive of the same piece. By no means, though, can each subsequent performance be a repeat of the previous one. It can only be related to it by the fact that it has some identifiable markings, which can be classified as belonging to a specific score.

However, if the score need not capture (and indeed cannot capture) all the subtleties and complexities of movement, the logical question is: what exactly does the notation capture? Is the notation no more than a mere imprint with un-answerable questions and holes, or, is it a basic blue print of sequential directions through which most of the basic plan is visible, and the rest must be added through whatever means deemed necessary (i.e.; research, experience, interviews etc...)?

Joseph Margolis, in his paper “The Autographic Nature of Dance”, strongly opposes Nelson Goodman’s views, especially regarding the emphasis placed on the function of scores:
Dance scores are primarily heuristic devices for recovering a minimal sense of the principal positions and movements of a given dance...dance notation, on the whole, tends to capture the movements of a dance by drawing the path sequence of trajectories that statically approximates it (Margolis, 1981, p. 421).

Although Margolis here may sound somewhat close to Goodman in conceding that the notational score is limited as to what it can denote, he strongly believes that the score is seriously limited, and that which it does denote is not the essence of the dance nor does it contain its authority. Rather, the authority belongs to the dancers in performance of the text.

We are clearly dealing with two opposing views as to what it is that notation captures or approximates, and therefore, how it is that the written score should function. The essentialists would say that the score denotes enough of what is needed in order for it to function authoritatively as text, while the opposite position places the emphasis of authority and identity in the actual performance itself- as a mediation between the bare bones skeleton of the score, and the interpretation which is personal (this results in co-authorship).

I wonder whether there is any way these two sides can be reconciled. Peter Kivy, in his book Authenticities, puts forward the claim with regard to Western music that:

The historically authentic performance movement, then, the way we have come to know it in practice, is pretty much... a project aimed at collapsing performance into text, in essence transforming the music of
our past… from a performance art… to an art in which sound production is completely determined by ‘notation’ (Kivy, 1995, p. 277).

As one who attributes the authoritative role to the performer, Kivy also goes on to say that ‘historically authentic’ music performances are perfectly valid as well as intrinsically interesting; but as ‘restorations’ they are to be judged and aesthetically appreciated on different grounds than musical performances.

It is in this way perhaps, that both sides of the argument can be somewhat reconciled; each is judged by different aesthetic standards, each is fulfilling different roles for music and performance, each has a different voice of authority, and each is valued for different reasons and purposes.

This may still state the differences too strongly. Even within the co-authorship model the score is an integral part of the performance process; it provides guidelines or a map. Likewise, in the historical authenticity camp - (although the musician may try to provide a truly authentic rendition of the time/place/person who first created the text/score), personal interpretation cannot be eradicated. In both cases, it is no simple process of separation. Text and action work together to some degree in both of the above mentioned cases. Consequently, to try and separate the score from the performance, or, vice-versa, the performance from the score is to undermine the important ways (in the above two scenarios) in which each aspect informs the other. Joysanne Sidimus, a former Ballerina with NBC, and currently
'Repetiteur' of Balanchine's choreography for NBC says of her role in re-creating choreography:

I think the greatest gift we give dancers is the equality to empower them to come to their own interesting point of material development...I have always hated the title, although I am honoured by it, of "Repetiteur," because there is nothing repetitive about a Repetiteur. The only thing repetitious is that you are doing the same steps. The challenge is to make those steps different and alive. These women I assure you could do the same phrase of music and choreography for twenty-five years and it would never look the same way in any two performances. What makes that happen? It is a collaboration, but it is also a focus on lack of an absolute (Sidimus, 2001, p. 114).

This is an example of the co-authorship model- the text is honoured in the process of re-construction, but, it is done only in terms of the steps themselves- each dancer brings him/herself to this process and therefore the possibility of the dance being a new experience exists within 'the lack of an absolute'.

The emphasis on the score in relation to authenticity points to yet another question in relation to the function of a score, why have the score at all? For what purpose do we feel the need to establish scores for dance works?

On November 8-9th, 1997, at Roehampton Institute (a subsidiary of Surrey University- England), a conference entitled "Preservation Politics" was held. Attended by dance scholars, choreographers, dancers, and notators, the articles that were published (see Dance Theatre Journal Vol14 No2 1998) as a result of the conference confirm that the Western dance world was struggling to understand how
notation should function. Should notation be a means of preserving a heritage-a
tradition? Is notation for the transfer of old dances (that ‘someone’ decides should or
need to be kept ‘alive’), should all new dances be notated? If not, how do we know
which dances should be notated? Is it only good dances which should be notated? Is
notation for the purpose of copyright? Is notation a business? Should the dance
world become literate. And so on.

Beyond these questions and many more, it is apparent that the struggle with
notation and dance is not so much with notation as a system itself, but rather, with
the role it will play historically within the set cannons and traditions of western dance.
The practice of producing scores has largely been directed at large scale ballets. At
some point it was decided that for the sake of posterity the particular ballet should be
notated in hard copy- we should capture it before it is gone! Once notated the text
becomes a definitive version representing a particular choreographer, company, and
moment in time. The snag is that many- if not all major companies dance some
version of the Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty etc. (The Classics). Therefore
one particular version is one definitive version among the many, and yet they are one
and the same.

It is interesting to know that the western dance world has had a long tradition
of passing down its steps and ballets through each generation. This ‘passing down’ is
a kind of oral tradition, where a dancer would pass his or her role down to another
dancer, as a way of mentoring younger dancers up through the ranks of a company.
In passing down steps and dances, personal idiosyncrasies, memory lapses, explicit changing of choreography and timing all have a way of filtering through the process of teaching and learning— the passing down of dances is anything but static. Historically it has been a very dynamic process of interconnecting personalities mixed with the transfer of what is deemed as necessary and sufficient conditions (whatever those may be). We take the classical ballets we see as authentic, although none of us was around to see the very first Swan Lake or Sleeping Beauty production. In the oral, and more accurately kinetic transfer of movement and dances “some liberty is allowed- and it is that liberty which sustains the heritage” (Carter, 1998, p. 28).

It is crucial to make the connection between the practice of notation and its relation to time (historical) with regard to the identification of authenticity. As Sandra Carter mentions as her case for the preservation of dance:

The 20th Century ballet repertory is of course, a much more protected one. You don’t mess with Ashton and certainly not with Balanchine. But there is something embodied in the term ‘classical’, which suggests longevity...in contrast, the notion of ‘modern’ dance implies a resistance to this sustenance. Something that is modern and even more so, ‘contemporary’, is by its very nature of its time (Carter, 1998, p. 28).

This connection between notation and historical time is where the apparent differences in the development between music and dance becomes most notable. Music, although it has developed alternatives to the five line staff, is usually noted at the time of its inception. This means, that although pieces may be created through improvisation, they are traditionally scored through notation. The score in music is
used for learning purposes, training, performance, and for posterity. Dance on the other hand does not share this ‘literacy’. Historically there have been many forms of dance notation, yet these forms have been geared to the personal choreographer, or to particular historical styles of dance rather than based on a shared ‘global’ understanding of movement. Typically choreographers create movement, either by themselves or in collaboration with others, they may write notes, draw sketches, keep mental reminders, or even develop personal systems of codifying their movement patterns. Choreographers do not typically notate their own works.

Historical time and western dance generally follow a progression of time passing before pieces become notated. Choreographers, especially contemporary ones who work independently of large companies rarely have their works notated by a choreologist or notator. Rather, time passes, the first performance has taken place, and perhaps after a certain period of time has elapsed, and for a multitude of possible reasons, the piece becomes qualified as being worthy of being notated. For whatever reason it is deemed that ‘this particular piece’ should not disappear from the repertory of western dance- this is a piece which constitutes part of a history that needs to be accounted for and held onto. It seems that dance in the process of re-creation (in relation to that which is preserved (notated)) may be a form of selective history making, whereby we decide now, which works are worthwhile passing on to the future through a prescriptive text. Within the realm of modern dance, pioneers such as Martha Graham, and Doris Humphrey are now having their early works reproduced and performed through notation and the guidance of dancers who have
had the dances passed down to them. The pieces in collective social memory have
stood the test of time, and now they are preserved to consolidate the history of
western contemporary dance- this is the history, which will now be passed on. The
fact that contemporary dance tends to be notated after the fact may have to do with
the financial ability of small independent choreographers to pay for the services of a
notator, as well as the possible improvisational quality of much contemporary dance
as a possible obstacle to creating definitive scores. Whatever the reason(s) may be,
the fact remains that Western dance is selectively recording its history of dance, and
dance remains in essence an ephemeral art.

IS DANCE ALLOGRAPHIC OR AUTOGRAPHIC?

Let us begin with the question ‘who owns a dance?’ It is not an easily
answered question. Surely, the original choreographer has a definite share in the
dance. But, what about the notator, whose job it is to denote and translate every
aspect possible, ranging from the initial concept, to movement, to timing etc. Surely,
the notator must have to interpret what he/she saw heard, was told, was
demonstrated- the notator is not a neutral intermediary. And, what about the
reconstructor whose job it is to bring a dance back to life from pages of carefully laid
out symbols. How do we know that his/her reading of the score coincides
semantically with that of the person who wrote the score? What influence does the
reconstructor have once points of confusion come to the surface? What influence does this person have at this point? And last but definitely not least what about the dancers themselves? What is their role in the reconstructive process? Are they simply moving mouthpieces for the choreographer, and by extension for the notator/reconstructor, or do they have a share of the dance as well through degrees of personalities capabilities, style, thoughts and interpretation?

The distinction between autographic works and allographic works must be made at this time. The distinction is a necessary one because it delineates where some form of genuine ownership is to be found in the textual score of a dance piece. Autographic works are understood as “being written in the author’s own hand writing, or self recording” (Webster’s third new International Dictionary), while, allographic refers to “a writing or a signature made for a person by another” (Webster’s third new International Dictionary).

Nelson Goodman states that “initially, perhaps all arts are autographic..” (Goodman, 1968, p. 121). Initially there is one person alone who creates the work so that it bears his or her personal stamp. In dance that personal stamp belongs to the person who instigates the movement- usually this is the choreographer. Goodman, goes on to say that, “where the works are transitory, as in singing and reciting, or require many persons for their production...a notation may be devised in order to transcend the limitations of time and the individual” (Goodman, 1968, p. 121). The instituting of a notational system transforms an art form or work so that it becomes
allographic in nature. Now it is a work created for a person/or people by an independent source. This shift from autographic to allographic is enormous as it suddenly makes clear that the score is the art object created for the performers to perform. They (the performers) must comply with the standards set in the score itself. For Goodman this is the crux of his argument for symbol systems and art as language. The distinction between allographic and autographic can account for the distinction between forgeries and originals in autographic art (i.e.: painting and drawing), as well as the building of a language structure based in tradition for those arts, which are allographic through notation (i.e.: dance, music, architecture).

This notion of dance as allographic allows for a conception and tradition of dance literacy that finds function in the acknowledgement of a tradition, as well as a history. A language structure such as that of a notation system allows for artists and audiences of the present to be conversant (to some degree) with an art object of the past, or to preserve art of the moment for future use. The text passes along through history as the surviving art object.

Joseph Margolis, however, strongly claims in opposition to Goodman that “the theory of the dance and of bodily performance cannot be completely formulated without attention to the deeply intentional, ultimately autographic features of the expression and significance of bodily movement itself” (Margolis, 1981, p. 423). The argument is meant to shift the authority back to the performer, for as previously mentioned, how is it even possible for the dancer to regard him/herself as simply
neutral? To believe that the score and even “to believe that the choreographer is the only source of a work’s value is to run the danger of turning dancers into mindless puppets” (Ramsay, 1998 b, p. 31).

To subscribe to the notion that dance when it is notated shifts from the autographic to the allographic, is a leap that for me is discontinuous, and too simplistic. Unlike Goodman, who claims that the arts can be governed by symbols and language constructs, I believe that the ‘arts’ are not all the same, and cannot be subject to the same rules, in terms of the applicability of notation and symbols. Dance has had a sporadic history of being notated, to the great dissatisfaction of some and with differing degrees of success for others. But, dance is not music (although they cannot be separate from each other structurally- they are not the same creature), and, dance is not drama (although dance is often ‘dramatic’). To believe that these three distinctive arts are all subject to the same conditions and rules of applicability for notation is to literally misunderstand and negate the fact that bodies moving and dancing are not involved in a parallel language system that can be transposed. Having said this, I must also add that to solely place the seal of authenticity and authority within the realm of the script or score is problematic because it negates the autographic component that is realized by the performers themselves. Audiences attend performances, not scripts on paper (or computer). In on sense then, the dance is the dance that it is only at the moment that it is performed. “At the moment that it is presented it disappears-dance exists at a perpetual vanishing point. At the moment of its creation it is gone…[it is] an event
that disappears in the very act of materializing” (Van Zile, 1985-86, p. 42). The notation of a piece is then but a shadow (as Plato would describe it).

The belief that the dance can exist in all its authenticity on paper/ or in a notated form is housed within (for me) a problematic view (which both Peter Kivy and Joseph Margolis refer to), that of ‘composer worship’ and the ‘cult of genius’. If the closest we can get to the composer or choreographer’s initial intent is through the written score, then surely this must be the original of all the originals! This claim is false, as Peter Kivy says so well:

This claim has as its basis, I suggest, the ideology of the composer’s infallibility or, perhaps, the ‘cult’ of the composer as ‘superhuman’, ‘supermusician’. In any event, not only writing of the composer’s performing intentions into the ‘text’ but the writing of historically authentic sound into the ‘text’ as well is, both directly in the former case and indirectly in the latter, an attempt to put all parameters of sound production under the composer’s discipline (under the assumption that historically authentic period sound is what the composer literally ‘had in mind’) (Kivy, 1995, p. 279).

To give the text or notational score the absolute specific ‘parameters’ for movement production, gives the performer but two choices. The first is to stay directly under its thumb (strictly) and produce no more than an attempt at direct translation- negating the personal and subjectivity of the performer. The second choice is to go beyond the written ‘implications’ or ‘scaffolding’ of the score, in order to perform - a performance that even as it appears and vanishes creates for itself an intrinsic sense of originality. Of these two possibilities, it is the second option that may
provide for the most exciting of possibilities, the continual re-dancing of history, and furthermore, may provide a true understanding of the value of the dancer as a ‘performer’.

TECHNOLOGY AND ITS PROSPECTS FOR NOTATION

The possibilities are rapidly changing for dance notation through technology, and perhaps it is through technology that notation may make its mark as a more valuable and usable tool, for both dancers and choreographers alike.

Perhaps it seems as though I am veering off course with steering this discussion of dance notation to that of technology, yet, the capabilities which technology have to offer my line of inquiry are not only substantial but, also of intrinsic interest to anyone who is working in the field of dance/studies.

The official merging of computers and dance was acknowledged in 1981 when the National Dance Association held its first symposium on computers and dance. This first ever symposium set the course for the dizzying pace of technology and how it relates to dance. Since its inception these symposia have assumed a new name—‘Dance and Technology’, and they have been held regularly across both Canada and the United States. Primarily these symposia have centered around the topics of animation systems, and educational implications for the application of technology.
Within the literature of dance technology, it is stated that by the 1970s computers were being used or experimented with in the realms of notation (specifically Laban and Benesh), body modeling, and kinetics for movement analysis. The applications for robotics and image digitizing were also moving forward.

Of specific interest to this chapter are the merging of two programs, namely 1) Lifeforms, and 2) The Dictionary Database of Classical Ballet Terminology. The Lifeforms program began with the creation and experimentation of three dimensional modeling – it was originally known as a program called ‘Compose’. As developed at Simon Fraser University by Dr. Thomas Calvert (Professor with the school of Computing Science, Engineering, and Kinesiology) and Thecla Schiphorst (choreographic consultant), and several program designers, ‘Compose’ came to be known as “Lifeforms”. This program was originally conceived and designed to be a choreographic tool, which could make use of ready-made human images, or images of one’s own choice could be inputted. As a ‘tool’ it had features which allowed for the creating of sequences of movement with three dimensional bodies, the viewing of the movements from any angle, and the manipulation of music, lighting and stage design. These features allowed for a piece to be created and previewed before ever going to stage. In fact this program allowed for the creation of dances that were meant only for computer generated bodies to dance.

