Videodance Studies

ANALYSIS AND EVOLUTION OF VIDEODANCE

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VIDEODANCE STUDIES

Analysis and evolution of videodance / Análisis y evolución de la videodanza

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Editorial

Videodance Studies: Analysis and evolution of videodance

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With this new collection of articles on videodance, we want to continue complementing the activities of the EIVV (International Meeting on Videodance and Videoperformance). In this encounter (https://videodance.blogs.upv.es/) we have managed to bring together high quality artists to comment and discuss videodance works, intentions, processes and aesthetic aspects. With this book, we have brought together articles that delve into aspects of video dance creation, featuring participants of the meetings and guest authors.

As editor and organizer of this book of articles, the first question that arises is the very usefulness of analytical articles. The production of videodance continues to grow and improve year after year, as we can see in the works received and selected at the EIVV. In fact, our Meeting was purely academic in the beginning, but by opening it up to the presentation of works, the festival/showcase aspect has completely dominated the purely academic activity. But there is still a need to establish a knowledge and theory of videodance, and with this book we bring together writings of **analysis from and for the creation of videodance.** Mainly, we have articles by the creators of the works themselves, whether they are the directors or the choreographers. We have even made a section of articles written in duo by the director together with the choreographer, and it is one of the richest sections because by having both points of view and analyzing the possible points of conflict or divergence, we really understand the processes of creating videodance as a hybrid art between dance and audiovisual. Many of these articles are based on the artist's own experience rather than on bibliographic analysis, providing the freshness and sincerity of those who face the creative process. We also include articles of analysis of works and currents of videodance but always made from the perspective of the analysis of the creation of the works.

Thinking and analyzing one's own work (or that of others) allows us to understand a little better how we create, to become aware of our intentions and the evolution between the initial project and the final audiovisual work. This better understanding has a great value for the creators themselves, to understand themselves and to evolve, but it is also an invaluable contribution for other creators or scholars who can thus advance in their processes of ideation, realization, techniques and, we hope, enrich their creation.

Editorial

Videodance Studies: Análisis y evolución de la videodanza

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Con esta nueva colección de artículos sobre videodanza, queremos seguir complementando las actividades del EIVV Encontre International de Videodansa i Videoperformance. En este encuentro (https://videodance.blogs.upv.es/) hemos conseguido reunir a artistas de gran calidad para comentar y debatir las obras de videodanza, las intenciones, los procesos y los aspectos estéticos. Con este libro, hemos reunido artículos que profundizan en los aspectos de la creación de la videodanza, contando con los participantes de los encuentros y con autores invitados.

Como editor y organizador de este libro de artículos, la primera cuestión que se plantea es la utilidad misma de artículos de análisis. La producción de videodanza sigue creciendo y mejorando año tras año, como podemos observar en las obras recibidas y seleccionadas en el EIVV. De hecho, nuestro Encuentro era puramente académico en un principio, pero al abrirlo a la presentación de obras, el aspecto de festival/muestra ha dominado completamente la actividad puramente académica. Pero sí que existe aun una necesidad de establecer un conocimiento y una teoría de la videodanza, y con este libro reunimos escritos de **análisis desde y para la creación de la videodanza.** Principalmente, tenemos artículos de las propias creadoras y creadores de las obras, ya sean como directores o directoras, o como coreógrafas o coreógrafos. Incluso hemos hecho un apartado de artículos escritos a duo por el director o directora junto con la coreógrafa o coreógrafo: al tener ambos puntos de vista y analizar los posibles puntos de conflicto o de divergencia, entendemos realmente los procesos de creación de la videodanza como arte híbrido entre la danza y el audiovisual. Muchos de estos artículos se basan en la experiencia propia más que en el análisis bibliográfico, aportando la frescura y sinceridad de quien se enfrenta con el proceso creativo. También incluimos artículos de análisis de obras y corrientes de videodanza pero hechos siempre desde la perspectiva del análisis de la creación de las obras.

Pensar y analizar la obra propia (o ajena) permite entender un poco mejor como creamos, darnos cuenta de nuestras intenciones y de la evolución entre el proyecto inicial y la obra audiovisual final. Esta mejor comprensión tiene un gran valor para el propio creador, para entenderse a sí mismo y evolucionar, pero es también una aportación inestimable para otras creadoras y creadores que pueden así avanzar en sus procesos de ideación, realización, técnicas y, esperamos, enriquecen su creación.

Videodance Studies: The Evolution and Analysis of Videodance

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Part 1

Analysis and evolution of videodance

Análisis y evolución de la videodanza

This part centers on articles that analyze the language of videodance as a genre and its evolution. Adrienne Brown IIreland) analyzes the Leitmotif in screendance, through examples of *Paysage enseveli* by Blas Payri. Clara Guimarães (Brazil) analyzes works by Kika Nicolela centering on the usage of the female body. Silvina Szperling and Susana Temperley (Argentina) make a brief retrospective on the Festival VideodanzaBA, established in the 90's in Buenos Aires and highlight some of the works that have been selected. María José Rubin (Argentina) analyzes the use of speech in the work of Ingrid Nachstern.

Enric Burgos contributes a paper in Catalan and Spanish comparing the rules of the Dogma95 in cinema (Lars von Trier) and in videodance.

The Leitmotif and Narrative in Screendance

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Abstract

This paper is an analysis of Paysage Enseveli: *a Video Dance film by Blas Payri, taken from Musicological and Semiological perspectives. I will look at a Leitmotif structure and whether this is an appropriate model for its interpretation. I will draw on 19th century aesthetics, cultural theories from 20th and 21st centuries, and will align literary and dance perspectives with music while parsing the film in visual and sound components.*

Biography

Dr Adrienne Brown was born in Dublin, she was a founding member of (1990s), and chair of Dance Ireland from 2008 - 2013. She has choreographed over 40 original works, staged in Ireland, England and France; the collection of which is in the National Dance Archive, University of Limerick. Adrienne collaborated with several composers in her work: Paul Hayes; JJ Vernon; Michael Seaver; Mel Mercier; Trevor Knight and Siobhán Cleary. She has also worked with recorded music: Bach, Beethoven, Arvo Pärt, John Taverner and Ian Wilson. She has taken inspiration from the writings of Oscar Wilde, W.B. Yeats, Paula Meehan, Charlotte Mew and Beth Ann Fennelly.

From 2002 – 2012 she completed a B.A. degree in University College Dublin, graduating with honours in Music and English, and an honours M.A. in American Studies. Following her master's thesis, she was awarded an Ad Astra Research Scholarship from U.C.D. to write a PhD in Musicology and Dance, based on the proposal "Meaning Indicators in Twentieth-Century Music and Dance". She made two films with Eoghan O'Reilly, I See His Blood (2016) and Contrition (2017). She is the creator of Wicklow ScreenDance Laboratory and is a published author.

Introduction

Dance for video or film opens interesting points of discussion not only within a Screendance framework, but also across art disciplines: music, dance, visual art, film. With this premise in mind, I will question the use of the musical Leitmotif as a possible driver of narrative within Screendance. To illustrate this, I will analyse *Paysage Enseveli* (trans. "Shrouded Landscape"): a film by Blas Payri (Payri, 2006: 7), based on the novel *Thérèse Desqueyroux* by François Mauriac (Mauriac, 1927). In preparation for analysis I will look briefly at the concept and musical origin of the Leitmotif, and of the prevailing aesthetic milieu during the 19th Century in music and visual arts, some of the factors that govern 20th Century dance scholarship, and I will also allude to the organising principle of Pattern within music and dance. Musicology will feature as an over-arching perspective to these investigations.

Pattern

Music and dance share a common language of rhythm, pulse, breath, phrase, trajectory, mood and tone, and have spoken to each other throughout the centuries (Brown, 2012: 1). Since we are looking at Screendance, which combines visual, aural and kinaesthetic elements, it is useful to see some of the differences and commonalities that are associated with each. We have to note that music theory is a tradition that dates back through time to the ancient Greeks and beyond (Grout and Palisca, 2001: 7), while dance theories largely sprang up during the mid-twentieth century, leaving dance theory somewhat in a position of 'catch-up' with film and music (Foster Leigh, 1996; Martin, 1996). Also, postmodernism is an overarching factor in the appearance of 20th century dance studies, with its emphasis on the body as writer and permeability of the 'work' in question (Parviainen, 1998: 33). However, to proceed towards a close analysis of *Paysage Enseveli* we need to look back at philosophical and cultural trends that governed the era of the Leitmotif and the subsequent twentieth century.

Pattern is an essential part of thematic development in music or dance. Critic Edwin Evans said: "for every pattern, large or small, in the texture of the music, there is potentially a choreographic equivalent" (Evans, cited in Damsholt, 2006: 5). While patterning in dance can be rendered in large scale, or, indeed open-endedness, nevertheless it is understood as outplay of dance components in patterns through the medium of the physical body in motion. Authors such as Richard Kraus attribute the origin of dance to early observation of the movement of birds and animals; the mysteries of nature, the sun, moon and stars; day and night, seasons of the year, life and death (Kraus, 1969: 34 – 40); linking dance with the overarching shapes and patterns of the universe. The long history of Musicology tells us of incremental developments in music as a creative, written and performance practice that allows us to see quite clearly those patterns of notes, phrases and themes in music that combine to give it a recognisable structural edifice; in dance, this is not quite so easily discernible, due to mimetic and corporeal factors along with associations of theatrical storytelling. However, the use of motif, repetition and other devices in dance show some equivalents in pattern recognition, albeit there is far more to be said on this subject than this paper can allow. In this case, as we are looking at a film that was created entirely based on the Leitmotif structure (Payri, 2018) we can assume a certain pre-disposition towards the search for pattern and motif within it.

In his 2016 Blog, Payri gives an account of his intention and method in creating *Paysage Enseveli* as an ambitious work in terms of the integration of sight and sound. He writes that it did not consist solely

of audiovisual *music* based on Leitmotifs for a video-dance, but that also the *image* was built (my italics) using an equivalent to that same concept that comes from music (Payri, 2016: 155). He took into account established theories of the Leitmotif in audiovisual music having narrative, connotative, and structural functions as the "narrative and denotative musical element *par excellence*" (auth. Italics), whilst also, the concept of semantic congruence is used to explain the similarity between meanings in music and image. Much emphasis has been given to the psychological effects of music on the image (Payri, 2016: 155). The same, of course can be said for the effects of music on dance. While Payri suggests that we cannot interrogate narrative functions of music without the concept of the Leitmotif (Payri, 2016: 155), it is not the same situation with dance *per se*. With dance we are always dealing with the human body which, of its very nature and corporeality is "always signifying" (Brown, 2012: 286 - 292; see also Damsholt, 2006; Leigh Foster, 1996; Parviainen, 1998).

Leitmotif

Here I would like to trace a brief musical history of the Leitmotif. Composer Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883) is commonly known as the progenitor of the Leitmotif, although the term was used prior to his adaptation of such (Kamien, 2000: 420 – 423). I also acknowledge the prevailing idea of Programmatic Music from the 19th century Romantic period where music was closely related to literature: in this case instrumental or orchestral music that was based on a poem, novel, play or other text. Such music was usually accompanied by a 'programme' with explanatory comments for the audience, and / or its title was the same as the text (Fleming, 1995: 511 – 513). For the purposes of this examination I will not include the *text* of Mauriac's novel as it does not fall within the rubric of musical analysis that I am using, although Payri incorporated its narration into his schematic construction.

The original meaning of Leitmotif is 'head motif' and it is a concept whereby a theme or musical phrase is associated with a character, idea or place. It is, by definition, a recurring fragment of identifiable music that represents something of the story or mood of the piece in question, and in Wagner's case, reached its culmination in his *Ring Cycle* (1876) (Wikipedia, 2018). The Leitmotif functions denotatively when indicating a character or narrative element while also serving in connotation where it may colour a scene with sad or tense atmosphere or create a suspension or relaxation (Rodman, 2006 quoted in Payri, 2016: 155 – 156).

Fig. 1 Siegfried's horn call in *Siegfried* (1857) (Wikipedia, 2018)

Fig. 2 Valkyrie, Brünnhilde (1874) (Classical-Music.com, 2017)

In the late 1840s Wagner finalised a concept of Gesamtkunstwerk (trans. "Total Work of Art") which he believed was fully realised in opera only. In this, he proposed that the events of stage as a whole – '*melodised* speech' of the libretto, and '*verbalised* orchestration', displayed through thematic and motivic manipulation – raised the music drama to the level of the symphony (Horton, 2005).

As examples of this, we can look at the following Leitmotifs which appeared in Wagner's operas (Fig. 1 & 2)

In his approach to musical development Wagner used thematic Leitmotif phrases to depict characters, ideas or events that allow the plot to be discerned through repeated, although often changing and mutating recognisable musical phrases. His musical approach to harmony was unorthodox, involving series of dissonant chords that did not resolve in the accepted way. His use of the 'Tristan' chord became signified with longing and desire, through harmonic means, and the use of echoing silence as seen below in Fig. 3 (Wikipedia, 2018).

Fig.3 The Tristan Chord

Wagner's Leitmotifs formed a dense web spread over the orchestral setting, which gave determination to its structure at any given moment. Each separate Leitmotif, besides expressing an instant in the drama, also formed a node within the web of Leitmotifs, and thus formed the musical structure (Kamien, 2000: 423).

Literary Comparisons

Looking at some of the other movements that were taking place in 19th Century European art music from the 1840s onwards, there was an idea that symphonic music could have the same aesthetic substance as literature, whereby the symphony as a whole would be constructed out of thematic material that depicted a struggle to be resolved at the end: a typical literary device. We can see this in Beethoven's symphony #5 for example, with its 'Fate' theme (Horton, 2005) which appears in the first four bars and continues throughout in varying permutations and developments.

Fig. 4 "Fate Motif" from Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor (1808) (Wikipedia, 2018)

Additionally, Liszt's development of the symphonic poem which was generally single movement, with literary or narrative plot guiding it, had quasi-symphonic structural organisation often based on Sonata Form. However, despite the fact that these narratives were demonstrated through musical means and understood by a generally musically educated audience, concerning the Wagnerian Leitmotif, Payri suggests that it frequently did not stand out to audience perception upon first hearing and that listening for such structural edifices requires intellectual effort; the corollary of which the audience cannot obtain this narrative device unless the music has been studied in advance (Payri, 2016: 156). Additionally, Adorno and Eisler have criticized the Wagnerian Leitmotif as descending into mere melody in opera arias (Adorno and Eisler 1981 quoted in Payri, 2016: 156). These ideas were

hotly contested during the period we are looking at. Indeed, Wagner believed he was the natural successor to Beethoven, and that Beethoven's Symphony #9 in D Minor (1822 – 24), with the inclusion of a Chorale in the final section, thereby correlated the symphony with music drama (Horton, 2005). In this way, Wagner put himself on a par with Beethoven as a composer of music that equated with the highest level of coherence and expression. For our purposes, since Screendance is a 'blended' art form of expression (music, dance, film, visual art), we can hold in mind Wagner's concept of the 'total work of art' and his perhaps grandiose belief that he was the natural successor to Beethoven; a theme we shall return to.

As an example of the use of Leitmotif in film construction, Blas Payri analyses the recurrent appearance of song 'Moon River' by composer Henry Mancini (in collaboration with film maker Blake Edwards) in the 1961 film, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Despite several titles and lyrics being proposed for the song, lyricist Johnny Mercer thought there was some ambiguity in the final piece (Payri, 2011: 140) yet it became synonymous with the film. Payri builds the case for the use of Leitmotif in film by observing frequent diagetic use of 'Moon River' leading to an increase in recognition and meaning that emanates from this music, because "the song is mood congruent and well-integrated into the text" (Payri, 2011: 137).

'Moon River' serves as main title song in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and as a source for musical variation based on short pieces of the melody, in what Payri refers to as the classical Wagnerian Leitmotif. Payri suggests that actress Audrey Hepburn's diegetic performance of the song which becomes "an essential moment in the narration" surely an indication of success of the Leitmotif, as it defined a necessary exposition of the character's representation (Payri, 2011: 140). Moreover, he asserts that it not only does this, but rather, suspends advancement of the story and focuses on the song and its performer, but this he deems a positive factor as "[t]he leitmotiv will effectively emanate from the character" (Payri, 2011: 141).

As an addendum to this idea, not only does Payri find recurrent musical themes (here the Leitmotif) as tropes of narration, but also Danish choreographer Kim Brandstrup has a similar system. Brandstrup was choreographic mentor to Adrienne Brown over a period of four years on her creation of the full-length dance drama *Colmcille* in 2000 (Leland, 2000). Brandstrup espouses the use of a 'three time repeated dance phrase' as a visual metaphor to convey not only inherent structure in the dance, but also as a means of emphasising important moments in the narrative (once to introduce, twice to reinforce and third time to change). Thus, the idea of repeated patterns/motifs/movement phrases is a known device in creating narrative (and sometimes abstract) dances, a subject too large to fully investigate here but more can be read about it (Brown, 2012).

Musicology/Semiology

In the study of western art music, Musicology has a long-established tradition of analytic practice, not always in search of meaning or expressive purpose but more commonly treating music as definitively abstract. Austrian music theorist Heinrich Schenker (1868 – 1934) developed a model of analysis that was reductive, with music defined as reducing to background and foreground texts, each contributing to the overall analysis (Horton, 2005). In oblique reference to a Shenkerian model, and looking at musical textures Payri questions "should [there be] a structure or symbolic element that will not always be perceived by the recipient? [His] opinion is clearly yes that the structure of language of the work must be richer than what is perceived in a first viewing or hearing" but also, the risk is that by creating a structure based upon elements that are not perceived, cannot be carriers of form for the

human mind. "A structure that is not noticeable is not a structure" (Payri, 2016: 161). This neatly encapsulates one of the paradoxes of perception, which, in Shenkerian terms is referred to as nearly simultaneous forward and backward hearing and understanding of the musical phrase or theme being perceived.

The first premise of Schenkerian analysis is separation of foreground from background text: a practice known as segmentation. Segmentation is, effectively, a decision regarding recognition of themes and motifs that are recurrent or in development throughout the music, and analysis of same, following established music theories. Schenker's methods are very suited to tonal music from the Bach to Brahms, however, with the breakdown of tonality in the early twentieth century, there was a need to consider music differently, leading to the rise of what became known as the New Musicology which aligned itself toward the musical event or experience, often resolutely from the receiver's perspective and with a strong bias in favour of socio-cultural trends.

Nevertheless, I am employing Semiology as a method of analysis for this Screendance work from a narrative perspective. Semiology derives from Linguistics and is the search for meaning-related signs appearing in a text (music, film, literature, or dance) that generate comprehension of message throughout. It is a framework of enquiry employed to perhaps find meaning in 'clusters' of signs in dance gestures, music motifs etc. (Brown, 2012).

Paysage Enseveli was devised on the use of Leitmotifs both in sound and visual creation. I paraphrase Blas Payri: "the soundtrack... [uses]... leitmotivs linked to the voice of the character (humming, laughter, whisper) ... or to external sources (bells, drone)... [and] each visual element is related to an idea or feeling: the woods symbolize ... social oppression, the sea/water.... destruction" and so forth (Payri, 2018). Indeed, following an oral presentation of ideas contained in this paper in Valencia, Spain (Brown, 2018), Payri elucidated further to explain that *every* element contained within *Paysage Enseveli* was chosen specifically from these confined parameters, meaning, there was nothing allowed to enter the film that was not a Leitmotif within his system.

The concept of theme and variation based on rhythmic and melodic motifs is well-established in instrumental music but not so in electroacoustic musical language, but Payri set out to make clearly discernible oppositions whether by the sound's human origin or not, or by the polarization between recognizable and abstract source. He did this by dividing Leitmotifs into two groups: the sighs, laughter and singing of the protagonist, or external materials such as bells, bass or chorus. (Payri, 2016: 156 – 157). His Leitmotif of 'oppression' is a sustained and low-pitched *sostenuto* drone invading the texture slowly; 'despair', a descendant or distant descendant; 'desire' is made up of sighs and whispers in the sound scape (Payri, 2016: 157).

The first step in analysis is the process of 'segmentation': extrapolation of themes and motifs from the overall work. Segmentation is possible by close listening, watching, reading musical scores or otherwise interrogating a work under analysis. As has been mentioned, music, theatre and dance are sites of enquiry using Semiology/Semiotics; each field having its own approach. Kofi Agawu's "The Challenge of Semiotics" (Agawu, 1999: 139 – 150) gives useful information on segmentation in music: revealed as high points or climaxes, which then can be seen to embody of aspects of syntax and rhetoric. Applying Semiology to the fields of theatre, the body, gesture and dance, Nancy Dalva's "The Way of Merce" (Dalva, 1992: 181) focuses on fragmentation, collage and simultaneity in the work of Merce Cunningham, while Patrice Pavis's article "Problems of a Semiology of Theatrical

Gesture" (Pavis, 1981) examines the problems that attach to determination of Semiology and the body: he acutely observes that while the body is engaged in performance on stage, it is never actually *switched off* (auth. Italics). This is to say, that the body can never be said to be neutral in transmission, because gesture, unlike verbal discourse, has no voids between the words, no natural borders or limits to the gestural message; every movement then is meaningful (Pavis, 1981: 65 – 68). These arguments are beyond the scope of this paper but worth following up for the interested reader.

Analysis

I first traced sound Leitmotifs in *Paysage Enseveli* by close listening and parsing identifiable themes according to their place in time, noting each one and its time log. In Fig.5, we can see the placement of such motifs across the 12 sections. We can notice that some sections had no sound: 1,3,7,9 and 11. Motifs and their time appearances in the film text are shown in the table below.

Sound Analysis of *Paysage Enseveli*

1. Le silence/   No sound
2. La famille !/ 1.06 – 1.08 laughter; 1.11 – 1.12, 1.18 – 1.120 laugher (with echo); drone 1.17 – 2.11 with '3-beat laughter motif'; 2.12 – 2.28 'whispering motif', 2.16 – 2.17 laughter; 2.12 – 2.28 '3-beat laugh motif'; 2.27 loud laugh.
3. Cette plainte indéfinie des cimes/   No sound
4. Ce corps contre son corps/ 4.36 – 4.46 'faint bell motif'; 5.13 – 5.16 'whispering motif'; 5.18 – 5.33 musical sequence with strong *triangle* sound at beginning and end; 5.37 – 5.40 laughter/'whispering motif'; 5.43 – 6.13 'rhythmic layered bell with melodic tones motif' 6.14 – 6.20 'whispering motif'; 6.21 – 6.25 *triangle*; 6.39 – 7.20 'faint bell motif'.
5. La derniére nuit d'octobre/ 8.20 soft drone building up to louder at 8.35.
6. Acharnement/ 9.01 – 10.00 continuous building drone with distant voice fragments at high pitch; 9.14 high laugh; 9.40 – 9.44 'whispering motif'; 10.01 – 10.13 drone; 10.17 – 10.26 'whispering motif'; 10.26 – 10.46 drone; 10.32 – 10.36 'whispering motif'; 10.46 – 11.40 'bell motif'; 11.08 – 11.17 'ascending vocal drone motif'.
7. Une pluie menue/   No sound
8. Le Bonheur n'existe pas/ 13.30 – 13.50 variation on laughter sound with layering/cut-off sound making rhythmic phrase; 13.54 – 13.57 'whispering motif'; 14.21 – 14.50 'faint bell motif'; 14.30 – 15.00 'ascending vocal drone motif'; 14.52 – 15.00 laughter; 15.13 laughter; 15.15 – 15.42 'bell motif' and 'ascending vocal drone motif'.
9. Inconnue/   No sound
10. Campagne trempée d'aurore/ 17.17 drone; 17.26 – 17.35, 18.01 – 18.08 'bell motif' getting louder to *triangle*; 17.35 – 18.08 'ascending vocal drone motif'; 18.10 – 18.16 'whispering motif'.
11. Solitude/   No sound
12. Le froid de la nuit/ 19.30 – 20.00 'ascending vocal drone motif'; 19.59 – 20.50 'bell motif' and 'ascending vocal drone motif; 20.10 – 20.15 bell; 20.32 – 21.12 getting louder/softer and melodic bell phrase; 20.52 – 22.00 drone.

Fig. 5 Sound Analysis of *Paysage Enseveli*

Similarly, the same has been done for Visual motifs – here, I deduct that there are visual 'background' motifs (forest, dunes etc.) which I would equate with Shenker's 'background text' in music analysis, mentioned earlier. 'Foreground text' consists of identifiable, repeating movement of visual 'clusters'

that I identify as motifs. This can equate to Shenker's 'foreground' text, upon which he based his analytical method.

Visual Analysis of *Paysage Enseveli*

1. Le silence/ 'pulling chair motif' 0.20 – 0.50
2. La famille !/ 'crouching figure motif' 2.28 – 2.44; 'moving trees motif' 1.32 – 1.45; 'moving trees motif' 1.32 – 1.45; 'turning motif' 1.51 – 1.57; 'tree circling motif' 1.52 – 1.56, 2.11 – 2.13, 2.15 – 2.17, 3.10 – 3.15; 'running motif' 1.58 – 2.02, 2.07 – 2.10, 2.12 – 2.17, 2.21 – 2.26; 'turning motif' 2.03 – 2.06; 'arms uplifted motif' 2.49 – 3.13; 'pulling chair motif' 3.16 – 3.40
3. Cette plainte indéfinie des cimes/ 'pulling chair motif' 4.02 – 4.25
4. Ce corps contre son corps/ 'crouching figure motif' 4.36 – 5.16, 5.58 – 6.08, sequence of 'falling back and forth motif'/'leaning against surface motif/'turning motif' 5.19 – 5.58, 6.08 – 6.25; 'crouching figure (variation) motif' 6.01 – 6.08, 6.25 – 6.42, 6.59 – 7.06, 7.14 – 7.19; 'pulling chair motif' 6.46 – 6.59, 7.09 – 7.10
5. La derniére nuit d'octobre/ 'pulling chair motif' 7.42 – 7.57, 8 01 – 8.35
6. Acharnement/ 'moving trees motif' 8.50 – 9.03, 11.01 – 11.19, 'crouching figure motif' 9.39 – 10.00, 10.02 – 10.12, 10.26 – 10.31, 10.36 – 10.52; 'leaning against surface/falling back and forth motif' 10.14 – 10.25, 10.32 – 10.36; 'pulling chair motif' 10.55 – 11.42
7. Une pluie menue/ 'crouching figure motif' 11.59 – 12.12; 'pulling chair motif' 12.17 – 13.15
8. Le Bonheur n'existe pas/ 'crouching figure (variation) motif' 13.30 – 13.49; 'leaning against surface/falling back and forth motif' 13.52 – 14.17, 14.52 – 15.13; 'pulling chair motif' 14.30 – 14.50, 15.14 – 15.58; 'moving trees motif' 15.06 – 15.12
9. Inconnue/ 'pulling chair motif' 16.07 – 17.01
10. Campagne trempée d'aurore/ 'pulling chair motif' 17.13 – 17.24, 17.57 – 18.29, 'running motif' 17.27 – 17.30, 17.36 – 17.41; 'turning motif' 17.25 – 17.27, 17.46 – 17.49
11. Solitude/ 'arms uplifted motif' 18.41 – 18.48; 'front body opening motif' 18.39 – 18.50
12. Le froid de la nuit/ 'front body opening motif' 19.08 – 20.00; 'turning motif' 20.30 – 20.40, 20.43 – 20.47, 'running motif' 21.04 – 21.07, 21.19 – 21.50, 21.57 – 22.10

Background motifs/Sections they appear in

Sand Dunes 1,3,5,7	Forest 2,6	Walled Enclosure 4	Beach 8,9
	Sea 8,10,11, 12		

Fig. 6 Visual Analysis of *Paysage Enseveli*

Many of the motifs in this work are contained and easily discernible, but some, such as the sequence of 'falling back and forth motif'/'leaning against surface motif/'turning motif' in section 4 (5.19 – 5.58) are more complex showing evidence of 'developing variation technique' – Shenker again. We can see in Fig. 7 the camera shows us multiple viewings of the female figure, and the motif comprises three other identifiable motifs: turning, falling back/forth and leaning against surfaces.
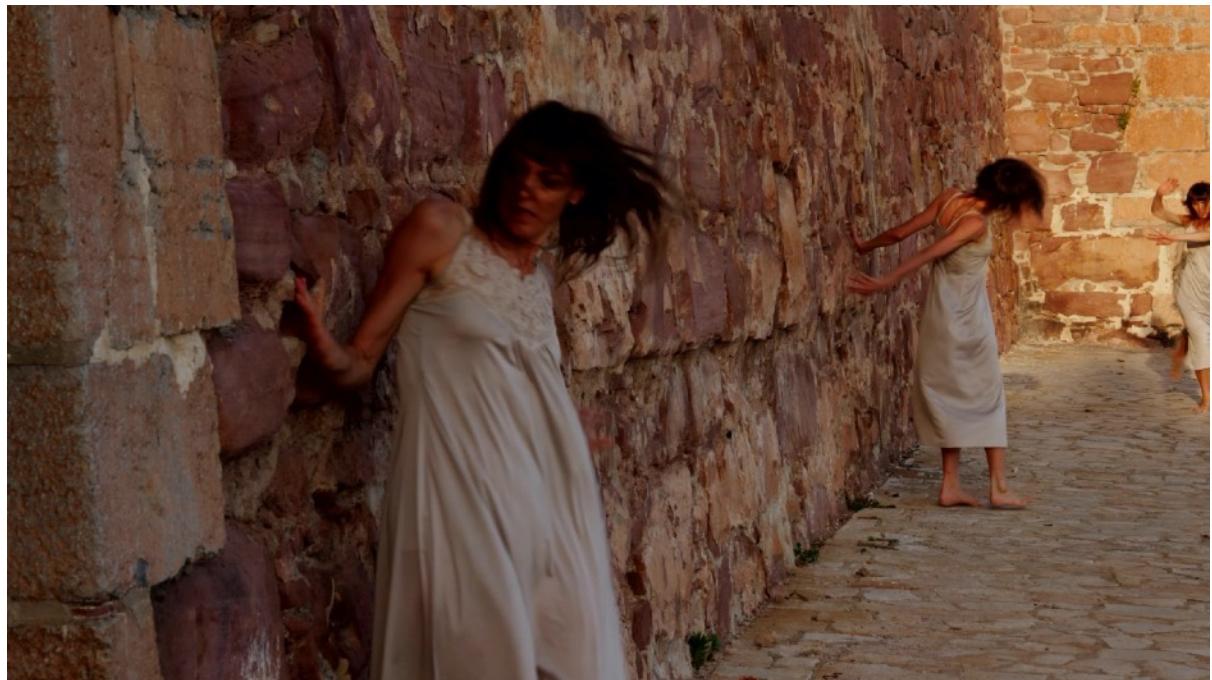
Fig.7 'falling back and forth motif'/'leaning against surface motif/'turning motif'. Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)

'Crouching figure' motif which appears throughout the work shows evidence of developmental variation also: I take the core of this motif to be the frontal torso turned in on itself 4, (601 – 608) as seen in Fig. 8.