The second program that is of interest is the Dictionary Database of Classical Ballet Steps. The development of dance notation has provided the dance world with
a skeletal framework for the recording of dances and movement sequences, thus providing a written statement of an ephemeral art. The obvious downfall (as I have discussed) of these notational systems is in the phase of interpretation. Professor Rhonda Ryman (University of Waterloo), and Anuschka Roes (Currently Principal of the Teacher Training Program at The National Ballet School) have worked together on an ongoing basis and developed the Dictionary Database of Classical Ballet Terminology. This Database is comprehensive of Ballet in that it is based on the five main ‘schools’ of classical technique: 1) Bournonville (Danish), 2) Cecchetti (Italian), 3) Vestri (French), 4) R.A.D. (British), and 5) Russian (including Vaganova). Within the vast amount of information that is housed in the database, are the options to view the notated form of a step or position, as well as the depiction of a ‘Lifeforms’ body (three dimensional) performing the desired step. This represents the merging of two different applications of programs - Lifeforms, as a choreographic tool, and The Benesh Editor as a coding system.

Now that technology can bridge the gap between a three-dimensional image and correlate it to a symbol (notation), it would seem that perhaps the dance field is on its way to eliminating (what is problematic for some) as the gap that exists between text and performance/interpretation. In theory – yes- this becomes quite possible. What, however, is still not possible is the reconciling of the computerized digital image to that of a specific human being, or the actual real human form. For although the three dimensional images ‘represents’ the human form in a binary
coding system, it is still not an exact duplicate of the human body. The computerized rendition is limited to its own structure.

The ability for the computerized image to only approximate its real life model is perhaps a small point of argument for some, but for those who see dance as a ‘human’ endeavour it is of great consequence—whether dancers come to move as computer generated models, or vise-versa, or whether dancers come to move in concert with computer bodies, will inevitably challenge the constructs of what constitutes Western dance. What however will remain constant is the phenomenological assertion that dance reveals all meaning and intensity through the actual expression of the subjective moving body.
Chapter Four: 
Aesthetic As Sensing

To be clear from the outset of this chapter, it is understood that the ideas presented here do not constitute a comprehensive discussion of the aesthetics of Western dance—whether it be aesthetic theories of imitation, expression or form. A detailed description of Dance Based Dance Theories is authored by Atler (1991), and provides an excellent analysis and comparison of the major ideas pertaining to a Western aesthetics of dance. Rather, this chapter aims to explore the particular theory of Aesthetics belonging to Susanne K. Langer (1953), and further elaborated upon by Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1966), because it is dissonant with the foundational understandings of phenomenology that I have so far presented.

A discussion of the transformation of everyday utilitarian movement to the realm of what constitutes dance is not an easy task. Furthermore, this discussion can be complicated with the addition of aesthetics as an important dimension. Dance, by nature is an ephemeral form and therefore resistant to objective contemplation except by memory, or through recording. A dance can never be held afar and scrutinized the way an object can, it (dance) vanishes as it happens. What one experiences as one performs, or as one witnesses a performance is fleeting. The ‘fleeting’ quality of dance is held together temporally because being in the moment is
grounded in both intention and action (see discussion-chapter 2). This fact is an important one to recognize- and it is very much recognized and discussed in dance academia. What, however doesn’t seem to get much attention are the consequences of being an art form based on being in the moment.

Therefore, to partake in performing or viewing dance necessitates that one be involved in the performance as a subjective person. To do otherwise would require one to remove him or herself from the moment that is taking place. If one is to remove him or herself from participating in the moment, the totality of the whole form of the dance is disrupted. To think reflectively on what has just taken place, while the dance continues, effectively removes one from being continuous with the dance.

To participate in a dance either as spectator or performer requires that one be present to the experience. And, being present entails that one has a ‘sense’ of what he or she is participating in. I use the word ‘participate’ here expressly because it implies that one is active in this process; it is not a passive production or reception of dance as a manufactured object. A dance is co-authored throughout its process of inception, creation, rehearsal and performance. A dance although it vanishes, is real. And it is this ‘sensible’ reality that I advocate both dancer and viewer participate in in the dance.

I will show here that the aesthetic essence of dance is not to be understood as: 1) a pre-manufactured form of feeling which is a derivative of actual feeling, and, 2)
neither is it the divorced result of defining dancing bodies as abstract referent symbols. Rather, an aesthetic sense, which encapsulates dance, is perceived, sensed and felt.

It is of use here to define how it is that I am using the term aesthetic. For the purpose of this chapter I return to the etymological foundations of the word aesthetic and its counterpart anesthetic. Aesthetic is translated from Greek Aistheticos/ aistheta- and, is meant to refer to things perceptible by the senses. Opposite to the word Aesthetic is the word anaesthetic, which comes from the Greek word anaisthetos, meaning insensible, or deprived of physical or mental sensation (Hoad, 1996, p. 7), (Thompson, 1995,p. 21). This chapter will argue that which is aesthetic refers to that which is perceptible and felt.

Earlier, I mentioned that dance is of the moment; this ever-changing present entails being as the intertwining and correlation of the temporal and the spatial through the dancing body. Merleau-Ponty understands this to mean a non-divided moment that exists consciously. He claims that (bodies as art):

Are beings in which the expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, their meaning accessible only through direct contact, being radiated with no change of their temporal or spatial situation (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 151).

Within Merleau-Ponty’s claim, two ideas that stand out in importance are that 1) expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, and 2) that meaning is accessible only through direct contact.
The significance of these two ideas has ramifications for the foundational writing of Susanne K Langer, (Feeling and Form, 1953), and the subsequent writing of Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (The Phenomenology of Dance, 1966). I am particularly interested in these two philosophers because their particular phenomenology of dance never seemed to fit with my experience as dancer, performer, or audience member. Their phenomenology upon closer inspection is at odds with the basic assumptions of phenomenology. Copeland and Cohen (1983) describe:

Langer’s complex theory of art is in part a version of the theory of art as expression. But she specifically rejects the doctrine...that dance arises in the emotions of artists, emotions which are then directly 'expressed' in the work of art... In her view the gestures of the dance express feelings but not what the dancer feels. They are virtual or illusory gestures which are logically or symbolically expressive but not self-expressions (Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p. 4).

Within the dance academia, Langer’s and by extension Sheets-Johnstone’s (1966) aesthetic theory of Western dance, based on ‘virtual reality’ and ‘symbolic illusion’ has been criticized. The criticism of Langer’s theory primarily revolves around the reduction of gesture to symbol, as well as her inconsistent understanding of how symbols function. Alter (1991) distinctly displays the problem with Langer’s theory with the words of Ernest Nagel:

Langer divides ways of communicating into two categories: discursive symbolism of which language is an example, where words are analogous to the ideas for which they stand, and presentational symbols of which music, dance, architecture, and other arts are examples. Dance as art is the ‘creation of form expressive of human feeling’.
Ernest Nagel identifies the flaws in her notion of language: Words, as discursive symbols, and their meanings may symbolically exemplify the concepts they represent, Nagel argues, but they are not analogous to those concepts. He identifies a contradiction in her notion of art as presentational symbol. Although she claims presentational symbols differ from discursive symbols, Nagel argues that for arts to be 'symbols' of sense experience, the symbol must stand for something. Arts she claims, reflect the 'morphology of feelings' and this means they convey general forms of feeling. But earlier she claimed that discursive- not presentational symbols do that. Nagel's arguments show the inaccuracy of Langer's definitions of discursive and presentational symbols (Atler, 1991, p. 34).

Apart from Langer's logical inconsistencies as to her description and understanding of presentational and discursive symbols, Langer, also fails to recognize that the reduction of gesture in particular to the status of symbol requires a syntax structure to govern and coordinate meaning. As discussed in Chapter three, Nelson Goodman (1968) clearly explains that for order and logic to guide symbolic understanding, a symbol must have only one discreet referent- otherwise logic would be lost, confusion would arise and meaning would not be possible. Translated into movement, this means that gesture must have a clearly understood meaning as it counterpart. I must be able to translate gesture into meaning (specific). This notion is problematic in dance for two very specific reasons. The first is that Langer refers to 'gesture' as symbolic or referent based. Gesture as a referent is for Langer removed from reality, and is imbued with a sense of the virtual. This limited understanding of gesture is one which I propose to reassess.
Gesture plays out succinctly both what our words can say, as well as connect to an emotive connotated reality from which our words remain distanced but always speak of. Gesture is a direct communication that underlies every aspect of our daily communication; gesture’s function is to reveal. An example of gesture is a ‘thumbs up’ as a sign of approval, it is the shrugging of shoulders combined with the rolling of the eyes and a slight turn of the head and a punctuated inhale of breath, meant to imply that one can barely tolerate the imposition of another persons’ will. Gestures function superficially as a signal. Intrinsically gestures function as being fastened to the emotive reality to which they refer. Gesture therefore is not a referent or a symbol, it is a non-divorced extension of what is felt or known.

In dance, several kinds of movement come into play. There is the use of gesture, there is the abstracting of gesture to an essential nuance imbued with meaning, and there is the use of movement in and of itself.

Personal and cultural gestures are meant to be read, and understood within a context. The meaning of gestures relies upon context whether this be socially or personally defined for meaning to be clear. The sister art of mime plays on this contextuality in order to heighten meaning. In dance, gesture is used periodically, rather than continuously. And more often than not, gesture is used in an abstracted form within the content of other movement. Abstracted gesture, if choreographed well, both in context and in movement “must contain the essence of an image, feeling, or idea” (Blom and Chaplin, 1982, p. 125). As ‘containing the essence’
abstracted gesture does not distance itself from that which it wishes to reveal. By a contradictory turn, abstraction of gesture brings one closer to the essence of that which is conveyed. Revealing the essence of meaning in gesture is not a divisive act, whereby meaning is divorced from that of which it speaks. Rather abstracted gesture by revealing essence remains firmly tied to the meaning of which it is a derivative- it functions to bring one closer to meaning. In no way is gesture a virtual referent. Gesture and abstracted gesture remain logically within the realm of the real. Merleau-Ponty asserts that 'phenomenology is the study of essences' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. vii). Van Manen (1990) further develops this assertion by saying:

A good description that constitutes the essence of something is construed so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are now able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way (Van Manen, 1990, p. 39).

Movement in dance can also be realized within the exploration of dynamic qualities, tensions/releases/ and structural design. Within this sphere “there is no getting away from the humanness of the dancer” (Blom and Chaplin, 1982, p. 126). Even in pure movement form, the dancer cannot be eradicated from the dance. Movement, whether it be in dance, or, otherwise, is indistinguishable from what it expresses. And what it expresses may be beyond the scope of words, and symbols. The subjective being of the dancer in motion maintains that the dancer and movement remain within the domain of the actual felt and real. Dance as a form is not
predicated on symbolic illusion or on distancing the body from what it dances and knows.

Another area of concern with regard to the phenomenology of Langer and Sheets-Johnstone, is that art, and more specifically dance is relegated to a time and a place that stands outside of reality. Dance takes place in a 'virtual reality' of its own. The following two passages as written by Sheets-Johnstone (1966) describe this space and time.

1) The form-in-the-making describes this perpetual creation, this movement of form toward its own completion. Virtual force, then is an illusion of force, which spatializes and temporizes itself; it takes place neither in the space and time of everyday life nor outside these dimensions altogether (Sheets-Johnstone, 1966, p. 42).

2) It is clear that the form of dance is therefore an abstracted form in two senses: it is abstracted from the continuum of form in everyday life to exist as a complete form in and of itself- it needs no prologue or epilogue, no past or future referents to make it logical or complete- and secondly, it is abstracted from actual content so that it is divorced from any actual and specific feeling. We look at the form of dance and see it not as holding a specific content but as being significant in and of itself, not as being an actual expression of joy, for example, but as being a symbol of a form of joyfulness (Sheets-Johnstone, 1966, p. 61).

This theory is logically incongruent with the organic spirit of phenomenology, and by extension an aesthetic of dance. Oddly both of these philosophers by defining the dancer as symbolic and gesture as semiotic, end up distancing the dance from the dancing body, and furthermore the audience from perceptively partaking in the dance, through the concept of 'symbolic illusion'. In an attempt to provide an
aesthetic understanding of dance, they have both opted for a Platonic maneuver, which essentializes the demarcation of boundaries between that which is real and that, which is representational (mimicked-gestural).

Art, for Langer stands out from the everyday world and has unique qualities or ‘import’, which cause it to contrast with daily reality. Art works are logically expressive of human feelings by their presentation of an image or symbol (Atler, 1991, p. 34).

For dance to be considered from a subjective/intersubjective standpoint, it must be realized in immediacy- a notion that both Langer and Sheets-Johnstone adhere to. However what they further go on to do is place immediacy within another realm altogether. This virtual realm for them makes possible aesthetic transformation. It brings pedestrian movement to the level of art. For them this aesthetic realm stands apart from the everyday and does not constitute the real. It is tied to the real of everyday by disclosing forms of expression rather than true expression. Langer and Sheets-Johnstone have attempted to elucidate a logical relation between the dancer as symbol and the actual conscious perceptive/sensing body. But, to acknowledge the dancer as a symbol, is to spot the flaw of such logic. This particular phenomenological attempt is one which has gone awry. To try and rationalize a moving (subjective) dancer as an abstract element is to completely misjudge the necessity and the reality of pre-reflective experience that is always in the process of becoming, being and having been. Surely both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty would
consider it odd at best to divorce a feeling body from the form of dance, to in fact abstract the body into a semiotic language system.

It is understood here that Langer's and Sheets-Johnstone's attempts to define for dance an aesthetic theory begins in the synthesis of time, space and body. However, they both depart from a true phenomenological understanding with the creation of a parallel (virtual) world. Their aesthetic theories are untenable in understanding an aesthetics of dance by the very fact that they negate the dancer's subjective / pre-reflective reality of being in the moment.

The opening of this chapter brought forward Merleau-Ponty's conception of 'the body as art'. As discussed there are two ideas that have extreme relevance to this discussion. Merleau-Ponty claims that: 1) expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, and 2) meaning is accessible only through direct contact.

A true phenomenological account of dance aesthetics does not separate meaning from the body that dances it, nor does it sever the dancer (s) or audience from his or her own spatial/temporal reality, only to be relinquished to a watered down version based on illusion. If this were the case, dancers would be mere tricksters, juxtaposing reality with illusion, and anyone who ever felt emotionally compelled by dance as art would be unstable. Fraleigh (1987), aptly states that, 

Dance passes directly between the dancer and the audience, actualizing a bodily lived aesthetic between them as it is expressed and experienced intersubjectively. Dance closes the distance between self and other (Fraleigh, 1987, p. 60).
Fraleigh’s statement supports Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological stance, and returns dancer, the dance and audience to their rightful subjective and intersubjective relationships. She does this by attending to immediate processual experience. Fraleigh’s statement also points to the notion that dance exists relationally between performer and audience. She claims that it is a continuous ‘moving toward the world and others’ (Fraleigh, 1987, p. 56) kind of enterprise. As futural (moving toward) Fraleigh’s notion is supported by my previous discussion on becoming and being (Based on the spatial orientation of moving forward, Chapter 2) The moments of becoming and being encapsulate (and as previously discussed, necessitate) a past, present and future held together inter-relationally. This provides for an experience of dance governed by a sense of unity and logic, which is wholly real and not illusory in any way. This totality of experience cannot suddenly be transported to an aesthetic virtual space. There is in reality no reason to do this, nor is it possible. For Fraleigh, as dance passes directly between the dancer and audience “a field of relation is created between people- there is a source of communion” (Fraleigh, 1987, p. 59).

The aesthetic sense of dance is imbued with how one perceives through the senses- and by extension how one feels. That which has an aesthetic quality in dance is not about abstraction and symbolism aimed at distancing one from experience, rather, it is about how one perceives and by extension how one senses movement.
In this unified understanding Fraleigh upholds Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology because his studies ‘show that human perception is selective, active and intentional’ (Fraleigh, 1981, p. 62). She further states, “aesthetic perception is first a capacity- the capacity that all healthy people possess- to relate to aesthetic sensations… aesthetic sensations are affective (vitaly felt) (Fraleigh, 1981, p. 62).

Dance as an art form based on being in the moment is fundamentally tethered to the relational ties of the subjective moving body and its extension temporally and spatially. Being in the moment gives dance its fleeting quality; this quality cannot be made manifest if the dance and dancer are divorced in feeling and form from the dance itself.
Chapter Five: Implications

The construction of the Cartesian Duality of mind and body has strongly impacted the place of dance within academic scholarship; conversely the place of scholarship within dance practice, as well as how professional dance training is carried out within an objectified stance toward the aesthetically ideal body. In this chapter I will discuss how phenomenological theorizing has made attempts to address these three educationally relevant implications. The first implication that will be discussed is that academic discourse (read: written language.) suffers from a real mistrust- even a disavowal of bodily forms of being and knowing. And so, we are left to question whether written language can return once more to the foundations of conscious experience in an attempt to bring academic writing closer to the sense experience and perceptions of the body.