Fig.8 Crouching figure. Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)

Fig.9 Crouching figure (variation). Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)
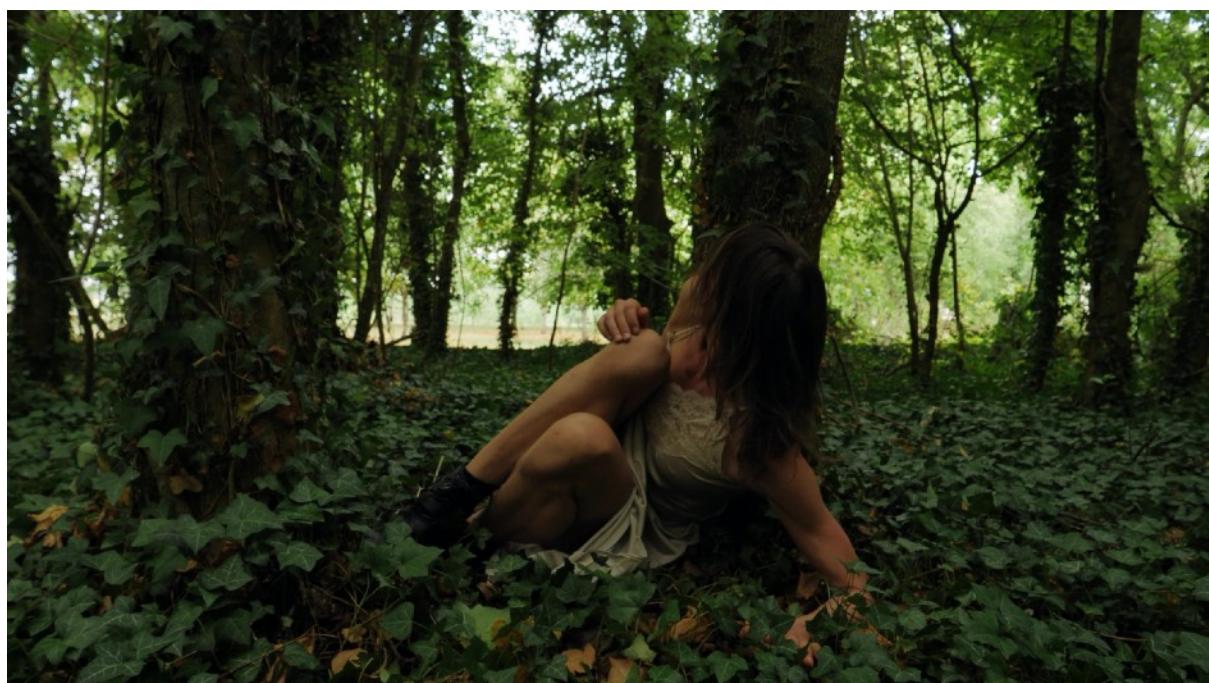
Fig. 10 Crouching figure (variation). Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)

'Pulling chair' motif is the most commonly used throughout *Paysage Enseveli*, appearing in sections 1– 10 consecutively, shown below in Fig. 11.

Fig. 11 Pulling chair. Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)

Fig. 12 Pulling chair. Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)

Having completed Sound and Visual component motif placement, I followed this process by listing distribution of each motif (Sound and Visual) how often it is used, and the sections it appears in giving us an overview of motivic material in the film. The table 1 shows motif name, number of times it appears (red) and the sections it appears in.

We can see those that are most prevalent: Laughter, Drone, Whispering, Bell, Vocal Drone, Pulling Chair, Crouching figure, turning, running, falling back/forth.

Distribution of Sound and Visual Motifs in *Paysage Enseveli*	
SOUND	VISUAL
A/ Laughter 8 2,4,6, 8	A/ Pulling Chair 10 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
B/ Drone 7 2,5,6,12	B/ Crouching figure 6 2,4,6,7,8
C/ Whispering 9 2,4,6,8,10	C/ Moving trees 4 2,6,8
D/ Bell 6 4,6,8,10,12	
E/ Layered Bell 1 4	D/ Turning 4 2,4,10,12 2,11
F/ Musical Seq 1 4	H/ Falling back/forth 3 4,6,8
G/ Drone & Voices 1 6	I/ Front body open 2 11,12
H/ Vocal Drone 6 6,8,10,12	
I/ Laugher cut off 1 8	

Table 1. Distribution of Sound and Visual Motifs in *Paysage Enseveli*

Table 2 is a collation of material as used in each section. In it, we clearly see that sections 2, 4 and 6 conflate the most in terms of Sound and Visual motifs used. Sections 10 and 12 have slightly less, but more in comparison with sections 1, 3, 7 and 9 which rely solely on a single Visual motif. Sections 5 and 11 have minimal motifs. Section 2 has the most in terms of Visual signifiers, sections 4 and 6 use the most in Sound signifiers. That these sections (2, 4 and 6) are within the first half of the film, I can deduce that this indicates a build-up of information, tension, complexity or emotional narrative. This emotional narrative reduces in complexity in the second half of the piece from sections 7 – 10 with fewer indicators used.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
VM A	V M A,B,C,D,E,F,G SM A,B,C	VM A	VM A,B,D,H SM A,C,D,E,F	VM A SM B	VM A,B,C,H SM A,B,C,D,G,H	VM A,B	VM A,B SM A,C,D,H,I	VM A	VM A,D,F SM C,D,H	VM G,I	VM D,F,I SM B,D,H

VM = Visual Motif   SM = Sound Motif

Table 2. Sound and Visual Motif Collation across Sections 1 - 12

It should be noted that 'Pulling chair motif' ceases completely after section 10. Sections 11 and 12 introduce Visual motif 'I' for the first time: front body opening (figure 13); this is significant, as during the earlier piece, the body was either crouching, falling, running back and forth or turning – kinaesthetically an opening of the front torso can indicate ecstasy, willingness, vulnerability, and other unguarded emotional states. Moreover, there is a colour change in sections 11 and 12 from earlier sections: a move from earthy browns, greens and greys to blues and indigos. Light coming upon the sand and sea along with these icy blues and purples brings its own change and one that can feel like a resolution of sorts.

Fig. 13 Front body open. Screenshot from *Paysage Enseveli* (Blas Payri)

Conclusion

Some thoughts on the analysis of *Paysage Enseveli* and what it may reveal in terms of narrative are: it was found that there were corollaries between music and literature in the 19th century, the period of the Leitmotif. Wagner believed he created an artistic conflation – the 'total work of art' in his operas and that he succeeded Beethoven (arguably held as the apotheosis of 19th Century symphonic development) as progenitor of new forms of expression in music. The Leitmotif was used by Wagner as descriptor, character identifier, storyline matrix and structural mould in his works. Therefore, in this film, it is entirely possible to adapt the Leitmotif as a way of creating both structure and narrative through visual and aural means, and as a way of linking Screendance to literature. The field of Linguistics which examines the smallest components of language structure has been appropriated by theatre, dance and music theorists as a way of examining these art forms, a further method of enquiry to support analysis of Screendance works. Therefore, Semiology, and Leitmotifs allow us to bring together the forms contained within *Paysage Enseveli* and examine them as narrative, or its equivalent in non-language-based expressions. We can look at what we 'see' and 'hear' in this work and search for narrative thread through the lens of analysis by these methods.

An actual rendering of storyline is not the point of this endeavour as this is for the perceiver to find individually. However, some insights based on conflation of motifs throughout are:

- Aural rhythm is created not only through sonic means (of each motif) but also through the 'on' 'off' rhythm whereby every second section has visual motifs only and no sound (1,3,7,9,11 and 5 only has one sound motif)

- Sound quality throughout favours 'muffled', soft, continuous, indistinct, distant values, with the human voice bringing whispering and laughter; these sounds render haunting qualities that can construe meaning

- Visually, sites chosen for this film include wilderness in forest, by the sea and in a disused old stone-walled garden, there is no-one present except for the dancer. These sites both contain and liberate the dancer as she moves through each scene. There is a suggestion that scenic backdrops are signifiers of mood and narrative as Payri has suggested in his description above (p 5)

- 'Pulling chair' and 'crouching' are the most prolific visual motifs in *Paysage Enseveli*. As mentioned previously, 'pulling chair' is used in each of the first ten sections and then disappears for the last two. There can be multiple readings of this motif, indeed the variations that appear with the chair being used as a seat, an object to be explored and danced around and so forth, opening further interpretations. 'Crouching' is the starting point of a developing variation that sees the dancer move through a coiled torso closed in on itself, a metaphor for fear, protection, tentative enquiry and other possibilities

- There is a build-up of motifs throughout the first 6 sections with the busiest conflations in sections 2, 4 and 6. These are gradually resolved in the remaining 6 sections that include a new motif appearing in section 11 'front body open'. This new motif is a complete change from body movement throughout the film thus far and indicates a new feeling: freedom, liberation, surrender or similar 'open' psychological states

- Colour change from greens, browns, greys and overcast skies in sections 1 – 10 are contrasted with the last two sections where the camera reveals sky reflected on blue/purple smooth sand and sea – the change is palpable, along with the dancer's new movements as she plays with the sea. In terms of plotline, this seems a kind of resolution to earlier material whereby the natural world offered more oppressive scenic backdrops, now resolved into calmer, more serene and glowing territory

An answer to the question asked at the beginning of this paper whether it is possible to find narrative through use of Leitmotif in Screendance is clear: it is entirely possible to do this, albeit that an uncovered narrative is still one open to interpretation based on individual reading of the signs therein. Narrative reading is particularly clear in the case of *Paysage Enseveli* as this film was created entirely based on the Leitmotif structure, perhaps uniquely in this one instance, it may not be so easy to apply this method to other dance films. Some points of concurrence are evident, such as Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* with the combined visual, aural and kinaesthetic elements in Screendance. Additionally, the prevailing literary connotations in music of the 19th century with literary, or narrative features of music, also propel much of film's sensibility, in this case, a dance film. With these overlaps,

the process of segmentation: extrapolating motifs – following Schenkerian analytical theories – allows for examination of the salient themes (visual and aural motifs).

Payri recommends focusing on resources of video-dance by addressing these matters in dance (studied with the dancer/choreographer) to such specifics as open or closed body; balance or imbalance of the position; directions and displacement of the movement etc., and with camera and filming by looking at camera fixed or motion shots and so forth (Payri, 2016: 161); clearly worth further investigation. This is an interesting departure in 21st Century dance-for-film works, in this case highly dependent on a strongly moulded creative edifice, perhaps one that will not be replicated over future films, but it nevertheless gives an opportunity to examine ways in which visual, aural and aesthetic means are perceived and comprehended by the receiver, and a comparison between Screendance as an art form and 19th Century literary/musical progenitors.

Acknowledgements

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Kika Nicolela: the subversion of female body

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Abstract

This article presents an analysis of the films Crossing, Windmaker, Entre-Temps *and* Cake d'Amour *by Kika Nicolela (Brazilian artist, filmmaker and independent curator through concepts derived from the philosophers Michel Foucault and Judith Butler's works.*

These films were released between the years 2003 and 2017. They use the female body as protagonist. These bodies are exposed to different situations, shedding light on the topic of construction of the designated place for women in our society. Furthermore, Nicolela allows us to think how these bodies can re-signify themselves, transforming into subversive and transgressive bodies.

The films are complementary to each other, with the perception that the female body lives different experiences, resulting in the loss of its own identity. The existence of an aesthetical and a behavioral pattern for women can have violent repercussion for any woman that differs from the norm. Consequently, it restricts diversity and individuality. However, reflecting upon how they can resist against this imprisonment of their bodies, we can recognize paths pursued by them to achieve freedom, and to understand their own existence as bodies that matter.

Biography

PhD student in Political Philosophy at the University of Paris. Researcher at the Laboratoire du Changement Social et Politique (Laboratory of social and political changes). Her research consists of the use of female body as a form of political resistance in the light of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler philosophies. Clara studied Music at the Federal University of Pernambuco and State University of Londrina. She graduated in Philosophy by the Methodist University of São Paulo, and completed a Master's degree in Education, History, Philosophy of Science and Mathematics at the Federal University of ABC. Born in Brazil, she has been acting as a philosopher researcher and feminist activist. As an artist, she specializes in Arab dance and is a lyrical singer in contemporary experimental music.

Introduction

This article presents an analysis of some projects conceived by Kika Nicolela, Brazilian artist, filmmaker and independent curator. *Crossing (2003), Windmaker (2007), Entre-Temps (2016)* and *Cake d'Amour (2016)* bring narratives that possess the archetypal constructions of femininity. All of them were created with different partners: dancers, actresses and other types of artists. The films show some symbolic elements that represent the social imaginary of the female role, bringing to the surface movements of construction and deconstruction of what it is to be a woman. From my comprehension of the subject, I present a thread connecting all these projects of the artist: the female body. Reflecting upon this point, I have chosen to use the philosophers Michel Foucault and Judith Butler as theoretical reference. This article proposes a narrative that invites the reader to reflect about the place of women in the world.

Firstly, I would like to present two concepts of Michel Foucault which are the theoretical approach of this article: disciplinary body and utopian body. So, the disciplinary body is a body marked and domesticated for the rules, norms and all tools of power. For Foucault (2007, p. 183-184), the power is something that flows and cannot be found in a specific place, because power is everywhere. So, it does not "apply itself to people, it goes through them". That is why is not possible to say that power is in someone's hands or at just one spot. It is not something tangible. Thus, power teaches people how act according its rules, because their bodies are the mass that feeds it.

The body is not marked only by physical violence: there are other types like psychological and symbolic that can leave also deeper marks. Therefore, the bodies are taken and controlled by a power that renders them adequate and docile (Foucault, 2009, p. 98-100).

These tools of disciplinary control of bodies are based on the complete domination over them, so all their steps and movements are observed. Because of this control, the body becomes more useful (Foucault, 2009, p. 121). Consequently, in a disciplinary body there is no place for idleness or futility. So, the body changes into a machine-body, a body that does not know how it is controlled by power and for that, it creates a type of pleasure in following the rules of the power.

Michel Foucault presented the concept of utopian body in a radio conference in 1966. It is a concept that brings a relation between a real and a phenomenological body. So, these elements could be the source of discussion about the inner body. In this point of view, the body could be born through itself or erase it, because it is a starting point for its subjectivity.

"Utopian is a place where I will have a body without body, a body that will be beautiful, limpid, transparent, luminous, speedy, collosal in its power, infinite in its duration" (Foucault, 2013, p. 8). Therefore, the utopian body is a construction of an imaginary inner and outside space, because it knows nothing about itself. For example, for Foucault this body cannot see itself that is why it needs some tools for do it, like see a dead body or see itself in the mirror. Without these tools, the body will see only parts of itself, consequently it builds its body out of it. So, that is what Sabot (2012) calls *utopic*

virtuality[1]. The body does not really exist, but it creates an image of itself. In this way, living different sociocultural experiences, the body can put it out itself.

Finally, for Butler (2015, p. 15-16) before the body can be considered a body, it must conform to a whole set of characteristics that model and control it according to social and political norms. Therefore, the body needs to socialize, to correspond to social expectations in order to guarantee its subsistence and maintenance of life. Everything in him had to be adequate, both the language and the yearnings of life. For the author (2015, p.57-58), "the body is a social phenomenon: it is exposed to others, it is vulnerable by definition". For its survival, it is sustained through the relations with what is external to it, "as something that, by definition, is subject to the ability and strength of the social: the vulnerable." As it is vulnerable, it is subject to violations in the most different spheres, not being subject only to physical violation. However, since the body is always subject to the oppression of power, there is no "non-vulnerable" body.

Butler says that the differentiation between the sexes is marked by society and by the presentation of discursive practices as a way of sustaining the discourses that control the bodies:

> The category of "sex" is, from the start, normative; it is what Foucault has called a "regulatory ideal." In this sense, then, "sex" not only functions as a norm, but is part of regulatory practice that produces the bodies it governs, that is, whose regulatory force is made clear as a kind of productive power, the power to produce – demarcate, circulate, differentiate – the bodies it controls. (2011, p. 1)

Wondering about these concepts of body by Judith Butler and Michel Foucault, how can we relate them with the body in the films *Crossing, Windmaker, Entre-Temps and Cake d'Amour* by Kika Nicolela?

Disciplinary Bodies

The work of Kika Nicolela has different interpretative possibilities. However, I chose to start analyzing her work with "the disciplinary body" by Michel Foucault. For the author, disciplinary bodies are bodies trained to remain within social norms. They are molded and become docile. In this place of discipline, there is no space for dispersion or vagrancy; therefore, idleness and uselessness are not welcome because the body must be efficient. Thus, everything must be controlled: gesture, speech and movement. Everything must be objective and, above all, productive. So, the bodies become a body-instrument, a body-machine. (Foucault, 2009, pp. 122-130).

Reflecting upon disciplinary bodies, is it possible that free bodies exist? To answer this question, I will start with the movie *Crossing*. Released in 2003 and of 9 minutes duration, Kika Nicolela's film presents a common act of daily life: a body that crosses the street. Filmed on the largest and most important avenue in the state of São Paulo-Brazil: Avenida Paulista, it shows the paradox between a disciplinary body and a transgressing body. In this case, a transgressor body is a body that tries to break the rules and the norms imposed by tools of power.

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[1] " Ce corps, « fantôme qui n'apparaît qu'au mirage des miroirs, et encore, d'une façon fragmentaire », n'est qu'une présence évanescente, troublante même puisqu'elle échappe lorsqu'on croit la saisir, tel « ce dos que je sens appuyé contre la poussée du matelas sur le divan quand je suis allongé, mais que je ne surprendrai que par la ruse d'un miroir1 ». Le corps, « mon corps », révélé à luimême indirectement – et par esquisses - dans les reflets successifs d'un miroir, contient donc en lui-même une virtualité utopique, qui fait de lui le lieu de naissance, l'expression originaire de toutes les utopies - littéraires ou philosophiques. Mon corps est constitutivement hors de soi."

The film starts with a static body that becomes a moving body. Perhaps this is a transition from a disciplinary body to a transgressing body in the process of self-discovery. The gestures of the body are light and expanded. The movement deconstructs not only the "docile body" (disciplined body), but it also deconstructs the restriction that is reserved for the female body. This performative body creates a dialogue with elements that are attributed to women, such as a lipstick that ends up being spread all over a face and, when it does, unconventional movements in the middle of the avenue are observed. The body seems to be looking for some kind of freedom.

Fig. 1: Screenshot of *Crossing* (2003), with performer Letícia Sekito

The place of women in western society has been related to care, silence, and privation of their own individuality (Perrot, 2005, p. 9-11). Consequently, if a woman behaves outside the rules, she is considered to be mad or to present an inadequacy that borders on promiscuity. Thus, a film that presents a woman in the middle of the process of self-discovery and transgression of order can bring us to wonder about the women's resistance and the existence of the female body.

Judith Butler (2015a, p. 15-16) says that for a body to be considered a body, it must be adapted to social and political norms, meaning that everything in that body needs to be adequate so it can be constantly evaluated. If it agrees with the social expectations, it will be a guarantee of its subsistence and maintenance of life. In this sense, the choreography begins with increasing facial movements (Fig. 1) and it amplifies to the corporal awareness of space in open planes. This, then, is an example of Butler's body concept, because the performer's body (Sekito's body) shows us a body transforming itself in a not-body.

Sekito's body breaks the norms when it makes unexpected movements. So, under the role of power, all movements of the body need to be controlled, however, here the body makes the opposite, it starts a dance in the middle of the avenue. So, in this way, an ordinary life action like crossing the street,

would become an important path of freedom for a female body; a body that changes itself, disrupting the patterns and expectations for a women body.

From my own perspective, this body lives a cathartic and transgressive process. For even at the end of the film, when this body returns to invisibility, walking around the crowd, it does not return as it was but returns as a transformed body. Thus, one of the possibilities of this film would be to question our space and our place in the world as women.

Utopian bodies

Right above, I have talked about the problem of the disciplinary body. Now, I would like to discuss the utopian body. For Foucault (2013, p.8), they are bodies that live in "a place out of all places. In other words, they are imaginary bodies", beautiful, but not real. The place of utopia would create bodies without bodies, as if they were illusions in which they could be erased or detached as bright and luminous bodies.

I have chosen two films by Kika Nicolela that, I believe, relate to the concept of a utopian body. The first one, *Windmaker* (Fig. 2), released in 2007, is 11 minutes in duration and features a woman interacting with nature. It would not be a body, but a symbolic construction of a fusion of a non-body with elements of nature. This non-body would be the fusion with air, the movement of the wind and with the representation of nature itself. It has no matter, it is a utopian body.
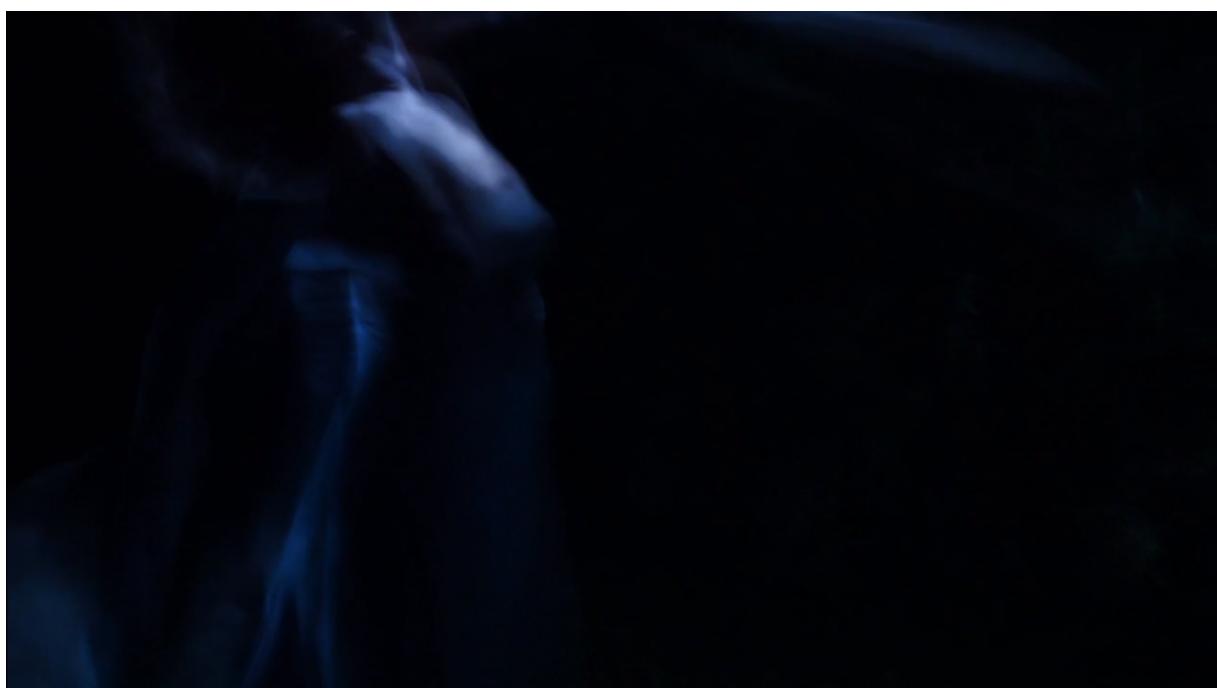
Fig. 2: Screenshot of *Windmaker* (2007), with performer Luciana Canton

The second one is called *Entre-temps* (Fig. 3). Released in 2016, 12 minutes duration, it brings a dialogue between a female body and a building with a sad and complex history. The building was occupied by the Nazis during World War II, and then transformed into a prison. After that, it became the Jewish Museum of Belgium. However, in 2014, the building was the target of a terrorist attack, and

4 people were killed. At the time of the shooting, the building was empty awaiting demolition. The scenes were filmed in one of the prison cells created by the Nazis.

Fig. 3: Screenshot of *Entre-Temps* (2007), with performer Anna Tenta

Like every work of art, many interpretations are possible, but to me, on these films by Nicolela, the body is trying to recognize itself as a body. It begins with a choreography that brings the performer to move her body at the same time that it recognizes the space around it (before, the body seems to be dead or living a mortal sleep). However, the direction of the video leads us to constant breaks of expectation, using black screen cuts. So, it is a technique to bring us back to reality. The actress, and performer, curls up and expands her body. She seeks the light and the shadow. She shouts, vocalizes and becomes silent. She would be a body that would not be a body in itself. She would be a utopia.

Foucault (2013) in the text *"le corps utopiques"* presents the concept of a body that is not a body, because it does not recognize itself. It observes the world and itself through two windows (eyes) that allow it to see only one perspective.

In the film, the body sees body parts, walls, windows, arms... it is formed by pieces of itself. In my own judgment, this body is trying to be free from both spatial and bodily imprisonment. This beautiful, translucent, vivid and free body would be a utopia. So, we have a feminine body that fights for the right of existence, for the construction of itself, passing through paradoxes such as clean and dirty, light and shadow.

The body has been literally imprisoned, but in the attempt to free itself, it would expand, seeking the window, the gaps and the external light. Then it would try to make movements, touching itself. This could be an attempt at self-recognition and also to recognize itself as a body again. This body would be in search of an exit and it would even let out exhausted screams, writhes, breaths and vocalizations;

sometimes resigning and accepting its condition of body, sometimes attempting to be in fact a utopia, reaching for freedom.

In this search, intuitively, a body would do what Foucault presents as a solution to the problem of non-recognition because, for the author, there are three possibilities of finding the existence of the body. The first one is to see a dead body, the second is to look at it through a mirror. For if we look at our own body without a mirror, we only see pieces. We cannot connect the parts to build the image of a complete body as we only see a portion of it. However, by looking at a dead body or seeing ourselves in a mirror, we can connect those pieces and finally construct a full body in our minds.
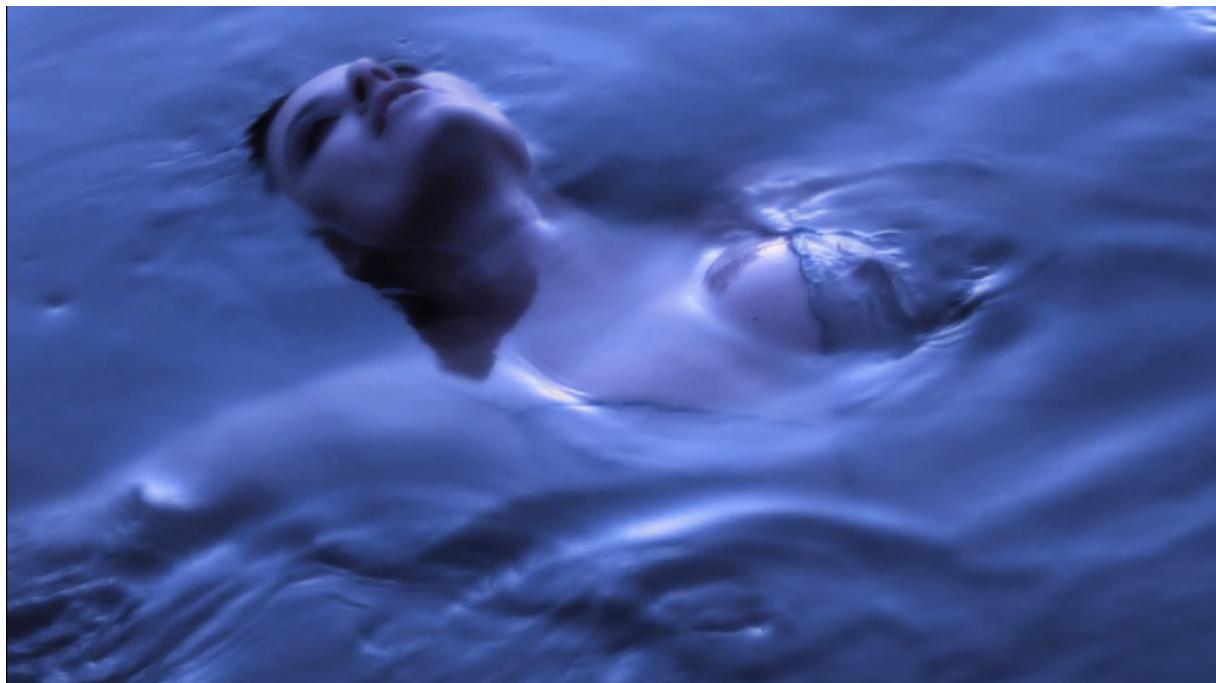
Fig. 4: Screenshot of *Windmaker* (2007), with performer Luciana Canton

Nonetheless, in this film, the female body would follow the path of transgression to reach recognition. It was trapped in a room with empty walls; however, it found new ways to try gaining freedom. It tries to touch itself and, consequently, its own existence.

For Foucault the third solution to recognize one's body is love, because by being touched by another body, we can feel ourselves. Then, we recognize ourselves and understand that we are finally a body. Be that as it may, the female body in the film still finds itself alone, it has only itself, so the only possible external touch would be the peeled walls and the deteriorated floor.

It would be the solution for it: trying to feel itself while it touches the wall, and thus trying to feel the touch of the wall in return. Even if it is not human touch. This sensual relationship with space would make her closer to a body, Foucault (2013, p.16) says that to make love is a way of living outside the utopia. There is an intensity of sensations when we are touched by the hands of the other. When we make love, we know that our body is present. Thus, using utopic virtuality we can perhaps build a real body.

The use of this corporeal-spatial sensuality could bring the woman to the consciousness of the materiality of her body. Her body is not an ethereal utopia anymore, but something that has the perception of its movements and its human existence.

Regarding this concept, the body breathes the life that still pulses in its veins, becoming an alive and transgressor body. It recognizes itself as a body and seeks to love itself and sees love as a possibility of becoming complete, even in the middle of the all adversity of solitude and imprisonment.

In this same perspective, I consider important to observe the trajectory of *Windmaker* and the non-body that also relates to the space. Therefore, for me, we have two non-bodies living a process of building their bodies, leaving aside their utopian constitution to become a materialized/real body.

In *Windmaker*, this body that is connected to nature (Fig. 4) also lives a process of exchange with space. However, unlike *Entre-temps* and its sensual relation to space, this new body is touched by water, becoming matter, being capable of floating and feeling itself.

In a sense, I understand that these two films are connected through the problem of the utopian body, because they have a utopian body that becomes matter. So, by establishing connections with space, they would recognize themselves as bodies, assuming its materiality. They are like an archetype of feminine construction, and so are many women who are also trying to reach these processes of construction and deconstruction of their place in society. Leaving a non-place, we could habit a non-body, and then become a body living its own identity.