The second educationally relevant implication to be discussed is that dance is a form all on its own. It is not the same sort of system that language is, and furthermore, it is not analogous to language. As a form in and of itself dance is governed by a logic that allows for such a possibility as the thinking body; dance improvisation makes manifest this possibility.
The third, and final implication to be discussed in this chapter aims to disclose the politics of power that exist within a training system aimed at the creation of bodies that dance. A different conception of the word aesthetic (as from chapter four) will delineate the ‘body as object’ within dance pedagogy. It is acknowledged here that throughout my former discussions of body, I have held a subjective view as being the necessary precursor to the unification of the temporal and the spatial.

While holding to this view, I must also concede to the reality (based on personal experience as well as ample academic writing) that the body in dance is often subjected to an aesthetically objectified status. This objectified status has pedagogical implications. Which are supported by such theorists as Foucault, and Goffman among others.

There is a conflict to be found between the practice of dance and its place within academic discourse. Whereas academic discourse places much emphasis on theoretical concepts, the dance community inversely places its emphasis on practice. The balancing act for university dance programs, and education curriculum theorizers has consistently been to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

There continues to exist a paucity of writing on dance within aesthetic theories. This, however, does not mean that dance has not been written about. Dance has always held a place within society and writings, but what it has not enjoyed is a measure of acceptability. In fact, within the concept of the Fine Arts that developed in the 17th to the 18th Centuries, dance has almost always figured as a stepchild to the other art forms of music, painting, and sculpture.
Francis Sparshott in his lengthy paper ‘On the Question: Why Do Philosophers Neglect the Aesthetics of the Dance?’ (1982), acknowledges the fact that dance has yet to find its way into mainstream discourse. He goes on to say that “it may be that the philosophical neglect of dance is not so much a tendency of writers to ignore that art, as a tendency of philosophical readers to ignore what has been written.” (Sparshott, 1982, p. 5) Certainly to do any research on dance means that one must go beyond the boundaries of dance in order to find information. For example today dance can be found within cultural studies, gender studies, etc. (For example see: Christy Adair, Women and Dance 1992, Judith Lynne Hanna, Dance, Sex, and Gender 1988, and Rachel Vigier, Gestures of Genius- 1994). Such studies are providing much need and valid frameworks for researching dance. Sparshott further makes the point that although dance is often seen as the most primitive (basic) of the arts, it does not hold the same esteemed role within constructed aesthetic concepts and theories.

The fact that dance does not hold a central place within a system of Fine Arts is neither accidental nor arbitrary. Sparshott explains that the basis for discounting dance can be traced back in part to Hegel’s formulation of a system of the arts. At the time that Hegel was writing his theory, dance was a form of accompaniment found within spectacles. It was a form of amusement and distraction (such as an interlude in an opera), without holding a distinct form for itself (i.e. such as ballet). Dance beyond mere distraction or idiosyncratic amusement was also understood to be tied to an essentialist position, whereby the other arts represented pure forms, at
best dance could be considered as a mimetic art. That gestures of mime could point to tangible ideas was perhaps the saving grace of dance; it was its entryway into some recognition and acceptability.

Hegel was also formulating a Romantic conception of the arts, and historically dance was trailing far behind. It was only in the years 1830-1832 (premiering the ballet: La Sylphide) when the ballet was distinctively showing signs of encapsulating a Romantic form. As the ballet presented itself as an art form (behind the times), it began to come into its own through costume (the tutu), and technical innovation (through pointe shoes).

Sparshott discuses a leading Manifesto of the Enlightenment written in 1751, by d'Alembert, in which it is written that:

The Fine Arts appear there within a classification of human knowledge; they are classified as a form of reflective knowledge, among the liberal arts, having as their aim the production of pleasure through the imitation of nature. The Fine Arts are painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry (Sparshott, 1982, p. 10).

Within this encyclopedic entry and classification, dance is not even mentioned, therefore making clear its exclusion. The other art forms are included because they had developed at least a rudimentary language system, capable of expressing and displaying specific knowledge. This construction of the arts from an essentialist position aligns itself with Aristotle’s concept of forms and poetics.

The discounting of dance within aesthetic theories is not so much an issue tied to Romantic conceptions of art. Today Western Ballet and Modern Dance have been
integrated at least in practice into the system we call Fine Arts. It has done so mostly through practice, not through its theorizing. Although Dance has lagged behind in terms of its integration, it has played catch-up, only to remain peripherally understood and researched in academic discourse. This in itself can be argued as being related to notions of body and mind.

5.1 Language and Conscious foundations of experience

I want to describe here the concept of mind/body as it is associated with a notion of literacy and language. In Evan Alderson’s 1990 (SFU) presentation titled ‘The body as a site of culture’, he discussed the idea that a scholarship of dance would be a means to opening up the tied relationship between embodiment and culture. Of express importance to his line of thought is the repression of the body and embodied experience through literacy. Alderson, in fact, goes so far as to say (and he is not alone in saying this) that “the body has suffered under linguistic imperialism.” (Alderson, 1990- SFU presentation)

It is of interest that our language system, which some would say (i.e. Merleau-Ponty), has evolved out of /or side by side with the lived experiences of lived bodily actions and communications has in fact doubled back on itself. Our language system has turned around and colonized the body, and furthermore, effectively marginalized the body’s effect/place within discourse. It must be asked ‘what does it mean to say
that our language has become disembodied?' and furthermore how has this occurred?

Although it is somewhat easy to point an accusatory finger in Descartes’ direction, I believe that it is worth our while once again to go further back to a discussion of the shift that occurred when Greek culture transferred their oral culture to that of a literate one.

Havelock’s book The Muse Learns to Write (1986), insightfully gives an account of what may have happened when the Greeks converted their method of communication from an acoustic form/event, to a visual object- namely the written document. Havelock claims that:

The text as read came to be regarded as the equivalent of the word as spoken. Since scholars and specialists deal almost exclusively with texts, the assumption has grown up that writing is identical with language ~ in fact, that writing is language, rather than merely a visual artifact designed to trigger the memory of a series of linguistic noises by symbolic association (Havelock, 1986, p. 112).

This confusion, which is based on equating the spoken with the written text, is in fact what makes it possible to disemboby text. This is so because, once text is set in written form it becomes tangible as a separate artifact from the person who originally created it. In this separation it takes on a life of its own as an object distinct from the thoughts and acts which brought it into being in the first place. In its presentation the text is often referred to as an object which we can think about; it is an object for philosophizing about the abstract, rather than the concrete.
Carolyn Marvin in her 1990 presentation ‘The Body Of the Text: Literacy’s Corporeal Constant’, elaborates further on this theme. Marvin discusses the concept of orality as having traditionally been understood as being tied to the concrete. Orality thus understood is a temporal aspect of the interrelation of time and space-hence consciousness. In this sense thoughts are within the reign of the body, meaning that thoughts become revealed and known through action. Action is thus phenomenologically understood as the mode of ‘being’ in the world. Orality therefore presents its foundation in what we would today term as dramatic.

Meanwhile, the traditional view of literacy has been such that it is able to contain abstractions within itself. Because the abstraction is taken to be an inward turn (looking in on itself) no bodily action is required in order to reveal or make something known. Marvin claims that this view is starting to break down, and that a shift is once again taking hold, so that the construct of language may become more adequately dispersed between the actively thinking mind, and the gesturing body. Theoretically this may be the case, yet this sort of ‘shift’ has yet to really take hold and effect a change in the academic world. The purported ‘shift’ has yet to fully show itself within the practice of education.

Current popular and academic models of literacy are not merely bodiless, but studiously anti-body... Scholarly models of literacy have been silent about bodies as long as literate skills were considered from a mentalistic or cognitive perspective. Oral expression or practices, which are visually tied to the body, could be set aside as a distinct aspect of intellectual development (Marvin, 1990, SFU presentation).
That the sensory aspect of our oral communication is deemed as a separate or distinct aspect of intellectual development is held as problematic here. It suggests the inevitability that some forms of scholarship are worthwhile, while others are marginal. This view conceptualizes the intellect as having the capacity for specialized forms of thinking, rather than thinking as a whole synthesized form in itself.

Marvin claims the dispersing of language between mind and body is a paradigm shift that is in fact beginning to take hold within academic scholarship. The academic writing of Celeste Snowber attests to this shift, and is in fact predicated not on the intellect as the only source of knowledge, but rather, dispersing knowledge to the body as well. Snowber's work epitomizes "a poetic rendering of knowledge and articulates text in physically provocative ways." (Snowber, 2002, p. 21) In collaboration with the words of Ted Aoki (1997) Snowber gives this account for embodied forms of writing:

dwelling in the midst of doubling of live(d) experiences' (Aoki, 1997), our lived experience, in a place for the recovery of the past as well as the production of the present. This place, he continues, is 'dwelling in the midst of ambivalence and ambiguity,' replacing the Modernist binaries of 'Either-Or and providing space for dynamic possibility. Dance becomes this place of dynamic possibility where the visible and the invisible become partners (Snowber, 2002, p. 21).

The doubling back action and the mention of the visible and invisible both speak to the pre-reflective moment of movement experience through a sense of body data. While the narrative written counterpart is reflective, adhering to the ties of
experience, both the written narrative and the danced body narrative display facets of
the visible and the invisible- that which is known and that which is discovered.

Snowber's body narratives flesh out written words by connecting 'movement
as thinking'. Explored linguistically, 'movement as thinking' is predicated on the idea
that “the body has its reason” (Snowber, 2002, p. 22), and furthermore, that “our
bodies have a memory” (Snowber, 2002, p. 22).

There has been a continuous desire in the last twenty years to create an
autonomous place for dance within academic scholarship. My concern is both with
the seeming lack of theorizing of dance as an academic discipline, and with the
obvious imbalances between theory and actual performance of dance when an
academic program is put in place.

The omission of dance within academics is theoretically based in the
longstanding disavowal of the body in relation to knowledge and truth. But, by
following a phenomenological view it becomes possible to deconstruct this objective
idea entirely, and to place sensory action/perception as intertwined within a reflective
intellect.

The 1991 conference titled: The Place of the University in Dance, presented
scholars from Canadian universities discussing the need for dance in universities and
what the mandate of such programs should be. Iro Trembeck from L'Université de
Québec à Montréal, is quoted as saying,

I do not perceive a cleavage between the 'skills' persons and the
observers, the thinkers and the doers. Colleagues from other academic
disciplines tend to see the applied activity as a technical assistance to
the more intellectual one of theorizing on the subject. In dance the two are inseparable and equally worthy. Neither is parasitic. One might precede the other chronologically, but not hierarchically, for each draws strength from the other’s knowledge and light-shedding (Trembec, 1991, p. 39).

The need for studio work/composition as Trembeck sees it needs to be balanced with theorizing; which for her are two disciplines that are not held in opposition, but, rather relationally. At this same conference Grant Strate of Simon Fraser University made clear his belief that technique and composition are a must for any dance program- that Universities should in fact be involved in the production of artists/dancers. However, acknowledging the climate of social change, he also discussed the need to move toward more cross-disciplinary models of education.

It is clear that artists of the 90 and beyond must become less specialized and more adaptable and maneuverable in the work place than they have erstwhile been, simply to survive in fields that become more competitive. They must be educated as well as trained...although the need for broadly educated, socially aware artists is great (this has always been a condition for excellence), the need for art scholars, critics, analysts, and historians is equally great. In fact, I would say that the latter category requires more encouragement and support at this time to achieve a symbiotic balance between creator and preceptor, a balance best addressed by university educators (Strate, 1991, p. 37).

The need for dance programs to be built around disciplinary models, as well as acknowledging the need for both the making of dances and the theorizing of dance is a balance that is at times precarious to manage. Dance scholars know how difficult it is to carve out a niche for dance within the university setting. This difficulty is not
one based solely on the doing of dance- but rather attests to a scholarly displacement
of the body within a concept of education.

It is of interest that in an attempt to shed light on the theorizing of dance
curriculum, it becomes very difficult to simply maintain the argument and discussion
on just the act of dancing itself; the argument continuously points to the notion of
body. Amy Koritz claims in her text ‘Re/Moving Boundaries: From Dance History
to Cultural Studies’ (1996), that “cultural studies scholars ought to be attending to
dance. What they have rather attended to is ‘the body’” (Koritz, 1996, p. 90) If
Koritz is right, then I am at fault for this focus as well. But, it is defensible. That
our language system has become increasingly disembodied, that our concepts of
knowledge and truth rely on inward summersaults and abstractions, and that a
majority of those who dance are women, actually necessitates a constant regard for
‘the body’. Surely the dance can be found alongside of studies of the body, if not
already inherently within the body itself.

It is of interest that not only is the traditional academic model suspicious of
dance as a possible object of study, but that the dance community has remained
suspicious of the academic community. Claiming that dance may no longer be the
stepchild of the arts, but “that it still is the stepchild of scholarship” (Hodes, 1991, p.
68) Hodes presents himself as a skeptical dance educator. As such he is worried that
dance scholarship in an attempt to make itself ‘presentable’, may in fact negate its
studio compartment. He is also worried by the number of non-dance artists who are
currently entering the field of dance studies through the hospices of cultural studies and other fields. He says that:

Those without significant time spent in the studio as participants or close observers—have staked out intellectual turf... descended upon dance like anthropologists into a mysterious tribal culture... Unless this changes, dancers may one day discover that they are mere practitioners in a field where desk-bound theorists are the only professionals (Hodes, 1991, p. 68).

Hodes clearly exemplifies the traditional debate between theory and practice in a rather paranoid manner. Yet, he does point to the need to construct within curriculum theory on dance the very necessary aspect of studio experiences. In fact without the actual dance experience, there is very little else to go on. In his fear that desk-bound scholars may takeover dance as a field, Hodes neglects to say that most dancers do not want to sit behind desks and theorize. A 1995 study titled ‘Personality and Occupational Stress in Elite Performers’, conducted by Linda H. Hamilton et al. found that “68% of the musicians had completed college, compared with 15% of dancers, and additionally 47% of the musicians had pursued a graduate education.” (Hamilton ET al, 1995, p. 86).

The very fact that so small a number of dancers pursue a form of post secondary education, and furthermore Graduate studies is a tell tale sign of why dance is being mined by other fields! It further grounds the notion of the seemingly incompatible notions of academics, and performative dance, as well as the notion that
Perhaps performative dance is much too entrenched in its mandate- 'don't think- just dance!'

Perhaps the middle ground (as an 'in-between' of sorts) is the appropriate option for performative dance and academic scholarship. It is time that dance let go of some of its inhibitions about doing scholarly work, while the academy admits to a multiplicity of forms and dimensions for the practice of making meaning and knowledge.

That the dancing body is capable of making meaning - that it is in fact the site of lived meaning, needs to be acknowledged. Although dance has continued to be degraded in status, it must remain first a performed activity, in order for any sort of theorizing to be possible.

One cannot but be struck by the enormous amount of social effort extended, of sustained, cooperative work performed, and of oppression and violence done in the creation and maintenance of such social dichotomies (Jay, 1981, p. 49).

It is time that both the dance and academic communities realign their concepts of knowledge, and experience, of theory and practice. If phenomenology is interested in the foundational structures of our experience, what does it have to offer in terms of curricular theorizing? And, can it provide a space whereby language and text are understood as embodied? Phenomenology, in having placed science, the measurable, and the quantifiable as second order to the experience of phenomena itself, has
decisively carved out a space for an analysis that begins in the subjective realm and which finds expression in description, and in the synthesis of experience.

Because phenomenology is not understood as a methodology, it is open to many alternative forms of investigation; According to Pinar et al: in Understanding Curriculum (1995), phenomenological methodology might take the form of a hermeneutical interpretive aspect, it may further honour a philosophical tradition, or it may even cross-situate itself with post-structuralism. (Pinar et al, 1995) Whichever direction is chosen, it can be said that the phenomenological approach finds value in the uncovering of foundational connections, and the intertwining of strands of experience and knowledge.

Several phenomenological scholars have critiqued mainstream social science. Ted Aoki (in Pinar, 1995) characterized mainstream social science, especially, as exhibiting an instrumentalist interest in control. That is:

empirical-analytical social science identifies concepts or ‘variables’ and investigates their relations statistically.... This ‘empirical-analytic’ tradition implies a radical separation of person and world, in sharp contrast to both phenomenological and aesthetic modes of knowing (Pinar, 1995, p. 410-411).

The empirical-analytic tradition begins its investigation of phenomena as an object taken out of its original context, and as such it enforces a separation between person and phenomena. The phenomenological perspective attempts to alleviate this distancing by defining its starting point in that which is pre-reflective. A return to
experience is the subjective beginning point that attests to a synthesis of relation between person object/experience and the world.