Females' bodies matters

Cake d'Amour (Fig. 5) was released in 2017 and it is 3 minutes in duration. It was created by a multidisciplinary project called Dollhouse. It was a collaborative effort between the choreographer Manon Oligny (Canada), the theater group Bye Bye Princesse and Kika Nicolela. This film has a feminist conception and presents a strong critique of the feminine social and cultural role. In it, a woman sings a song that describes the step-by-step of a love cake that she is making for her beloved and while she does that, she is throwing the ingredients on her own body. The performer sings with her sweet and gentle voice and at the same time, she makes corporal movements that show that she is uncomfortable about her condition. The song is from the French cult movie *Peau d'Âne* by Jacques Demy.

In the film, she has a vintage look, braided hair and a dress with frills. She is white, blond, has blue eyes and a sweet smile on her face. She perfectly embodies the stereotype of a good housewife, within the expected pattern of a beautiful and feminine body. It is possible that the spectator will be under the impression that she is a resigned woman, who accepted the role that was imposed upon her.

However, after the initial 30 seconds, the film breaks our expectations in scenes like the one where the performer demonstrates her annoyance with a gesture that simulates her own strangulation. From the point of view of feminist philosophy, this scene well illustrates Butler's (2015) critique of the need to discipline the body in socio-cultural standards. Therefore, it can be considered a body for discipline, as I have already mentioned in the analyses of *Crossing*. For that matter, *Cake d'Amour* would present a paradox between the notion of acceptance of rules and the construction of individuality.

This process of acceptance of the feminine role is extremely violent. It can lead to sanctions, social exclusion or even death for those who do not follow the rules. The outsider's body is marginal: it walks in places that are at the margin of everything that is standard.

Fig. 5: Screenshot of *Cake d'Amour* (2017), with actress and performer Marie-Pier Labrecque

The essential question of feminism is about the possibility of choice (real choice of a free woman: that is to say a woman living at a free society non-patriarchy, non-liberal, non-capitalist, etc.) and the understanding of women's plurality of types, bodies and behaviors. The problem is the standardization of feminine identity, such as presumed heterosexuality, the invisibility of black women or even the choice of profession. Thus, Kika Nicolela would have created a game that breaks paradigms by building discourses that speaks outside the common place, creating a subversive body.

This white and heterosexual female body that sings and performs shocks us because it brings the image of someone throwing food products onto their own body. Therefore, we can say that the woman is making a cake on herself. This absurd and violent situation can be understood as a metaphor of construction of femininity. This woman does not throw flour on her body for nothing: she is preparing herself to give her body as a gift to others. It can be understood as a process of reification of the female body. However, it is not distant from the process that women ordinarily experience in life. This violent process of discipline would be specially evidenced by the contrasts created by the choreography. For example, when the performer breaks four eggs on her chest and throws the sugar on her body while moving happily.

In these scenes, I believe she is not a body who possesses its own individuality, feelings, and wills. So, she is preparing herself to serve another body. In this regard, her construction of femininity was built by care for others and her existence would be resigned to satisfy a male body. It brings us back to the iconic phrase of the philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1976) in the book *The Second Sex*: "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman". About this theme, Butler (2015b, p.193) observes the existence of

a vast field of meanings that are part of the feminine and masculine world. A girl, when born, is marked as a woman and learns how to behave. While male bodies are trained from infancy to become more active beings and are at the top of the socio-cultural hierarchy. Women learn acceptance and prepare their bodies to serve another.

Other significant point of reflection in this film is it has a woman-blonde-hegemonic body. For Hagan (2018), there is still a lack of diversity in the screendance festivals programs and submissions. Consequently, it easier to find a white and heterosexual body in these films than some blacks, LBGT+s, indigenous… bodies. However, in *Cake d'amour* despite this blond body, Kika is proposing a critical game between *Cake d'Amour* and the French movie *Peau d'Anê* in English *Donkey Skin*, and for that, she is doing a critical of the place of woman in a oppressive, racist, sexist, LGBT+ normative, colonial society. So, in this movie, a king is trying to marry his daughter, but she escapes from the incestuous marriage and falls in love with a prince of another kingdom. The song *cake d'amour* is sung by her while preparing a cake for her beloved.

Thus, this body in Kika's film represents a criticism of the oppression of woman and also the white, blond and heterosexual beauty pattern. For me, Cake d'Amour presents, in its 3 minutes, deep reflections on the role of women in our society, using metaphors to deconstruct the place of women, based on the radical idea that women are bodies that matter.

Conclusions

Crossing, Windmaker, Entre-Temps and *Cake d'amour* by the Brazilian artist, filmmaker and independent-curator Kika Nicolela, present the female body from different perspectives. Showing us directions to how art can contribute to the deconstruction of gender roles. In *Crossing* we have a female body that resists being disciplined to be accepted by society.

This body transcends the common place that is expected. It abdicates the sensation of invisibility in order to connect to the idea of total visibility. Consequently, it could result in the marginalization of itself. However, in *Windmaker* and *Entre-Temps*, Kika Nicolela questions the existence of a body in a Foucaultian sense of body-utopia. She presents paths in which this body, isolated and, in one of the cases, literally isolated, can recognize itself as a body, and construct itself not only as a utopia but also as a body completely connected.

Finally, in *Cake d'Amour*, we have the culmination of this female body trajectory. In this film, a body moves into a symbolic field, bringing the performativity of the feminine condition. And, in my opinion, it shows the question about the metaphorical death of women who are imprisoned and resigned in their own "feminine identity" to serve male figures. These four films by Kika Nicolela present different dimensions of female bodies in their journey of liberation and freedom; thus rendering the bodies resistant and subversive.

As far as I am concerned, the films of Kika Nicolela bring the archetypal woman through a process of liberation from social rules that imprison: so doing by representing a construction of what it is to be a woman, and those different stages she passes through. Therefore, I understand that it makes a journey that goes from this disciplinary body, through the utopian body, to try to find a free body. I see an evolution in this process, but not in the linear sense, rather as movements and ideas that agree and

dialogue with new concepts, as if it were adding new elements that are increasingly present in our society, and bringing up the feminine claims, while it retains the possibility of using art to promote social reflection and transformation.

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Crónica imposible. Hacia la construcción de una historia de la Videodanza Argentina

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Resumen

Intentamos asumir la tarea de dar cuenta en un marco de vaivenes y entramados dialécticos de veinticuatro años de videodanza argentina De este modo y a partir del repaso de sus momentos de gestación, los criterios de decisión y encuentros definitorios en las políticas de producción del Festival Internacional VideoDanzaBA (Argentina) y la recordación y análisis de las premiaciones que hicieron hito en esta suerte de historia imposible y sin embargo tan real que ya lleva viva casi un cuarto de siglo.

Biografía

Silvina Szperling

Formada en danza contemporánea, incursionó en la videodanza en 1993, género del cual es pionera en Argentina. Varios de sus cortometrajes fueron premiados: "Temblor" (Mejor Edición de la Secretaría de Cultura de la Nación) y "Chámame" (premios La mujer y el cine, La noche del corto; IMZ/Cinedans, Amsterdam). Fundó y dirige el Festival Internacional VideoDanzaBA, el cual es miembro fundador de RAFMA (Red Argentina de Festivales y Muestras Audiovisuales) y REDIV (Red Iberoamericana de Videodanza).Su primer largometraje documental, Reflejo Narcisa *se estrenó en BAFICI 2015, con estreno comercial en MALBA en 2016. La película recorrió los festivales de La Habana (Cuba), Mostra do Filme Livre (Brasil, 4 ciudades), Piriápolis de película (Uruguay), Crear en Libertad (Paraguay) y Rosario, San Martín de los Andes y Santiago del Estero (Argentina), así como proyecciones en CalArts Institute (USA), ICPN (Perú), EICTV (Cuba).* Reflejo Narcisa *ganó la Mención especial del Jurado en FEM CINE (Chile).*

Silvina dicta clases de videodanza en la maestría de Cine Alternativo de EICTV (Escuela Internacional de Cine y TV, San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba), así como en múltiples entornos artísticos y educativos de la Argentina, América y Europa. Es titular de la cátedra de Crítica de Danza en la UNA (Universidad Nacional de las Artes), donde dirige el Proyecto de investigación "Danza-tec: escrituras e inscripciones del cuerpo tecnológico en múltiples soportes y escenas". Szperling fue crítica de danza de los diarios Página/12 *(Argentina) y* La Opinión *(LA, EEUU), así como las revistas* Balletin Dance, Funámbulos *(Argentina) y* Dance Magazine *EEUU).*

Susana Temperley

Es especialista en Crítica y Difusión de las Artes (UNA) y en Análisis de la Producción Coreográfica (UNLP). Desde hace más de una década, se encuentra abocada al estudio de la relación entre danza y tecnología y sus problemáticas en torno a los lenguajes del arte contemporáneo. Es co-compiladora del libro Terpsícore en ceros y unos, ensayos de Videodanza, *Ed. Guadalquivir, 2010 y autora del libro* Videodanza. Complejidad y Periferia. Hacia una plataforma de análisis de la danza en interacción con la tecnología, *Ed. REGC, 2017. Dirige la revista digital* Loïe. Revista de danza, performance y nuevos medios *(www.loie.com.ar)*

Introducción: de continuidades y discontinuidades (o de las matemáticas no euclidianas)

En términos de "evolución" o crónica del Festival Internacional VideoDanzaBA, debemos aclarar que el mismo nació en 1995 en el seno del Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas de la Universidad Nacional de Buenos Aires.

El Rojas era por aquellos años el punto de reunión y bautismo de gran parte de las vanguardias escénicas de la capital argentina, destacándose por su apertura a la experimentación, la cruza de lenguajes y la bohemia, no solo porteña sino también internacional. Centro de estudios informales, así como de producción artística, el Rojas había acogido al grupo de Danza-Teatro de la UBA dirigido por Adriana Barenstein, al festival de Video-Arte Euro-Americano de la mano de Jorge La Ferla y a una miríada de creadores en todas las artes. En el aspecto educativo, se caracterizaba por concentrar a los profesores más innovadores y atrevidos de la ciudad. Es decir, si querías tomar una clase de artes buena, bonita y barata ibas al Rojas y tenías satisfacción garantizada.

La danza no había llegado a la universidad: la Universidad Nacional de las Artes simplemente no existía. Tampoco la oficina gubernamental Prodanza, con sus subsidios a la creación. Ni internet. Ni los medios digitales. Esa rudimentaria condición de *low-tech*, de *flâneur*, sumada a la aceptada escasez de recursos económicos para el arte y particularmente para la danza, permitieron o –mejor dicho- cimentaron que la irrupción de un nuevo formato artístico se transformara en la niña bonita de la mítica avenida Corrientes, la que nunca dormía.

Fig. 1: Douglas Rosenberg dictando su clase de videodanza en la ciudad de Rosario, Argentina (1995)

Fig. 2: Momentos de la entrega de premios en 1998, con Núria Font, Silvina Szperling y colegas

Ese caldo de cultivo impulsó que una modesta muestra de taller (el Primer Taller de Videodanza para Coreógrafos que dictara Jorge Coscia en 1993) conformada por 4 -sí, cuatro- breves videos fuera un éxito de taquilla y envalentonara a las 4 alumnas/artistas que habían logrado convertir un ejercicio en obra -Melanie Alfie, Paula de Luque, Margarita Bali y Silvina Szperling- a asumir este incidente en su carrera artística como una nueva forma de arte. La videodanza era algo: un género, un lenguaje, algo que generaba definitivamente una expectativa y una expectación mayor que los espectáculos coreográficos, los cuales además requerían esfuerzos sobrehumanos.

Fig. 3: Miembros de la edición de 1999 con Rodrigo Alonso, Gabriela Golder, Silvina Cafici, Graciela Taquini, Silvina Szperling (izda.) y Silvina Cafici, Rodrigo Alonso, Claudio Caldini y Sara Fried (dcha.)

De ese modo, y sobre las 3 patas de su mantra -Difusión, Formación, Reflexión- nació un festival con 1 (un) invitado internacional, algunos artistas participantes y bastante público. Y ahí nomás, el entonces reciente licenciado en Artes Rodrigo Alonso (y que ha contribuido a la teorización de la videodanza, Alonso 2010), introducido a Silvina Szperling por la Grande Dame del VideoArte Argentino Graciela Taquini, aportó su sabiduría, criterios y habilidad para editar "tortas" (compilados) con la cassettera

VHS en su hogar, mediante la exclusiva herramienta de la pausa. Títulos honoríficos: Directora General Szperling y Coordinador General Alonso. Staff: nadie más.

Todo muy romántico, y por cierto muy entusiasta, incluyendo los cuatro pisos por escalera hacia las oficinas de producción. Y la convocatoria e imán de la videodanza como novedad hicieron que, quizás en un afán de institucionalización, el dúo mencionado y allegados fogueara la instrumentación de **premios**.

Y aquí apareció la idea de un **jurado de notables**, cuyos miembros, siempre con el faro de la hibridez de lenguajes, debían incluir representantes del mundo de la danza, del audiovisual y de la videodanza como lenguaje.

En los primeros años (1995-1999) dichos jurados integraron en el plano nacional gente de la talla de Ana Kamien, Margarita Bali, Susana Tambutti, Oscar Araiz (por la danza), Graciela Taquini, Jorge Coscia, Andrés Di Tella, Fabio Guzmán (por el audiovisual). En el plano internacional, referentes de la videodanza como Douglas Rosenberg, Elliot Caplan y Núria Font (Fig. 1 y 2).

Las discusiones de jurado han sido experiencias enriquecedoras y divertidas, de gran aprendizaje en términos de análisis, el cual luego aportaría a desarrollar tanto criterios curatoriales como métodos educativos. Memorable, particularmente, es la discusión del '99 (Figura 3) entre Margarita Bali, Graciela Taquini y Elliot Caplan (videasta residente de Merce Cunningham). Este describió toda una escena de visualización en la cual pudo predecir la imagen siguiente en el desarrollo de una obra. Quedó claro que la previsibilidad en arte era algo peyorativo.

El lustro aludido se vio nutrido por un constante incremento en la participación de artistas de todas las edades, en un porcentaje superlativo provenientes del mundo de la danza contemporánea, sumando algunos del tango y folclore. Escasa era sin embargo la implicancia como creadores de videoartistas y menos aun cineastas, división que por ese entonces realmente marcaba una divisoria de aguas.

Fig. 4: Participantes de la edición de 2001

Aproximándose al 2000/2001 (Figura 4), crisis económico-política en ciernes y demás, el festival se vio obligado a enfrentar su primer corte, seguido de una elipsis narrativa. Dicha suspensión se prolongó hasta el 2005 y fundó una nueva etapa, poniendo a prueba la flexibilidad, capacidad de adaptación y, en definitiva resiliencia del festival.

Con un panorama cultural totalmente diferente, particularmente un desarrollo notable del cine argentino (incluyendo literalmente miles de estudiantes de cine) y de apoyos económicos a la danza en la ciudad de Buenos Aires, en un mundo donde la digitalización de los soportes y las comunicaciones instantáneas (aunque aun no interactivas) ya no asombraban a nadie, el Rojas volvió a acoger al festival en versión *reloaded*.

Nuevas generaciones de tesistas universitarios de danza y de audiovisual se necesitaban mutuamente, y aprendieron a colaborar arriesgándose, sin saber de los viejos temores a comparar el valor de los distintos lenguajes (créase o no). Ese clima de intrépido espíritu colaborativo fomentó la idea de que las premiaciones propendían un halo competitivo no muy adecuado a los nuevos tiempos. La búsqueda de legitimación no estaba centrada en el dictamen de un jurado. Quizás la legitimación ya no era un tema.

Al mismo tiempo, el creciente borramiento de los bordes entre las otrora llamadas "disciplinas artísticas" ponía en duda criterios de calificación y comparación entre las obras "premiables" y, por ende, proponía desafíos interesantes pero muy difíciles de resolver con las anteriores varas. La calidad técnica era cada vez menos disímil, dada la nueva accesibilidad tanto de equipamientos como de conocimientos en el uso de herramientas digitales.

Sin embargo, la enorme cantidad de obras que llegaban al festival (todavía en DVD por correo postal) hacía indispensable algún tipo de tamiz para separar la paja del trigo. Una curaduría *avant la lettre*.

El tema se resolvió mediante la figura de Jurado de Preselección, un triunvirato que visualizaría todo el material y decidiría cuáles obras quedaban adentro y cuáles afuera. Aunque parezca sencillo y casi simplista, el mecanismo abrió muchísimas oportunidades y temas de debate interesantísimos, durante los cuales iban apareciendo categorías que ya no apuntaban a discriminar "lo bueno" de "lo malo", sino a agrupar obras afines y nominando pronto géneros dentro del lenguaje de la videodanza.

Así nacieron las secciones del festival. Programas de cortometrajes que en los primeros años se agrupaban bajo el dudoso paraguas de la procedencia geográfica ("Videodanza de España" o "Videodanza del Reino Unido") pasaron a ser llamados "Videoperformance" o "Escena" o "Tiempo real", o los ya clásicos "Urbana" o "Natura".

Es decir, los cuerpos de los jurados de preselección sucesivos se fueron transformando en una escuela de curaduría que además se sincronizaba con una nueva red de festivales: El Foro Latinoamericano de Videodanza. En las reuniones del FLV (Buenos Aires, 2007; Rio de Janeiro, 2008; Fortaleza, 2009; Puebla, 2011) surgía cada vez con mayor fuerza el clamor por discutir asuntos curatoriales.

¿A qué organizador de festival de videodanza le importaba hablar de asuntos financieros, o de circulación de obras, si podía dedicar tiempo a discutir con colegas de una decena de países latinoamericanos sobre **curaduría**?

Participantes de aquellos Jurados de Preselección: Diego Trerotola, Daniel Böhm, Claudia Sánchez Lobo y por supuesto el padrino: Rodrigo Alonso.

Junto con la mencionada evolución colaborativa, tanto en términos artísticos como de coproducción, apoyada por el afianzamiento de las redes de gestión regionales, el festival adoptó en 2011 una nueva frecuencia bienal. Un andar más pausado, que permite tomar aire entre edición y edición. Reflexionar, recapitular, recalcular. Muy importantes para sostener la resiliencia aludida.

Hete aquí que entre las redes de gestión, el festival VideoDanzaBA es miembro fundador de RAFMA (Red Argentina de festivales y Muestras Audiovisuales). Como tal, además de cuestionar y/o alentar ciertas políticas públicas se produce un efecto "polinizador" entre los colegas. Y aparentemente todos los festivales de cine tienen una (o varias) secciones competitivas. Tienen varios cuerpos de jurado. Ofrecen unos laureles que, no por simbólicos, son poco apreciados por los realizadores en todo el mundo.

De manera que, poco a poco, con un Premio del Público al comienzo, luego con el Premio RAFMA, más el premio ADF (Asociación de Directores de Fotografía), arribamos a la conclusión de que las secciones competitivas (u "Oficiales" como las llaman los festivales de cine) son esenciales para la inclusión de nuestro festival en dicho universo. Y para la inclusión de nuestros artistas en el universo audiovisual internacional.

Artistas a los cuales hemos apoyado además con una enorme oferta de seminarios, talleres, cursos, residencias, simposios, publicaciones y el LAB VD (Laboratorio de Desarrollo de Proyectos). El LAB, además de tutorías, otorga sus propios Premios Estímulo en reconocidas casas de postproducción argentinas.

Y en esta era 100% (o 95%) digital y *online*, hay plataformas que nos proveen hasta criterios de calificación para la ponderación de obras. Criterios a los cuales -al menos en el caso de www.FilmFreeway.com - podemos sumar nuevos parámetros. Por ejemplo: "Creación coreográfica" o "Geopolítica".

De este modo, en la edición 2017 hemos contado con un nutrido grupo de jurados, muchos miembros de la nueva "evolución" de nuestra red regional: REDIV (Red Iberoamericana de Videodanza).

Leonel Brum (Brasil), Soraya Vargas y Dixon Quitián (Colombia), Sofía Orihuela (Bolivia) se sumaron a los argentinos Paulo Pécora, Daniel Böhm, Claudia Sánchez Lobo, Alejandra Ceriani y Gabily Anadón, conformando 3 cuerpos para decidir los premios de las 3 categorías competitivas: Argentina, Internacional y Videodanza-Minuto.

Por las discontinuidades aludidas, en 2019 el Festival Internacional VideoDanzaBA festeja 24 años de existencia, pero "solo" celebraremos nuestra edición n° 17.

¿Y qué sucedió entonces con el histórico Jurado de Preselección? En deliberación del *staff* completo del Festival Internacional VideoDanzaBA fue votado democráticamente el criterio de que **todo el equipo** participa y opina en dicha preselección. Las discusiones con las nuevas generaciones ya son materia de otro artículo.

Estéticas fundacionales. El paisaje como desafío en la videodanza argentina de los 90.

En 1970, Trisha Brown desafiaba la gravedad de una manera nunca antes vista. En Wooster Street, en ese entonces de moda, estrenó una obra catalogada por la prensa como arte de guerrilla: *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* situando a uno de sus bailarines en lo alto del edificio, en ángulo con el muro, perfectamente perpendicular al suelo. El efecto logrado consistió en que el *performer*, sostenido por una serie de cuerdas, parecía dar un extraño paseo hacia abajo. La simplicidad del gesto contribuyó a cambiar la definición de la danza a escala mundial.

Casi treinta años más tarde, la videodanza argentina incursiona en el lenguaje ya constituido de la danza aérea y la relación cámara-cuerpo se configura en función de las coreografías trazadas por la pionera Brenda Angiel en *La Pared* (1997).

En *La Pared*, la cámara asume el desafío de sumarse al diálogo ya formado entre el cuerpo y el aire, el cuerpo en movimiento desafiado por la gravedad suponen para la cámara un modo diferente de acercamiento, un cambio de perspectiva. La dinámica de registro y del punto de vista desplegado en un espacio en que, anteriormente, el cuerpo se limitaba a ser el objetivo de la cámara (en la toma aérea convencional) implica aquí, con el advenimiento de la danza aérea, una transmutación que da por resultado un territorio de diálogo entre la cámara y el cuerpo, una zona de entrelazamientos que pauta sus propias leyes.

La enorme capacidad del medio audiovisual para retratar y describir paisajes y, a la vez, el desafío que implica el espacio para el cuerpo y para el "ojo" también están presentes en *Arena* (Figura 5), de Margarita Bali (1998).

Fig. 5: Fotograma de *Arena* (8'30'', Argentina, 1998) Segundo premio 1998 Dirección: Margarita Bali

Arena se caracteriza por tener como escenario los médanos de una playa pero al mismo tiempo, se presenta como un no lugar. La ausencia de puntos de referencia y de objetos artificiales y la invisibilidad de una topografía aprehensible dejan lugar al protagonismo de los elementos naturales que, con sus cambios y dinámicas, dan al paisaje características de *partenaire* más que de escenario.

El espacio de *Arena* se configura como un territorio dado a ver desde distintas modalidades de observación. En algunas ocasiones, el ojo espectatorial se ve obligado a remedar la coherencia de este territorio basándose en fragmentos inconexos y reforzados como tales por la música asonante de un piano en *off*. De modo tal, que el desafío a la mirada se formula como el de la resolución de una paradoja (muy fiel, por otra parte, al estilo de autor que continuará desarrollando Bali).

En este marco, un grupo de *performers* se desenvuelve optando por esta relación tripartita, cuerpo-cámara-paisaje. El cuerpo se presenta oscilando entre dos connotaciones, por una parte se figura un cuerpo en interacción con su entorno y supeditado a este, desafiado por este (bajo las leyes de la gravedad, la resistencia de las pendientes de arena o del andar en contra del viento). Por otra parte, asume el rol de dibujar sobre el paisaje como un lápiz sobre un lienzo. Así, es por momentos cuerpo performático y por otro, herramienta de intervención de ese espacio abstracto y magnético.

Un paisaje diferente es el de *El Territorio* (Figura 6), videodanza de Paula de Luque y Jorge Bernard (1996). Consiste en el interior de un baño donde se exploran las posibilidades del cuerpo y de la cámara que se habilitan o inhiben de acuerdo con las dimensiones reducidas del espacio. La austeridad del ambiente de superficies sólidas y lisas en contrapunto con el canto lírico (banda sonora en *off*), hablan de un tipo diferente de exploración que implica un desafío para el cuerpo y la cámara pero en una dirección diferente a la de los espacios abiertos.

Fig. 6: Fotograma de *El Territorio* (8'50'', Argentina, 1996) Segundo premio 1996 Dirección general y coreografía: Paula de Luque

Videodanza argentina, veinte años ¿después?

De acuerdo con Douglas Rosenberg (2012), en la danza, los cuerpos efectivizan un tipo particular de lógica, sea esta coreográfica, kinestésica o de otra índole. Incluso considerando las posibilidades de los cuerpos virtuosos y la intervención de metodologías de entrenamiento contemporáneas que maximizan su rendimiento, los cuerpos humanos se desempeñan en tiempo real y en un espacio concreto y están supeditados a sus límites físicos. Cuando los cuerpos se mueven en formas que están más allá de tales límites absolutos, los huesos se rompen, los músculos se desgarran y, en el límite, el caos se apropia del cuerpo y tiende a su aniquilación "Las imágenes mediadas de cuerpos en movimiento están sujetas a un tipo diferente de lógica, una no subsumida al terror del dolor corpóreo. En este universo es factible desgarrar, desalinear, reordenar y unir fragmentos de movimiento o partes del cuerpo que no fluyen lógicamente en ellos y en su disposición natural (no mediada)" (2012, pp. 53-54).

Para explicar el efecto del cuerpo, producto de la relación entre su naturaleza orgánica y las tecnologías audiovisuales, el investigador delinea el concepto de "corporeización" y señala cómo la videodanza cuestiona la forma en que las ideas coreográficas en la práctica son históricamente y típicamente corporeizadas. La ubicación del componente coreográfico dentro del espacio tecnológico de los medios ofrece un nuevo espectro de posibilidades a la danza. Sin embargo, para recorporeizar el cuerpo, primero debe ser descorporeizado, es decir, que las ideas predefinidas sobre el cuerpo también deben ser puestas en cuestión y deconstruidas.

En *Náusea* (2015, Figura 7) se presenta una posibilidad de diálogo entre el lenguaje de la arquitectura, la pintura muralista y el cuerpo en una propuesta de "recorporeización".

Fig. 7: Fotograma de *Náusea* (4'07'', Argentina, 2013) Premio RAFMA 2015 (Red Argentina de Festivales y Muestras Audiovisuales) Dirección: Daniela Medina Silva, Ignacio Violini

No hay coreografía de danza propiamente dicha sino movimientos definidos que hacen que el cuerpo se amolde a las superficies – por ejemplo, al bajar la escalera la *performer* se arrastra de espaldas y ayudada por sus brazos y piernas, haciendo que su cuerpo tome la forma que los escalones le permiten, o, en otra instancia, imita lo representado en el mural (una cascada) con el arqueo del cuerpo y un leve gesto ondulante de los brazos. A esto se agrega la repetición de motivos visuales y la incorporación de espejos que generan un efecto de fusión geométrica envolvente en la que el cuerpo resulta, en sí mismo, superficie y forma. El sonido sintético evidencia su artificialidad y se enlaza con secuencias de ecos provocado por materialidades que podrían o no ser las que vemos.

Esta elección estética también es observable en *Promenade* (2015). Aquí, las corporalidades de cinco mujeres recorren la casa Curuchet destacando sus volúmenes: el movimiento mínimo de una mano enfatiza la textura de una superficie, el rostro contra un cristal esmerilado se disloca, se disuelve en un entramado amorfo de carne y vidrio. La gramática del detalle es lo que prima: la rugosidad de la planta de un pie, la trama de los dedos de una mano, siempre en contacto y tomando la forma de una superficie lisa (yeso, madera, vidrio). Cuerpos deconstruidos y moldeados, que finalmente, construyen una trama narrativa donde vuelven a configurarse pero ahora como personajes fantásticos "habitantes de la casa" dinamizados por un sonido sintético y al mismo tiempo etéreo y distante. Se trata, en definitiva, de una casa engañosa para el visitante, para su mirada, pues según sea su posición se le aparece como un espacio arquitectónico o asume un aspecto bidimensional, por momentos poblado y, por momentos, vacío.

Fig. 8: *Lado A* (6´36´´, Argentina, 2017) Premio RAFMA 2017 (Red Argentina de Festivales y Muestras Audiovisuales) Dirección: Alejandrina Groisman

Un caso diferente es el de *Lado A* (2017, Figura 8), un paisaje despojado, algo árido. A lo lejos, se dibuja una serie de siluetas montañosas que dan marco al escenario. La particularidad del escenario radica en que, en medio de ese terreno de una monotonía natural, se yergue una estructura en columnas de cemento, lo que alguna vez fue el proyecto de un gran edificio.

Entre las vigas de la enorme mole gris y al descubierto, se desarrolla un solo que fusiona elementos de danza contemporánea con *free style* en sintonía con un solo de batería. El dúo bailarina y baterista son personajes sin gesto que se comunican solo a través del movimiento del cuerpo y el sonido.

Sonidos disonantes alternan con otros rítmicos. El sonido parece rebotar contra el cemento, pero también escaparse por los espacios libres de la construcción. Los movimientos son limpios, geométricos, deconstruyen el cuerpo en una suerte de provocación cubista. La cámara acentúa las formas geométricas de la arquitectura y del cuerpo.

Como corolario de dos décadas de videodanza argentina vale dar cuenta de dos videodanzas – *En la huella del ancla* (2017, Figura 9) y Pellejo (2017, Figura 10) que en conjunto ponen en evidencia un síntoma de esta historia que entre tantas herencias aparece por lapsos, como detractora de la estética purista y en la historiografía propuesta por Sally Banes, evocan a la danza posmoderna de corte de impronta metafórica y sus elementos teatrales que la colocan en una relación cercana e incómoda con la (supuestamente, superada en ese momento) danza moderna histórica.

En la huella del ancla es una pieza de atmósfera teatral, que busca generar efecto de espectáculo. Nuevamente, el escenario natural es protagonista, en este caso las ruinas de un pueblo décadas después del paso de una inundación arrasadora. En este espacio desolado y fantasmagórico (debido al blanco de la sal que quedara cubriéndolo todo luego de la retirada del agua), los cuerpos vestidos de púrpura se hunden más que moverse, sin nunca llegar a fusionarse. El efecto teatral se refuerza con la inclusión de objetos de utilería y de texto recitado que guían la posición espectatorial. Los gestos y la repetición de movimientos (vaivén del cuerpo, dedos que se mueven en el aire como frente a una máquina de escribir inexistente) se mezclan con un *collage* de locuciones originales, el *off*, sobre aconteceres relacionados con los desplazamientos humanos, pasajes de la constitución argentina que subrayan a esta tierra como un Estado de fronteras abiertas. Todo ello junto a sonidos sintéticos e instrumentales distorsionados, que en continuo, dan un efecto de mantra, de vaivén que se adecúa y refuerza los movimientos del cuerpo performático.