Van Manen (1990) attends to the apparent contradiction presented between that of written textual language and sensual experience by stating that: “writing creates a distance between ourselves and the world whereby the subjectivities of daily experience become the object of our reflective awareness” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 127). The distance of which Van Manen speaks is a double act based on 1) necessity, as well as 2) the relation of experience to language. By necessity, textual language ‘slackens the threads between oneself and the world’ (Van Manen, 1990, p. 127). This ‘slackening of the threads’ takes up the space in-between that phenomenological writing aspires to. The space in-between is removed from the totality of immediate experience so as to attend to “a deeper sense of the meanings embedded in some isolated aspect of practice” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 128).

By attending to meaning, textual language (which necessitates distancing), paradoxically functions to bring one closer to reflective meaning/praxis. “By praxis we mean thoughtful action: action full of thought and thought full of action” (Van Manen, p.128). The idea is to realize a corporeality that can exist in textual language, rather than its usual flattened constructed referential meaning. Praxis necessitates that the phenomenological text breathes, emotes and creates meaning as it is written as well as when it is read. Texts which exemplify this descriptive aliveness include poetry, drama based prose, narrative, and autobiographical forms.
Textual language also distances itself from experience because: “writing tends to abstract from the experience we may be trying to describe” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 128). It abstracts by the fact that written textual language stands as a “derivative sign language” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. ix) in relation to the actual world of experience. Textual language attempts to apprehend actual experience reflectively. Functionally it does so as secondary to the actual experience itself. However, functioning as ‘secondary’, reflective phenomenological writing does not act as a mere shadow or paled version of experience. Rather, a phenomenological text has the twofold purpose of praxis (reflection and action), as well as “placing consciousness in the possibility of confronting itself, in a self-reflective relation” (Van Manen, p. 129). The possibility of consciousness confronting itself gives rise to the notion of the visible and the invisible (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). As consciousness confronts itself reflectively, it may reveal that which was previously unknown by a reflection of what was known. As text stands apart (but always) in relation to experience it takes on the outer form of inner subjective experience. The phenomenological text responsibly mediates the in-between of inner/outer and subjective/objective binaries. Descriptive analysis of this kind infuses language with the dynamics of corporeal experience, because it takes its place of departure in the subjective realm of experience. The produced text may exist objectively outside the person who has written it, but it does so without losing its subjective tie to an exploration of personal experience.
Language, as written or vocalized within a phenomenological realm, is understood to be wholly expressive, because of "the untiring effort to author a sensitive grasp of being-itself" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 132). For Van Manen (1990) the actual act of reflective writing, whereby one can attend to what is known in order to reveal that which is/was unknown is a form of practical action. It is practical and active because the authoring of phenomenological text is deemed to be creative in process. "In writing the author puts in symbolic form what he or she is capable of seeing" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 130). To give voice to ‘seeing’ is for Van Manen an example of praxis. This happens because what one sees must be mediated through knowledge that one possesses.

And because we are what we can ‘see’ (know, feel, understand), seeing is already a form of praxis- seeing the significance in a situation places us in the event, makes us part of the event. Writing, true writing, is authorizing, the exercise of authority: the power that authors and gives shape to our personal being (Van Manen, 1990, p. 130).

Text as praxis is made possible through the reciprocated circuit of embodied knowledge and reflective writing that retains corporeal ties and threads. Praxis therefore is the dynamic power of phenomenological text to both act and reflect conjunctively.

The ability to ‘see’ as described by Van Manen (1990) is analogous to Merleau-Ponty’s (1968) notion of ‘the visible’. Within phenomenological text seeing as the visible aspect of experience is bridged to the threads which are invisible. This is made possible through a depthful recognition that ‘to write is to rewrite’ (Van
Manen, 1990, p. 131). It is in the act of rewriting, that an attunement to that which may have been initially invisible is uncovered.

The place accorded to ‘rewriting’ is perhaps the most depthful to reflective textual practice because it is a place/space that acknowledges both multiplicity (Snowber, 2002) and ambiguity of meaning, identity, and experience. Rewriting takes place in-between the visible and the invisible. Deleuze states:

> In a multiplicity what counts are not...the elements, but what there is in-between, the between, a site of relations which are not separable from each other. Every multiplicity grows in the middle (Deleuze, 1987, p. vii).

The in-between space created in rewriting is depthful (rather than localized) because, it is based on “constructing successive or multiple layers of meaning, this laying certain truths while retaining an essential sense of ambiguity (Van Manen, 1990, p. 131). The layers of meaning are depthful because they function beyond static or discreet points of view from which to create meaning. Rather, the layering is depthful, because, if viewed as a cross section, meaning(s) is/are derived by a denseness of superimposed truths and ambiguities. In denseness I do not mean that everything is pilled up high, rather, denseness and depthfullness result from the fibrous ties that bind truth and ambiguity together. Density of meaning travels spatially, rather than localizing itself in space, and it acts temporally, moving backward in reflective acts, and moving forward in praxis (action based on reflection).
Rewriting is a corporeal act because it is predicated (as just mentioned) on motion/movement itself. The ‘re’ prefix in rewriting acts spatially and temporally. ‘Re’ can move one backwards, moving back from a point reached, or move back from a starting point. ‘Re’ can recede, so that one passes away, into the distance (fading). ‘Re’ can retain or hold in place. And lastly, ‘re’ can move one in opposition and in conflict in rebelling. (Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology) The etymological ‘re’ reveals a dialectical experience, which is complex and depthful, precisely because it moves one to textually recognize multiplicity of meaning while chasms of ambiguity remain elusively rendered.

The paradoxical reality of phenomenological theorizing aspires to ‘get closer’ to the experience or the phenomenon itself by textually receding from experience itself. The temporal nature of movement is to ‘move forward’ through becoming and being. Meanwhile, it is the temporal nature of reflection to ‘turn back towards’ the experiences that have been. Phenomenological theorizing dwells in-between this tension. Aoki (1986/1991) aptly refers to this relationship as ‘indwelling.’ Aoki calls on his reader to “take of understanding indwelling as a dialectic between complementaries with a logic of its own. For many of us grounded in linear logic, such an understanding may seem to be a totally new way of understanding” (Aoki, 1986/1991, p. 164).

Phenomenological theorizing as an academic pursuit is not governed by a strict science of ‘how to.’ There is no definitive recipe for doing phenomenology, as phenomenology is not understood to be a method. Rather, the realm of
phenomenological theorizing involves a consuming inquiry that attempts to realize some order of truth and meaning. Van Manen (1984, 1990, 1995) has written extensively on a cross section of what he terms the four main divisions of inquiry. His four categories are as follows: 1) turning to the nature of lived experience, 2) exploring the phenomenon: generating data, 3) phenomenological reflection, and 4) phenomenological writing. These four categories (in extended form and understanding) are related in a demanding interplay that attempt to provide for a complete understanding of experience, while conceding that such a full disclosure remains in the end unattainable. However the meaning (s) that are to be found in corporeal experience, and reflective writing are rewarding enough to demand such a consuming process.

How can these ideas translate into curriculum theorizing for dance scholarship? The first issue is that it demands that dance be experienced. This means that performance viewing, improvisation classes, technique classes etc be experienced first hand. A scholarship of dance requires that dance be present in order for any inquiry to take place. This notion sees the practice of dance as mandatory to any further academic analysis. One cannot study dance without there being any dancing in which to take part, either as performer or as a viewer, observer, creator, etc.

Joann Macnamara (1999), in her phenomenological understanding of dance, presents her readers with a hermeneutic approach, which has as its base the philosophies of Husserl, Gadamer, and Van Manen. For Macnamara a
phenomenological hermeneutic approach allows for an extensive investigation that encompasses both the inner subjective realm of experience, and the outer objective world as socio-cultural. The added dimension of the socio-cultural is a wonderful navigational tool because it necessitates that one understand that the world is not only pre-given (as the phenomenologist would see it) but also acknowledges that in many ways people construct and modify it. Macnamara’s hermeneutical /phenomenological style is broad, and yet it is specific to experience itself. The collaboration between hermeneutics and phenomenology furthermore, accounts for the fact that the inner subjective world is never static, and the same can be said about the outer objective world. Such things and experiences are often in a state of flux, which points to the notion that perhaps, we can never fully grasp the truth. Once again, language remains embodied in this experience, acknowledging that it is anterior to experience, and intertwined with objective reflection.

Most phenomenological accounts for curriculum theorizing stress the need to keep language as an expressive mode and that language remain embodied, whether it is read or written. Forms such as autobiographical writing, as well as poetry, combinations of thematic and analytical reading and writing, as exemplified by (Grumet, 1988, Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995, Cancienne and Snowber, 2003) find themselves actively expressing modes of being, rather than passive accounts. Symbolic language from the phenomenological view is understood as a “moving form” (Pinar et al, 1995, p. 435), thus the temporal and spatial aspects of consciousness remain true to the phenomenological logic of embodied literacy.
Strands of meaning become evident through textual exploration of corporeal experience. Phenomenological theorizing, because it is based on corporeal experience, is suited to dance and academic theorizing. As such the subjective base of such an enterprise cannot eradicate nor negate other modes of subjective experience. This therefore necessitates that phenomenological accounts of corporeal experience tend to have a multidisciplinary tone and applicability (accounting for feminist, educational/pedagogical/cultural discussions among many others).

For Dance scholarship a phenomenological methodology may in fact serve the purpose of bridging the gap between theory and practice, since it necessitates both, and navigates between the inside and the outside worlds in order to reveal the foundation of experience. This view also entails that teaching and learning outcomes remain somewhat elusive and indeterminate.

An educated person... guards against disembodied forms of knowing, thinking and doing that reduce self and others to things, but also strives... for embodied thoughtfulness that makes possible living as human beings. Finally, an educated person enters the pedagogical relationship by acknowledging humbly the grace by which educator and educated are allowed to dwell in a present that embraces past experience and is open to possibilities yet to be (Pinar, 1995, p. 428).

A phenomenological theoretical understanding of dance is a large undertaking, as it is the coming together of the academic, as well as the performative that is desired. In order for this to become reality the academic scholarship of dance must not retreat from the experience of dancing; it must firmly plant its research base within the very experience. Language describing dance must remain embodied (finding its source in
the subjective), and therefore expressive of its own foundations, rather than treat
dance as an object of contemplation. It may even be acknowledged that perhaps
dance can provide its own philosophical investigations through movement itself.

Performative dance, on the other hand must not assume that academic inquiry
is spurious, or idiosyncratic and detached. Rather, academic inquiry can play an
explicative role in the sense that it allows one to travel between the subjective action
and the objective determinate object and negotiate understanding and perhaps some
measure of truth.

Theoretically a phenomenological curriculum would necessitate a method of
assessment that could deal with the very nature of open-endedness - multiple
possibility, and certainly complexity. These qualities are the very nature of
phenomenology, whereby experience, action and being are understood to never be
wholly determinate.

5.2 Dance is Not a Language

Dance is a sort of language, people say; language is a sort of dance. But the expression ‘sort of’ covers a multitude of sins... but nothing is like language except language, and nothing is like dance except dance (Sparshott, 1995, p. 251).

Having discussed in the previous section (5.1) the need to re-forge the
relationship between movement and language, it must be understood that this is not
an attempt to make dance and language one and the same. Dance and language are not reducible to each other, but they do at times have a relationship, which we can pay close attention to. Bringing the use of language closer to the realm of movement experience is a doubling back action- an attempt to bring language back to its movement based foundations, by making room for the foundational threads of experience of being to be explored. It is hoped that bodily conscious forms of writing may bring dance scholarship some measure of respectability- and in fact I am fairly confident in saying that in the extensive and respected work of Dr. Snowber narrative ties to dance improvisation, and an attunement to body data are attesting to the foundational realm of the moving body within respected academic circles.

However, writing ‘about’ dance, or exploring one’s experiences of movement experience through the written can never take the central place of the dance itself. The corporeal experience of ‘being in the moment’ within the form of dance remains central to dance scholarship. A scholarship of dance must stand guard against a philosophy that advocates that ‘dance is like language.’ As Sparshott advocates “nothing is like dance except dance” (Sparshott, 1995, p. 251). And, it is by this fact alone that dance may be regarded as a form of scholarship in and of itself. Dance does not need to be held up by other disciplines to maintain its authority. It has its own authority which resides in the fact that dance is predicated on the notion of ‘thinking in movement.’

For Sheets-Johnstone there are different ‘kinds’ or ‘forms’ of thinking in movement, such as the thinking that takes place in infancy (movement based) versus
aesthetic thinking which may take place in dance improvisation (movement based) (Sheets-Jonstone, 1999, p. 484).

As Sheets-Johnstone presents dance as a form of knowing in movement, she forges for dance scholarship a new paradigm from which to explore experience, (both sense and perceptive as mediated in consciousness). It allows one to side step the trap of attempting to theorize about dance outside of itself through the incongruent paradigm of language. Thinking in movement keeps dance theorizing within dance itself. The difference between theorizing about dance through dance, and just the act of dancing is this: Theorizing through dance means that the movements / steps / timing / intention and moments are consciously manipulated and understood in bodily form. The process of understanding and making meaning happens in motion. (A good example of this process is the narrative included in chapter three from Peggy Baker). Theorizing through dance implicates consciousness, and an attunement as to how one’s subjective self combines the spatial and temporal organization of self. On the other hand, to simply dance, does not necessarily implicate an awareness or consciousness of how the subjective self is combining with time and space.

Dance improvisation is presented by Sheets-Johnstone as being both dynamic and processual. Improvisation is by no means the only form of dance that makes manifest thinking in movement, but it is arguably the only dance form (other than performance) that centrally follows this structure. Dance composition, and technical training exercises do maintain the paradigm of thinking in movement, yet the process here tends to be mediated by repetition, correction, skill acquisition and change. As
such the 'flow' of thinking in movement becomes an interrupted one. In dance improvisation the flow of thinking in movement is uninterrupted and continuous (or at least this is the goal!)

Dance improvisation presents thinking in movement whereby flow is maintained. This means that the dancer never takes him/herself out of the reality that is created at each present moment. This attunement is not easy to maintain, and does need both skill and concerted effort. The constant creation of ‘present moments’ in dance improvisation are held together by a flow, because repetition and clarification to not interrupt dance improvisation- it presents itself as a form of thinking. It is pre-reflective, and as such is a phenomenologically viable form.

To say that the dancer is thinking in movement does not mean the dancer is thinking by means of movement or that her/his thoughts are being transcribed into movement. To think is first of all to be caught up in a dynamic flow: thinking is itself, by its very nature, kinetic. It moves forward, backward, digressively, quickly, slowly, narrowly, suddenly, hesitantly, blindly, confusedly, penetratingly. What is distinctive about thinking in movement is not that the flow of thought is kinetic, but that the thought itself is. It is motional through and through; at once spatial, temporal, dynamic (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 486).

Thought is motional in dance because thought does not separate itself from the movement that is being performed: the thought is the movement itself as it unfolds. Because thought presents itself as unfolding movement, this necessitates for the dancer that he or she be present to the moment that is at hand, as well demands a spatial/temporal awareness that is adaptive to each changing moment. This
awareness also extends itself to the possibilities that are futurally: Movement therefore looks/ or extends forward toward the next movement, while maintaining its necessary present. This awareness allows the dancer to constantly renegotiate the present moment by being tied or grounded to the moments that came before. This awareness allows the dancer to move and renegotiate each spatial and temporal change consciously. Sheets-Johnstone clearly maintains that dance created improvisationally is not a divided enterprise, the dance movements explored cannot be divided from the reality that is created. (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 487)

In just such ways, the global dynamic world I am perceiving including the ongoing kinesthetically felt world of my own movement is inseparable from the kinetic world in which I am moving: Sensing and moving do not come together from two separate regions of experience, fortuitously joining together by virtue of their happening in, or being part of, the same body... Movement and perception are seamlessly interwoven; there is no 'mind-that is separate from 'body-doing' (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 487).

Perception as manifested through spatial and temporal awareness is possible only through the moving body, and as Sheets-Johnstone advocates, perception and movement do not form a two-step; the one does not methodically follow the other, nor is the one figured a priori to the other. Improvisational dance has no seam or gap either in thought or in movement because this kinetic process is not a bifurcated one. The kinetic process reveals itself as existing in-between the polarities of mind and body.
It is most happily noted here that in her most recent writing Sheets-Johnstone (1999) presents a much more organically sound phenomenology of dance. In a most divergent way Sheets-Johnstone (1999) realigns her notion of thinking in movement with Merleau-Ponty’s. She does this when she states that: “my perceptual moving present is in this sense indistinguishable from actual movement.” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 490) This thought is reminiscent of Merleau-Ponty’s claim that “expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 151). Both authors are attesting the lived experience as being totally unified. Sheets-Johnstone also reasserts her understanding by distancing improvisation from any form of ‘virtual illusion’ by stating that:

Thinking in movement is thus clearly not the work of a symbol-making body, a body that mediates its way about the world by means of language; it is the work of an existentially resonant body. An existentially resonant body creates a particular dynamic world without intermediary. In improvisational dance, the world it creates is neither part of the everyday given world nor a temporary fictitious world, but a protean world created moment by moment (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 490).