Pellejo inicia con la máxima "No habrá paz para aquellos que impidan que las pieles mueran con quienes nacen". Mediante recursos teatrales (gestualidad, vestuarios y objetos) y efectos digitales la pieza recrea situaciones humanas frecuentadas por el cine de Hollywood, a modo de crítica social, tales como la pareja ensimismada frente al televisor, la cena familiar carente de diálogo, etc. También otros motivos como la fogata que reúne a las brujas en un ritual y la cita al neo-género Zombie.

Estas piezas no evaden los clichés, es decir esos fragmentos ficcionales o pseudo-factuales frecuentados por los medios de masas sino que, valiéndose de estos, desarmándolos y rehilvanándolos desde una base persuasiva y guiada por el móvil de lo ético dan por resultado que ambas piezas sean obras para "el gran público".

Fig. 9: Fotograma de *En la Huella del Ancla* (6'46'', Argentina, 2017) Mención del Jurado en la Competencia argentina de videodanza. Dirección audiovisual: Leandro Navall

Fig. 10: Fotograma de *Pellejo* (8:'45'´, Argentina, 2017) Primer Premio en Competencia argentina de videodanza y Premio del Público Guión y dirección: Federico M. Panizza

Así, desde una mirada especulativa, la incomodidad entre la estética integracionista de estas piezas, cargadas de recursos visuales y efectos espectaculares, es un malestar –en el sentido de hacerse visibles como marcas de un supuesto estado de retroceso del arte, de hacer tambalear lo logrado. Pero así como la metaforicidad y teatralidad reaparecen de forma recurrente en la danza y en el arte en general provocando quiebres y proponiendo nuevos interrogantes, también aquí, detrás de *En la Huella del Ancla* y de *Pellejo*, es posible adivinar esa voluntad que reclama la reconciliación del arte y la vida.

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Arena (8:30, Argentina, 1998) Segundo premio 1998 Dirección: Margarita Bali. Coreografía e interpretación: Ana Garat, Gerardo Litvak, Edgardo Mercado Gabriela Prado, Juan Pablo Sierra, Germán Svetaz Música: Marcelo Moguievsky

El Territorio (8:50, Argentina, 1996) Segundo premio 1996 Dirección general y coreografía: Paula de Luque Realización: Paula de Luque, Jorge Bernard Interpretación. Gabriela Prado, Raúl Valdéz

Nausea (4:07, Argentina, 2013) Premio RAFMA 2015 (Red Argentina de Festivales y Muestras Audiovisuales) Dirección: Daniela Medina Silva, Ignacio Violini Coreografía e interpretación: Laura Vago

Promenade (10:00, Argentina, 2015) Premio del público Guión y dirección: Cirila Luz Ferrón Dirección coreográfica: Florencia Olivieri Coreografía e interpretación: Julia Aprea, María Bevilacqua, Paula Dreyer, Florencia Olivieri, Mariana Provenzano, Carola Ruiz, Mariana Sáez. Música: Ramiro Mansilla Pons

Lado A (6:36, Argentina, 2017) Premio RAFMA 2017 (Red Argentina de Festivales y Muestras Audiovisuales) Dirección: Alejandrina Groisman Coreografía: Maria Sol Gorosterrazú Música: Gabriel Oros. Idea original e interpretación: Maria Sol Gorosterrazú y Gabriel Oros.

En la Huella del Ancla (6:46, Argentina, 2017) Mención del Jurado en la Competencia argentina de videodanza. Dirección audiovisual: Leandro Navall Dirección escénica: Mercedes Chanquia Aguirre, Interpretación: Grupo Danzamble (Universidad Nacional de Villa María).

Pellejo (8:45, Argentina, 2017) Primer Premio en Competencia argentina de videodanza y Premio del Público Guión y dirección: Federico M. Panizza Interpretación en danza: Soledad Belén, Renee Turkenich, Alejandra Ceriani, Julieta Ranno, Virna Furnaro. Música: Ramiro Mansilla Pons.

Hablarle al cuarto muro: el poder de la palabra en la videodanza de Ingrid Nachstern

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Resumen

A lo largo de su obra, Ingrid Nachstern convoca la palabra como una materia privilegiada de la videodanza. El habla a cámara (con o sin mirada involucrada) es una constante de sus piezas y, sin embargo, el peso de la lengua no acapara el sentido de la obra. Los textos convocan significados, evocan situaciones, géneros discursivos y escenas de la vida cotidiana. Mediante una serie de recursos, se apartan de una función ordenadora y explicativa de lo que ocurre en escena. Más cerca de la poesía contemporánea que del texto dramático en un sentido instrumental, regulan el acceso al sentido y se resisten, de este modo, a ser un canal transparente para la comunicación. Este discurso hablado pone de manifiesto sus características materiales y logra funcionar en un plano equitativo respecto de los demás elementos de la obra de videodanza, sin dirigirlos ni guiar su sentido, sino construyendo el sentido junto a y en relación con ellos. El análisis de estos discursos desde el punto de vista de sus modos de vocalización, de las características de los textos y del modo en que funcionan en relación con el movimiento, la música y la coreografía de la cámara en el marco de cada obra permite delinear un tipo de funcionamiento que da cuenta de la particularidad y de la evolución de la aún incipiente pero ya estilísticamente convocante obra de Nachstern.

Biografía

María José Rubin es docente-investigadora por la Universidad Nacional de las Artes y la Universidad de Buenos Aires. Integra la cátedra de Semiótica del área transdepartamental de Crítica de Artes (UNA). Participa del proyecto de investigación "Narratividad: Relaciones Arte y Mediatización", dirigido por Oscar Traversa (Crítica, UNA) y de un proyecto UBACyT relacionado con escritura y contextos de encierro (FFyL, UBA). Crítica y periodista especializada para medios online e impresos, entre ellos Revista Revol *y* Revista Ñ. *Integrante del Grupo de los Sábados, proyecto de investigación y escritura coordinado por Claudia Groesman, que actualmente se desarrolla en torno al eje de la improvisación en las prácticas de danza contemporánea a través del programa de residencias del área de danza del Centro Cultural de la Cooperación. Editora y traductora al inglés de* Videodanza, Complejidad y periferia, *de Susana Temperley. Escritora de textos curatoriales y grant writer para el Festival Internacional de Videodanza de Buenos Aires.*

Introducción

Las tres obras que integran la filmografía de Ingrid Nachstern pueden resultar incómodas. No del modo en que habitualmente consumimos incomodidad, como parte de un código compartido que deja traslucir las maneras establecidas de incomodar y los pequeños excesos que, sin abandonar la norma instituida, siguen generando el efecto deseado –pienso en películas de terror y *thrillers* que nos brindan una sensación de inquietud buscada, o en instalaciones de museo que nos dejan dudar un breve momento de la legalidad de tocarlas o interactuar con ellas durante la visita–. Las obras de esta artista son incómodas de un modo diferente, y entender cómo es que logran su noble cometido (así como enunciar humildemente el porqué de su nobleza) es el objeto de este artículo.

Pero antes, las presentaciones de rigor: Ingrid Nachstern es una realizadora de videodanza irlandesa con una extensa formación en danzas escénicas y una carrera en la realización fílmica iniciada posteriormente. Su obra para la pantalla, aunque incipiente, muestra intereses y recursos fuertemente definidos: inspirada en casos de violencia puntuales, su mirada se amplía para constituir una denuncia de alcance social en torno a problemáticas contemporáneas, con especial énfasis en cuestiones de género. Sin temor de romper el cuarto muro e interpelar con un registro confrontativo, evita sin embargo llegar al extremo de un efecto enunciativo *pour épater le bourgeois* que expulse al espectador e impida el vínculo con la obra (a los fines metodológicos, se entiende que el plano "enunciativo" corresponde al "efecto de sentido [...] por los cuales un texto se *construye* una situación comunicacional", en los términos de Steimberg [2013: 53, el subrayado pertenece al original]).
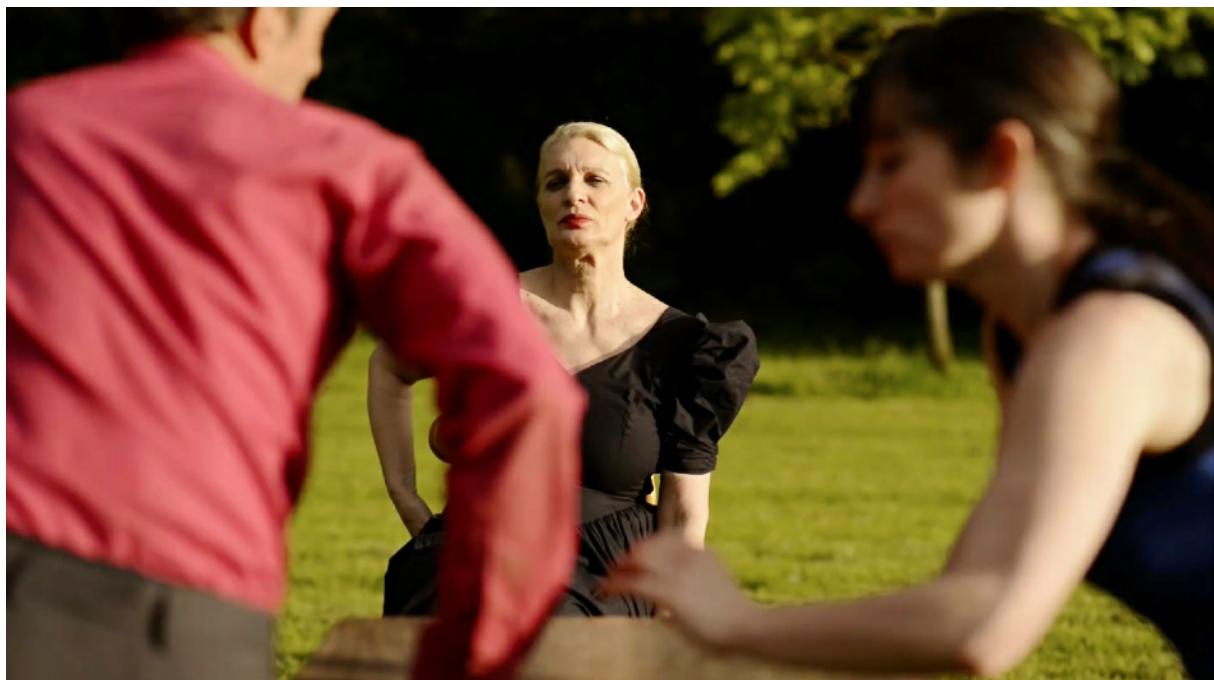
Fig. 1: Michael Cooney, Ingrid Nachstern y Lucia Kickham en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* (2014). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Hasta la actualidad, Nachstern ha estrenado tres obras junto a su compañía, Night Star Dance Company, todas con fotografía de Luca Truffarelli: las dos primeras, *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* (Modales en la mesa / Parar en el semáforo en rojo, 2014) y *Freedom-to go!* (¡Libertad para llevar! o, también, ¡Libertad para irse!, 2015), fueron en sus inicios una pieza de danza de 30 minutos; y *Shoe*

Horn/Office (Calzador/Oficina, 2018), el primero de sus films que nació, sin preámbulos, para la cámara. Las tres piezas se caracterizan por hacer del discurso verbal una parte constitutiva de su *materia significante* (Verón, 1987: 129), trabajando con las cualidades materiales de un habla que se vuelve capaz de hacer oír su denuncia a través de un lenguaje poético, el cual, lejos de literalizar sus palabras, les restituye toda su potencia política al preservar su especificidad artística.

La obra de Nachstern para la pantalla ha obtenido numerosos premios, incluido el Premio Reconocimiento a la Mejor Edición y el Premio Silver Screen (Nevada International Film Festival, 2015) por su primer film; dos premios IndieFEST (2016) y el Premio de la Audiencia (Brooklyn Film Festival, 2016) por su segunda pieza. Su tercer film, proyectado recientemente en el Brooklyn Film Festival (2018), ha obtenido reconocimiento en el IndieFEST de California, fue ganador de un Remi en el 51 Annual Worldfest-Houston International Film Festival en 2018 y recibjó el premio a Mejor Película Experimental de Los Angeles Movie Awards (2019).

La voz y su cuerpo: el ritmo y la figura humana. Primeras definiciones retóricas en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* (2014)

"¿Dónde está el equipaje?" es la pregunta que se oye en la primera escena de la primera obra de Ingrid Nachstern, *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights*, y será esta nuestra primera clave para aproximarnos a las particularidades de su trabajo. "¿Dónde está el equipaje?" se oye tal y como se lee aquí, en español, en el contexto de una pieza que, por lo demás (en su paratexto y en casi todo su texto verbal), se propone angloparlante. De hecho, pronuncia estas palabras una voz en *off*, angloparlante también, que más adelante se develará como la voz de una matriarca (Nachstern misma) que, desde la altura de una escalera cubierta de vegetación, donde parece ensalzar un luto silencioso y dignísimo (Fig. 2), descenderá para ocupar la cabecera de una mesa cuadrada (Fig. 1), en la que la verborragia y el movimiento se desatan.
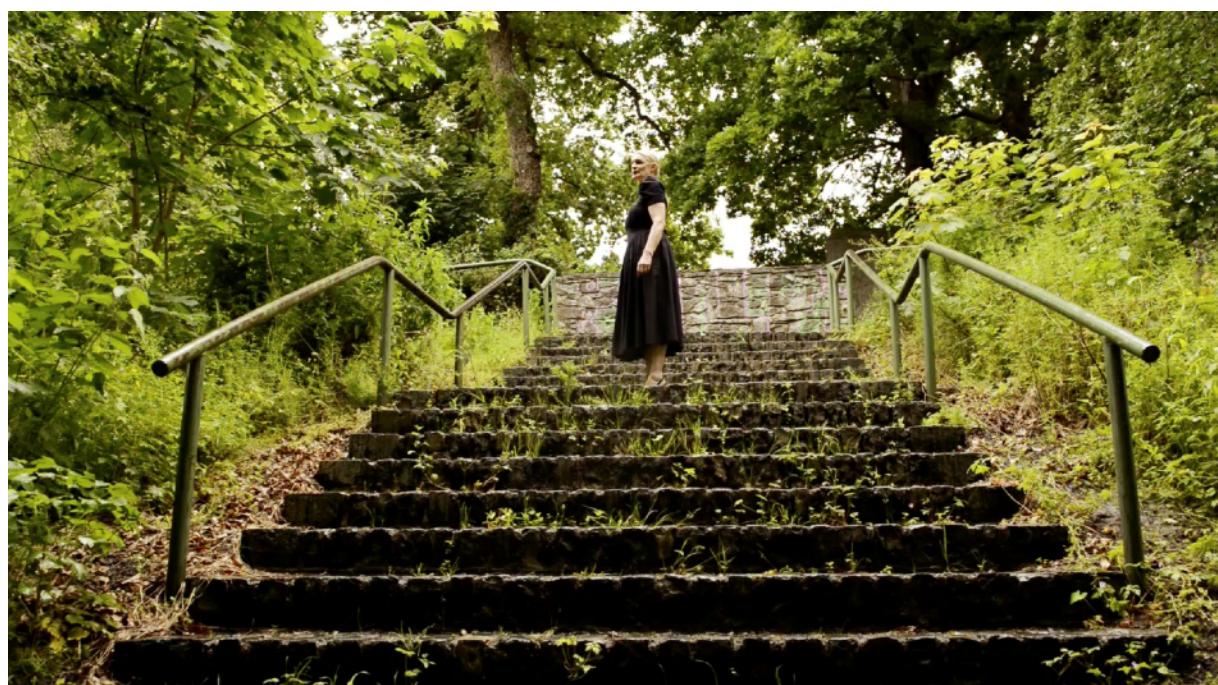

Fig. 2: Ingrid Nachstern en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* (2014). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

"¿Dónde está el equipaje?" repite ahora, mientras otros dos comensales recorren un arduo camino de tierra, pasto y pavimento arrastrando lo necesario para poner la mesa. El resto es el inglés de esta misma voz que encarna simultáneamente a una mujer indignada por el consumo energético del hogar ("*Why have the heater on 24/7?*", ¿Por qué la calefacción está encendida todo el día?), una feliz clienta de antidepresivos seguida del texto del prospecto que advierte maquínicamente sobre sus desmedidos efectos secundarios, y también remanidos lemas ecológicos ("*Look after the Earth, it's the only one you have*", Cuida la Tierra, es la única que tienes). Los discursos verbales, siempre por la voz de la matriarca, se enhebran entre sí mientras la pantalla muestra el itinerario hasta la mesa servida, donde ella ocupará su lugar. A la manera de separadores de la acción, otro idioma entra en escena: varias frases en alemán, pronunciadas en *off* y mostradas por escrito junto a figuras humanas silenciosas (Fig. 3), sentencian qué es y qué no es arte ("*Musik ist Kunst*", la música es arte, "*Tanz ist Kunst*", la danza es arte, "*Energie sparen ist keine Kunst*", ahorrar energía no es arte).

Así, en esta primera obra de Nachstern ya destaca el trabajo con las cualidades materiales del habla, que se vale de diversos recursos para dejar que tome espesor su propio cuerpo en tanto *materia significante* (Verón, 1987: 129) constitutiva de la obra y posible por su soporte video (aunque no necesario en el lenguaje de la videodanza), con sus matices rítmicos y sus alturas. Interesa por lo pronto señalar dos de estos recursos que tienen el efecto de destacar la materialidad de la voz: por un lado, el empleo de textos en lenguas extranjeras que, ante la (probable) incapacidad del espectador para comprender su sentido, funcionan como materias portadoras de cualidades sonoras que son puestas de relieve como las únicas investidas de sentido (ya que su sentido en tanto discursos que responden a las reglas de un código lingüístico [Saussure, 1945] resulta inaccesible). No son, sin embargo, meras sonoridades emitidas por humanos: sus cualidades materiales indican, al mismo tiempo, que porta un sentido lingüístico y que no podemos comprenderlo (cfr. Rubin, 2017). Por otra parte, el recurso de la voz en *off* es utilizado en dos sentidos: la voz en ausencia de la imagen del cuerpo que la emite (que se corresponde con su uso más habitual en toda suerte de géneros audiovisuales), o bien la voz en presencia de lo que puede identificarse como su fuente emisora, pero sin que esta figura humana muestre señales de utilizar su aparato fonador. Esta estrategia retórica se repite en *Shoe Horn/Office*, la tercera obra de la filmografía, pero con un matiz que construye una voz colectiva, tal como veremos más adelante (entendemos al plano retórico como aquel correspondiente a los "mecanismos de configuración de un texto que deviene en la 'combinatoria' de rasgos que permite diferenciarlo de otros", en palabras de Steimberg [2013: 52]).

Fig. 3: Ingrid Nachstern en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* (2014). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Se ha dicho que la voz de esta matriarca vestida de riguroso negro en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* es por momentos la de una mujer que refunfuña y profiere exclamaciones en relación con ciertos comportamientos abusivos de consumo doméstico (la energía, los comestibles), perdiendo el temperamento brevemente, hasta convertirse en médium de otro mensaje (los sedantes, sus efectos secundarios). En *Freedom-to go!*, esta tendencia se pronuncia: el tono sarcástico cobra protagonismo y el universo temático se particulariza de modo más claro, en voces que se corresponden con las figuras humanas que las emiten (se entiende por "temática" a la dimensión textual que atañe a las "acciones y situaciones según esquemas de representabilidad históricamente elaborados y relacionados previos al texto" [Segre, citado en Steimberg, 2013: 52]). De la primera obra solo se observa en esta segunda pieza un recurso: el de la mirada (y el habla) a cámara. Pero no debemos adelantarnos: nos resta aún explorar los temas que desarrolla esta filmografía y podremos hacerlo avanzando en el análisis de esta segunda pieza y su relación con el conjunto de la obra de Nachstern.

Poder, violencia y género, hacia la constitución de un universo temático en *Freedom to go!* (2015)

Así como la primera escena de *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights*, con su pregunta en español, nos sirvió de clave de lectura para aproximarnos a ciertos recursos retóricos del habla relevantes para la consideración de todo el film (y, como veremos, para toda la filmografía), también la primera escena de *Freedom to go!* nos dará una valiosa pista del camino que toma la producción de la artista, que tiene ya con su segunda pieza un punto de inflexión en términos temáticos. El film inicia con la voz cantante (incómodamente desentonada) de Lucia Kickham que, enfundada en un vestido rojo, tararea de pie los primeros compases del himno nacional de los Estados Unidos de América. Del consumo doméstico de medicamentos sin receta y el abuso de alimentos "*bite-sized*" pasamos a ubicarnos en un plano que, desde el inicio y sin reverencias, promete ampliar su comentario al ámbito político.

Fig. 4: Michael Cooney en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* (2014). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

La crítica a la cultura estadounidense se vuelve aquí más patente: si bien el acento americano característico ya estaba presente en *Table Manners/Stopping at Red Lights* como parte del discurso que remitía a escenas cotidianas, en esta segunda pieza se expande hacia problemáticas de gran escala y lo hace de un modo atrevido: "*Occupy Irak, occupy Wall Street*" (ocupar Irak, ocupar Wall Street) canta Michael Cooney, mientras Lucia Kickham ejecuta la grotesca ceremonia de comer una rosquilla y limpiarse los restos de glaseado con la mano para enseguida lamerla. Aquel tarareo desafinado y este canto sencillo y acompasado despliegan también una estrategia que la primera obra ya esbozaba: la retórica infantil, lúdica, que podía adivinarse en el movimiento y la gestualidad de Cooney y Kickham en contraste con la solemne figura de Nachstern (Fig. 4), aquí termina de establecerse con una función muy clara: abordar grandes temas, dolorosos para inmensas comunidades en todo el mundo, de un modo hasta tal punto irrespetuoso que solo pueda incomodar, a través de coreografías del cuerpo y (permítaseme) de la voz que sacan de quicio a los intérpretes y, tal vez, también un poco a los espectadores. Esta será la firma de autora de Nachstern y no hará más que acentuarse en su tercera obra. Pero, nuevamente, no nos adelantemos.

Freedom to go! continúa para mostrarnos una versión de Marilyn que dice "*I have a dream*" (yo tengo un sueño) con voz, justamente, ensoñadora, seductora, citando en clave en extremo irreverente el famosísimo fragmento del discurso que pronunció Martin Luther King, Jr. el 28 de agosto de 1963 durante la Marcha celebrada en Washington DC por los Derechos Civiles, de la que participaron posiblemente unas 300 mil personas, en su mayoría afrodescendientes, bajo el lema "empleo, justicia y paz". El discurso pronunciado por el líder del movimiento por los derechos de los afroestadounidenses en una marcha multitudinaria que posibilitó la aprobación de la Ley de los Derechos Civiles en 1964 y de la Ley del Derecho al Voto en 1965, las cuales por primera vez reivindicaban derechos para comunidades históricamente vulneradas, en los labios de una Marilyn que se acaricia una pierna y luego sigue citando "*free at last*" (por fin libres) mientras eleva en el aire

sus *jazz hands* (el alborozado movimiento de las manos característico en las obras de Broadway). Resulta innecesario abundar en comentarios sobre esta escena para reafirmar este punto.
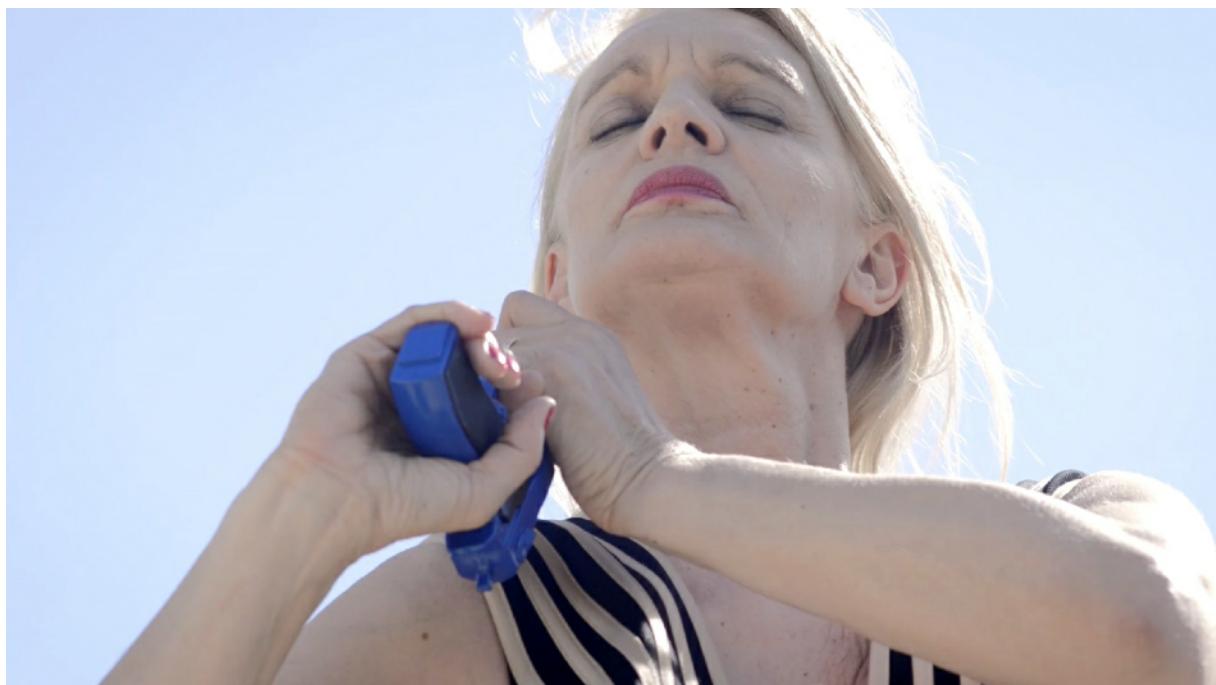
Fig. 5: Ingrid Nachstern en *Freedom to Go!* (2015). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Vale, sin embargo, destacar un elemento más: esta versión de Marilyn, que más adelante portará un arma de juguete (Fig. 5) mientras los demás intérpretes se baten a duelo apuntando con sus dedos índices, cierra la escena anterior diciendo "*Liberty. Equality. Celebrity*" (Libertad. Igualdad. Celebridad). Así, no solo introduce esta nueva crítica, dedicada al *star system* devenido institución socialmente prestigiada y al ensalzamiento de sus valores como fundantes de la trama social, sino que también marca un nuevo nivel de parodia en el plano de la disposición física de los intérpretes, que en adelante (en esta obra y, marcadamente, en la de 2018) seguirán encarnando gestualidades exageradas que abonan al efecto lúdico, el cual, en combinación con las temáticas abordadas, parecería habitar el corazón mismo de aquella incomodidad diferente por la que nos preguntábamos en el inicio del artículo.

La ampliación del universo temático vuelve a afirmarse pasada la mitad de este segundo film, cuando lo infantil, que había sido un rasgo fuertemente marcado en el plano retórico, se enuncia explícitamente en el texto verbal. "*Little girls, tiny girls, queens of the beauty pageant*" (Niñas pequeñas, niñas chiquitas, reinas del concurso de belleza). La voz es nuevamente de Lucia Kickham, quien primero se muestra silenciosa en aquel vestido rojo del inicio que ahora le impide caminar, pues incluye una cola de sirena (Fig. 6). Luego, vemos su boca en primer plano (un recurso ya presente en el film anterior, Fig. 10), recitando a velocidad un texto frenético con un efecto provocador por otra vía: no ya lúdica (o no exclusivamente, puesto que juega con las palabras para formar, por ejemplo, "*public*", público, uniendo "*pube*", pubis y "*lick*", lamer), sino evocativa de imágenes que, en su conjunto, se aproximan a un imaginario sexual ("*Orifices gaping! Watermelon--wider! Stuff them fuller!*", ¡Orificios que se ensanchan! La sandía, ¡más ancha! ¡Rellenalas más!) sin alejarse del motivo infantil ("*pushing down your Teddy bear*", empuja hacia abajo tu oso de peluche; dicho con voz socarrona). Los estándares de belleza y las instituciones que los legitiman comienzan a esbozar una preocupación más

amplia por las relaciones de poder y la violencia de género como intereses de la filmografía de Nachstern, para florecer como tema principal de su tercer film, *Shoe Horn/Office*.

Fig. 6: Lucia Kickham en *Freedom to Go!* (2015). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Hablarle al cuarto muro: los efectos enunciativos de la denuncia "cara a cara" en *Shoe Horn/Office* (2018)

Hasta aquí, la videodanza de Nachstern daba respiro. Cuando el movimiento de un intérprete parecía desbordar carga expresiva, cuando el texto verbal empujaba los límites de lo provocativo (Fig. 1 y 4), sobrevenía un momento de relativa calma (Fig. 2 y 6). *Shoe Horn/Office* prefiere dejar estas cortesías de lado. Durante sus 10 minutos sostiene la tensión y la mirada del espectador con muchos de los recursos que ya se han observado, y trabaja especialmente con la mirada a cámara: este rasgo, una constante en la filmografía de la artista si atendemos al plano retórico, puede tomarse como una clave enunciativa de su tercera pieza en tanto se consolida como parte de un modo de hacer que fue madurando en el trabajo de las anteriores (recordemos que esta es la primera de la filmografía que no transpone obras escénicas previas).

Nuevamente, una pregunta nos interpela ni bien inicia la pieza, pero nadie la pronuncia esta vez: se nos da por escrito. "*Do you not wanna wear the pussy bow?*" (¿Es que no quieres usar el lazo de lavallière?). Esto solo merece que nos detengamos. Por un lado, "*wanna*" es la pronunciación coloquial, habitual en Estados Unidos, de "*want to*". Por el otro, el lazo de lavallière se repopularizó en 2016, de mano (o al cuello) de la Primera Dama de los EE. UU., Melania Trump. "*Pussy*" significa cachorro de gato en inglés, pero también se utiliza como sinónimo vulgar de vagina. Con toda esta carga significante, la pregunta de *Shoe Horn/Office* abre la puerta de par en par al motivo principal de esta obra: la indumentaria femenina. Tacos, corsés y vendas ensangrentadas en los pies "de loto" (que la antigua práctica del vendado de pies dio como resultado en distintos estratos sociales de la China de los siglos X a XX) integran el vestuario de las intérpretes y reciben especial atención de la cámara. Hasta aquí, la referencia más evidente de la primera parte del título de la obra (calzador). La segunda

parte (oficina) se evoca por medio de una máquina de escribir, un escritorio y la relación asimétrica de dos hombres que visten traje y una mujer que viste una falda corta, unos tacos altos y una camisa con *pussy bow* (Fig. 7).
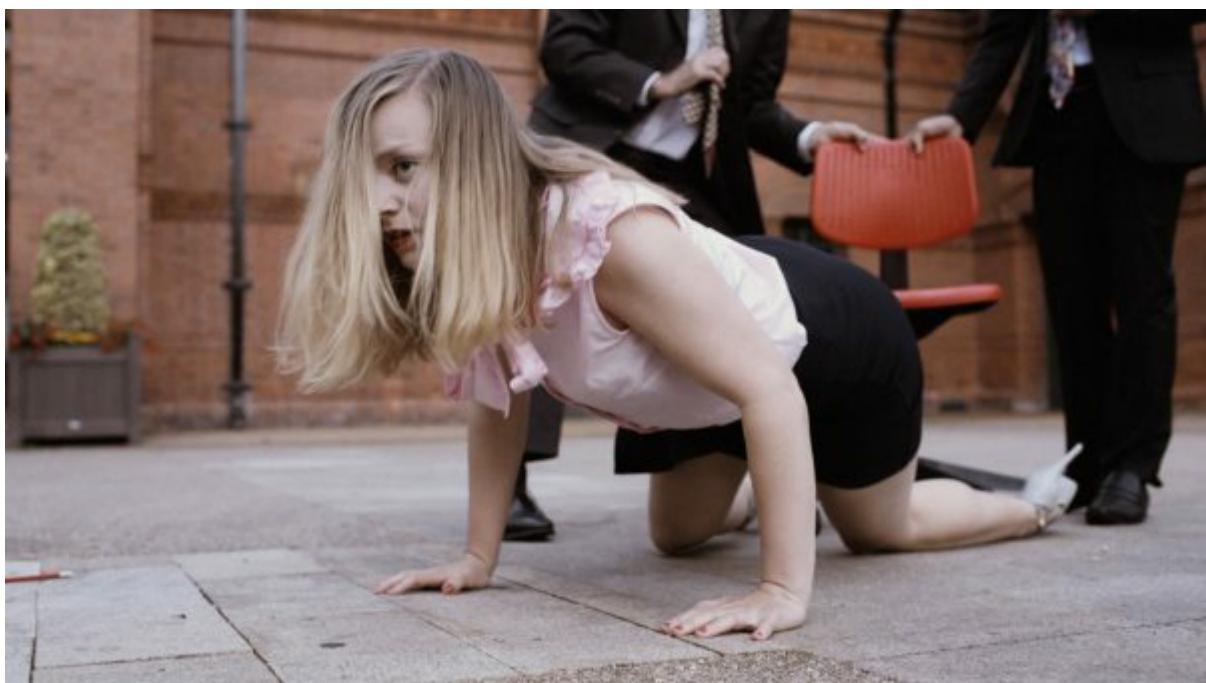
Fig. 7: Millie Daniel-Dempsey en *Shoe Horn/Office* (2018). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Es mucho lo que se puede decir de este film sin llegar a agotar su complejidad; por el momento, nos conformaremos con atender a dos cuestiones: por un lado, recordemos aquella hipótesis de Eliseo Verón en torno al eje O-O (los ojos en los ojos) que es como denominó a la operación de mirada a cámara sobre la que se constituyó el vínculo enunciativo propio del noticiero moderno: "cuando aparece en otros géneros audiovisuales lo hace invariablemente asociado a un movimiento de referenciación, a una operación destinada a desficcionalizar el discurso" (Verón, 2003). Es indudable en este punto el carácter sociopolítico del universo temático que construye la filmografía de Ingrid Nachstern. Mediante la mirada a cámara, sus obras, muchas veces inspiradas por titulares de la prensa roja (Rubin, 2018), nos hablan "cara a cara" de problemáticas actuales, y lo hacen con un tono urgente que no expulsa al espectador por un exceso de confrontación, pero que menos aun admite la indiferencia.

Finalmente, recordemos aquel recurso, señalado en relación con la primera obra, en que una voz en *off* se corresponde con la imagen de su emisor en la pantalla sin que este articule su aparato fonador. Ocurre en esta pieza en dos momentos: el primero, cuando las dos intérpretes femeninas, investidas en corsés y miriñaques (Fig. 8), ejecutan algunos pasos de un baile cortesano y se detienen un momento para mirar a una cámara que las espía en la intimidad de un mundo femenino y alegre. El segundo, cuando uno de los dos intérpretes masculinos salta y gira en torno a un centro, en el que se ubica la cámara que sigue su itinerario circular, durante el cual realiza una venia, repite gestos de arenga previamente compartidos con el otro intérprete masculino en un tono violento, e imita el movimiento que corresponde a subir el cierre de la braqueta, entre otros. Antes y después, la cámara enfoca, desde el mismo ángulo desde el que él observa a la cámara que lo toma desde abajo, el cuerpo de una mujer que yace en el suelo con un vestido corto al que se le ha levantado un poco la falda,

dejando ver sus piernas desnudas. El texto de ellas dice "*boys, get out of here*" (varones, fuera de aquí). El texto de él dice "*get out of jail free, just a little bit of action*" (salí en libertad de la cárcel, fue solo un poco de acción). Ni ellas ni él mueven los labios mientras los textos suenan pronunciados por sus voces, dando lugar a la construcción de una voz que no les pertenece en tanto individuos, sino que encarna una voz colectiva.

Fig. 8: Millie Daniel-Dempsey e Ingrid Nachstern en *Shoe Horn/Office* (2018). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Ahora bien, estas escenas condensan los elementos clave de la mencionada incomodidad como estrategia enunciativa que caracteriza, en mayor o menor medida, a las tres obras: la retórica infantil (en un sentido de inmadurez de la técnica antes que de una lograda evocación de un universo inocente y frágil, que también podría definirse con el mismo término), se hace presente en los juegos de palabras, los cánticos y los movimientos entre maniqueos y torpes que por momentos, y de manera creciente a lo largo del corpus, son los privilegiados de la coreografía. Ejecutados estos de manera también creciente con la mirada de los intérpretes a cámara, e inscritos de un campo temático que incluye problemáticas sociales urgentes a gran escala y consideradas de la mayor gravedad, solemnemente tratadas por los medios masivos, resultan en una sensación de incorrección enunciativa.

Torpes y desafiantes, políticamente incorrectas no en su postura sino en su modo, estas obras llegan al extremo de deslucir el artificio sin cancelarlo y, al hacer esto, no nos lo quitan pero tampoco nos permiten disfrutarlo a distancia. Al borde de lo grotesco, no llegan a definirse pertenecientes a ese estilo, pues esto mismo supondría el remanso de lo conocido. En cambio, por su reticencia a provocar de los modos establecidos, sacan de quicio realmente, hacen saltar por incomodidad a un espectador que no se siente en compañía de una comunidad con quien comparte los códigos de lectura de un producto pensado para complacerlo, sino que, por un instante, el rapto de soledad es inevitable y, tal vez por eso mismo, ante la imposibilidad del hedonismo aislante y la mirada de quien habla colectivamente sin despegar los labios, sea inevitable salir a buscar a otros.

Apostilla sobre el dispositivo video: cuándo es posible la voz y cómo transforma la enunciación en la danza

Una línea acaso tangencial a este artículo se preguntaría por la relación entre el dispositivo técnico como condición de posibilidad para la reunión de danza y habla, por un lado, y los efectos enunciativos que, en tanto tal, este dispositivo restringe. Lateral como es, abordemos la cuestión mediante un caso semejante: "[…] salas pequeñas, con pocas butacas […] cercanía con el espectador", son las palabras clave con las que Ana Durán y Sonia Jaroslavsky (2012: 114) trazan un perfil del teatro independiente de Buenos Aires (y, quien conozca pequeñas salas de otras latitudes, seguramente encontrará que la descripción no le resulta ajena). En la danza, este dispositivo escénico también supone la restricción a cuerpos de baile de número reducido, la imposibilidad de percibir a los bailarines como parte de un conjunto totalmente homogéneo o bien la posibilidad de distinguirlos plenamente con pocos recursos, y la imposibilidad de acallar o bien la posibilidad y oír sin casi mediaciones técnicas los sonidos que emiten sus cuerpos al caer, al respirar… al hablar. Es en este marco que surge "la articulación de discurso hablado por parte de los bailarines", un rasgo ya habitual de la danza de nuestros días (Rubin, 2017).

Fig. 9: Michael Cooney, Ingrid Nachstern y Lucia Kickham en *Freedom to Go!* (2015). PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Esta posibilidad, habilitada por la modificación sustancial del dispositivo escénico, también puede surgir como posibilidad en el marco de una danza para la pantalla, en la que la cámara brinda sus propias herramientas para "acercarnos" a los intérpretes, mientras que la tecnología de video trae hasta nuestros oídos un sonido grabado que puede incluir sus voces (o las de otros intérpretes). Estas observaciones no se agotan en la evidente transformación que supone incorporar a la *materia expresiva* de una forma artística hasta entonces sin voz la sonoridad vocal emitida por sus intérpretes, sino que también trastoca los efectos enunciativos que, como propone Oscar Traversa (2011), están indisociablemente unidos al *dispositivo* por el cual se construye "la articulación entre dos instancias: la correspondiente a la puesta en obra de técnicas de producción sígnica y de procesos que hacían

posible la circulación discursiva, de manera que la suma de ambos recursos no resulta indiferente en lo que concierne a la producción de sentido".

Esta reunión de habla y danza ha llegado a estos escenarios con estrategias que tienden a rehuir la clave de lectura que correspondería a un teatro *logocéntrico*, al decir de Artaud (1978), en el que un texto previo domina el sentido de lo que ocurre en escena. En cambio, "el foco está puesto en su materialidad y no exclusivamente en su posibilidad de remitir a universos construidos sobre el sentido lingüístico del texto" (Rubin, 2017). Estrategias semejantes se ponen en juego en la obra de Nachstern, lo cual hace especialmente interesante esta comparación. No es ya el teatro logocéntrico al que se opondría, sino el cine clásico: "Michel Chion asevera que, paradójicamente, el cine, que es imagen, gira en torno de lo vocal y lo verbal: 'el cine es voco y verbocentrista', afirmará: todo se da en torno de la voz y de las cosas que dice esa voz" (Chion, 2008: 17, Rocha Alonso, s/f).

Tales estrategias, que ponen de relieve la materialidad del habla, comportan rasgos de un programa que puede rastrearse hasta la vanguardia esteticista en la literatura del siglo XIX (Flaubert, Verlaine), aquella que buscaba "desinstrumentalizar al lenguaje (…) reduciéndolo en lo posible a su dimensión sonora" (Burello, 2012: 161). En la segunda década del siglo siguiente, el Manifiesto de la danza futurista también pondría el acento en este aspecto: "El ruido, al ser el resultado del frotamiento o del choque de sólidos, líquidos o gases en velocidad, se ha convertido a través de la onomatopeya en uno de los elementos más dinámicos de la poesía futurista. (…) La danza futurista será (…) de palabras en libertad" (Marinetti, 1968: 189-190). Esta búsqueda encuentra un terreno especialmente fértil en el habla, sea en una situación escénica en vivo o en un soporte audiovisual, ya que el estatuto semiótico de la emisión o del registro (según el caso) de la voz en tanto "sustrato indicial primario, que hace contacto con el oyente y cuya significancia 'precede y trasciende el sentido de las palabras proferidas, de todo lo musical en la voz, su tonalidad, su color y su timbre, su espasmo rítmico'" (Parret, 1995: 17, citado en Rocha Alonso, s/f).

El lenguaje así "desinstrumentalizado" sería una vía posible para poner el discurso a resguardo de literalizar aquello que enuncia y arrastrar consigo toda la materia expresiva que integra la obra; en otras palabras, ayuda a eludir el riesgo de convertir un impulso creativo en un texto apelativo que configure una toma de posición o una declaración de principios sobre una realidad circundante (aunque, desde luego, no baste para garantizar el éxito de tal propósito). Las piezas que, presas tal vez de la urgencia o tomadas por la indudable legitimidad de su intención, no logran eludir el riesgo, acaban por perder en potencia enunciativa al descuidar el lenguaje, las técnicas y los saberes artísticos hacen a esa obra en particular.

Conclusiones

Los tres films que integran la obra de Ingrid Nachstern abordan temáticas sensibles con la urgencia que les hace justicia. Irreverentes hasta el límite de la incomodidad, logran sacudir la pantalla con escenas que se arriesgan a jugar en los bordes de lo desagradable, lo suficiente como para despertar una sensación de distancia que mueva el cuerpo del espectador hacia las problemáticas a las que apunta. Al hacerlo, logra sobrellevar dos peligros. Por un lado, el de repeler por exceso de incomodidad y expulsar a su público más allá de los temas que le propone, cancelando de inmediato el vínculo. Por otro, la muchas veces certera amenaza de que la relevancia del tema genere una ilusión de autosuficiencia y desbanque la necesidad de construir una propuesta enunciativa a la altura de las

circunstancias, lo cual suele derivar en textos (literarios, audiovisuales o de otro orden) que tienden más fuertemente, de manera voluntaria o no, a la declaración de principios que a un discurso artístico.
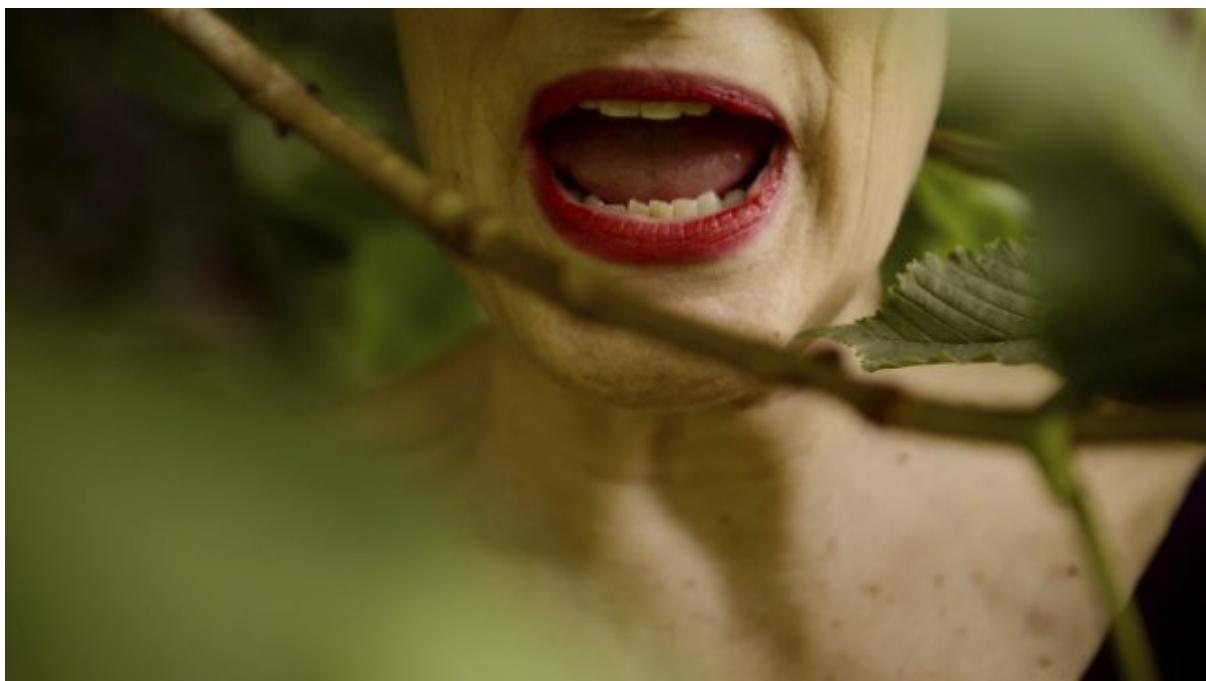
Fig. 10: Ingrid Nachstern en *Table Manners/Stopping At Red Lights* (2014), su primer film. PH: Ingrid Nachstern-Luca Truffarelli

Por el contrario, la filmografía analizada, que en su evolución fue afinando sus recursos coreográficos y definiendo su imaginario, ha trabajado desde un primer momento sobre la base de lo particular, evitando hacer alusión a sus temas a la manera de grandes títulos que, por abordar el todo, no logren hablar de nada. La materia verbal presente en estas piezas provee una perspectiva posible desde la cual observar cómo lo logra, trabajando con sus cualidades sonoras, multiplicando sus rasgos significantes de modo que, en el tejido denso que integra junto a otras materias expresivas con las cuales significa, ha constituido una fuente de potencia enunciativa sin literalizar el discurso y desnaturalizar así la especificidad del lenguaje artístico, que es, no huelga decir, donde reside todo posible valor de una obra de arte.

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"Una videodansa es defineix pel seu èmfasi en el cos": Dogma Dance i la seua defensa de la hibridesa de la videodansa

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Resum

Dogma Dance sorgeix l'any 2000 amb la voluntat de renovar el món de la videodansa. L'objectiu principal de la iniciativa consisteix a reivindicar el caràcter híbrid de la disciplina i allunyar-se de la dominància de la realització audiovisual sobre el coreogràfic. El moviment troba una evident inspiració en Dogma 95, el corrent cinematogràfic sorgit uns anys abans i liderat per Lars von Trier. Contrastem primer els manifestos i conjunts de regles d'ambdós moviments i especialment la regla que Dogma Dance copia literalment del Vot de castedat del corrent danès. Valorem aleshores la interpretació personal que von Trier en fa a partir de l'anàlisi de l'estil de filmació de Los idiotas. *L'examen de la posada en quadre d'un passatge significatiu de la pel·lícula ens permet mantenir que el principal atractiu que Dogma Dance troba en el moviment danès rau en una reivindicació de la corporeïtat que resulta clau per a garantir la hibridesa que Dogma Dance vol per a la videodansa.*

Biografia

Enric Burgos (València, 1976) és llicenciat en Filosofia (1998) i en Comunicació Audiovisual (2002) per la Universitat de València. En 2017 obté el títol de doctor en Ciències de la Comunicació per la Universitat Jaume I amb la tesi Amenaces i impulsos de l'escepticisme modern en el cinema de canvi de segle. Una lectura en clau cavelliana del Projecte idiota de Lars von Trier (Excel·lent Cum laude).

Ha treballat com a professor associat en l'àrea de Comunicació Audiovisual de la Universitat Politècnica de València (2007-2020). Actualment forma part del Departament de Teoria dels Llenguatges i Ciències de la Comunicació de la Universitat de València així com del Departament de Filosofia i Sociologia de la Universitat Jaume I. Els seus interessos de recerca es centren en les desviacions del model cinematogràfic hegemònic així com en el pensament de Stanley Cavell.

Ha participat en dos projectes internacionals d'investigació, en quatre projectes d'innovació docent, ha intervingut en més d'una vintena de congressos nacionals i internacionals i la seua aportació figura en nombrosos compendis d'actes. Fins al moment ha publicat dos llibres, sis articles en revistes especialitzades (com per exemple L'Atalante) i cinc capítols de llibre en obres col·lectives d'editorials de prestigi (com ara Thémata o Comares).

Introducció

En octubre del 2000 Katrina McPherson, Litza Bixler i Deveril Garraghan es proposen revitalitzar el món de la videodansa fent públics els fonaments del moviment Dogma Dance. Inspirats principalment en el corrent cinematogràfic Dogma 95 —només cal atendre al nom d'ambdós moviments i als seus llistats de regles que fixaven per a l'obtenció de certificats per advertir-hi l'evident influència—, els tres artistes amb base a Gran Bretanya miren de contrarestar el perillós rumb que la videodansa està prenent amb la seua progressiva inserció en el món de la producció comercial mitjançant l'aposta pel tàndem baix pressupost/alt valor artístic. Els mateixos fundadors de Dogma Dance expressen així els riscs que amenacen la videodansa: "perhaps in an attempt to be taken seriously in the world of television and film, dance films are losing the connection to dance. We see many dance films in which the focus is the design, the lighting or the telling of a story through the conventions of narrative film, with the dance content becoming an afterthought" (en Banes i Carroll, 2003, p. 176). Com McPherson mantindria anys després, l'objectiu principal del moviment era expressar allò que pensaven que la videodansa havia de ser en aqueixos moments i llançar el provocador repte a la resta de realitzadors i realitzadores (en Rosenberg i McPherson, 2014, pp. 155-156). La resposta va superar les seues expectatives i s'hi va generar un interessant espai per al debat i la creació. Heus ací el manifest de Dogma Dance i el conjunt de regles que el col·lectiu va proposar:

> YES to the development of dance technique for film—YES to a sharing of knowledge between dance and film—YES to the development of choreographic structure in film—YES to technology which aids rather than hinders—YES to human dancers—YES to the creation of a new genre—YES to safe dancers—YES to the encouragement of dance filmmakers—YES to a new hybrid form.
>
> NO to unsafe dancers—NO to the primacy of equipment and technology over human creativity—NO to the breakdown of choreographic structure—NO to purposeless hierarchies—NO to unbalanced wages—NO to the dominance of film in Dance film.
>
> In order to certify as a *Dogma Dance* film, the following rules must be adhered to:
>
> 1. The term 'dance film' will be used to describe the finished piece. A dance film is defined by its emphasis on the human body (still or in motion). In this context, 'dance' refers to the actions of human beings only.
>
> 2. The movement context of the film should clearly display choreographic intent. It should not be mime, nor should it be purely pedestrian movement.
>
> 3. Only one camera should be used.
>
> 4. A movement phrase (whatever the length) should be filmed in one type of shot only, i.e. not 'covered' by several different angles or sizes of shot.
>
> 5. Film only on mini-DV.
>
> 6. The camera must be hand-held. Any movement or immobility attainable in the hand is permitted. A moving camera is a dancing camera.
>
> 7. Only one lamp may be used. It can be any size. Other than that, use only natural light or artificial light that already exists in the location.
>
> 8. The camera, location or any other extraneous equipment should not impede the dancers movement. In order for a film to be a certified Dogma Dance film, the performing dancers should sign a written confirmation that they have felt this rule has been adhered to.

9. The dance film must be structured in screen time and space, i.e. it should be edited according to the rhythms dictated by the film rather than for continuity of the live choreography.

10. There must be no digitally created special effects, such as dissolves, created on the camera or the edit. Changes of speed are allowed, but only if they have intent with the choreography and are not used to cover up poor dance / film making.

11. The maximum length for a dance film should be 10 minutes, with at least 80% of this time being filled with bodies (or parts of bodies) in frame.

12. There must be a meaningful relationship between the soundtrack and the visual content of the dance film. It is not OK to cut to a musical track (i.e. a dance film is not a pop promo) or slap on music afterwards (McPherson, 2013, pp. 251-253).

Una simple ullada al manifest i les dotze regles ens permet detectar un parell de qüestions que trobem nuclears en la proposta de Dogma Dance i que tractarem d'anar desplegant de manera entrellaçada al llarg del nostre treball. Per una banda, la reivindicació del caràcter híbrid de la videodansa i la conseqüent denúncia de l'habitual jerarquia de la realització audiovisual de caire narratiu sobre la dansa —assumptes latents des dels orígens de la disciplina i que continuen sent-hi presents en la pràctica i en l'àmbit teòric, com testimonien escrits com ara els de Rosenberg (2010), Lewis-Smith (2016) o Fildes (2018). I per l'altra, la defensa del lloc central que ha d'ocupar el cos humà en la videodansa.

En efecte, i sobretot en les parts de la declaració d'intencions de Dogma Dance que més s'allunyen del document fundacional de Dogma 95 per a centrar-se en el més propi de la videodansa, tant la reivindicació de la hibridesa com la insistència en el cos són especialment subratllades. En els fragments on la redacció i els continguts més s'acosten a les directrius del col·lectiu cinematogràfic danès aquestes dues qüestions, però, semblen diluir-se. Per molt superficial que puga resultar l'observació, aquesta planteja, si més no, uns quants interrogants que semblen pertinents: On rau el veritable interès per associar-se tan obertament amb el moviment capitanejat per Lars von Trier? Hi ha quelcom que Dogma 95 puga aportar realment a la videodansa o es tracta d'una estratègia de publicitat consistent a vincular-se a una iniciativa que viu aleshores els seus millors moments? I, per damunt de tot, fins a quin punt no resulta paradoxal que Dogma Dance advoque per acabar amb la dominància del fílmic sobre la dansa i recórrega com a font d'inspiració a un moviment cinematogràfic de ficció i amb voluntat narrativa? Per mirar d'anar responent aquestes preguntes trobem adient dirigir tot seguit la nostra mirada cap al corrent danès.

Dogma 95: un esperit que va més enllà del merament cinematogràfic

L'any que Dogma Dance es dóna a conèixer, el moviment ideat per von Trier i Vinterberg ja compta amb més d'una dotzena de films certificats. Entre ells, els dos dirigits pels fundadors del col·lectiu i que s'estrenen en la mateixa edició del Festival de Cannes, això és, *Celebración* (*Dogme #1. Festen*, Thomas Vinterberg, 1998) i *Los idiotas* (*Dogme #2. Idioterne*, Lars von Trier) així com també les dues pel·lícules —*Mifune* (*Dogme #3. Mifunes sidste sang,* 1999) i *El rey está vivo* (*Dogme #4. The King is Alive*, 2000)— realitzades, respectivament, per Søren Kragh-Jakobsen i Kristian Levring, els altres dos membres que ben prompte es sumaren a la germandat. El corrent vivia en aqueixos moments la seua etapa d'eclosió i internacionalització, tot i que alhora començava a advertir-s'hi que Dogma 95 estava esdevenint una moda i guanyava en taquilla tot allò que perdia en subversió.

La història s'havia iniciat cinc anys abans, en març del 1995, quan von Trier presenta el nou moviment en una trobada de cineastes en París amb les dosis de teatralitat a què ens té acostumats. Després de llegir un manifest[1] carregat de retòrica marxista, von Trier enuncia davant de l'audiència i amb solemnitat catòlica el Vot de castedat que regirà la praxi de la germandat:

I swear to submit to the following set of rules drawn up and confirmed by DOGMA 95:

1. Shooting must be done on location. Props and sets must not be brought in (if a particular prop is necessary for the story, a location must be chosen where this prop is to be found).

2. The sound must never be produced apart from the images or vice versa. (Music must not be used unless it occurs where the scene is being shot).

3. The camera must be hand-held. Any movement or immobility attainable in the hand is permitted. (The film must not take place where the camera is standing: shooting must take place where the film takes place).

4. The film must be in color. Special lighting is not acceptable. (If there is too little light for exposure the scene must be cut or a single lamp be attached to the camera.)

5. Optical work and filters are forbidden.

6. The film must not contain superficial action. (Murders, weapons, etc. must not occur).

7. Temporal and geographical alienation are forbidden. (That is to say that the film takes place here and now).

8. Genre movies are not acceptable.

9. The film format must be Academy 35 mm.

10. The director must not be credited.

Furthermore I swear as a director to refrain from personal taste! I am no longer an artist. I swear to refrain from creating a "work", as I regard the instant as more important than the whole. My supreme goal is to force the truth out of my characters and settings. I swear to do so by all the means available and at the cost of any good taste and any aesthetic considerations. (Vinterberg i von Trier, 2000).

Si atenem al manifest de Dogma 95, observem en ell un cert paral·lelisme estructural amb el de Dogma Dance. Així com vèiem que el del grup de videodansa dedicava un paràgraf a les proclames encapçalades per YES i un altre a les que començaven per NO, així també Dogma 95 havia dedicat anys abans la meitat del seu escrit a la crítica més ferotge i l'altra meitat a la vessant constructiva del moviment. Més enllà dels irònics i provocadors atacs a la Nouvelle Vague i el concepte d'autor, el blanc últim del corrent danès és l'anomenat *cinema d'il·lusió* que podem entendre com a mutació del model cinematogràfic hegemònic en temps digitals. Aquest cinema d'il·lusió és definit al manifest per la seua previsibilitat i superficialitat però, sobretot, pel seu pervers ús de les noves tecnologies, pels seus trucatges i cosmètics que amenacen amb *esborrar els últims grans de la veritat*. Lluny, tanmateix, de

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[1] No reproduïm ací per qüestions d'espai el manifest Dogma 95, sinó sols el Vot de Castedat que contrastarem amb les normes establertes per Dogma Dance. A diferència de com esdevé amb el document inaugural del moviment de videodansa, tant el manifest com el Vot de Castedat de Dogma 95 són fàcilment localitzables. Ambdós es poden consultar, per exemple, en www.dogme95.dk, el lloc web que homenatja el moviment i que reprodueix part dels continguts que es publicaren en la pàgina originària ja desapareguda. En la bibliografia, no obstant, remetem a una publicació que contempla els parèntesis explicatius d'algunes normes que hem inclòs en el cos del text i que seran d'importància per al nostre desenvolupament.

demonitzar les noves possibilitats que obre la tecnologia digital, Dogma 95 advoca per posar-les al servei de la democratització del mitjà, de la recuperació de l'essència del cinema (això és, de la realitat profílmica de què es nodreix) i de la recerca de la veritat en cada personatge i escena.

Sens dubte, aquesta mirada ambivalent cap a la nova realitat tecnològica és un dels principals punts d'unió entre els dos moviments, com també ho és l'austeritat que degoten sengles conjunts de normes i la seua voluntat compartida de potenciar la creativitat a partir de les restriccions. Però malgrat la innegable dependència de Dogma Dance respecte de la proposta del seu homòleg cinematogràfic, no podem obviar que ambdós moviments sorgeixen d'un brou de cultiu comú, d'una mena de (si se'ns permet) "tradició subversiva" que enfonsa les seues arrels en un passat llunyà i que viu la seua eclosió més cridanera en el pas dels seixanta als setanta del darrer segle. Dogma 95, per tant, no brolla del no-res i està igualment en deute amb plantejaments de resistència cultural anteriors.

Una part considerable de la bibliografia sobre Dogma 95 s'ha dedicat a assenyalar precedents cinematogràfics amb què el moviment danès entra a dialogar. El recorregut ens portaria des d'aquelles interpretacions que insisteixen a remarcar el pes exercit en el col·lectiu per Dziga Vertov (Koutsourakis, 2011, pp. 138-144) o de la influència del neorealisme italià (Weisberg, 2000; Badley, 2006, p. 84) a unes altres que troben referències més properes en el temps a la proposta Dogma 95 i remeten a les pràctiques cinematogràfiques de John Cassavetes o Shirley Clarke (Smith, 2003, p. 114), sense oblidar les connexions que Dogma 95 mostra amb moviments com ara el Free Cinema (MacKenzie, 2003, p. 51), el Cinéma Vérité (Badley, 2006, p. 84), la Nova Ona danesa o el nou cinema alemany.