In realigning her own phenomenological understanding with that of Merleau-Ponty, Sheets-Johnstone now correctly asserts and agrees that “meaning is accessible only through direct contact” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 151). By stating that the body is not a symbol Sheets-Johnstone, rights the wrong of her previous theorizing (1966). The body now that it is no longer symbolic is free to function in full contact with what it expresses- therefore making possible the notion of thinking in movement.
Now the body has meaning, and knows (thinks) without having to be gesture bound or referent based.

For Sheets-Johnstone to say that improvisation takes place in a protean world is still not to fully bring dance improvisation into the here and now. Her protean possibilities denounce the virtual and illusory state she once advocated (1966), however the protean world still holds within it an ambivalence or an unclear definition. Perhaps this points once again to the difficult nature of explaining the aesthetic transformation in dance.

In re-writing her understanding of the phenomenological underpinning of improvisational dance, Sheets-Johnstone still falls short, by not extending this descriptive account to other forms of dance enterprise- such as performance, technique, or composition endeavours. However her analysis as a form of thinking does much to reassert that dance is not like language. Dance does not function solely on gesture or symbol, nor does dance function within a semantic or syntax structure. Dance itself is its own form and this means that it displays its own form of thinking which is kinetic. Thinking in movement is kinetic and does not separate action from the thought that conceived it; thought presents itself motionally. As such, improvisation presents itself as always being a dance of the present. This descriptive account brings dance improvisation within the phenomenological understanding of the unification of sense and perception, and motion as consciousness (temporally and spatially unified).
The descriptive account that is given here regarding thinking as movement is in stark contrast to the philosophically based ideas of Howard Gardner (1983). It is odd at best for me to hear from students that the reason we should be teaching dance in schools is because it would allow a teacher to provide kinetic opportunities to those students who are kinesthetically ‘wired’. To be clear, possible reasons why dance should be offered within educational curriculum are because, 1) movement is the foundation to generating the Subjective ‘I,’ 2) movement is the ground upon which language develops, and 3) because movement can also be thought of as thinking, whereby one can explore a space that is predicated on being between the mind and body. Gardner on the other hand claims that bodily kinesthetic Intelligence is one possible intelligence of “the mind which consists of several independent modules or intelligence” (Gardner, 2002, Internet p. 2).

A mentalistic rationalization of movement as thought is untenable and actually attempts to dismantle the reality of movement experience. Thinking in movement as described by Sheets-Johnstone and Merleau-Ponty does not relegate the wisdom of the moving body to a compartmentalized mind. Rather, both theorists seek to acknowledge the basis of experience as it is mediated in-between mind and body.
5.3 constructing dancing bodies, and institutional training objectives

This last section of chapter five relating to pedagogical and educational implications presents a departure from the ideas presented so far. This last section discusses the construction of the dancers' body as object, as well as the institutional means whereby this construction takes place.

Within the phenomenological construct of this thesis it has been important to recognize the relational ties between the subjective dancer extending spatially and temporally. Pedagogically this necessity is often overlooked. Good dancers no doubt develop this attunement, and sensitive teachers and coaches are careful to cultivate environments that support this development. A subjective attunement to the self in motion is not an indulgence, it is in fact the nexus of where the dancer and the dance meet. It is necessary from a phenomenological perspective to acknowledge the particular (and prevalent) aspect of dance training which tends to focus on the body as object, without the balance of subjective understanding of self in motion.

So far in my discussion of the body in motion I have considered the body as the basis for subjective experience and I have also described the subjective realm of experience as being integral to the form of dance. Phenomenologically speaking the moving body brings forth a kinesthetic awareness/consciousness, which is temporally and spatially organized. The subjective experience of the moving body in dance is described as the primary dimension of experience. The moving body exists/moves pre-reflectively. However, I must also acknowledge that there are immense
educational implications for any pedagogy, which is bodily based. These implications range from training practices, to social/cultural and racial recognition of bodies in motion. Any educational dance program whether it be recreational, professional or academic must acknowledge that the body is often treated as a site for control and power exchanges. Whether the objectified dancing body is explicitly or implicitly trained, manipulated, or transformed, it is acknowledged here that an awareness of this objectification needs to surface as part of any responsible pedagogic discussion.

In the Western World professional dance training typically spans the areas of Classical dance-Ballet, and Contemporary dance. I will limit my discussion to these two forms, as the dancers from these two forms of dance generally are the kind of dancers that are hired within professional companies. Having stated this, I do acknowledge many other forms of cultural dance and social dance, which I assume, also have training practices. My personal experiences of dance training span the traditional Western forms of ballet and contemporary dance, and it is with my experience as a background that I will move forward with this section.

Professional ballet training is perhaps the most objectively persistent training environment within Western dance education. Professional training practices affect very young children, as well as adults. These programs demand technical proficiency as second nature, transforming an everyday body into one which looks and behaves in a pre-determined and recognized way (this demand is one based on cultural value and currency). Recreational programs provide dancers with a measure of the need to
look a certain way, but, without the daily rituals and complete envelopment that is experienced by students who are on the professional track.

Dance in the educational sphere has generally not had to contend with the aesthetic look of the dancer, because, dance up until the last 10 years has generally only been part of Physical education curriculum. As part of P.E. dance has focused on issues of health, coordination, and interpersonal skills, all skills that are within the generalist teachers’ scope. However as dance has progressed into Fine Arts curriculum, many of the student teachers I have spoken with have made clear a certain discomfort. The discomfort is on two levels. The first is that they are uncomfortable with the reality of knowing what a dancer ‘looks like’ - something that they do not look like, and second, the discomfort arises out of trying to figure out where training and education meet. Effectively is there room for training in education?

The generalist teacher (based on my conversations with some) do not feel that they have access to a pre-conceived world of ‘who’ and ‘what’ constitutes the ‘being’ness’ of being a dancer. There appears from my discussion with these teachers a discrepancy between skill development, technical proficiency and the outward construction of what bodies that dance ‘look like’.

Certainly, these conversations revolve around the easily recognized look of the classical dancer, yet the bridge that exists between contemporary dance forms and classical ballet is today clearly forged. Training in contemporary dance generally necessitates a ‘grounding’ in classical dance (although not always). The forging
between classical dance and contemporary dance has lead to the ideal body being produced within both forms of dance training.

Pedagogical training practices in professional dance has given us a widely recognized constructed body, namely that of the ballerina. This image is socially and culturally ingrained – so much so that its impact must be acknowledged when one contemplates pedagogical issues relevant to education and dance.

Foster describes the ideal look of the ballerina in this way:

Here she is, a consummate embodiment of feminine ideals; a perfect blending of delicate beauty, athletic vitality and youthful grace. Vulnerable she exposes throat, armpit, and crotch. Yielding, she overflows into the eerily supple arch of the foot and the equally aberrant curve of the neck. Controlling, she directs the shapes of arms, legs, torso, and head. Desiring, she strains to surpass the bounds of her joints’ flexibility. Costumed in a child-like leotard that emphasizes her absolute skininess, no breasts, no belly, no voluptuousness of flesh anywhere, the geometry of her form nonetheless suggests maturity. The horizontal plane achieved by her head, the degree of angle between the legs, the straightness of the arms, with their flared, stiff fingers, the matter-of-fact expectancy of the gaze- all suggests a professional, even rational competence (Foster, 195, p. 109).

What is of interest in Fosters’ description is that this look is a constructed one… and it is a look that is aspired to. The obvious Feminist overtones in Fosters, words are correct in terms of how this body is to be looked at, and perceived as both gendered and sexualized. And, other authors (Cynthia Novak, Ann Daly, Janet Wolf, Judith Lynn Hanna, Rachel Vigier among many others) have taken much time to develop and discuss the construction of gendered and sexualized and ‘othered’
bodies. For the purpose of this chapter I will focus on is the process of the construction- rather than specific feminist accounts.

The construction of the dancing body is surely not an accidental phenomenon. In *Discipline and Punishment* (1977) Foucault brings attention to the body as object and consequently as a target of power. His claim is that in the 17\(^{th}\) and 18\(^{th}\) centuries the body came to be understood in two ways. The first way was as analyzable body- its function could be explained. The second way the body was deemed understood was through submission its and use (Foucault, 1977, p. 136).

The co-joining of the analyzable body and the manipulable body resides for Foucault in the notion of docility. Along with a mechanistic view of skill, speed, and usefulness, docility combined with discipline not only allowed for the taming of bodies, securing their usefulness, but also instilling an internal mechanism that would regulate behaviour. “The historical moment when an art of the human body was born, which was directed not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism itself makes it more obedient as it becomes more useful and conversely” (Foucault, 1977, p. 137).

The significance for the creation of docile bodies through discipline is that the docile body becomes self- regulated through surveillance. The docile body does not need to be coerced, it readily agrees to being managed. The docile body is obedient, and it can self-regulate because of surveillance. Smith (1998) claims that “Docile bodies are also the goal of much dance training as dancers become the material for the teacher’s or choreographer’s vision” (Smith, 1998, p. 131). The mechanism of
surveillance for Foucault is based on the idea that there is always an observer watching over one’s behaviour. The goal of this mechanism is to instill in one the feeling that one is always been monitored so that one begins to monitor oneself, even once the observer is no longer present. Smith maintains “the dance classroom, with its mirrors, watchful teachers, and self-critical students, is a key site for both external and internal surveillance of dancing bodies…” (Smith, 1998, p. 131).

The docility of dancers is even more pronounced because dancers attend class out of their own free will. Dancers in training want to progress, they want to dance professionally, and so the relationship between student and teacher is not necessarily one where the teacher is enforcing a strict transaction of power over a student. Rather the student monitors him or herself, securing authority for the teacher as if it was freely given. Having said this, and having experienced studio classes that ran with very little teacher intimidation, I also recall several ‘incidents’ in my career as student in training that were based not only on personal surveillance but also on abuse of teacher power. The incidents that I readily remember range from physical to verbal abuse, intimidation and even neglect. The constructing of dancers’ bodies is a long process that unfolds over many years of careful and deliberate training. The disciplined body coinciding along with the possible abuse of power over a student often leads to very real emotional and physical trauma pointing to a discrepancy between what is physically possible and that which is ideally expected. With regard to physical injury Foster states that:

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most of these physical traumas result from relentless repetition over long periods of time of exercises designed to instill in the body ballet's aesthetic ideals. Unlike the sudden quixotic tears, these injuries emerge as the registering of the incompatibility between an aesthetic ideal and a physical real. Not the product of mistaken judgment or a sudden failing of strength or flexibility, these injuries are explained as resulting from over-zealous practice, bodily ineptitude, or a misunderstanding of the training system. Ballet training itself is never the problem, yet, no one in ballet dances injury free (Foster, 1995, p. 110).

The emotional trauma (s) do present themselves through the highly published rate of body dismorphic disorders, and eating disorders. Emotional Trauma presents itself as an imprint in memory. Smith (1998) details an interview with a former dancer-named Catherine, and he relates their conversation in this way:

The physical experience of her teenage years at the conservatory is still with Catherine in her early thirties. Catherine shared, “I think I’ll spend the rest of my life trying to let go of this physical imprint.” She further describes herself as feeling “physically scared” and “totally maimed.” The lasting effects of her experiences can be attributed to their deeply somatic nature. She believes the combination of poor training and the “intense and...frightening” classroom “setup” left an imprint on her nervous system as well as her muscles. ...”training at that school affected me emotionally and physically in ways that I wish I could let go of” (Smith, 1998, p. 139).

The very extreme nature of the objectified dance body in Western dance is often thought of as a form of natural selection- some people look like a dancer, some people don’t look like a dancer. Seen as a natural ‘look’ a sense of normality is established, and as Foucault declares “the power of normalization imposes homogeneity...”(Foucault, 1977, p. 184). The process of normalization is clearly not
a natural occurrence, rather it is a created occurrence that hides well within itself
the market value of particular traits and habits. As dancers come to believe that the
ideal image is normal—natural, and in fact attainable, the aesthetic look of the dancing
body whether female or male becomes singular and taken for granted as the
acceptable and aspired look. To the categorization of the normal there is no real
alternative (the normal functions much like the hierarchy of binaries—as discussed in
chapter one). The dancer has long straight limbs, a short torso, a small head poised
atop a long neck, arcing feet, 90 degree turn out from the hip sockets, and a thin
build. Some people are born with this physical configuration—however, it is not
natural to most. This look is not representational of the common everyday look of
the general population, yet it is held up as both natural and normal for the dance.
This discrepancy shows that only a small percentage of people can fit themselves into
this mold.

Having recognized that the construction of the dancing body takes time (many
years in fact), necessitates that professional training be carried out at formal
institutions which can oversee the process from beginning to end. In an article titled
'Blood Sweat And No Tears' by Ingrid Ostheeren (1993) aptly states:

Ballet—a land of smiles? Of healthy beautiful bodies? In any case, ballet
is a quiet art, a real of extra-verbal replications that also refuse verbal
access outside stage events: I have problems with my area of concern.
My enquiries are answered by frank indications that reportage about
training problems are not wanted, as well as superfluous (Ostheeren,
1993, p. 16).
The professional dance school is an institution which prides itself on exclusivity, its high standards, its demand for discipline and its umbilical tie with tradition. It interests itself solely with producing excellence in art. To enquire about the ethics and underlying morality of such a training system is not met with enthusiasm. To undermine in any way that which has proven itself to be an effective system of training is seen as a great injustice, and in fact an unjustified attempt to break the system of its power and authority over that which it assumes it knows best.

One may ask how it is that the professional dance school is seen in my view to fulfill the requirements to be defined as a ‘total institution’. In his well read book ‘Asylums’ (1961), Erving Goffman claims that “a total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable amount of time, together lead an enclosed, formerly administered round of life” (Goffman, 1961, p. 13). The professional dance school is in my opinion such a place. The proven success rate of professional dance institutions leaves no doubt as to their ability to produce and construct dancers of great quality, and desirability for hiring. But, getting into a professional program is no easy feat.

An audition, says Carole Chadwick of The National Ballet School in Toronto, is always a difficult time...The parents come to watch...and afterwards all the parents are streaming out with children with red eyes. They’re so crushed and disappointed because this is something that they want so badly, and they just don’t have the physical requirements or something. It’s always rather devastating and the parents find it very difficult to understand...We say we are a small school and can take only so many. But the children who are chosen are always elated (Varley, 1971, p. 39).
Having gone through the procedure of this kind of audition, I know both the feeling of elation that comes with being one of the few chosen, as well as the disappointment of being told a flat out no without any reason or justification. I am keenly aware of the stress that builds up in students as they spend months preparing for an audition; and, even more acutely the stress that young children experience as they realize exactly what the nature of an audition means to their sense of self. Also, as a student in the teacher Training Program at NBS (National Ballet School of Canada), I assisted and watched the auditioning process. The process of numbering small children, and placing them strictly in lines before a table of jurors is a moment akin to absolute nakedness, there is nowhere to hide in this process. The children are judged on the basis of their physique, musicality, suppleness, strength, a lack of unwanted mannerisms, and a combination of all of these in the assemblage of future possibility. Although the audition does present itself in some ways as fun, and it is presented as being meant to be a positive experience, I am sure that the children quite rightly know what this game is about. They are being judged, either as acceptable, or unacceptable, as having possibility, or none at all within already established guidelines and parameters. William Hamilton M.D author of the article ‘The Best Body For Ballet’ (1982) says that:

dance (especially ballet) is a highly selective art form. I would venture to say that only the astronaut in our culture is more highly selected than the ballet dancer. Beginning with the first class, there is a
constant natural selection at work, a weeding out of the dancers with the wrong bodies and those who lack the tenacity to persevere. This ‘Darwinism’ begins early and continues throughout the career (Hamilton, 1982, p. 82).

As Hamilton asserts, entry into the institution doesn’t guarantee that the invitation to join the dance is forever. Circumstances change—growth spurts, or a lack of, or simply not fitting in with the schools’ physical image, or not being able to meet the standards which are set, or not being able to change a physical quality that was perhaps thought of as malleable etc. always leaves room for the possibility of dismissal from the revered institution. Professional dance institutions do not propagate indeterminism. They carefully select, take apart and re-construct a person into a dancer with the intent of producing a determinable class of performers. They (institutions) are well aware of what the final product (dancer) needs to be, and as such they are very careful in selection and then the development of the students.

In order to produce its highly determinate and regarded product, the dance institution follows the central features of ‘total institutions’ as outlined by Goffman (1961)

The central feature of total institutions can be described as a breakdown of the barriers ordinarily separating these three spheres of life (sleep, play, work). First, all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority. Second, each phase of the member’s daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together. Third, all phases of the days activities are tightly scheduled with one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequencing of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials. Finally
the various enforced activities are brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfill the official claims of the institution (Goffman, 1961, p. 6).

Most professional dance institutions take on a residential form, whereby children can attend world-class dance training, while maintaining an education. There are of course students who attend these institutions as day students and return home to their families at the end of every day. The need for residential housing is both practical as well as part of the all-encompassing nature of the total institution. The entrance into residential housing can be a traumatic, and lonely experience, especially for very young students (grade 2 and grade 3). It is habitual during the month long auditioning process at NBS for example to not let children speak with their families by telephone during the first week of the auditioning process. "The barrier that total institutions place between the inmate and the wider world marks the first curtailment of the self" (Goffman, 1961, p.14). By restricting the students' contact with family during the first week of audition, the student is forced to rely on staff for what normally would be provided by the parents. To the child this can be traumatic, as he or she may initially perceive their selfhood as partly defined by their interaction with their family unit. Now that this tie is temporarily severed, the young student and even some of the older students need to find new ways to cope with daily experiences. As well,
we very generally find staff employing what are called admission procedures, such as taking a life history, photographing, weighing...institutional clothing, instructing as to rules, and assigning to quarters. Admission procedures might better be called 'trimming' or 'programming' because in thus being squared away the new arrival allows himself to be shaped and coded into an object that can be fed into the administrative machinery of the establishment, to be worked on smoothly by routine operations (Goffman, 1961, p. 16).

My experience with admission procedures for both myself as well as other incoming auditioning students included a visit to a psychologist, as well as a personal interview with someone from the school administration. Both interviews were aimed at assessing whether this is the right place for me as a student, on psychological level, as well as on a personal level.

The professional dance institution has an obligation to parents, students and the funding public and government to provide the best quality of training and education possible. It is no surprise that such institutions are so favourably looked upon and respected. I am in fact divided on this issue because I am well aware of the quality of dancer that is turned out by such institutions, and I marvel at how they are perfectly formed, and at their performance qualities, technique and physical development. On the other hand having experienced two years in such an institution I question at what cost does this all-encompassing bodily perfection come?

With this conundrum I must contend that the professional Dance training institution wears two faces. It presents to the general public and the dance community an up front façade that revels in perfection, discipline, tradition and
excellence. The total institution is careful as to how it presents itself. As Goffman reports "institutional display may be directed to visitors in general, giving them an ‘appropriate’ image of the establishment...In the guise of being shown all, the visitors are of course likely to be shown only the more prepossessing, cooperative inmates and the more prepossessing parts of the establishment" (Goffman, 1961, p. 102).

While visiting a professional dance institution, one is not likely to come in contact with the rigors of everyday training, and the strain of emotional distress due to high demands and expectations, nor is one likely to see the emaciated body and dark eyes of the student lost in the depths of an eating disorder. As well, one is not likely to come in contact with the reality of bodies that are trying their best to fit into a very idealistic aesthetic mold suffering corporeal injury. What the visitor will see is the best talent, responding to the best training, and rising to the challenge of the classical ideals of Western dance. Yes, some dancers will be very thin- but that what dancers are supposed to be aren’t they? And yes, some dancers will have injuries, but that is what happens in athletic endeavours isn’t it? The visit will be a positive one, and as such the ruling morality will be seen as good, and the ethics reasonable to the making/constructing of the dancer.

What I am suggesting here is that as an institution the professional dance school functions with an internal hidden agenda. I say this hesitantly, as I know that most dance teachers do not explicitly think about creating or maintaining a hidden agenda, and I am sure that the administration of professional dance schools would cringe at hearing this. Rather, my point is that by the very fact of being an institution,
professional dance schools operate on some level with an agenda that lies as an imprint below the surface.

The hidden agenda is one which ensures that the measures that are depended upon for success are not questioned; in fact the measures are usually regarded with confidence as being entirely within reason and even more so, necessary to the production of an elite group of performers and athletes.

The hidden curriculum teaches all children that economically valuable knowledge is the result of professional teaching and that social entitlements depend on the rank achieved in a bureaucratic process. The hidden curriculum transforms the explicit curriculum into a commodity and makes its acquisition the securest form of wealth (Illich, 1976, p. 38).

Professional institutions may present themselves as the best path for the serious student to take in order to achieve high levels of skill, recognition of personal talent and success. Yet, it also demands that students not question the methods taken in order to achieve this success.

These institutions may seem to provide an education and a training directed at the individual student, to develop his or her potential, however I venture to say that some of the measures taken do much to dismantle a subjective understanding of self in motion, rather favouring the dancer as object.

The institutional model is one whereby the goals of education are at odds with the demands of training, as training pulls the student toward an objective determinate goal, and education toward a global and subjective understanding of the world and
one’s experience of it. As the prevailing saying is “don’t think-just dance! the consumer (student) of precooked knowledge learns to react to knowledge he has acquired rather than to the reality from which a team of experts has abstracted it. If access to reality is always controlled by a therapist and if the learner accepts this control as natural, his entire world view becomes hygienic and neutral; he becomes politically impotent” (Illich, 1976, p. 45). The danger is of the student not being in touch with the reality from which all that he or she is trained to do originates. As well, the danger becomes an issue of control as discussed earlier with regard to Foucault. The student who remains oblivious to the reality of the unnatural ideals of professional Western dance becomes politically neutral- becomes in fact, an object of control-both by means of self surveillance, as well as through outwardly imposed forms.

The goal of the professional dance institution lies with the making/constructing of a dancer, not with educating a student. Mrs. Anna Haworth, former Academic director of The National Ballet School has said “we don’t encourage them to stay if they don’t have promise, first of all in dancing. That’s what the school is for- we’re training dancers, not university students” (Whittaker, 1967, p. 100). Although this statement dates back to 1967, I am confident in saying that not much has changed in this particular view. What I do concede has changed is that the value of education has become more important, so that dance students do have alternatives within post secondary education as they finish their professional training. Within the institutional setting a clear dichotomy is present. The mind and body are
separated, making the body a prominent focus, and the mind subordinate. Such a clear division, I believe, has led to a history of corporally injured dancers becoming retired dancers suffering depression, and experiencing feelings of not knowing what do after the dancing career is prematurely done. The Dancers Transition Centre in Toronto was developed, among other things, to help mature dancers receive help in setting up new life goals including education into a new field or job, as well as have counseling with psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers. The help that they can arrange for dancers takes these forms:

- Academic: Referrals to academic advisors
- Career: Referrals to career counsellors (to assist dancers toward retraining within and outside the dance profession through individual counselling)
- Financial: Referrals to financial advisors
- Legal: Referrals to legal advisors
- Personal: Referrals to psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists and personal counsellors (http://www.dtrc.ca).

In the past the value/emphasis of education extended to professional dance students did not hold education in the same esteem as it training. Today this relationship has changed, and continues to evolve as professional dance institutions such as The National Ballet School in Toronto forge program ties with other leading Canadian University Dance Programs, (York University, and Simon Fraser University and formerly with the University of Waterloo). A statistical study by researcher Linda Hamilton et al, titled: ‘Occupational Stress in Elite Performers’ (1995) focused on professional musicians and dancers; one of its findings was that “68% of the musicians had completed college, compared with 15% of the dancers, and
additionally 47% of the musicians had pursued a graduate education” (Hamilton et al, 1995, p.86). Oddly, there were no statistics for dancers pursuing Graduate education. Since 1995, I am sure that this statistic has changed, the place of the University in dance has had a great impact especially in the training and education of contemporary dancers.

The use of training versus education is the pedagogical means whereby professional dance institutions construct dancers' bodies. The military system may seem miles away from the ethereal fleeting character of dance, yet at its core professional dance training demands and challenges the human body to defy its natural self. 'The Educating of Armies' (1989) a book detailing military training tactics says that,

the trained response to order is immediate and precise, and instructions are followed implicitly. There are correct ways of doing things and the distinction between right and wrong is clearly defined. Learning is typically in imitation and repetition or practice and there is little room for imagination and variation in movements, or procedures. The training methods typically involve verbal instruction and demonstration and the giving of orders in sequence, as in ‘drilling’ (Stephens, 1989, p. 4).

The end to which training is said to serve is skill acquisition and development. Skills in themselves reflect learned and internalized patterns of movement, and as such serve as bench markers for the standard of achievement. However this analysis only does part justice to what training and skills are really about. Skills do in fact reflect the internalization of patterns of movement, but more than this the skills and the
movement that are methodically and repeatedly done, are done with the purpose of
developing a particular body. This is why the training process is meticulous. Each
time a muscle is stretched in a particular way the body takes on a new way of being
and by association a particular way of looking. The look of the dancers’ body is not a
by-product of the training system; it is the goal of the system.

Training does not conceptually require that the ends which it serves are morally
good. . . a training instructor is not required to make judgments about the instruction
he gives beyond judging its effectiveness and in this sense a trainer is a technician, not
a moral agent, although as a private individual he might entertain doubts about the
moral justification of the task he is engaged in (Stephens, 1989, p. 7).

The ballet teacher is in every sense an example of a technician, as someone
who is involved in the careful and meticulous putting together of a dancer. In fact,
the mechanical tone of these words implies a factory line process, whereby, based on
logical strategy, a dancer is put together piece by piece. Most notably, what strikes
me is that in constructing the dancer, what may be neglected and unattended to are
the subjective experiences of what movement feels like. Attention to and awareness
of the personal experience, of movement— of the self in motion— and even, of thinking
in movement does not have to negate skill acquisition. They actually do complement
each other very well and are demanded interrelationally once the student moves from
the studio to the stage. However, it is often treated pedagogically as separate from
skill acquisition.

The professional dance class is not the place for the overly sensitive student.
Within the class there is usually an unspoken yet known hierarchy, recognized by
both teacher and student. The unwritten code prevalent in most classes is such that
if the teacher pays a lot of attention to you, then you might be doing well enough. However, curiously defying any Skinnerian logic, if the teacher is exceptionally hard (read negative) on the student, and demanding of the student, then the student is most likely regarded as being very good, and therefore deserving of the teachers attention. The role of the technician is to spot what isn’t correct and to fix it, rather than to promote what is already good. This view of training added to a real passion for dance, as well as the feature of constant self-surveillance often gives rise to feelings of inadequacy for dance students. “The external pressure to begin training at a young age and to devote oneself exclusively and with extreme discipline to the perfection of one’s body conditions an ‘inner stage’ of physio-psychological endangerment, which is known in no other profession in the arts. This life of continual high tension makes dancers, so to speak, into extras in an absurd theatre piece written by anxiety” (Ostheeren, 1993, p. 16).

The term anxiety as Ostheeren makes use of it in the above quote relates to the history of published statistics surrounding high rates of corporeal injury, depression, eating disorders and body dysmorphia disorders (among others). Dance Magazine published these statistical findings (based on a questionnaire to dancers) in 1997:

Our results indicate that dancers continue to work with physical problems (75%), and use more support services, including psychotherapy. They also have significantly more arthritis, stress fractures, chronic problems, tendonitis, and injuries to the shoulder, knee, foot, back, hip, and ankle. Dancers whose teachers expect them to work with a serious injury do not achieve their goals as performers.
Their reasons include injuries (24% versus 14%), self-sabotage (21% versus 13%), and poor health (9% versus 2%) (Hamilton, 1997, p. 64).

The expectation that dancers work through an injury is one which I would say, has progressively changed in professional dance training, yet not completely. The change has been in the implementation of such things as body conditioning programs, departments of physiotherapy, the use of medical practitioners conversant in the rigors of dance training, and bio-mechanical specialists who intimately work through how the body moves with efficiency and ease. Despite all the innovation and professional expertise aimed at 1. preventing injury, 2. keeping dancers moving once an injury is sustained, and 3. designing ways of moving so as to avoid recurrent injury, dancers continue to work through injuries, under pressure either of their own accord, or that of the teacher, or that of the institutional setting. There is an agitated feeling with the onset of an injury—how much time off can a dancer afford to take?

Osthereen (1993) sites an interesting theory with regard to dancers and injuries and the effects of human produced endorphins and dopamines in the brains of both injured and non injured dancers. She says that:

It is of interest that the body produced endorphin is basically, in fact, not addicting in that it is dissipated soon after its interaction with receptors; that it will, however, under specific circumstances produce dependency. That is to say that it produces a ‘high’ similar to that caused by opium—a daze. If one tries to extend this ecstasy of well being over physical exertion ever more frequently— for example daily training—this demand is then comparable with drug addiction...after one or two days of taking a break—an irritating obsession toward movement, toward bodily occupation sets in. And soon afterward, one misses this so quickly and decisively that blood circulation drops
totally. One is phlegmatic, lacking in drive, depressive. These are real withdrawal symptoms (Ostheeren, 1993, p. 18).

As the dancer tries to cope with an injury and the necessary time off, most dancers go back into training before full recuperation has taken place. Repeat injuries, which become chronic, and overuse injuries are not unheard of.

The Western aesthetic ‘look’ of the dancing body has been conditioned for the predominant look of long and thin. Certainly some people are born with this body, yet most struggle on some level to achieve as well as to maintain it. Rumours of compulsive dieting, and poor eating habits run rampant. While professional schools have paid head to the reality for medical and psychological support, as well as educating students within a ‘healthy’ lifestyle, the reality remains that dancers are thin.

The increasing field of dance medicine is providing support to the reality of over-training, stress-management, emotional, and physical trauma. Yet, the good intentions of the medical profession has had little effect on the actual desired aesthetic look of the dancer’s body. This aesthetic look continues to become more extreme.

With regard to how to make a change in the aesthetic look of the dancer, the reality of institution and training systems needs to be addressed. Comments such as the following demonstrate the relative inability of the medical profession to make a real impression. “it is incumbent upon medical and dance professionals to ensure
that dancers be made aware of possible dangers to their skeletal integrity. Advice to reduce training will most likely be ignored, and therefore is not realistic” (Armann, 1990/1991, p. 13). Or, “all of us may await a reappraisal of the dance aesthetic, in which the vision of female grace, energy, and beauty is more in line with biological constraints” (Vincent, 1990/1991, p.44). As we wait for a ‘reappraisal’ of the dance aesthetic, Illich (1970) reminds us that change will only occur by “first constructing a society in which personal acts themselves reacquire a value higher than that of making things or manipulating people” (Illich, 1970, p. 146).

Systems of dance training must form some logical way to treat the systematized training of bodies, not solely as a closed determinate systems of technique. Dancers therefore should not only encounter their bodies as objects upon which they mandate a technique; rather, they should also have the chance to recognize the body as inherently and consciously tied to the temporal and the spatial, and as such the site of open ended possibility. It is only in this sense that the body never becomes divided from itself and experience.

The body as object encapsulates a double understanding: first, the body becomes an object of contemplation and attention, and second, the body (even objectified) can never be fully severed from its subjective origins. A part of ones’ body even while objectified will always remain part of ones’ body, and this is a subjective relation that cannot be escaped. It is imperative that training practices attempt some balance within the subject/object tension, so that the subjective dimension of self in motion retains its sense of primacy.
CONCLUSION

As a phenomenological investigation, this thesis finds its origins in my personal experiences as a dancer and theorist. The two spheres of dancer, and theorist have been for many years a source of tension within me, and between academia and the dance world. As a dancer I was expected to perform as directed within an infantilized and docile culture. As theorist, I have felt the need to move beyond the confines of books and desks so that my questions return to their source of origin, so that in fact my thoughts do not remain conceptually mind bound. There is a very real need to connect the conceptual ideas to their nexus in movement and dance. Without dance, there are no questions to ask. This tension has resolved itself, by choosing to stay in-between the hierarchical polarity of mind and body; I have chosen to subvert the dichotomy by acknowledging that to reduce myself to either/or end of the polarity is untenable.

The tension between dance and theorizing presented itself to me at key times within my career. I remember my decision to enter a University dance program as signaling (in my mind) the end of any real attempt to access a career in a professional company. I do acknowledge the quality of contemporary dance training to have been of the highest level, and the time spent with established and newly emerging
choreographers to have been irreplaceable. However, I, also felt that the time spent on what seemed like irrelevant academic work was a façade to bring a measure of acceptability to an otherwise downgraded art form. I often had the feeling that my time in studio was regarded as play, perhaps even an indulgence in comparison to the so called 'real minds' work' required of my courses in kinesiology, and english, among others. I remember the feeling that my Undergraduate degree in dance was in some way tarnished from the profession of dance, because dance had to be upheld by standards of theorizing applicable not to its own form, but rather, to the standards of studiously disembodied academia.