Menys habitual és trobar al·lusions a referents provinents d'altres àmbits de l'art i la cultura que, no obstant, influïren igualment Dogma 95. Podríem així parlar del pes que va exercir en el moviment danès el Teatre de la Pobresa de Jerzy Grotowski, de la influència del grup Oulipo o de l'empremta del polifacètic Andy Warhol (Rubio, 2010, p. 5). I podríem apuntar de manera semblant a les diverses pràctiques artístiques —com el videoart, la performance o la mateixa videodansa— que proliferen especialment a meitat dels seixanta, que es veuen impulsades pels canvis tecnològics del moment i que aposten pel cos humà com a component clau de la seua dissidència i resistència. De cap manera hem de descartar, doncs, que aqueix altre referent que Dogma Dance va contemplar en formular la seua iniciativa —a saber, la ballarina, coreògrafa i realitzadora Yvonne Rainer i el seu *No Manifesto* del 1965— deixara també la seua empremta en von Trier i marcara la seua proposta dogmàtica. Si tenim a més en compte que el principal ideòleg de Dogma 95 no sols s'ha dedicat a conrear el cinema narratiu sinó que s'ha interessat també per l'experimental, la videoinstal·lació o la pintura i, sobretot, si atenem al peculiar estil de filmació del danès potser puguem anar entenent des d'un altre prisma l'interès que la vídeo dansa —i més concretament, els fundadors de Dogma Dance— mostraren pel moviment sorgit a Dinamarca. Amb unes altres paraules, tal volta el corrent cinematogràfic sí que podia oferir quelcom valuós al propòsit de Dogma Dance de defensar la hibridesa de la videodansa i reclamar el lloc que en ella ocupa el cos humà.

La regla compartida. L'interès radica en la interpretació

Sota aquesta nova llum ens convé reconsiderar allò que fa poc albiràvem, això és, la presumpta desaparició d'aquests dos principals objectius de Dogma Dance en aquells passatges del seu document inaugural on més es cenyien a l'escrit signat per Vinterberg i von Trier. I ho farem acudint justament al

fragment on la coincidència en la redacció és més acusada. Ens estem referint a la norma que obliga a l'operador al sosteniment de la càmera amb el seu cos (regla 3 del decàleg de Dogma 95 i regla 6 de Dogma Dance). Com podem observar, la formulació és idèntica. Ara bé, els parèntesis posteriors que miren de desplegar la norma varien substancialment (encara que, com tractarem de mostrar en el successiu, responen a un mateix esperit). Mentre que el comentari de la regla que fa Dogma 95 matisa que *la pel·lícula no ha d'ocórrer on la càmera està situada sinó que el rodatge ha d'ocórrer on la pel·lícula té lloc*, en el text de Dogma Dance s'afegeix que *una càmera en moviment és una càmera que balla*. Les noves qüestions que en sorgeixen ens ajudaran a prosseguir el nostre camí: Per què Dogma Dance copia literalment la regla 3 de Dogma 95? Què li resulta tan atractiu d'aquesta? En quin sentit suggerim que els afegits a la norma dels dos moviments apunten en una mateixa direcció?

Des del nostre punt de vista, allò que sedueix Dogma Dance no és tant la regla en sí sinó una particular aplicació d'aquesta regla o, si es vol, i més concretament, la interpretació de la regla que observem en la praxi dogmàtica de von Trier i, en part, també en la de Vinterberg. Mirem d'explicar-nos a continuació. Per molt que Dogma 95 remeta en el seu manifest a la disciplina militar de l'avantguarda i a aqueix uniforme col·lectiu que totes les seues pel·lícules havien de vestir com a conseqüència del fidel seguiment de les normes, només cal visionar els primers films de la germandat per comprovar que cada cinta proposa una particular interpretació de les regles i n'obté un resultat diferent. D'aquesta manera, i segons ho entenem, les regles no determinen el que cada pel·lícula és, sinó que cada pel·lícula de Dogma 95 esdevé el lloc on —el joc amb què— es tracten d'entendre les regles, assumint la responsabilitat i el compromís que seguir la regla suposa.

Així les coses, i tornant a la tercera norma de la germandat danesa —i sisena de Dogma Dance—, podem comprovar que el seguiment que fan d'aquesta Vinterberg i von Trier en *Celebración* y *Los idiotas* respectivament és ben diferent de la manera com Kragh-Jakobsen l'acata durant la realització de *Mifune*. Mentre que en el dos primers films la càmera és víctima d'una obsessió pels cossos i s'adreça principalment allà on és el moviment sense preocupar-se per la qualitat tècnica de la imatge, en *Mifune*, l'operador de càmera (Anthony Dod Mantle, el mateix que va treballar en *Celebración*) aconsegueix l'estabilitat de l'enquadrament amb la càmera al muscle que les pel·lícules anteriors defugien. Trobem, per tant, que l'especial atenció al cos humà que mostren els films dogmàtics de Vinterberg i von Trier és allò que més interessa a Dogma Dance.

En concordança amb el que manteníem adés, malgrat les semblances que podem advertir entre el treball de càmera de *Celebración* i de *Los idiotas*, cada director presenta, però, la seua personal interpretació de les regles i, així, un estil de filmació particular. Hi ha almenys un parell de motius que ens porten a centrar l'anàlisi que en breu encetarem en el film de von Trier. El primer i més important té a veure amb la radicalitat amb què el treball de càmera de *Los idiotas* duu a terme l'esmentada focalització en els cossos. I és que si el film de von Trier fóra una videodansa no tindria cap problema amb complir amb l'exigència de Dogma Dance relativa a la presència de la figura humana en el metratge (regla 11), ja que no hi trobem a la pel·lícula pràcticament cap moment en què no aparega algun dels seus personatges. Segonament, decidim analitzar l'estil de filmació de la cinta del principal ideòleg de Dogma 95 perquè mostra una continuïtat i coherència amb el treball de càmera efectuat en unes altres obres del director que suposem que no passarien desapercebudes per als fundadors de Dogma Dance. No en va, ben bé es podria mantenir que von Trier formula la regla 3 del decàleg (i algunes altres més) a partir de l'experiència adquirida amb la realització d'*El reino* (*Riget*, 1994) —la

sèrie de televisió que es va estrenar a Dinamarca un mes abans que es redactara el manifest—, que la posa ja en pràctica en *Rompiendo las olas* (*Breaking the Waves*, 1996) abans de la seua aventura dogmàtica i que, tot just després d'aquesta, la torna a fer servir en *Bailar en la oscuridad* (*Dancer in the Dark*, 2000), film estrenat al Regne Unit uns mesos abans del sorgiment de la iniciativa Dogma Dance.

Curiosament, aquesta anterioritat de la praxi respecte de la formulació de les regles que advertim en von Trier es pot rastrejar també en l'obra de McPherson. Tant és així que la mateixa artista reconeix obertament que el seu treball previ a Dogma Dance encaixa prou bé en els paràmetres que el moviment fixaria amb posterioritat (en Rosenberg i McPherson, 2014, p. 156). Efectivament, i més enllà de l'observació de les regles que demostra *East South East* (2000) —la primera videodansa a obtenir el certificat Dogma Dance—, peces anteriors de McPherson com ara *Pace* (1995) o *Moment* (1999) exhibeixen evidents connexions amb la poètica que es deriva de les dotze regles, i, molt especialment, palesen les aspiracions coreogràfiques d'un treball de càmera atent a captar els gests expressius i a seguir emfàticament el moviment de les ballarines.

La càmera que apunta i dispara. L'episodi de l'orgia de *Los idiotas* i l'estil de filmació

D'ací endavant ens centrarem en la manera pràctica com von Trier lidia amb la tercera regla del decàleg durant el rodatge de *Los idiotas*. Abans d'arrencar amb l'anàlisi, convé dedicar unes línies a aqueix estil de filmació que von Trier fa servir en *Los idiotas* i, com hem dit, en altres creacions del director properes en el temps al seu únic film realitzat sota les directrius de Dogma 95. Amb Simons (2007, pp. 123-124; 130; 149-151) ens referirem a aquest mètode d'enregistrament com a *point and shoot style* o tècnica consistent a *apuntar i disparar*. D'acord amb aquest mètode amb què es mira de seguir l'esmentada regla 3, von Trier i els altres dos operadors de càmera de *Los idiotas* enregistraven en continuïtat el que anava esdevenint davant la càmera, sense haver establert prèviament uns espais on l'acció havia de desenvolupar-se.

La llibertat interpretativa i la improvisació que von Trier fomenta en l'equip artístic li ajuden a alliberar-se del control que el director de ficció tradicionalment assumeix respecte de la posada en escena i posada en quadre i li ofereixen, a més, i en virtut del procediment consistent a "apuntar i disparar", la possibilitat que els actors i els seus moviments condicionen decisivament les propietats cinematogràfiques del film. Les preses llargues i l'enquadrament mòbil —característiques fonamentals de la improvisació tècnica que duu a terme el *point and shoot style*—, marquen així un treball de càmera que deposita la confiança en la tasca dels actors i els permet tastar, també a ells, la promesa purificadora d'un projecte amb què von Trier vol allunyar-se dels constrenyiments habituals del cinema de la indústria[2]. D'acord amb açò i per tal de fer palès el potencial alliberador de la tercera regla Dogma 95, l'aclariment d'aquesta que s'introduïa entre parèntesi en el Vot de castedat podria quedar formulat de la manera següent: L'equip artístic i la realitat profílmica en el seu conjunt no han d'ajustar-se a les directrius de la càmera sinó que és la càmera la que ha de cercar i captar les expressions i moviments d'actors i actrius a mesura que van interactuant amb (i descobrint-nos) l'espai profílmic.

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[2] Dins d'aquests constrenyiments trobaríem el seguiment fidel d'un guió tècnic i un *storyboard* dels quals von Trier prescindeix. Tan sols un lax guió literari, adaptable a la dinàmica de rodatge i contínuament revisat, va servir de referència durant la realització de *Los idiotas*.

Aquestes consideracions inicials sobre el *point and shoot style* ens ajuden a albirar l'abans al·ludida convergència de propòsits entre les matisacions que afegeixen Dogma 95 i Dogma Dance a la regla que comparteixen. Alhora, ens possibiliten establir connexions entre la nostra exposició i diverses reflexions sobre l'enregistrament de la videodansa, com per exemple la distinció que estableix Rosenberg entre *dance for camera* i *dance with camera* (2010, p. 64), les tres diferents estratègies de gravació de videodansa que Fildes contempla (2018, p. 191-192) o l'aplicació dels postulats del ciné-transe de Jean Rouch a la videodansa que porta a cap Esbert (2016). Recorrent puntualment a aquestes aportacions, mirarem tot seguit de valorar l'estil de filmació que presideix *Los idiotas* a partir de l'anàlisi de la posada en quadre de diversos moments del film que trobem especialment significatius.

La història de *Los idiotas* ens apropa a un grup de joves que, liderats per Stoffer, es fan passar per persones amb discapacitat intel·lectual amb el presumpte propòsit de contactar amb l'idiota interior que sovint resta reprimit. Al llarg de tot el film, i tant en les escenes més introspectives del grup com en aqueixes on la seua simulació és llançada com a provocació a la societat, la teatralització de la comuna idiota apareix marcada per la renúncia al llenguatge verbal i per l'aposta del cos com a via d'expressió. El zenit de les aspiracions de la colla s'abasta en l'episodi en què els joves celebren una festa que acaba derivant en orgia. El passatge no sols serveix per a il·lustrar immillorablement la reivindicació del cos que advertim en el film si l'observem des d'una perspectiva temàtica sinó que, a més, ens aprofita adientment per a fer palesa la manera com el *point and shoot style* comporta una paral·lela insistència formal en el cos humà. És per això que cenyirem la nostra anàlisi a l'esmentat fragment i la presentarem com a extrapolable a la pràctica totalitat de la cinta.

Durant els plans inicials de l'episodi dedicats a apropar-nos a l'accés dels convidats al saló on la festa tindrà lloc, la càmera mostra una estabilitat relativa. En començar a sonar la música diegètica que amenitza la festa, en canvi, la càmera reacciona davant el moviment dels cossos dels actors de manera paral·lela a com aquests responen al so de la cançó. Després de mostrar-nos les fredes primeres reaccions d'una part dels assistents, una ràpida panoràmica horitzontal capta el grup al complet ballant alegrement i fent l'idiota. L'agilitat del muntatge es suma a una festa on la càmera pareix ballar amb els personatges per a oferir-nos la imatge de la impetuosa abraçada de Stoffer a Nana i, instants després, amb total menyspreu pel ràcord de moviment i de so, seguir la trajectòria impredictible d'un Stoffer que acaba de passar per davant de l'objectiu.

Tanmateix, la música i el bullici, els cossos i la càmera cessen sobtadament la seua activitat conjunta a partir del pla immediatament posterior. Stoffer, aquell en honor del qual se celebra la festa, decideix en eixe moment que l'orgia ha d'arrencar. La figura de Nana despullant-se atrau a partir d'aleshores l'atenció de Stoffer, com també la de l'enunciació. Si abans la càmera semblava ballar com els protagonistes, ara pareix menejar el seu cap d'un costat a l'altre, dirigint la seua mirada des de la perplexitat d'un Stoffer que observa dempeus cap al cos nu de Nana que jau en terra. El muntatge intercala un pla de conjunt amb la reacció expectant dels assistents per a tornar al pla americà de Stoffer, qui deixa caure l'ampolla de cervesa que té a la mà i s'adreça cap a Nana, amb el conseqüent moviment de càmera que acompanya el seu desplaçament. Un nou *jump cut* mostra directament Stoffer i la jove en terra, mentre aquesta introdueix la mà per sota dels seus calçotets.

La càmera es contagia poc després de l'activitat creixent de les figures. Un inestable i ràpid escombrat ens permet apreciar la nuesa d'uns cossos a penes distingibles per a acabar oferint-nos la imatge de

Stoffer, qui taral·leja efusivament una melodia i salta de manera compulsiva. Una panoràmica semicircular executada en direcció oposada al moviment immediatament anterior ens permet veure les reaccions de la resta de la colla. Tot seguit, nou plans donaran comptes en un minut i vint-i-cinc segons de la integració de la reticent Susanne en l'orgia. Primerament, veiem la jove en pla americà, asseguda a l'ampit de la finestra i fullejant una revista, sense intenció de sumar-se al joc sexual. Stoffer se li acosta i la càmera segueix el seu apropament (Fig. 1). El líder de la colla baixa el tirant del vestit de Susanne i, davant la negativa d'aquesta, retrocedeix uns quants passos immediatament, així com també ho fa la càmera (Fig. 2). Tant Stoffer com l'operador tornen a repetir exactament el mateix moviment dues vegades més. Els tres desplaçaments comporten evidents i reiterats canvis d'exposició en la figura de Stoffer, motivats per la seua variable distància respecte de la llum natural que entra per la finestra (Figs. 3 i 4).

Figs. 1-4: Les anades i tornades de Stoffer són mimetitzades per la càmera de *Los idiotas*

Els últims plans referits palesen especialment l'evident convergència entre la tècnica consistent a apuntar i disparar que segueix von Trier i la *filmació-espill* de què parla Esbert (2016, p. 14) en apropar-se al ciné-transe de Rouch. En efecte, la càmera de *Los idiotas* actua mimèticament, segueix contínuament l'acció i es mou en funció dels moviments dels cossos filmats, entrant en el seu ritme. Von Trier abandona l'habitual procediment marcat per aqueixa *mecànica de control* que Esbert presenta com a antítesi de la *filmació-espill* i ho fa de manera radical, sense cercar cap possible equilibri entre ambdues maneres d'abordar la filmació i assumint el risc de perdre el(s) cos(sos) filmat(s) en l'enquadrament i acabar obtenint una imatge tècnicament pobra.

Figs. 5-8: Els tres joves persegueixen Susanne i la càmera persegueix tots quatre

Però és el següent pla dels dedicats a mostrar-nos com els joves aconsegueixen que Susanne es sume a l'orgia el que millor ens permet apreciar l'obsessió de la tècnica del *point and shoot style* pel moviment dels cossos i les seues accions. Aquest pla comença captant l'esquena de Susanne mentre aquesta s'enfila a tota pressa cap a la porta que dóna accés al jardí del xalet (Fig. 5). En eixir, la jove és seguida per Stoffer, Axel i Miguel, els quals travessen la porta tot just abans que l'operador de càmera reprodüisca la mateixa trajectòria (Fig. 6). De nou, els notoris canvis lumínics afecten una presa que els ha portat mitjançant l'enregistrament continu des de l'interior de la casa fins al jardí, i que es desenvolupa, ja en l'exterior, tant en zones amb llum solar directa com en àrees situades a l'ombra dels arbres. Els joves persegueixen Susanne de la mateixa manera com la càmera persegueix tots quatre (Fig. 7). El llarg pla ens permet apreciar la inestabilitat d'una càmera dirigida per un operador que corre darrere dels personatges així com la deficient captació d'àudio en augmentar la distància entre els actors i el microfonista. Fins i tot, podem arribar a sentir el soroll extradiegètic que els bruscs moviments de l'equip tècnic evitant les branques dels arbres afegeixen a la banda sonora. Després d'haver corregut uns vint metres darrere de Susanne, Miguel aconsegueix dur-la a terra (Fig. 8).

Aquests vint segons de metratge sense talls ens possibiliten detectar la gravació ininterrompuda que caracteritza la *filmació-espill* i, alhora, recullen gran part d'allò que von Trier es proposa amb l'opció pel *point and shoot style*. La càmera al muscle facilita el recurs a un enquadrament mòbil que reacciona constantment davant les accions dels personatges, que troba la seua motivació principal en les expressions i trajectòries d'aquests. Els cossos dels protagonistes constitueixen el tema dels plans, i els

enquadraments i composicions romanen subordinats al seu moviment. Són així aquests cossos els que —si més no, indirectament— decideixen l'espai del camp i el fora de camp: les seues expressions (gestuals, però també sonores) i els seus desplaçaments indiquen cap a on ha de dirigir-se la càmera. La cinematografia de *Los idiotas* s'allibera així de les limitacions tradicionalment imposades pel guió tècnic i el *storyboard* i encaixa amb la caracterització que Deleuze fa del *cinema del cos* com aquell en què la performativitat reemplaça la causalitat, impedint concebre el film com a mera reproducció d'un guió (1987, pp. 251-270). O, si fem servir la nomenclatura de Fildes (2018, pp. 191-192), von Trier es comporta com un caçador-recolector (*hunter-gatherer*) que cerca i segueix els moviments impredictibles del seu blanc com si fóra un documentalista obert a la improvisació i s'allunya de la planificació acurada del granger (*farmer*) qui segueix, presa rere presa, les pautes de filmació imposades per les rutines del cinema de la indústria.

El següents plans del passatge, per la seua banda, remarquen que l'atenció als cossos no sols es manifesta en la persecució d'aquests per part de la càmera. Encetada ja l'orgia, la càmera es situa en el mig de l'acció disposada a cobrir l'auge de la festa sexual. Integrada en el grup com si fóra una participant més, enregistra des de ben prop l'amalgama de cossos fragmentats per la curta escala dels plans, prenent els genitals i els posats discapacitats dels personatges com als seus principals motius. La minimització de la distància entre càmera i cossos es revela ací, com en molts altres moments de *Los idiotas*, com a ingredient clau en l'estil de filmació de la pel·lícula i com a una altra de les qüestions que ens permeten vincular-lo amb la pràctica cinematogràfica de Jean Rouch. No en va, podríem afirmar que en ambdós apropaments fílmics l'acte d'enregistrar se'ns presenta, com diria Esbert (2016, p. 10), com a experiència sensorial en què la càmera està al servei d'una forma horitzontal de trobada amb l'altre.

Aquesta proximitat de la càmera de cap manera comporta necessàriament la seua estabilitat. Ans al contrari, el reenquadrament en busca de nous motius constitueix igualment una constant en aquests plans de curta escala, com podem observar en l'escena d'amor entre Jeppe i Josephine immediatament posterior amb què es tanca l'episodi de l'orgia. Al marge del grup, la parella comença la seua aproximació física en una habitació del pis de dalt. A mesura que els joves van apropant-se, la càmera s'acosta als dos i l'escala dels plans va minvant. L'ànsia devoradora de la càmera escruta les mirades, besos i plors dels amants, tot volent escodrinyar la veritat de l'instant i del detall (Figs. 9-12). La reducció de la distància entre càmera i personatges (reforçada en diversos moments de *Los idiotas* amb l'ús del *zoom in*) ens apropa en moments del film com aquests a l'emoció més nua i a la intimitat més feridora mitjançant la mostració de l'expressió o el gest en què es condensa la força de l'acció, oferint-nos una bona il·lustració d'allò que Deleuze anomena *imatge-afecció* (1984, pp. 131-150).

Veiem, doncs, com la fixació amb els cossos per part de l'estil de filmació de von Trier en *Los idiotas* es manifesta de diverses maneres. Com l'examen de la posada en quadre del passatge de l'orgia ens ha permès comprovar, el seguiment del moviment dels cossos (inclosa la seua persecució) per part de la càmera, la reducció quasi malaltissa de la distància entre subjectes filmats i operador i l'afegit afany escrutador del *zoom in* es presenten com a eines fonamentals per a la reivindicació formal de la corporeïtat que el film duu a terme. Abans de finalitzar amb el comentari del passatge, no obstant, volem remarcar un segon sentit en què el plantejament formal reivindica el cos i que ens porta a valorar el treball de càmera posant ara l'accent no tant en allò que focalitza la seua atenció sinó en la

manera com realitza els seus moviments de reenquadrament, això és, derivant l'atenció des de la *filmació del moviment* cap al *moviment de la filmació*.

Figs. 9-12: L'apropament entre Jeppe i Josephine és subratllat amb la progressiva aproximació de la càmera

Com observem especialment en certs fragments que hem comentat —com ara en els plans en què la càmera oscil·la entre la imatge de Stoffer i la de Nana abans d'encetar-se la festa sexual, en les anades i tornades de Stoffer en el seu intent de convèncer Susanne perquè participe en l'orgia o en la persecució d'aquesta pel jardí— la càmera mira i es comporta com un cos: busca, corre i escruta amb els seus evidents gestos. Les imatges que ens ofereix el film són fruit d'una *càmera-cos* o, per continuar fent servir paraules d'Esbert (2016, p. 17), d'un operador que *fa cos amb la càmera* i deixa constància de la dimensió física de l'experiència creativa de rodatge. En efecte, lluny d'amagar-se com a invisible observadora de les accions, la càmera de *Los idiotas* ens manifesta la seua condició de *res extensa*, es reivindica com a cos que ocupa un espai i un temps. La seua tasca no és oferir la "*view from nowhere*" encastellada pel cinema hegemònic. Tot al contrari, allò que es proposa és copsar la veritat de l'instant mitjançant la "*view from now-here*"[3], des de l'*ací* i l'*ara* que el moviment danès reivindica.

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[3] El joc de paraules emprat ens el proporciona Früchtl (en Schmerheim, 2013, 109, nota 168).

Conclusions

Iniciàvem el nostre recorregut apropant-nos al moviment Dogma Dance i ressaltant les dues qüestions que trobàvem nuclears en la seua iniciativa, a saber, el refús a la sovintejada jerarquia de la realització audiovisual de la videodansa sobre el coreogràfic i la defensa de l'espai central que ha d'ocupar el cos humà en aquesta pràctica artística. Ens preguntàvem aleshores quins eren els beneficis que la videodansa podia trobar en la proposta de Dogma 95 i fins a quin extrem no podia resultar contradictori mirar d'atacar l'esmentada jerarquia mitjançant la inspiració en —i vinculació programàtica amb— un moviment cinematogràfic com el sorgit a Dinamarca. Mentre exploràvem els manifestos i conjunts de regles d'ambdós moviments, hem al·ludit als interessos que es revelaven com a comuns —el refús a la propensió a l'espectacularització i l'efectisme en què cau un cert ús de les noves tecnologies, l'aposta per un altre ús del digital que tendeix cap a la "democratització" amb les produccions de baix pressupost, la concepció de la restricció com a incentiu per a la creativitat— i fins i tot hem al·ludit al rèdit publicitari que Dogma Dance poguera haver perseguit en associar-se a l'aventura de Vinterberg i von Trier. Però l'examen d'aqueixa regla de Dogma 95 que el moviment de videodansa copia literalment ens ha portat a centrar l'atenció en la interpretació que von Trier fa d'aquesta i, conseqüentment, en l'estil de filmació que se'n deriva i que podem apreciar a *Los idiotas*. L'anàlisi ens ha servit per detectar les diverses maneres com el treball de càmera efectuat al film apunta cap a la reivindicació de la corporeïtat i això ens permetrà acabar d'arrodonir ara la resposta als anteriors interrogants sobre el veritable interès de Dogma Dance en el moviment capitanejat per von Trier.

Després del nostre recorregut estem en disposició de confirmar la hipòtesi que de forma més o menys explícita llançàvem, a saber, que un dels majors atractius que el moviment danès representa per a Dogma Dance ve donat pel pes que el cos humà té en l'estil de filmació que degota la regla compartida i que troba en *Los idiotas* la seua màxima expressió. És més, podríem afirmar fins i tot que aqueixa atenció que el treball de càmera de von Trier dedica als cossos és el major atractiu per a la videodansa tal i com és concebuda per Dogma Dance, sobretot si s'accepta el nostre plantejament segons el qual el lloc central que el col·lectiu vol per al cos humà en la videodansa és justament el mitjà fonamental per a assegurar el caràcter híbrid de la disciplina pel qual advoquen. I és que, des del nostre punt de vista, trobem que mentre que el manifest de Dogma Dance mira de fixar l'objectiu prioritari del moviment —garantir la hibridesa de la videodansa tot posant en valor el coreogràfic davant de la tirania del fílmic— les dotze regles proposades tracten d'exposar els mitjans concrets per a aconseguir-ho, i d'entre aquests, la focalització en el cos (en tot els seus abasts) n'és la pedra angular.

D'aquesta manera, i sempre prenent com a referència la personal interpretació del decàleg que fa von Trier, semblen clars el profit i els beneficis per a la videodansa que Dogma Dance pretén extraure de l'aventura cinematogràfica danesa. En primer lloc, la revalorització del profílmic per sobre del tècnic que proposa Dogma 95 —i sobretot, la conseqüent fixació de la càmera de von Trier pels cossos que hem apreciat en l'anàlisi— entronquen perfectament amb el paper central que Dogma Dance preveu per al cos humà de la/es persona/es que ballen (regles 1, 8, 11). Així com per a von Trier la càmera ha d'estar al servei d'allò que esdevé inesperadament davant d'ella, així també Dogma Dance aposta per una realització audiovisual ajustada a —i harmonitzada amb— la dansa que està enregistrant. Aquest respecte per allò que està sent filmat en cap cas hauria de suposar una minimització o eliminació de la

realització audiovisual. En efecte, l'intent de Dogma Dance per defugir els processos narratius tradicionals i els seus modes de producció —o siga, per allunyar-se de la videodansa narrativa (*narrative screendance*) de què parla Payri (2018, p. 37)— no pretén desembocar en la supremacia absoluta de la dansa —és a dir, en una videodansa entesa com a mera prolongació de la dansa (*screendance as an extension of dance*), per continuar amb la triple categorització que proposa Payri (2018, p. 36),. La hibridesa que Dogma Dance reclama encaixa millor amb allò que Walon anomena *ciné-danse* (2016) o amb el que Payri designa com a "*screendance as an art form*" (2018, p. 37), això és, amb aqueixes propostes que conceben la videodansa com a diàleg horitzontal on la tècnica de filmació tracta de trobar-se en règim d'igualtat amb la coreografia que enregistra.

Segonament, la unitat càmera-cos filmant —o, si es vol, la càmera somatitzada que belluga amb els cossos— que hem pogut observar en els fragments analitzats de *Los idiotas* bé pot imbricar-se amb les aspiracions coreogràfiques que Dogma Dance persegueix. Entenem ara millor per què una càmera que no segueix unes directrius prèviament establertes és, precisament, una càmera que balla lligada a un realitzador dansant (regla 6 de Dogma Dance i 3 de Dogma 95), una càmera que assumeix l'intercanvi de coneixement entre dansa i filmació i que col·labora a l'hora de desenvolupar una estructura coreogràfica de la videodansa des de l'enregistrament. Sota aquests paràmetres, pensem que la convergència dels sentits en què apunten les matisacions de la regla compartida entre ambdós moviments que abans assenyalàvem resta suficientment aclarida.

I per últim, i com a conseqüència de l'anterior, la resposta que von Trier cerca i obté per part de l'espectador/a és, principalment, una de caire somàtic —això és, una resposta del cos que l'espectador/a evidentment és. Açò no pot sinó engalzar amb la mirada hàptica que, infravalorada tradicionalment, estimem que pretén Dogma Dance per a l'espectador/a d'una videodansa entesa —en consonància amb Walon (2014)— com a mitjà dels sentits que desitja una experiència encarnada en la seua audiència.

Així les coses, no jutgem que hi haja contradicció en la mirada cap al cinema de Dogma Dance perquè la seua no és una exploració de solucions en la tirania del model cinematogràfic dominant, sinó una recerca d'inspiració en un moviment de resistència que com Dogma 95 que, tot i el seu afany narratiu, entronca amb un discurs audiovisual alternatiu caracteritzat per reivindicar el cos i recórrer a ell com a gest polític. I és que, al cap i a la fi, l'atenció a la corporeïtat que observem en *Los idiotas* i que Dogma Dance reclama per a la videodansa no sols s'oposa a la voluntat de control racional que advertim en el cinema tradicional sinó també a les bases de la nostra cultura moderna i logocentrista sobre la qual s'assenta l'hegemonia del cinema de la indústria.