Several years later, I found myself in completely the opposite situation. Having spent two years at The National Ballet School’s Teacher Training Program, I grew disenfranchised and frustrated with the docility which was expected of me. I spent close to eight hours a day in studio moving toward some expectation of what seemed like unattainable excellence. Taught to use each moment as if it was a performance, hair and makeup a standard requirement prior to entering the studio at 8:15 AM. I was stunned to hear one of my teachers say to me one day: “now that we’ve gotten you to the breaking point, maybe you’ll finally give in and dance the way we want you to, and, stop asking questions- all you need to do is dance!” It was from this cultured environment that I chose to depart; in search of a place where having a voice would be viable.

I made the decision (once again) to return to the University setting pursuing this time a Graduate degree. As I sat with my program director at NBS, discussing
my upcoming plans, one of my pedagogy teachers approached me. She wanted to know why, as a dancer, and as a teacher, trained at one of the ‘finest’ professional schools would I ever go to a University to sit at a desk. She claimed that I belonged in a studio. The sentiment was that I was misplacing what I had physically, emotionally and artistically achieved. Underlying this conversation was the feeling that my moving to the academic world was a betrayal of sorts, because, now I was entering a world where questions and theorizing were a legitimate act.

The tension between being a dancer, and one who theorizes about dance and dancers is paradoxical within the confines of Western thought. As I have claimed, I cannot tenably be reduced to either/or of this dichotomy. My premise throughout this thesis has been to acknowledge that within the contradiction between the mind that thinks and the body that moves, there is an unbounded space that I have chosen to stay in. This unbounded space is an in-between space that challenges the hierarchical binary of mind/body, making room for the possibility of creating new understanding and identity (ies). The paradoxical lens has been presented here as a medium through which alternative understanding becomes possible. It acts subversively by pointing to the possibility of a thought-full dancing body, and embodied thoughts.

By viewing the hierarchical binary through a paradoxical lens, two key ideas present themselves. First, the space in-between becomes a democratic space, where the concept of the binary does not retain its valuational status or currency. Second, the in-between reveals a relational synthesis through threads that conjoin (rather than
bifurcate) between body and mind. These relational threads are important to the art of dance.

Dance as a form that is predicated on the relational synthesis of the moving body and by extension of the spatial and the temporal cannot survive dismantling or compartmentalization. This phenomenological finding necessitates the consequences of being an art form that reveals itself in the moment, be acknowledged. Most notably this acknowledgement reveals the capacity of the body to think in movement. As a dancer, thinking in movement is not an isolated occurrence that happens now and then. Thinking in movement is fused with being in the moment. Theorizing in movement further necessitates the doing of dance so that all interrelated aspects of dance elements become combined within a subjective understanding of self in motion. Theorizing in movement is the work of dance in movement form fused with conscious understanding.

However, there are times when thinking in movement may be heightened within exceptional moments of performance or improvisation. As a dancer in performance, the exceptional moments of thinking in movement are those characterized by a certain invisibility, whereby the performance itself (both in the moment, and reflectively) is not an event which I remember, the performance in some sense eludes any form of grasping. This invisibility is not, as many consider it to be, a performance guided by a body on automatic pilot; rather, these performances allude to the threads of temporal and spatial organization that fuse together so concretely that all other realities in space and time become peripheral to the
experience of thinking in movement, in the moment. This heightened experience of thinking in movement reveals the invisible seamlessness between dancer, movement/thought/action. This reveals dance not in discreet parts or segments, but rather, in a whole totality of experience.

Whereby my heightened experiences of performance reveals an element of invisibility, my exceptional moments of dance improvisation highlight the notion of visibility. The present moments to which I am attuned in improvisation reveal themselves in action(s). As improvisation brings forward that which is not planned, there are moments (of connection), which, stand out against a horizon of other action/movements, always in relation and never disjoint. For myself improvising with other dancers can be both a source of frustration, while trying to forge some sort connection, and, it can also be a source of pure wonder, when the connections makes themselves known. I have in retrospect one particular incidence when I chose during an improvisation session to leap off a table that was in the studio, between the pull of gravity and the floor; my partner co-transformed my fall into a graceful landing. This moment has always stood out for me because it makes clear the notion that bodies think in movement, and by extension, bodies relate to other bodies in movement. I contend that in fact improvisation, when all goes well, is not an art of reaction, as in, one dancer moves and the other reacts; rather, the connection/implication is a deeper one. The temporal and spatial threads exist and can be experienced both intra-personally and inter-personally while thinking in movement.
Although speaking to examples of extraordinary experiences in performance and improvisation, what becomes phenomenologically important to notice are both the visible and invisible relational threads between the body, the temporal and the spatial. Whether explicitly revealed or not these threads cannot survive dismantling nor compartmentalization. Both the visible and the invisible threads maintain the wholeness of the dance form. The fleeting art of dance exist in wholeness at the moment at which it is performed. As discussed in chapter three, any attempt therefore to capture dance via notation and symbols, and even the reduction of dancer to symbol, effectively breaks the necessary threads that make dance what it is.

As dance is an art form that reveals itself in the moment through thinking in movement, there is a necessity to attempt to grasp the full meaning of Martha Graham's words: "the body never lies. It is a barometer telling the state of the soul's weather to all who can read it" (Graham, 1991, p. 4). The fundamental reality to which Graham speaks, is that dance is an art form that is felt, the body does not dance in an alternative reality, rather, as Graham asserts, the body never lies; it is not divorced from the sentient feeling dancing person.

Thinking in movement reveals that the aesthetic sense of dance is felt, that in fact dance is a sensorial and perceived experience. The dancer is perhaps more graceful or skilled from one point to another, yet, in dance the dancer remains truthful and present to the senses. When one dances, one is not divorced or separate from what one dances, and consequently one is not separate from what one feels;
likewise, as an audience member what one perceives and participates in is not a moving image, but rather, a felt reality.

The aesthetic felt reality of dance is based on the moving body and the extension of the temporal and spatial. This relational matrix is what allows dance to be surrounded within its own form. Senyshyn (2003) explains the notion of form with regard to music in this manner: “form is un-definable but this does not necessitate music’s ability to escape its form; the form is embedded in and thus irreducible from the music” (Senyshyn, 2003, p. 122). Likewise, dance presents itself within a feeling of wholeness when the relational threads between the body, the temporal and the spatial are harmonious and seamless. It is the wholeness to which form is a relative. “A great performance will reveal the feeling of wholeness of form but not in its parts… A mediocre performance reveals its parts and not the whole” (Senyshyn, 2003, p. 124).

Form, whether, it be in relation to music (Senyshyn, 2003) or dance remains elusive to any reductionist account. The form of dance can only be partially grasped, as the fleetingness of dance defies objectification. It is for this reason that dance must be understood as a form in and of itself; it is not like anything else. Dance is not (as I have previously stated) like language. This phenomenological statement requires the acknowledgement that movement can be imbued with both thought and knowledge in which our senses, perception, and intention all play a part. The fact that dance and language are not synonymous forms does not mean that language cannot attempt to make meaning of corporeal experience. Rather, the links to be forged
between language (read written) and dance (movement) are a worthwhile undertaking. Writing that aims to be aware and conscious of the corporeal underpinning of experience may in fact have the capacity to bring one closer to the truth of the relation between experience and meaning. As Merleau-Ponty states:

"The process of expression, when it is successful, does not merely leave for the reader and the writer himself a kind of reminder, it brings the meaning into existence as a thing at the very heart of the text, it brings it to life in an organism of words, establishing it in the writer or reader as a new sense organ, opening a new field or a new dimension to our experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 182)."

The links to be forged between language and dance (movement) must attempt to remain true to the foundations of conscious experience. Embodied writing, does not attempt to create the experience of corporeal experience, but rather, aims to elicit meaning (reflectively) by creating a new space from which to look at the visible and invisible threads of experience. Both dance and language as their own distinct forms have the capacity to inform each other- but phenomenologically they can never reduced the one to the other. And, most importantly, the truth of corporeal experience as the primary dimension of being will necessitate that language always act in reference (as secondary) to that of subjective experience.

This thesis has brought forward a phenomenological vantage point from which to explore dance. The indirect question of how dance functions relationally through the body, the temporal and the spatial, as well as the need to stay within the Western construct of the mind/body dichotomy through a paradoxical lens, reveal
that dance can in fact function as a place of transformation and knowledge making as well as have ample room for reflective theorizing.

Academically, the value of dance as transformative carries obvious implications. The place of dance in universities, and consequently the place of universities in dance is a discussion, which needs to be upheld. Should there be such a divisive line between the doing of dance and the theorizing of dance? Are the lines that dancers encounter between training, pedagogy and theorizing limited to hierarchical difference and value? Or can they survive a relational/democratic restructuring, whereby, the phenomenological necessity of movement/dance as primary and necessary, will always functionally, lay the groundwork to which all other dance domains are related in some way within the university setting?

Dance programs must first and foremost dance, but not to the exclusion of or aversion to theorizing. Without a responsible method of inquiry and theorizing dance will always be mined by other forms of study, and it will continue to find respectability by being upheld within the legitimacy of other disciplines. As well, the necessity for dancers to work/play within the form of dance must also re-negotiate a new meaning/understanding. The attunement of professional training must strive to cultivate the notion that theorizing in movement is essential to the profession and education of dancers. Theorizing for dancers must take place within the form of dance itself, as well as strive to forge links to the form of embodied language and text. Easily stated here, these implications continue to haunt dance artists and theorist alike. Perhaps in the space in-between, dance may find the ground needed to
challenge the hierarchical divisions upheld within the dominant culture of academia (as mindful) and dance (as body).

The ethical challenge presented by this thesis is one that holds subjective experience as the primary dimension of being. This necessitates that the culture of professional dance training move away from engendering a mentality of docility and unquestioning reliance. Students of dance are subjective beings, capable of dancing fully within the form of dance, if they move with an awareness of themselves spatially and temporally in motion. The objectively constructed dancer has much to contend with, constantly attending to the superficial limits of body construction and maintenance, which necessitate that dancers deviate from a possible reality of dance as a way of knowing, to dance as a way of looking.

Fleetingly dance vanishes the moment it is revealed. The visible dance is invisibly held together through a relational synthesis of moving body extending temporally and spatially. And, it is to these threads that the dancer must be fully committed.
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APPENDIX

Introduction

In this appendix I have included three interviews/conversations, which took place respectively with three distinguished women whose impact and thoughts on the Canadian dance scene (and, by extension the international dance scene) are undeniable. The three women whom I will present have had this impact through pedagogy, training practices, the development of ideals, and the reflective analysis of dance, dancers, performances, teachers, performers and audiences alike. The three women whose voices are heard in this appendix are 1) Mavis Staines, Artistic Director of The National Ballet School (Toronto), 2) Anushka Roes, Manager of the Teacher Training Program at the National Ballet School (Toronto), and 3) Kaija Pepper, distinguished author and critic, publishing works pertaining to the Canadian dance scene. The interviews with Mavis Staines and Anuschka Roes took place by telephone, transcending the distance between Toronto and Vancouver. The interview with Kaija Pepper took place in person, in Vancouver.

These three women share an important bond: each in her own way has had an impact on how dance in Canada is shaped and thought about. They have each had contributions to the making of dancers, distinguishing the roles of teachers, re-
conceptualizing the way training of professional dancers should take place, as well as acting as social mediator by reflecting on performance issues, discussing conceptual and theoretical issues, and last, acting as a chronicler of events, moments, and relationships pertaining to dance in Canada.

The importance of these interviews is that they attest to the everyday lived reality of dance. This thesis has largely been conceptual in nature, and it is hoped that the ideas I have presented and discussed do find sound grounding within the experience of dance as discussed in the following interviews. The conceptual ideas I have presented not only work as theoretical ideas (abstract); but, they more importantly have a validity that resonates with the actual experience of dance and its related issues in education, training, and aesthetics.

My conversation with Mavis Staines is an important one, as she is distinguished on both the Canadian and International dance scene as a visionary. Her work as Artistic Director of The National Ballet School has placed her in the role of being the person who steers the way that professional dance training takes place. She has impacted a turn towards a more wholistic form of professional training based on health and well being, and she continues to push the art of the ballet towards an ideal of perfection maintained with high standard of expectation achievement.

My discussion with Anuschka Roes, likewise is an important one. My interest in speaking with her was on two levels. The first is that Anuschka, in her role as Manager of the Teacher Training Program at The National Ballet School of Canada, has an enormous impact on the pedagogical training practices for dance
teachers. It is through Anuschka that a program aimed at dance educators/trainers finds its vision and executes its reality. Anuschka also has the larger scope of education within her view. For her, the issue of training dancers to become teachers is one which brings authority to the role of being a teacher. As such, a dance teacher is not relegated to the role of someone who couldn't cut it as a professional dancer.

The emphasis on training dancers to be teachers gives much needed professionalism to a role that has often been treated as second rate. Anuschka also sees the wider circumference of education and movement within the sphere of general education. As such she questions why it is that movement rarely finds its way into the classroom.

The second reason I wanted to speak with Anuschka is because, she has been a recurring and familiar face throughout my journey as a young dance student, University dance student, and student teacher. Our paths have crossed many times, and it is with extreme curiosity and interest that I finally have had the chance to converse with Anushka about her ideas, which invariably informed all the studio classes I have had under her direction.

The final interview that is presented in this chapter took place with Kaija Pepper. This very enjoyable conversation proceeded as the result of an introduction facilitated through Dr. Snowber (SFU). Kaija rounds out my previous two interviews by providing a more globalized perspective on dance in Canada. As an author and critic, Kaija is acutely aware and able to discuss a wide range of circumstances within dance. The lens from which she spoke was an insightful one, aimed at making
distinctions, connections, and forging new ideas within the world of professional dance and education.

**Mavis Staines**

**Biography**

Mavis Staines, born in Quebec’s Eastern Townships and raised in Vancouver, received most of her training at Canada’s National Ballet School, where she has been Artistic Director since 1989.

Upon graduation from NBS, Staines studied in Paris and London for six months before joining the National Ballet of Canada. After six years, she joined the Dutch National Ballet and danced for three years under the direction of Rudi van Dantzig until an injury cut short her performance career.

On her return to Canada, Staines reinvested her training and experience back into NBS as a teacher. She enrolled in the School’s Teacher Training Program, joined the staff as a teacher in 1982, and became Associate Artistic Director under Betty Oliphant in 1984. Six years later, on Oliphant’s retirement, Staines became Artistic Director.

Within and beyond the National Ballet School, Staines is now devoted to improving ballet training---to preserve the best of traditional schooling while adding to the curriculum elements young dancers need today to advance both their careers and their lives. She has been responsible for bringing many renowned dance specialists to NBS, including Hamburg Ballet Artistic Director John Neumeier, Irina Trefimova of the Vaganova Academy in St.
Petersburg, American neuromuscular specialist Irene Dowd, and Claude Bessy, Artistic Director of the Paris Opera Ballet School.

Staines served as juror for the Prix de Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1993, 1994, and 1995, and headed the jury as President in 1998 and 1999—-the first person in the Prix’s 25-year history to head the jury two years in a row. In 1997, Staines was a presenter at the Prix de Lausanne Symposium, and in 1998 was a workshop presenter at the IOTPD Conference in The Hague, Holland. Staines’ Lausanne presentation was published by Dance Magazine in June 1997 under the title “Going Beyond Classical Tradition.” In February 2001, Staines accepted the volunteer position of Artistic President Designate for the Prix de Lausanne and in February 2002, assumed the full responsibilities of Artistic President.

Staines’ ground-breaking work also made an impact on the world’s dance community when she chose to celebrate the School’s 40th anniversary in 1999 by mounting the historic Not Just Any Body Global Conference to Advance Health, Well-Being and Excellence in Dance and Dancers. Satellite linked live with the Holland Dance Festival in the Hague (with partners the Dutch Health Care Foundation for Dancers, Theater Instituut Nederland and the Holland Dance Festival), the conference was also pulled down by other satellite locations in Europe and North America, in addition to the participants attending from around the world.

Over the years, Staines has served in various capacities with a number of dance-related organizations, including: DANCE/USA, Philadelphia, 1994; Dance Advisory Committee, The Canada Council for the Arts; The Dance Community of Educators, Toronto; and Kala
Nidhi Fine Arts of Canada, Toronto. In 1998 Staines won the Toronto Arts Award for the Performing Arts.

Interview

Question: In dance (specifically professional ballet and modern dance training):

As a teacher of dance are you aware of how you are specifically relating to students? For example, are you aware of relating to them specifically in a wholistic manner as mind and body as relationally interconnected, or rather, in a dualistic manner placing separate emphasis on thinking through movement, and the body as being a physical tool to be manipulated?

Are there times when you see it as pedagogically positive or necessary to relate to dancers in a dualistic manner, For example, the commonly heard phrase “don’t think just dance!” In training the body as a tool that needs to be technically responsive why might it be necessary to relate to dancers’ bodies in an objective manner such as this?