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"Una videodanza se define por su énfasis en el cuerpo": Dogma Dance y su defensa de la hibridez de la videodanza

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Abstract

Dogma Dance was born in 2000 with the desire to renew the world of videodance. The main objective of the initiative is to vindicate the hybrid character of the discipline and to move away from the dominance of filmmaking over choreography. The movement finds an evident inspiration in Dogma 95, the cinematographic current that emerged a few years before, led by Lars von Trier. First, we contrast the manifestos and sets of rules of both movements and specially the rule that Dogma Dance literally copies from the Vow of Chastity of the Danish current. Then we value the personal interpretation that von Trier makes of this rule from the analysis of the filming style of The Idiots. *The examination of the framing of a significant passage of the film allows us to assert that Dogma Dance's main attraction to the Danish movement is about reclaiming the corporeality, which is key to guarantee the hybridization of videodance targeted by Dogma Dance.*

Resumen

Dogma Dance surge en 2000 con la voluntad de renovar el mundo de la videodanza. El objetivo principal de la iniciativa consiste en reivindicar el carácter híbrido de la disciplina y alejarse de la dominancia de la realización audiovisual sobre lo coreográfico. El movimiento encuentra una evidente inspiración en Dogma 95, la corriente cinematográfica surgida unos años antes y liderada por Lars von Trier. Contrastamos primero los manifiestos y conjuntos de reglas de ambos movimientos y especialmente la regla que Dogma Dance copia literalmente del Voto de castidad de la corriente danesa. Valoramos entonces la interpretación personal que von Trier hace de esta regla a partir del análisis del estilo de filmación de Los idiotas. *El examen de la puesta en cuadro de un pasaje significativo de la película nos permite mantener que el principal atractivo que Dogma Dance encuentra en el movimiento danés radica en una reivindicación de la corporeidad que resulta clave para garantizar la hibridez que Dogma Dance quiere para la videodanza.*

Biografía

Enric Burgos es licenciado en Filosofía y en Comunicación Audiovisual por la Universitat de València. En 2017 obtiene el título de doctor en Ciencias de la Comunicación por la Universitat Jaume I con la tesis Amenaces i impulsos de l'escepticisme modern en el cinema de canvi de segle. Una lectura en clau cavelliana del Projecte idiota de Lars von Trier.

Ha trabajado como profesor asociado en el área de Comunicación Audiovisual de la Universitat Politècnica de València (2007-2020). Actualmente forma parte del Departamento de Teoría de los Lenguajes y Ciencias de la Comunicación de la Universitat de València así como del Departamento de Filosofía y Sociología de la Universitat Jaume I. Sus intereses de investigación se centran en las desviaciones del modelo cinematográfico hegemónico así como en el pensamiento de Stanley Cavell.

Ha participado en dos proyectos internacionales de investigación, en cuatro proyectos de innovación docente, ha intervenido en más de una veintena de congresos nacionales e internacionales y su aportación figura en numerosos compendios de actas. Hasta el momento ha publicado dos libros, seis artículos en revistas especializadas (como por ejemplo L'Atalante) y cinco capítulos de libro en obras colectivas de editoriales de prestigio (como Thémata o Comares).

Introducción

En octubre del 2000 Katrina McPherson, Litza Bixler y Deveril Garraghan se proponen revitalizar el mundo de la videodanza haciendo públicos los fundamentos del movimiento Dogma Dance. Inspirados principalmente en la corriente cinematográfica Dogma 95 —solo hay que atender al nombre de ambos movimientos y a sus listados de reglas que fijaban para la obtención de certificados para advertir la evidente influencia—, los tres artistas con base en Gran Bretaña intentan contrarrestar el peligroso rumbo que la videodanza está tomando con su progresiva inserción en el mundo de la producción comercial mediante la apuesta por el tándem bajo presupuesto/alto valor artístico. Los mismos fundadores de Dogma Dance expresan así los riesgos que amenazan la videodanza: "perhaps in an attempt to be taken seriously in the world of television and film, dance films are losing the connection to dance. We see many dance films in which the focus is the design, the lighting or the telling of a story through the conventions of narrative film, with the dance content becoming an afterthought" (en Banes y Carroll, 2003, p. 176). Como McPherson mantendría años después, el objetivo principal del movimiento era expresar aquello que pensaban que la videodanza tenía que ser en esos momentos y lanzar el provocador reto al resto de realizadores y realizadoras (en Rosenberg y McPherson, 2014, pp. 155-156). La respuesta superó sus expectativas y se generó un interesante espacio para el debate y la creación. He aquí el manifiesto de Dogma Dance y el conjunto de reglas que el colectivo propuso:

> YES to the development of dance technique for film—YES to a sharing of knowledge between dance and film—YES to the development of choreographic structure in film—YES to technology which aids rather than hinders—YES to human dancers—YES to the creation of a new genre—YES to safe dancers—YES to the encouragement of dance filmmakers—YES to a new hybrid form.
>
> NO to unsafe dancers—NO to the primacy of equipment and technology over human creativity—NO to the breakdown of choreographic structure—NO to purposeless hierarchies—NO to unbalanced wages—NO to the dominance of film in Dance film.
>
> In order to certify as a *Dogma Dance* film, the following rules must be adhered to:
>
> 1. The term 'dance film' will be used to describe the finished piece. A dance film is defined by its emphasis on the human body (still or in motion). In this context, 'dance' refers to the actions of human beings only.
>
> 2. The movement context of the film should clearly display choreographic intent. It should not be mime, nor should it be purely pedestrian movement.
>
> 3. Only one camera should be used.
>
> 4. A movement phrase (whatever the length) should be filmed in one type of shot only, i.e. not 'covered' by several different angles or sizes of shot.
>
> 5. Film only on mini-DV.
>
> 6. The camera must be hand-held. Any movement or immobility attainable in the hand is permitted. A moving camera is a dancing camera.
>
> 7. Only one lamp may be used. It can be any size. Other than that, use only natural light or artificial light that already exists in the location.
>
> 8. The camera, location or any other extraneous equipment should not impede the dancers movement. In order for a film to be a certified Dogma Dance film, the performing dancers should sign a written confirmation that they have felt this rule has been adhered to.

9. The dance film must be structured in screen time and space, i.e. it should be edited according to the rhythms dictated by the film rather than for continuity of the live choreography.

10. There must be no digitally created special effects, such as dissolves, created on the camera or the edit. Changes of speed are allowed, but only if they have intent with the choreography and are not used to cover up poor dance/film making.

11. The maximum length for a dance film should be 10 minutes, with at least 80% of this time being filled with bodies (or parts of bodies) in frame.

12. There must be a meaningful relationship between the soundtrack and the visual content of the dance film. It is not OK to cut to a musical track (i.e. a dance film is not a pop promo) or slap on music afterwards (McPherson, 2013, pp. 251-253).

Un simple vistazo al manifiesto y las doce reglas nos permite detectar un par de cuestiones que encontramos nucleares en la propuesta de Dogma Dance y que trataremos de ir desplegando de manera entrelazada a lo largo de nuestro trabajo. Por un lado, la reivindicación del carácter híbrido de la videodanza y la consiguiente denuncia de la habitual jerarquía de la realización audiovisual de cariz narrativo sobre la danza —asuntos latentes desde los orígenes de la disciplina y que continúan estando presentes en la práctica y en el ámbito teórico, como testimonian escritos como los de Rosenberg (2010), Lewis-Smith (2016) o Fildes (2018). Y por la otra, la defensa del lugar central que debe ocupar el cuerpo humano en la videodanza.

En efecto, y sobre todo en las partes de la declaración de intenciones de Dogma Dance que más se alejan del documento fundacional de Dogma 95 para centrarse en lo más propio de la videodanza, tanto la reivindicación de la hibridez como la insistencia en el cuerpo son especialmente subrayadas. En los fragmentos donde la redacción y los contenidos más se acercan a las directrices del colectivo cinematográfico danés estas dos cuestiones, sin embargo, parecen diluirse. Por muy superficial que pueda resultar la observación, esta plantea, cuando menos, unos cuantos interrogantes que parecen pertinentes: ¿Dónde radica el verdadero interés por asociarse tan abiertamente con el movimiento capitaneado por Lars von Trier? ¿Hay algo que Dogma 95 pueda aportar realmente a la videodanza o se trata de una estrategia de publicidad consistente en vincularse a una iniciativa que vive entonces sus mejores momentos? Y, por encima de todo, ¿hasta qué punto no resulta paradójico que Dogma Dance abogue por acabar con la dominancia de lo fílmico sobre la danza y recurra como fuente de inspiración a un movimiento cinematográfico de ficción y con voluntad narrativa? Para tratar de ir respondiendo estas preguntas estimamos conveniente dirigir a continuación nuestra mirada hacia la corriente danesa.

Dogma 95: un espíritu que va más allá de lo meramente cinematográfico

El año que Dogma Dance se da a conocer, el movimiento ideado por von Trier y Vinterberg ya cuenta con más de una docena de films certificados. Entre ellos, los dos dirigidos por los fundadores del colectivo y que se estrenan en la misma edición del Festival de Cannes, esto es, *Celebración* (*Dogme #1. Festen*, Thomas Vinterberg, 1998) y *Los idiotas* (*Dogme #2. Idioterne*, Lars von Trier) así como también las dos películas —*Mifune* (*Dogme #3. Mifunes sidste sang*, 1999) y *El rey está vivo* (*Dogme #4. The King is Alive*, 2000)— realizadas, respectivamente, por Søren Kragh-Jakobsen y Kristian Levring, los otros dos miembros que pronto se sumaron a la hermandad. La corriente vivía en esos momentos su etapa de eclosión e internacionalización, a pesar de que a la vez empezaba a advertirse que Dogma 95 estaba convirtiéndose en una moda y ganaba en taquilla todo aquello que perdía en subversión.

La historia se había iniciado cinco años antes, en marzo del 1995, cuando von Trier presenta el nuevo movimiento en un encuentro de cineastas en París con las dosis de teatralidad a las que nos tiene acostumbrados. Después de leer un manifiesto[1] cargado de retórica marxista, von Trier enuncia ante la audiencia y con solemnidad católica el Voto de castidad que regirá la praxis de la hermandad:

I swear to submit to the following set of rules drawn up and confirmed by DOGMA 95:

1. Shooting must be done on location. Props and sets must not be brought in (if a particular prop is necessary for the story, a location must be chosen where this prop is to be found).

2. The sound must never be produced apart from the images or vice versa. (Music must not be used unless it occurs where the scene is being shot).

3. The camera must be hand-held. Any movement or immobility attainable in the hand is permitted. (The film must not take place where the camera is standing: shooting must take place where the film takes place).

4. The film must be in color. Special lighting is not acceptable. (If there is too little light for exposure the scene must be cut or a single lamp be attached to the camera.)

5. Optical work and filters are forbidden.

6. The film must not contain superficial action. (Murders, weapons, etc. must not occur).

7. Temporal and geographical alienation are forbidden. (That is to say that the film takes place here and now).

8. Genre movies are not acceptable.

9. The film format must be Academy 35 mm.

10. The director must not be credited.

Furthermore I swear as a director to refrain from personal taste! I am no longer an artist. I swear to refrain from creating a "work", as I regard the instant as more important than the whole. My supreme goal is to force the truth out of my characters and settings. I swear to do so by all the means available and at the cost of any good taste and any aesthetic considerations. (Vinterberg i von Trier, 2000).

Si atendemos al manifiesto de Dogma 95, observamos en él cierto paralelismo estructural con el de Dogma Dance. Así como veíamos que el del grupo de videodanza dedicaba un párrafo a las proclamas encabezadas por YES y otro a las que empezaban por NO, así también Dogma 95 había dedicado años antes la mitad de su escrito a la crítica más feroz y la otra mitad a la vertiente constructiva del movimiento. Más allá de los irónicos y provocadores ataques a la Nouvelle Vague y el concepto de autor, el blanco último de la corriente danesa es el llamado *cine de ilusión* que podemos entender como mutación del modelo cinematográfico hegemónico en tiempos digitales. Este cine de ilusión es definido en el manifiesto por su previsibilidad y superficialidad pero, sobre todo, por su perverso uso de las nuevas tecnologías, por sus trucajes y cosméticos que amenazan con borrar los

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[1] No reproducimos aquí por cuestiones de espacio el manifiesto Dogma 95, sino solo el Voto de Castidad que contrastaremos con las normas establecidas por Dogma Dance. A diferencia de lo que sucede con el documento inaugural del movimiento de videodanza, tanto el manifiesto como el Voto de Castidad de Dogma 95 son fácilmente localizables. Ambos se pueden consultar, por ejemplo, en www.dogme95.dk, el sitio web que homenajea al movimiento y que reproduce parte de los contenidos que se publicaron en la página originaria ya desaparecida. En la bibliografía, no obstante, remitimos a una publicación que contempla los paréntesis explicativos de algunas normas que hemos incluido en el cuerpo del texto y que serán de importancia para nuestro desarrollo.

últimos granos de la verdad. Lejos, aun así, de demonizar las nuevas posibilidades que abre la tecnología digital, Dogma 95 aboga para ponerlas al servicio de la democratización del medio, de la recuperación de la esencia del cine (esto es, de la realidad profílmica de la que se nutre) y de la investigación de la verdad en cada personaje y escena.

Sin duda, esta mirada ambivalente hacia la nueva realidad tecnológica es uno de los principales puntos de unión entre los dos movimientos, como también lo es la austeridad que rezuman sendos conjuntos de normas y su voluntad compartida de potenciar la creatividad a partir de las restricciones. Pero a pesar de la innegable dependencia de Dogma Dance respecto de la propuesta de su homólogo cinematográfico, no podemos obviar que ambos movimientos surgen de un caldo de cultivo común, de un tipo de (si se nos permite) "tradición subversiva" que hunde sus raíces en un pasado lejano y que vive su eclosión más llamativa en el paso de los sesenta a los setenta del último siglo. Dogma 95, por lo tanto, no brota de la nada y está igualmente en deuda con planteamientos de resistencia cultural anteriores.

Una parte considerable de la bibliografía sobre Dogma 95 se ha dedicado a señalar precedentes cinematográficos con los que el movimiento danés entra a dialogar. El recorrido nos llevaría desde aquellas interpretaciones que insisten en remarcar el peso ejercido en el colectivo por Dziga Vertov (Koutsourakis, 2011, pp. 138-144) o de la influencia del neorrealismo italiano (Weisberg, 2000; Badley, 2006, p. 84) a otras que encuentran referencias más próximas en el tiempo a la propuesta Dogma 95 y remiten a las prácticas cinematográficas de John Cassavetes o Shirley Clarke (Smith, 2003, p. 114), sin olvidar las conexiones que Dogma 95 muestra con movimientos como por ejemplo el Free Cinema (MacKenzie, 2003, p. 51), el Cinéma Vérité (Badley, 2006, p. 84), la Nueva Ola danesa o el nuevo cine alemán.

Menos habitual es encontrar alusiones a referentes provenientes de otros ámbitos del arte y la cultura que, no obstante, influyeron igualmente en Dogma 95. Podríamos así hablar del peso que ejerció en el movimiento danés el Teatro de la Pobreza de Jerzy Grotowski, de la influencia del grupo Oulipo o de la impronta del polifacético Andy Warhol (Rubio, 2010, p. 5). Y podríamos apuntar de manera parecida a las diversas prácticas artísticas —como el videoarte, la performance o la misma videodanza — que proliferan especialmente a mitad de los sesenta, que se ven impulsadas por los cambios tecnológicos del momento y que apuestan por el cuerpo humano como componente clave de su disidencia y resistencia. De ninguna manera hemos de descartar, pues, que ese otro referente que Dogma Dance contempló al formular su iniciativa —a saber, la bailarina, coreógrafa y realizadora Yvonne Rainer y su *No Manifesto* de 1965— dejara también su huella en von Trier y marcara su propuesta dogmática. Si tenemos además en cuenta que el principal ideólogo de Dogma 95 no solo se ha dedicado a cultivar el cine narrativo sino que se ha interesado también por el experimental, la videoinstalación o la pintura y, sobre todo, si atendemos al peculiar estilo de filmación del danés quizás podamos ir entendiendo desde otro prisma el interés que la videodanza —y más concretamente, los fundadores de Dogma Dance— mostraron por el movimiento surgido en Dinamarca. Con otras palabras, tal vez la corriente cinematográfica sí que podía ofrecer algo valioso al propósito de Dogma Dance de defender la hibridez de la videodanza y reclamar el lugar que en ella ocupa el cuerpo humano.

La regla compartida. El interés radica en la interpretación

Bajo esta nueva luz conviene reconsiderar lo que hace poco vislumbrábamos, esto es, la presunta desaparición de estos dos principales objetivos de Dogma Dance en esos pasajes de su documento inaugural donde más se ceñían al escrito firmado por Vinterberg y von Trier. Y lo haremos acudiendo justamente al fragmento donde la coincidencia en la redacción es más acusada. Nos estamos refiriendo a la norma que obliga al operador al sostenimiento de la cámara con su cuerpo (regla 3 del decálogo de Dogma 95 y regla 6 de Dogma Dance). Como podemos observar, la formulación es idéntica. Ahora bien, los paréntesis posteriores que tratan de desplegar la norma varían sustancialmente (aunque, como intentaremos mostrar en lo sucesivo, responden a un mismo espíritu). Mientras que el comentario de la regla que hace Dogma 95 matiza que la película no tiene que ocurrir donde la cámara está situada sino que el rodaje debe ocurrir donde la película tiene lugar, en el texto de Dogma Dance se añade que una cámara en movimiento es una cámara que baila. Las nuevas cuestiones que surgen nos ayudarán a proseguir nuestro camino: ¿Por qué Dogma Dance copia literalmente la regla 3 de Dogma 95? ¿Qué le resulta tan atractivo de esta? ¿En qué sentido sugerimos que los añadidos a la norma de los dos movimientos apuntan en una misma dirección?

Desde nuestro punto de vista, aquello que seduce a Dogma Dance no es tanto la regla en sí sino una particular aplicación de esta regla o, si se quiere, y más concretamente, la interpretación de la regla que observamos en la praxis dogmática de von Trier y, en parte, también en la de Vinterberg. Intentaremos explicarnos a continuación. Por mucho que Dogma 95 remita en su manifiesto a la disciplina militar de la vanguardia y a ese uniforme colectivo que todas sus películas debían vestir como consecuencia del fiel seguimiento de las normas, solo hay que visionar los primeros films de la hermandad para comprobar que cada cinta propone una particular interpretación de las reglas y obtiene un resultado diferente. De este modo, y según entendemos, las reglas no determinan lo que cada película es, sino que cada película de Dogma 95 resulta el lugar en el que —el juego con el que— se tratan de entender las reglas, asumiendo la responsabilidad y el compromiso que seguir la regla supone.

Así las cosas, y volviendo a la tercera norma de la hermandad danesa —y sexta de Dogma Dance—, podemos comprobar que el seguimiento que hacen de esta Vinterberg y von Trier en *Celebración* y *Los idiotas* respectivamente es muy diferente de la manera como Kragh-Jakobsen la acata durante la realización de *Mifune*. Mientras que en los dos primeros films la cámara es víctima de una obsesión por los cuerpos y se dirige principalmente allá donde está el movimiento sin preocuparse por la calidad técnica de la imagen, en *Mifune*, el operador de cámara (Anthony Dod Mantle, el mismo que trabajó en *Celebración*) consigue la estabilidad del encuadre con la cámara al hombro que las películas anteriores rehuían. Juzgamos, por tanto, que la especial atención al cuerpo humano que muestran los films dogmáticos de Vinterberg y von Trier es aquello que más interesa a Dogma Dance.

En concordancia con cuanto acabamos de mantener, a pesar de los parecidos que podemos advertir entre el trabajo de cámara de *Celebración* y de *Los idiotas*, cada director presenta, sin embargo, su personal interpretación de las reglas y, así, un estilo de filmación particular. Hay al menos un par de motivos que nos llevan a centrar el análisis que en breve comenzaremos en el film de von Trier. El primero y más importante tiene que ver con la radicalidad con la que el trabajo de cámara de *Los idiotas* lleva a cabo la mencionada focalización en los cuerpos. Y es que si el film de von Trier fuera una videodanza no tendría ningún problema en cumplir con la exigencia de Dogma Dance relativa a la

presencia de la figura humana en el metraje (regla 11), puesto que no encontramos en la película prácticamente ningún momento en el que no aparezca alguno de sus personajes. En segundo lugar, decidimos analizar el estilo de filmación de la cinta del principal ideólogo de Dogma 95 porque muestra una continuidad y coherencia con el trabajo de cámara efectuado en otras obras del director que suponemos que no pasarían desapercibidas para los fundadores de Dogma Dance. No en vano, bien se podría mantener que von Trier formula la regla 3 del decálogo (y algunas otras más) a partir de la experiencia adquirida con la realización de *El reino* (*Riget*, 1994) —la serie de televisión que se estrenó en Dinamarca un mes antes de que se redactara el manifiesto—, que la pone ya en práctica en *Rompiendo las olas* (*Breaking the Waves*, 1996) antes de su aventura dogmática y que, poco después de esta, la vuelve a usar en *Bailar en la oscuridad* (*Dancer in the Dark*, 2000), film estrenado en el Reino Unido unos meses antes del surgimiento de la iniciativa Dogma Dance.

Curiosamente, esta anterioridad de la praxis respecto de la formulación de las reglas que advertimos en von Trier se puede rastrear también en la obra de McPherson. Tanto es así que la misma artista reconoce abiertamente que su trabajo previo a Dogma Dance encaja bastante bien en los parámetros que el movimiento fijaría con posterioridad (en Rosenberg y McPherson, 2014, p. 156). Efectivamente, y más allá de la observación de las reglas que demuestra *East South East* (2000) —la primera videodanza que obtuvo el certificado Dogma Dance—, piezas anteriores de McPherson como *Pace* (1995) o *Moment* (1999) exhiben obvias conexiones con la poética que se deriva de las doce reglas, y, muy especialmente, evidencian las aspiraciones coreográficas de un trabajo de cámara que quieres captar los gestos expresivos y seguir enfáticamente el movimiento de las bailarinas.

La cámara que apunta y dispara. El episodio de la orgía de *Los idiotas* i el estilo de filmación

De aquí en adelante nos centraremos en la manera práctica como von Trier lidia con la tercera regla del decálogo durante el rodaje de *Los idiotas*. Antes de arrancar con el análisis, conviene dedicar unas líneas a ese estilo de filmación que von Trier usa en *Los idiotas* y, como hemos dicho, en otras creaciones del director próximas en el tiempo a su único film realizado bajo las directrices de Dogma 95. Con Simons (2007, pp. 123-124; 130; 149-151), nos referiremos a este método de grabación como *point and shoot style* o técnica consistente en apuntar y disparar. De acuerdo con este método con el que se trata de seguir la mencionada regla 3, von Trier y los otros dos operadores de cámara de *Los idiotas* grababan en continuidad cuanto iba aconteciendo ante la cámara, sin haber establecido previamente unos espacios en los que la acción debía desarrollarse.

La libertad interpretativa y la improvisación que von Trier fomenta en el equipo artístico le ayudan a liberarse del control que el director de ficción tradicionalmente asume respecto de la puesta en escena y puesta en cuadro y le ofrecen, además, y en virtud del procedimiento consistente en "apuntar y disparar", la posibilidad de que los actores y sus movimientos condicionen decisivamente las propiedades cinematográficas del film. Las tomas largas y el encuadre móvil —características fundamentales de la improvisación técnica que lleva a cabo el *point and shoot style*—, marcan así un trabajo de cámara que deposita la confianza en la tarea de los actores y les permite probar, también a ellos, la promesa purificadora de un proyecto con el que von Trier quiere alejarse de los

constreñimientos habituales del cine de la industria[2]. De acuerdo con esto y para hacer manifiesto el potencial liberador de la tercera regla Dogma 95, la aclaración de esta que se introducía entre paréntesis en el Voto de castidad podría quedar formulada de la manera siguiente: El equipo artístico y la realidad profílmica en su conjunto no tienen que ajustarse a las directrices de la cámara sino que es la cámara la que debe buscar y captar las expresiones y movimientos de actores y actrices a medida que van interactuando con (y descubriéndonos) el espacio profílmico.

Estas consideraciones iniciales sobre el *point and shoot style* nos ayudan a divisar la antes aludida convergencia de propósitos entre las matizaciones que añaden Dogma 95 y Dogma Dance a la regla que comparten. A la vez, nos posibilitan establecer conexiones entre nuestra exposición y varias reflexiones sobre la grabación de la videodanza, como por ejemplo la distinción que establece Rosenberg entre *dance for camera* y *dance with camera* (2010, p. 64), las tres diferentes estrategias de grabación de videodanza que Fildes contempla (2018, p. 191-192) o la aplicación de los postulados del *ciné-transe* de Jean Rouch a la videodanza que lleva a cabo Esbert (2016). Recurriendo puntualmente a estas aportaciones, trataremos a continuación de valorar el estilo de filmación que preside *Los idiotas* a partir del análisis de la puesta en cuadro de varios momentos del film que encontramos especialmente significativos.

La historia de *Los idiotas* nos acerca a un grupo de jóvenes que, liderados por Stoffer, se hacen pasar por personas con discapacidad intelectual con el presunto propósito de contactar con el idiota interior que es a menudo reprimido. A lo largo de todo el film, y tanto en las escenas más introspectivas del grupo como en esas donde su simulación es lanzada como provocación a la sociedad, la teatralización de la comuna idiota aparece marcada por la renuncia al lenguaje verbal y por la apuesta del cuerpo como vía de expresión. El cenit de las aspiraciones de la pandilla se alcanza en el episodio en el que los jóvenes celebran una fiesta que acaba derivando en orgía. El pasaje no solo sirve para ilustrar inmejorablemente la reivindicación del cuerpo que advertimos en el film si lo observamos desde una perspectiva temática sino que, además, nos sirve adecuadamente para evidenciar la manera como el *point and shoot style* comporta una paralela insistencia formal en el cuerpo humano. Es por ello que ceñiremos nuestro análisis al mencionado fragmento y lo presentaremos como extrapolable a la práctica totalidad de la cinta.

Durante los planos iniciales del episodio dedicados a acercarnos al acceso de los invitados al salón donde la fiesta tendrá lugar, la cámara muestra una estabilidad relativa. Al empezar a sonar la música diegética que ameniza la fiesta, en cambio, la cámara reacciona ante el movimiento de los cuerpos de los actores de manera paralela a como estos responden al sonido de la canción. Tras mostrarnos las frías primeras reacciones de una parte de los asistentes, una rápida panorámica horizontal capta el grupo al completo bailando alegremente y haciendo el idiota. La agilidad del montaje se suma en una fiesta donde la cámara parece bailar con los personajes para ofrecernos la imagen del impetuoso abrazo de Stoffer a Nana e, instantes después, con total desprecio por la continuidad de movimiento y de sonido, seguir la trayectoria impredecible de un Stoffer que acaba de pasar por delante del objetivo.

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[2] Dentro de estos constreñimientos encontraríamos el seguimiento fiel de un guion técnico y un *storyboard* de los que von Trier prescinde. Tan solo un laxo guion literario, adaptable a la dinámica de rodaje y continuamente revisado, sirvió de referencia durante la realización de *Los idiotas*.

No obstante, la música y el bullicio, los cuerpos y la cámara cesan repentinamente su actividad conjunta a partir del plano inmediatamente posterior. Stoffer, aquel en honor de quien se celebra la fiesta, decide en ese momento que la orgía debe empezar. La figura de Nana desnudándose atrae a partir de entonces la atención de Stoffer, como también la de la enunciación. Si antes la cámara intentaba bailar como los protagonistas, ahora parece mover su cabeza de un lado a otro, dirigiendo su mirada desde la perplejidad de un Stoffer que observa de pie hacia el cuerpo desnudo de Nana que yace en tierra. El montaje intercala un plano de conjunto con la reacción expectante de los asistentes para volver al plano americano de Stoffer, quien deja caer la botella de cerveza que tiene en la mano y se dirige hacia Nana, con el consiguiente movimiento de cámara que acompaña su desplazamiento. Un nuevo *jump cut* muestra directamente a Stoffer y la a joven en el suelo, mientras esta introduce la mano por debajo de sus calzoncillos.

Figs. 1-4: Las idas y venidas de Stoffer son mimetizadas por la cámara de *Los idiotas*

La cámara se contagia poco después de la actividad creciente de las figuras. Un inestable y rápido barrido nos permite apreciar la desnudez de unos cuerpos apenas distinguibles para acabar ofreciéndonos la imagen de Stoffer, quien tararea efusivamente una melodía y salta de manera compulsiva. Una panorámica semicircular ejecutada en dirección opuesta al movimiento inmediatamente anterior nos permite ver las reacciones del resto de la pandilla. A continuación, nueve planos darán cuenta en un minuto y veinticinco segundos de la integración de la reticente Susanne en la orgía. Primeramente, vemos a la joven en plano americano, sentada en el alféizar de la ventana y hojeando una revista, sin intención de sumarse al juego sexual. Stoffer se le aproxima y la cámara

sigue su acercamiento (Fig. 1). El líder de la pandilla baja el tirante del vestido de Susanne y, ante la negativa de esta, retrocede unos cuantos pasos inmediatamente, así como también lo hace la cámara (Fig. 2). Tanto Stoffer como el operador vuelven a repetir exactamente el mismo movimiento dos veces más. Los tres desplazamientos comportan evidentes y reiterados cambios de exposición en la figura de Stoffer, motivados por su variable distancia respecto de la luz natural que entra por la ventana (Figs. 3 y 4).

Los últimos planos referidos muestran especialmente la evidente convergencia entre la técnica consistente en apuntar y disparar que sigue von Trier y la *filmación-espejo* de la que habla Esbert (2016, p. 14) al acercarse al *ciné-transe* de Rouch. En efecto, la cámara de *Los idiotas* actúa miméticamente, sigue continuamente la acción y se mueve en función de los movimientos de los cuerpos filmados, entrando en su ritmo. Von Trier abandona el habitual procedimiento marcado por esa *mecánica de control* que Esbert presenta como antítesis de la *filmación-espejo* y lo hace de manera radical, sin buscar un posible equilibrio entre ambas maneras de abordar la filmación y asumiendo el riesgo de perder el/ los cuerpo/s filmado/s en el encuadre y acabar obteniendo una imagen técnicamente pobre.

Figs. 5-8: Los tres jóvenes persiguen a Susanne y la cámara persigue a los cuatro

Pero es el siguiente plano de los dedicados a mostrarnos cómo los jóvenes consiguen que Susanne se sume a la orgía el que mejor nos permite apreciar la obsesión de la técnica del *point and shoot style* por el movimiento de los cuerpos y sus acciones. Este plano empieza captando la espalda de Susanne mientras huye hacia al jardín (Fig. 5). Al salir, la joven es seguida por Stoffer, Axel y Miguel, que atraviesan la puerta poco antes de que el operador de cámara haga exactamente lo mismo (Fig. 6).

De nuevo, los evidentes cambios de luz afectan una toma que los ha llevado desde el interior de la casa hasta el jardín, y que se desarrolla, ya en el exterior, tanto en zonas iluminadas por el sol como en áreas situadas a la sombra. Los jóvenes persiguen a Susanne y la cámara corre detrás de los cuatro (Fig. 7). El largo plano permite apreciar la inestabilidad de la cámara y la deficiente grabación de audio al alejarse los actores del microfonista. Hasta podemos oír el ruido extradiegético que los bruscos movimientos del equipo técnico evitando las ramas de los árboles añaden a la banda sonora. Tras haber corrido unos veinte metros detrás de Susanne, Miguel consigue tirarla al suelo (Fig. 8).