At some point in the training process the dancer who is objectively conceived will need to amalgamate a more wholistic approach to who he/she is in motion. The dancer must come to realize him or herself as more than simply a mechanistic instrument or body. As a pedagogue how do you see this process taking shape, how might the mind and body come to be acted upon as relationally intertwined so that
ones' performance might be successful both technically and more broadly in terms of self awareness in motion?

Response:

Year 2003 teachers’ seminar focused on the horrific results/nature of the mind/body separation. Mavis discussed this idea with a concern for finding ways for dance educators to 1) stay connected themselves in the teaching process, and 2) relate to young dancers as connected beings. It is important that students not be confused between what is expected of them in terms of artistry, and in terms of technique- between mind and body (and soul). All of these components are to be understood pedagogically as interwoven. As ‘interwoven’ each part of the mind/body (and soul) is understood to be in a relational mode, and pedagogy needs to reflect this.

Question:

In describing the unity that is sought after in both the dancer and the dance, what do you think are the obligations of a young aspiring dancer in training? By ‘obligations’ I am referring to the historical and social contexts that a student finds him/herself in relation to in the training process: for example: notions of talent, relationship of skill to performance, dedication to studio training, as well as stage craft. As well, ‘obligations’ is understood to encompass how students are to relate to themselves with a respect and understanding physically, emotionally and mentally. In order to achieve these obligations what supports are necessary for the young dancer?
Mavis stated her strong reaction against my use of the word ‘obligation’ with regard to my questioning, “what are the obligations of young aspiring dancers.”

Her reaction stems from her view that children come into the process of professional dance training willingly, and with the capacity to make decisions for themselves. “Obligation” weighs too heavily. Rather, the exploration of talent should be viewed as a stimulating process whereby both students and teachers build partnerships. This process unlike ‘obligation’ is non-deterministic, and is not so heavy-handed. It is a rare thing for children not to want to rise to the challenge. The training process is not about ‘obligation’ but rather, it is about educating young children to be respectable to themselves and to others while making effective choices. In this process it is believed that both teacher and student cannot be creative if held in a rigid state (as implied by obligation)…. This points to the need for pedagogues to also be involved in a continually evolving process of modifying how they teach.

Question:

Can you describe the connection between music and dance…. And by extension between time and space?

Response:

In dance there is never one static moment. We must understand that ‘inner rhythms’ are private to everyone… Mavis makes reference here to Sorella Englund “don’t listen to the music, be the music”
Question:
Are there any specific ways in which you can see the effects of technology affecting
1) students' understanding of movement and how they experiment with movement,
and, 2) what may be expected of students in terms of movement from
choreographers (i.e.: more or less athletic, more abstract. . .) How have you seen
technology affect or challenge how and what we recognize as dance?

Response:

Regarding the impact (s) of technology: Mavis has recognized, that now that
children are immersed in technology from very young ages, three main points
arise. 1) Children are not as physically fit as they once were. 2) Children need
more encouragement to 'get into their bodies' to explore. 3) It takes longer to get
children to explore with the concepts of space and time. (Mavis makes reference
here to Irene Dowd- On the need for society and educators to be aware of the
health costs of sitting in front of technology)

Question:
Specifically what parameters do you use to define what constitutes dance? A) What
for you are the underlying structures that must be present for pedestrian movement
to be considered dance? B) Who can be considered a dancer? C) And by what
standards can this judgment be made?
With regard to defining what parameters constitute dance, Mavis initially says that she does not know…. But further questions the ability of almost everything to be a dance. Perhaps what constitutes the parameters of dance comes down to what should be shown to others.

With regard to who can be considered a dancer Mavis makes reference to the hostility that is often promoted by untrained dancers, who base their hostility on the notion that training interferes with creativity.

Question:
What do you consider the word ‘aesthetic’ to refer to in relation to dance? Is that which is ‘aesthetic’ internal to the dance, i.e. referring to the transformation of dancer/time/space into an indivisible whole? Or does it relate to the outward look of the dance? In dance are there multiple aesthetics such as emotive or structural?

Response:
No response

Question:
Inherent within the techniques and methodologies used in training young dancers are systems of power (both societal, and political), as well as systems of value. Do you see an ethical role or a place in dance training institutions and by extension companies to challenge or renegotiate the boundaries of gender, sexuality and race? Is it the place of classical dance to reflect the multicultural and pluralistic society we live in? Does dance have the power to challenge societal norms?
Response:

Dance training institutions do have moral responsibility. This involves: 1) Interaction between students and teachers. 2) Instilling a clear notion and the practice of ‘taking care’ of oneself. 3) Fostering an environment that upholds curiosity and open-mindedness. 4) Eradicating or changing behaviours without militancy.

It must be understood that Classical Ballet has its own parameters that don’t ‘turn on a dime’. It is an art form that has realities, i.e.; the use of pointe shoes necessitates/requires certain anatomical structures be present so that they may be used safely and correctly.

In today’s society the ballet is exhibiting a broad range of movement and body-types, but there are still parameters that are intrinsic to the form- these parameters must be adhered to. The ballet is not apologetic for these parameters, and further, the ballet should not pretend that everyone can be a professional dancer- it must acknowledge certain limitations.

Anuschka Roes

Biography:

Trained in California and Toronto, Anuschka Roes has taught classical ballet, national/character dance, modern theatre, Benesh notation and pedagogy across Canada, the United States, Europe, South America, Asia and Australia. She was a consultant for the recently published RAD Dictionary of Classical Ballet Terminology. An examiner for both the Royal Academy of Dancing and the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, she was appointed Manager of NBS' Teacher Training Program in 1996.
Interview

Question:

In dance (specifically professional ballet and modern dance training):

As a teacher of dance are you aware of how you are specifically relating to students? For example, are you aware of relating to them specifically in a wholistic manner as mind and body as relationally interconnected, or rather, in a dualistic manner placing separate emphasis on thinking through movement, and the body as being a physical tool to be manipulated?

A) Are there times when you see it as pedagogically positive or necessary to relate to dancers in a dualistic manner, For example, the commonly heard phrase “don’t think just dance!” In training the body as a tool that needs to be technically responsive why might it be necessary to relate to dancers bodies in an objective manner such as this?

B) At some point in the training process the dancer who is objectively conceived will need to amalgamate a more wholistic approach to who he /she is in motion. The dancer must come to realize him or herself as more than simply a mechanistic instrument or body. As a pedagogue how do you see this process taking shape, how might the mind and body come to be acted upon as relationally intertwined so that ones’ performance might be successful both technically and more broadly in terms of self awareness in motion?
Anuschka began our conversation by making clear that ‘music is everything’—that music serves as the motivation for movement and dance. How we choose to use music can be done in many ways: i.e; the use of music can be reactive, or it can deliberately contrast etc….music has many layers—so our reactions as choreographers/dancers is based on our own educations and social and cultural backgrounds.”

Learning how to use music happens within the studio through daily exercises: i.e; repetitive movement patterns, punctuation (i.e.; frappes: focus on the quality of the movement) “Music is also necessary to the learning of shape, variation, building and digretion – all of which are necessary to choreography”

Students must be 1) exposed to different forms/ styles of music… they must have variation in what they hear and move to. 2) It is important for students to have an understanding of aspects of music such as tempo, quality etc…Students need to develop an awareness of the music they move to. 3) Students need to aware of how music works as a whole… where do the changes occur, where are the linkages, and what is the sequencing.

**Question:**
Specifically what parameters do you use to define what constitutes dance? A) What for you are the underlying structures that must be present for pedestrian movement
to be considered dance? B) Who can be considered a dancer? C) And by what standards can this judgment be made?

Response:

What is Dance?

“Dance is the only art form that is a reaction to something else (namely: music)”

Dance does not happen in isolation, it is distinctly collaborative in its very nature.

Music on the other hand can stand all on its own. (One Canadian choreographer/dancer who exemplifies this very well is Peggy Baker)

An aside on notation

With regards to notation it must understood that dancers are ‘kinesthetic’, whereas, notation is static. Notation tells the steps- and nothing else. Part of the reason that so few dancers cannot read dance notation is because the professional dance training system ‘weeds out the academically learned kind of person’ – so, what needs to happen is a change in how dancers in training are presented the information regarding notation- so that it becomes meaningful to kinesthetic understanding.

Question: As a dance educator what do you see as the ultimate role of dance in public education? Who should be developing these programs, and who should be teaching?
Anuschka wishes that the practical use of movement would find a place within academic learning environments. She questions: “why the academic environment/mentality doesn’t use the benefit of movement to inform?”

We need movement in the classroom…. Realizing that the word ‘dance’ might be interpreted too restrictively… we should perhaps just use the word movement. This is important to physical development, we need to get children to refine movement, not just Gross muscle development, but, also small muscle development.

Anuschka questions: “creativity- does it require movement?” this could be important educationally.

We do need to train academic teachers to be comfortable and capable to teach movement concepts within their classrooms. This training needs to be phased in at the teacher training certification level- prior to teachers entering the classroom. For grades 8 through 12 it would be necessary to have more specialized teachers in specific dance training practices.

Question:

While attending the NJAB conference several years ago, it became clear that many dance educators hold different conceptions of what dance is, as well as what the goals
of dance training vs. education should be. As an expert who has had vast experience recreationally, academically at the University level as well as professionally (NBS)-what for you are the defining factors for dance in each area? What makes each area unique, and where do they connect?

Response:

Regarding Aesthetics, no one will ever agree on what exactly this word refers to. There is disjuncture between what is healthy, what is correct, what is acceptable vs. what one personally likes.

Question:

Inherent within the techniques and methodologies used in training young dancers are systems of power (both societal, and political), as well as systems of value. Do you see an ethical role or a place in dance training institutions and by extension companies to challenge or renegotiate the boundaries of gender, sexuality and race? Is it the place of classical dance to reflect the multicultural and pluralistic society we live in? Does dance have the power to challenge societal norms?

Response:

To claim that ‘I am a dancer’ is a purely subjective view point- it is to believe oneself to be a mover to music. The claim that one is a dancer is perceptively subjective… (This point Anushka depicted through a dancer in Death Valley
California who danced every night on her own stage- but for no audience- the dancer needed no audience to verify her claim that she was a dancer)

The distinction must be made between ‘being a dancer’ and being a ‘professional dancer’ who makes his/her living getting paid to dance.

In the training process it is important to realize that: 1) the subjective person is not restricted in any way. And, 2) that the body we have is not the one we might ideally choose. The body as instrument is what it is... coming to understand that one cannot be separate in mind/body is for many an emotional process... and what is disturbing is when students attempt to make changes that are a physical impossibility.

Within the studio environment the mirror does play a role- it must be used as a tool rather than a crutch. As a tool the mirror can be used as a visual aid to sensory /kinesthetic understanding.

As such it is important that all children be given opportunity to dance, and to take classes, and further that both sides of mind/body be developed from the very beginning.
Change in dance is based on: 1) artistic directors, and their own personal visions, and 2) it also comes down to money, and what people are willing to pay money to see.

Kaija Pepper

Biography

Kaija contributes to the Globe & Mail, The Dance Current, Dance Magazine (U.S.), the Vancouver Courier and other publications. Her quarterly “View from Vancouver” has run in Dance International for over a decade.

As well as lecturing on dance history and critical thinking at MainDance and Arts Umbrella, Kaija has led writing workshops at Dancing on the Edge, Nanaimo’s Infringing Dance Festival and at the 2005 Vancouver International Dance Festival. She edited The Dance Centre’s publication, Dance Central, from 1995 to 2003, and holds an MA in Liberal Studies from SFU.

**Interview**

My discussion with Kaija was with regard to philosophical issues in dance. The questions outlined below acted as a base from which to start our discussion...we did not follow through each question individually, but rather had a discussion, which touched upon the issues, brought up by the questions.

1) Can you describe the connection between music and dance.... And by extension of time and space?

2) Are there any specific ways in which you can see the effects of technology affecting 1) students understanding of movement and how they experiment with movement, and, 2) what may be expected of students in terms of
movement from choreographers (i.e.: more or less athletic, more abstract….)

How have you seen technology affect or challenge how and what we recognize as dance?

3) Specifically what parameters do you use to define what constitutes dance? A) What for you are the underlying structures that must be present for pedestrian movement to be considered dance? B) Who can be considered a dancer? C) And by what standards can this judgment be made?

4) What do you consider the word ‘aesthetic’ to refer to in relation to dance? Is that which is ‘aesthetic’ internal to the dance, i.e. referring to the transformation of dancer/time/space into an indivisible whole? Or does it relate to the outward look of the dance? In dance are there multiple aesthetics such as emotive or structural?

5) Inherent within the techniques and methodologies used in training young dancers are systems of power (both societal, and political), as well as systems of value. Do you see an ethical role or a place in dance training institutions and by extension companies to challenge or renegotiate the boundaries of gender, sexuality and race? Is it the place of classical dance to reflect the multicultural and pluralistic society we live in? Does dance have the power to challenge societal norms?
6) Philosopher R.G. Collingwood makes it clear in his writing that the performer
(dancer) is in a process of “co-authorship” in the performance of dance,
impacting both an imaginative interpretation as well as a personal signature.
As a critic and writer/or choreographer do you think that dancers are used in
choreography within a process of co-authorship? Do you think this differs
between classical and contemporary dance? Why/why not?

7) In theorizing about dance, philosopher Susanne Langer is known for
describing dance as that which is ‘virtual’. “Art for Langer, stands out from
the everyday world and has unique qualities of ‘import’, which cause it to
contrast with daily reality. Artworks are logically expressive of human feelings
by their presentation of an image or symbol (Atler, Dance-Based dance
Theory 1991, p.34). Within your own conversations with dancers do you
think that this ‘virtual’ theory is tenable? Do dancers see themselves as
expressers of symbolic feelings? Does this theory, which is often presented to
people who theorize about dance, do a disservice to the actual lived
experience of the dancer? Can we have an aesthetic understanding of dance,
which places emphasis on the relation of dance to reality?

Response

Kaija discussed forms of dance that are based on technical training, where the
distinction must be made that the dancer is dancing with ‘intention’- rather than
moving ‘blindly’. With a distinguished level of technique a dancer has (possibly)
the capacity to reveal 'meaning'. With regard to 'meaning'- it is understood that
the dancer may in fact be dancing with a different understanding of the
movement and the dance than the original intentions of the choreographer- and
other dancers involved… BUT, what is important is the dancers’ technical
understanding of movement carries them so that their movement says something
beyond pedestrian or gestural movement alone. This idea points to the
conundrum that the technically proficient dancer can dance exquisitely and
meaningfully/ and in conjunction with the choreographers intentions, without
necessarily being aware of what these may be. This conundrum points to the idea
of A) Multiple meanings, B) Co-authorship within the art form (both in process
and performance), and C) the nebulous quality of where dance’s meaning is to be
found… i.e.; original intention, dancers’ interpretation, the audience’s own
perceptions etc…

With regard to meaning- technical training can provide for the dancer a way to
extend and expand the range of movement they perform with an understand-
ing of the quality that is required of their movements. It also shows the
incorporation and exploration of time and space, so that something can be said.

Kaija, discussed the notion of technique in dance vs. a notion of ‘community
dance’. Community dance – presents everyone with the opportunity to dance,
without the use of formalized technique. Rather it has its movement basis driven
by sincerity and emotion. Community dance takes place with the intent of its
dancers expressing themselves. Generally community dance relies on
preconceived gestural movement, which may also be categorized as stereotypical
and obvious. Community dance does not usually incorporate the dancers having
an extended understanding or exploration of movement.
The notion of intention:

We discussed the discrepancy with regard to the intention of movement and dance in relation to that of language. The inevitable intellectualization of movement is often financially motivated through the current ‘Grant’ process. This process mandates that verbal justification be made (of a proposed dance piece) so that the distribution of funds can be made in a socially responsible manner. This Grant process is often made problematic by: 1) assuming that justification is necessary; 2) assuming that justification and intent can be adequately verbalized and that the translation of dance can be fully captured through symbolic language; 3) that intent comes clearly to the choreographer prior to the making/creating of the piece- rather than possibly through the process of working to create the piece with dancers, set designers etc… co-operatively.

A large part of our discussion was directed to the ideas of knowledge and meaning in dance.

Kaija made clear that ‘knowledge’ is to be found in many places and instances within a dance. The knowledge is 1) less concrete than we assume it to be, and 2) there may be several layers of meaning/knowledge working both dependently and independently from each other at any particular instant in a dance. As such, meaning and knowledge in dance are revealed in ‘the moment’ rather than at statically pinpointed times. This also reveals the transitory nature of co-authorship, which is held between all involved in the dance making process and performance (audience included).
We briefly discussed the difficulty inherent in looking at abstractions, as well as the predominant notion of having to ‘educate an audience’, of the political and economic motives that drive this notion.