Estos veinte segundos de metraje sin cortes nos posibilitan detectar la grabación ininterrumpida que caracteriza la *filmación-espejo* y, a la vez, recogen gran parte de las pretensiones de la técnica consistente en apuntar y disparar. La cámara al hombro se asocia con un encuadre móvil que reacciona a las acciones de los personajes y que encuentra motivos en sus expresiones y trayectorias. Los cuerpos de los protagonistas constituyen el tema de los planos y los encuadres y composiciones dependen de su movimiento, que indica hacia donde debe dirigirse la cámara. Estos cuerpos, pues, deciden el espacio del campo y fuera de campo. *Los idiotas* trata de liberarse así de las limitaciones tradicionalmente impuestas por el guion técnico y el *storyboard* y se ajusta a la caracterización que Deleuze hace del cine del cuerpo como aquel en que la performatividad reemplaza la causalidad, impidiendo concebir el film como mera reproducción de un guion (1987, pp. 251-270). O, si usamos la nomenclatura de Fildes (2018, pp. 191-192), von Trier se comporta como un cazador-recolector (*hunter-gatherer*) que busca y sigue los movimientos impredecibles de su blanco como si fuera un documentalista abierto a la improvisación y se aleja de la planificación cuidadosa del granjero (*farmer*) que sigue, toma tras toma, las pautas de filmación impuestas por las rutinas del cine de la industria.

Los siguientes planos del pasaje, por su parte, remarcan que la atención a los cuerpos no solo se manifiesta en la persecución de estos por parte de la cámara. Comenzada ya la orgía, la cámara se sitúa en el medio de la acción dispuesta a cubrir el auge de la fiesta sexual. Integrada en el grupo como si fuera una participante más, graba desde bien cerca la amalgama de cuerpos fragmentados por la corta escala de los planos, tomando los genitales y los gestos disfuncionales de los personajes como sus principales motivos. La minimización de la distancia entre cámara y cuerpos se revela aquí, como en otros muchos momentos de *Los idiotas*, como ingrediente clave en el estilo de filmación de la película y como otra de las cuestiones que nos permiten vincularlo con la práctica cinematográfica de Jean Rouch. No en vano, podríamos afirmar que en ambos acercamientos fílmicos el acto de grabar se nos presenta, como diría Esbert (2016, p. 10), como experiencia sensorial en la que la cámara está al servicio de una forma horizontal de encuentro con el otro.

Esta proximidad de la cámara de ninguna manera comporta necesariamente su estabilidad. Al contrario, el reencuadre en busca de nuevos motivos sigue constituyendo una constante en los planos de escala corta, como podemos observar en la escena de amor entre Jeppe y Josephine inmediatamente posterior con la que se cierra el episodio de la orgía. Al margen del grupo, la pareja empieza su aproximación física en una habitación del piso de arriba. A medida que los jóvenes van acercándose, la cámara se acerca a los dos y la escala de los planos va menguando. El ansia devoradora de la cámara escruta las miradas, besos y llantos de los amantes, queriendo escudriñar la verdad del instante y del detalle (Figs. 9-12). La reducción de la distancia entre cámara y personajes (reforzada en algunas ocasiones con el uso del *zoom in*) nos acerca en momentos del film como estos a la emoción

desnuda y a la intimidad mediante la mostración de la expresión o gesto en los que se condensa la fuerza de la acción, abriéndonos a aquello que Deleuze denomina *imagen-afección* (1984, pp. 131-150).

Vemos, pues, como la fijación con los cuerpos por parte del estilo de filmación de von Trier en *Los idiotas* se manifiesta de varias maneras. Como el examen de la puesta en cuadro del pasaje de la orgía nos ha permitido comprobar, el seguimiento del movimiento de los cuerpos (incluida su persecución) por parte de la cámara, la reducción casi enfermiza de la distancia entre sujetos filmados y operador y el añadido afán escrutador del *zoom in* se presentan como herramientas fundamentales para la reivindicación formal de la corporeidad que el film lleva a cabo. Antes de finalizar con el comentario del pasaje, no obstante, queremos remarcar un segundo sentido en el que el planteamiento formal reivindica el cuerpo y que nos lleva a valorar el trabajo de cámara poniendo ahora el énfasis no tanto en lo que centra su atención sino en el modo como efectúa sus movimientos de reencuadre, esto es, derivando la atención desde la filmación del movimiento hacia el movimiento de la filmación.

Figs. 9-12: El acercamiento entre Jeppe y Josephine es subrayado con la progresiva aproximación de la cámara

Como observamos especialmente en ciertos fragmentos que hemos comentado —como por ejemplo en los planos en los que la cámara oscila entre la imagen de Stoffer y la de Nana antes de comenzar la fiesta sexual, en las idas y venidas de Stoffer en su intento de convencer a Susanne para que participe en la orgía o en la persecución de esta por el jardín— la cámara mira y se comporta como un cuerpo: busca, corre y escruta con sus evidentes gestos. Las imágenes que nos ofrece el film son fruto de una

cámara-cuerpo o, para continuar usando palabras de Esbert (2016, p. 17), de un operador que *hace cuerpo con la cámara* y deja constancia de la dimensión física de la experiencia creativa de rodaje. En efecto, sin esconderse como observadora invisible de las acciones, la cámara de *Los idiotas* evidencia su condición de *res extensa* y se reivindica como cuerpo. Su intención no es ofrecer la "*view from nowhere*" que quiere el modelo cinematográfico dominante sino la "*view from now-here*"[3] (desde el *aquí* y el *ahora* que el movimiento danés reivindica) con el que captar la verdad del instante.

Conclusiones

Iniciábamos nuestro recorrido acercándonos al movimiento Dogma Dance y resaltando las dos cuestiones que encontrábamos nucleares en su iniciativa, a saber, el rechazo a la habitual jerarquía de la realización audiovisual de la videodanza sobre lo coreográfico y la defensa del espacio central que debe ocupar el cuerpo humano en esta práctica artística. Nos preguntábamos entonces cuáles eran los beneficios que la videodanza podía encontrar en la propuesta de Dogma 95 y hasta qué extremo no podía resultar contradictorio intentar atacar la mencionada jerarquía mediante la inspiración en —y vinculación programática con— un movimiento cinematográfico como el surgido en Dinamarca. Mientras explorábamos los manifiestos y conjuntos de reglas de ambos movimientos, hemos mencionado los intereses que se revelaban como comunes —el rechazo a la propensión a la espectacularización y el efectismo en que cae cierto uso de las nuevas tecnologías, la apuesta por otro uso de lo digital que tiende hacia la "democratización" con producciones de bajo presupuesto, la concepción de la restricción como incentivo para la creatividad— e incluso hemos aludido al rédito publicitario que Dogma Dance pudiera haber perseguido al asociarse a la aventura de Vinterberg y von Trier. Pero el examen de esa regla de Dogma 95 que el movimiento de videodanza copia literalmente nos ha llevado a centrar la atención en la interpretación que von Trier hace de esta y, consiguientemente, en el estilo de filmación que se deriva de ella y que podemos apreciar en *Los idiotas*. El análisis nos ha servido para detectar las diversas maneras como el trabajo de cámara efectuado en el film apunta hacia la reivindicación de la corporeidad y esto nos permitirá acabar de perfilar ahora la respuesta a los anteriores interrogantes sobre el verdadero interés de Dogma Dance en el movimiento capitaneado por von Trier.

Después de nuestro recorrido estamos en disposición de confirmar la hipótesis que de forma más o menos explícita lanzábamos, a saber, que uno de los mayores atractivos que el movimiento danés representa para Dogma Dance viene dado por el peso que el cuerpo humano tiene en el estilo de filmación que rezuma la regla compartida y que encuentra en *Los idiotas* su máxima expresión. Es más, podríamos afirmar incluso que esa atención que el trabajo de cámara de von Trier dedica a los cuerpos es el mayor atractivo para la videodanza tal y como es concebida por Dogma Dance, sobre todo si se acepta nuestro planteamiento según el cual el lugar central que el colectivo quiere para el cuerpo humano en la videodanza es justamente el medio fundamental para asegurar el carácter híbrido de la disciplina por el que abogan. Y es que, desde nuestro punto de vista, pensamos que mientras que el manifiesto de Dogma Dance mira de fijar el objetivo prioritario del movimiento —garantizar la hibridez de la videodanza poniendo en valor lo coreográfico frente a la tiranía de lo fílmico— las doce reglas propuestas tratan de exponer los medios concretos para conseguirlo, y de entre estos, la focalización en el cuerpo (en todo sus alcances) es la piedra angular.

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[3] El juego de palabras empleado nos lo proporciona Früchtl (en Schmerheim, 2013, 109, nota 168).

De este modo, y siempre tomando como referencia la personal interpretación del decálogo que hace von Trier, parecen claros el provecho y los beneficios para la videodanza que Dogma Dance pretende extraer de la aventura cinematográfica danesa. En primer lugar, la revalorización de lo profílmico por encima de lo técnico que propone Dogma 95 —y sobre todo, la consiguiente fijación de la cámara de von Trier por los cuerpos que hemos apreciado en el análisis— entroncan perfectamente con el papel central que Dogma Dance prevé para el cuerpo humano de las personas que bailan (reglas 1, 8, 11). Así como para von Trier la cámara tiene que estar al servicio de aquello que sucede inesperadamente ante ella, así también Dogma Dance apuesta por una realización audiovisual ajustada a —y armonizada con— la danza que está grabando. Este respeto por lo que está siendo filmado en ningún caso tendría que suponer una minimización o eliminación de la realización audiovisual. En efecto, el intento de Dogma Dance de rehuir los procesos narrativos tradicionales y sus modos de producción —o sea, para alejarse de la videodanza narrativa (*narrative screendance*) de la que habla Payri (2018, p. 37)— no pretende desembocar en la supremacía absoluta de la danza —es decir, en una videodanza entendida como mera prolongación de la danza (*screendance as an extension of dance*), para continuar con la triple categorización que propone Payri (2018, p. 36). La hibridez que Dogma Dance reclama encaja mejor con aquello que Walon denomina *ciné-danse* (2016) o con lo que Payri designa como "*screendance as an art form*" (2018, p. 37), esto es, con esas propuestas que conciben la videodanza como diálogo horizontal donde la técnica de filmación trata de encontrarse en régimen de igualdad con la coreografía que graba.

En segundo lugar, la unidad cámara-cuerpo filmante —o, si se quiere, la cámara somatizada que se mueve con los cuerpos— que hemos podido observar en los fragmentos analizados de *Los idiotas* bien puede imbricarse con las aspiraciones coreográficas que Dogma Dance persigue. Entendemos ahora mejor por qué una cámara que no sigue unas directrices previamente establecidas es, precisamente, una cámara que baila ligada a un realizador danzante (regla 6 de Dogma Dance y 3 de Dogma 95), una cámara que asume el intercambio de conocimiento entre danza y filmación y que colabora a la hora de desarrollar una estructura coreográfica de la videodanza desde la grabación. Bajo estos parámetros, pensamos que la convergencia de los sentidos a los que apuntan las matizaciones de la regla compartida entre ambos movimientos que antes señalábamos queda suficientemente aclarada.

Y por último, y como consecuencia de lo anterior, la respuesta que von Trier busca y obtiene por parte del espectador/a es, principalmente, una de tipo somático —esto es, una respuesta del cuerpo que el espectador/a evidentemente es. Esto no puede sino engarzar con la mirada háptica que, infravalorada tradicionalmente, estimamos que pretende Dogma Dance para el espectador/a de una videodanza entendida —en consonancia con Walon (2014)— como medio de los sentidos que desea una experiencia encarnada en su audiencia.

Así las cosas, no juzgamos que haya contradicción en la mirada hacia el cine de Dogma Dance porque la suya no es una exploración de soluciones en la tiranía del modelo cinematográfico dominante, sino una búsqueda de inspiración en un movimiento de resistencia que como Dogma 95 que, pese a su afán narrativo, entronca con un discurso audiovisual alternativo caracterizado por reivindicar el cuerpo y recurrir a él como gesto político. Y es que, al fin y al cabo, la atención a la corporeidad que observamos en *Los idiotas* y que Dogma Dance reclama para la videodanza no solo se opone a la voluntad de control racional que advertimos en el cine tradicional sino también a las bases de nuestra cultura moderna y logocentrista sobre la cual se asienta la hegemonía del cine de la industria.

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Part 2

Filming videodance in a single take

Rodar videodanza en una toma continua

This part includes articles written by the creators, about works that have been shot in a single take. This kind of filming requires a very precise and elaborate choreography of the camera and the dancers, a thorough coordination in time and space. Choreographer Iwona Pasińska (Poland), choreographer and director Fu Le (France) and filmmaker Sofía Castro (Argentina) explain the process and implications of this form of filming in their respective works.

Movement in Image

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Abstract

This paper introduces two dance films – Initiation and Bória, directed by Iwona Pasińska and produced by the Polish Dance Theatre. It examines the creative process behind works, which both for the dance theatre and its director were the first attempts in the medium of film. Focusing on the concept and aesthetic choices, this article aims to expose the approach towards film creation, driven by the artist's strong background in dance theatre and artistic photography.

Biography

Iwona Pasińska is a choreographer, movement dramatist, theatre theorist, artistic director of Movements Factory and founder of the Movements Factory Foundation. She graduated from the F. Parnell State Ballet School in Łódź. She holds a degree in theatre theory from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, where she also did her PhD, focusing on the experience of the body in contemporary theatre from the perspective of dance theatre. In 1997 Pasińska became the principal dancer of the Polish Dance Theatre (PTT) – Poznań Ballet. A year later she won the Leon Wojcikowski Medal for the most outstanding young dancer.

Since 2002 she has displayed interest in movement composition, dramaturgy of body expression and choreography, which developed in her own choreographic works.

Since 2010 she has been collaborating as choreographer or movement dramaturge with dramatic theatres, operas and alternative theatres, including: Teatr Wielki – Opera Poznań, Teatr Wybrzeże, Teatr Współczesny in Szczecin, Teatr Ochoty in Warsaw, Teatr Powszechny in Warsaw, Opera Nova in Bydgoszcz, Teatr Lubuski in Zielona Góra, Teatr Modrzejewskiej in Legnica, among many others.

In 2016 she became the Director of the Polish Dance Theatre. Her authorial conception encompasses interdisciplinarity, reaching the areas of dance film (Initiation was the first premiere in this field of interest) and social dance theatre. It also embraces presentation of theatre's achievements on national and international scale and inspiration of dialogue with the most rewarding accomplishments of Polish culture.

Introduction

The article introduces two dance films – *Initiation* (2017) and *Bória* (2018), directed by Iwona Pasińska and produced by the Polish Dance Theatre. *Initation* is filmed with a continuous movement of camera, while in *Bória* camera is static but with a continuous movement of characters in the frame. Both films were created as an cinematic experiment; it was the first time when Polish Dance Theatre took up such a task as film production. Also, for Iwona Pasińska, choreographer and the artistic director of PTT, it was the first time to become a film director – someone whose idea takes the shape of such an art form as film. Iwona Pasińska has been working with dance and physical expression for over 30 years, first as a dancer, then as a choreographer, movement dramatist and theatre theorist, creating for stage in dance, drama theatre and opera productions. Her interest in film was also very much influenced by fascination with photography, which enriched her way of seeing the image. She gained experience by assisting in the photographic sessions, which led her to learn the art of concept, photographic session set and lighting.

The creation of both works took 3 days on the film plan for each film, which included preparation of the set (light, costumes, set design, lightning, camera) , camera rehearsal, recording and shooting. However, the entire creative process took several months, mostly because of the preparation period.

The primary intention behind the film production for the Polish Dance Theatre was to explore the new form of artistic expression, and to reach audiences outside theatre venues, with a different vision of what the dance theatre could offer. Therefore, both films have been freely accessible on Vimeo since its premiere.

Initiation

As says the film description: *Initiation* is the musical and cinematic experiment directed by Iwona Pasińska, with the hypnotizing music composed by Jacek Sienkiewicz and Andrzej Grabowski's ascetic scenography, in which each prop has its own significance. The sophisticated visual form, supersaturated with the subtle play of artificial light and evening darkness, entwines with the widely understood physical expression of dance artists from the Polish Dance Theatre. Each of the black and white frames creating this short feature film is a separate, pictorial composition which could exist as an independent picture or artistic photography. They pan out into the dreamlike story, in which the viewer's perception is strongly influenced – apart from the movement of the dancers – by the motion of the film camera, cyclically returning to the same places. Looking into human habitats, toxic relationships and untamed fears we can see that demons, with whom the characters struggle often exemplify social problems described on the front pages of newspapers.

The concept and aesthetic vision of this film was driven by the artists' experience in the field of dance, theatre and photography, their deep understanding of bodily expression and visual image. They did not refer to any particular notion of screendance as a genre. This approach influenced every aspect of the film production, including the camera work and editing – except for the last 40-second scene, this 18-minute film was created in one shot, with the camera constantly panning around.

To create this project, Iwona Pasińska invited outstanding photographer Andrzej Grabowski, who created the set design. He also had an important assignment to find the right film plan – the space,

where the camera could, in one shot, outline the prepared images. Initially, they thought about riding rings, visiting many such objects for several months.

Fig.1: *Initiation* (2017) – space and camera tracks

Finally, it turned out that in the Old Zoo in Poznan, in which the Polish Dance Theater made several performance actions, there is a prewar building, so called 'cave', inspired by the Blue Grotto on Capri, built in 1906. In the past it was partially flooded with water and accessible by boat for visitors of the zoo. The interior of the 'cave' is an oval space topped with a dome supported by a row of columns and arcades. At that moment the building was empty, but it was about to be transformed soon to face the needs of the zoo. After taking the test shots, Iwona Pasińska and Andrzej Grabowski decided that this particular place was the right space, in which the pictures already created in their minds, fitted. Additionally, the location of the film plan in Poznań was an advantage, as it helped to place the film production in the theatre programme, making it much easier to coordinate with the Theater's stage production commitments at that time. However, the space required thorough cleaning, and especially checking every inch of the walls and floor for unevenness and removal of old hooks and nails, for safety of the dancers. The walls have also been repainted in gray to even out the color. On Fig. 1 we can see the interior of the cave with the tracks, and on Fig. 2 we can see the camera position.

Fig.2: *Initiation* (2017) – camera position

The main topic of *Initiation* is human existence – a question, why we live, and also the reflection on the experiences that repeat in human life. The course of life is captured in a metaphor of a run. As Iwona Pasińska said: 'I wanted to show an image of stagnation, to indicate how we are closed in a circle. And somewhere subliminally there is a question hidden, if we didn't loop ourselves, waiting for something that never comes. The images were born out of my fascination with life and at the same my boredom with this moment that we dwell in and observe every day. *Initiation* is built on stereotypes of human behaviour, including aggression, addictions, betrayal, loneliness, bigotry. Each thing, which seemed non-unique in our society, found in the film its own representation. In this film the point of running into life and also feeling a desire to escape from this kind of life is the crucial one - this is the final question to which the scenographic frame had to be found, and also adequate location.'

In this film also appears symbology – it consists of 12 pictures, 12 stories, which correspond to 12 months in a year. This repetition, cyclicality is clearly visible in the camera's rotation. Also, there are no accidental items on the film set. Objects, elements of stage design had been collected carefully for many weeks – most of them were found at online auctions throughout Poland. All of them join elements of aesthetics of everyday life, typical of Poland in the sixties and seventies of the 20th century, but which also seem to have the most universal character. They were chosen to create an image of what may happen in the coming 10 or 15 year time, but also of what might have taken place some 20 or 50 years ago.

 From this idea of versatility Iwona Pasińska drew out an image of a particular aesthetic dimension. This also posed a challenge for a stage designer to build matching filmsets with 12 sources of light. Film plan was controlled by set designer Andrzej Grabowski who had collected all the objects and had taken care of lighting, together with camera operator Marek Grabowski. Prior to building the film set, there were lightning rehearsals to find out how to illuminate the spaces, to concentrate on the topic expressed by performers. The interior of the 'cave' is very dark, the challenge was to illuminate the space in such a way that the entire space within the frame would be visible on black and white image. (As we can see on Fig. 3 – lightning rehearsal with one source of light) Each 'mansion' was illuminated by different sources of light within the film set, and with an individual spotlight. Additionally, the general lightning was used to illuminate the interior of the cave from the top. The examples of the set design, props and lighting we can see on the figures 4, 5 and 6.

Fig. 3: Initiation - lightning rehearsal, test shoot with one source of light

The choice to keep *Initiation* as black and white film came naturally from its aim to saturate the image with the same atmosphere as the scenography, to emphasize its universal character. In terms of aesthetics, it highlights the sculptural quality of the image, while at the same time brings the distance to the viewer's perception of movement.

Fig.4: *Initiation* (2017). Screenshot illustrating set and practical lighting design

Fig. 5: *Initiation* (2017). Screenshot illustrating set and practical lighting design

Fig. 6: *Initiation* (2017). Screenshot illustrating set and practical lighting design

In the composition of movement there is also a conscious shift between precise performative gestures, and the spontaneity in the individual physical expression of the performers – dancers of the Polish Dance Theatre. They also contributed in creation, filling the performance with themselves, as the choreographic process was focused not on the dance itself, but on their bodies and how they express the themes. Performers worked on given individual tasks to find the intentions in movement for their respective characters. Some sequences arose from improvisation. However in case of *Initiation*, pure improvisation wouldn't fill the whole scene, but it created space for freedom and occasionally it helped artists to find better, more adequate solutions in movement. Each of the 12 scenes required different choreographic approaches, individual tasks and tailored communication with dancers. At the beginning, rehearsals were taking place in the studio of the Polish Dance Theatre, without the presence of the film set. Given themes were beginning to develop in their corporeality, while the final result was obtained on a movie set. In the creative process, the fixed elements were set first – elements which had to appear because of their meaning. It was mostly gestures arranged to appear in precisely specified time and space. The fixed structure included order of actions, shifts in the space, flow and pace of movement, intentions inscribed in each gesture. The dancer's spatial orientation and memory was equally important – they had to remember precisely how far they can move in the space to stay within the frame, and to adjust their actions to the perspective of the camera. There were no real walls or barriers separating the sets of respective scenes, just columns, so the dancers could see each other, which also influenced their perception of timing. Action on the film plan was coordinated with the camera movement in real time by Iwona Pasińska, who announced verbally the beginning of each subsequent scene according to the camera preview. Also, a simple beat was played during the recording, to help coordinate action with the rhythm. An additional difficulty was posed by the oval

shape of the space, which made it necessary to adjust the trajectory and speed of the trolley in such a way that it gives the impression of moving in a circle. The timing of actions and the speed of camera movement were decided on the film plan, by trial-and-error method, and there were no further adjustments in the post-production.

One of the key inputs to a somewhat surrealistic atmosphere of *Initiation* was provided by the music score created by Jacek Sienkiewicz. His collaboration with the Polish Dance Theatre started earlier in 2017 from another, purely theatrical production, and he proved to be an ideal person to capture, with timeless sound, the continuity between images. To fully integrate sound and image, the composer was also present on the film plan. He created two versions of the music – the first one, more optimistic, was suggested with intent to balance the 'depressive' mood of the image. The second, final version corresponds with the general atmosphere of the film. The music was put after the film editing. Iwona Pasińska described their collaboration with Jacek Sienkiewicz: 'We talked a lot on a film plan why I had chosen some particular soundtrack to complement our actions. There was this one looped motif, representation of cyclicity, reflected in a musical composition. When Jacek Sienkiewicz started his own work, at first I realized that there was a variance between my and his vision. Lightness of music and heaviness of images diverged. We do not have to bring hope. The link between sound and image is twofold: it triggers expression but also helps to keep a certain rhythm, in which dancers moved. Thanks to it all the images coincide subconsciously.'

For all creators of *Initiation*, it was a truly collaborative process, in which they achieved an absolute understanding. Iwona Pasińska has been working with Marek Grabowski since many years, especially in projects of the Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw and the Movements Factory in Poznań, and with Andrzej Grabowski , they have been exchanging thoughts on what image is for over 30 years. She reflects on their intentions and artistic choices in shaping the *Initiation*: 'We were interested in "moving image" and that we are looking surreptitiously at the reality. I think we managed to apply the cinematic medium in the way completely different than in the works of other choreographers. It is wonderful that we do not double each other. We do not want to register action, we want to create moving images. We aim at "movement in image" and "moving image".'

Up to the present time, *Initiation* was shown at film festivals, being presented in over 40 official selections and winning 8 awards.

Bória

Bória (original title: Brzemię) is the second-ever film production of the Polish Dance Theatre, created in 2018. It is an interdisciplinary experiment, combining dance film and painting. The visual layer of Bória is co-created with ornamental motifs drawn from Stryjeńska's painting (Fig. 7) entitled Seasons. November – December (Pageant I – with a deer), which appears as the first and the last scene of the 9-minute film The painting is used as a curtain, and even while lifted up, its ornamental bottom edge is still visible above the stage, becoming a frame for the moving image. The entire film set was built in the studio of the Polish Dance Theatre, using its stage and theatrical lights.

Fig. 7: Zofia Stryjeńska, *Seasons. November – December* (*Pageant I – with a deer*)

The idea of the *tableau vivant* became a starting point for the visual composition, using static camera perspective and the procession of characters moving across the frame. Iwona Pasińska treated the colourful procession depicted by Stryjenska as an impulse to create the choreography and build subsequent scenes that make up the universal metaphor of life in the community, moving on the line of life, experiencing good and evil, happiness and pain, unchanging rhythm of the nature and change of fate. The following scenes refer to birth (Spring – the ritual of Marzanna - the straw dummy personifying winter), adolescence (Summer - the wedding), the time of suffering and defeat (Autumn – the war), and passing away (Winter – the funeral). The palette of colours in costumes and props highlights the mood in the subsequent changes – as we can see on figures 8 and 9. In contrast to the vibrant processions, there appear the intersections of solo dance scenes, performed by the male dancer (Dominik Więcek – figure 10). Fragmentary narration of these scenes, which are referring to the fate of the orphan rejected by the community, is built on the words of traditional songs in the arrangement of the Maliszów Band (Kapela Maliszów: Jan Malisz, Kacper Malisz, Zuzanna Malisz). The figure of orphan appears therefore on two semantic planes: as the main character of the song, and as a metaphorical figure of Everyman in the cycle of life.

Music, as well as Stryjenska's painting, grew out of the inspiration of the Polish and Hutsul folk culture. Members of the Maliszów Band did not hide their total surprise, and were a bit sceptical at the beginning, about the way Iwona Pasińska intended to use their music. First, by the choice to put together two pieces extremely different in style, coming from different periods, which they found impossible to join in one composition. Secondly, by choosing the male dancer to perform the orphan's role, whereas the song indicates it to be a little girl. However, they were very pleased with the final

result, and the way the interpretation of the traditional music was expanded by the concept of this film.

Fig. 8: *Bória* (2018), 1st scene - recreation of the Stryjenska's painting

Fig. 9*: Bória* (2018) – the funeral scene

Fig. 10: *Bória* (2018) – orphan's scene

Rejected material

For Iwona Pasińska's artistic practice the aesthetic of the image in every detail is one of the key aspects. This consistency is apparent also in the camera work. Continuously moving/rotating camera in *Initation* corresponds with the metaphorical and universal character of the image, while the use of static camera perspective and moving characters in *Bória* conveys the idea of immersion into Stryjenska's painting – juxtaposing moving and static image within the frame. However, due to the request of the camera operator Marek Grabowski, the alternative footage for both films was also created. This material included close-ups (for *Initiation*) and moving camera perspective (camera moving forward and backward in *Bória*).

Although this material didn't fit in the aesthetic vision and was rejected at the editorial selection, the situation of creating alternative footage provides an example of differences between creative approaches from the perspective of theater and film. Based on camera operator's filmmaking experience, the lack of editing and keeping the full-shot frame for the entire film seemed too risky, as well as the idea of keeping the static camera perspective, or constant camera pan for several minutes. After all, this was the experiment, and the rejection of such basic tools and rules of filmmaking could as well lead to unsatisfying results. Therefore, he insisted on providing the close-ups and mid-shots for the potential editing. On the other hand, from a theatrical perspective, creating an image to be seen without close-ups and editing seems a much more natural and well-known approach, therefore Iwona Pasińska from the beginning relied on her aesthetic vision, which deliberately required minimal or no editing. Using close-ups, introducing cuts and changes of shooting distance would break the concept of the film, with its feeling of the continuous passing of time, and observation from a distance.

Conclusions

The theatrical background and Iwona Pasińska's artistic approach had the profound influence on the creative process of both productions. As she comments: 'The biggest challenge in the process is time, or rather an attempt to keep it in the frame. There is plenty of time in the theater – the performance develops from rehearsal to rehearsal, from playing to playing. There is only "now" in the film, which must be in its final phase. The idea ripens slowly, and all the details fit together without hurry. Everything is born simultaneously: image, its meaning, musical selection, colour or lack thereof, the way of filming, stage design, light. It's such an organic composition where everything matures together. Only then I introduce dancers to the process, considering their individual expressive abilities. Their physical expression and sense of action is more important than dance. Dancers always contribute to the work on movement. I give the subject and we search together. They fill the given points with themselves, their physicality and kind of expression, which are important to me and must appear. Thanks to the fact that I know them very well, I know how to direct their physical abilities and psychophysical conditions. The challenge for me is to convey the essence of the frame, which they do not see and the sense of the scene, which does not result from the order of the script, but the order of filming. The post-production, i.e. editing, colour grading, fonts of letters, subtitles – this is all the second chapter, which arises from the first, already closed, "organic" one. The fruits of the second phase is what the viewer will see, and I learnt to entrust this chapter to those who perform it with the highest proficiency. It's great to be able to work with people who – despite the differences in taste - completely understand the sense of the whole picture. For the future, I hope to continue working on films and to immerse myself in the moving image even more.'

About the making of *Mass*

Fu LE

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Abstract

Choreographer and director Fu Le shares his views and experiences about shooting a long take in the screendance work Mass, *that was selected and presented at the EIVV, Encontre Internacional de Videodansa i Videoperformance, Valencia (Spain) - 2019. He comments on his previous experience and the specificities of choreographing and shooting a single take with 40 dancers and a dedicated team for the camera.*

Text translated from the French and edited by Blas Payri.

Biography

Fu LE is an eclectic choreographer, visual artist and award winning filmmaker. Born in Brittany, he arrives in Paris at 17 and obtains a diploma in metal sculpture, then he works in set design workshops where he is fascinated by the repetition of artisanal gestures. Quickly his interest detaches from the final result to question the creative process.

At the same time, Fu LE studies the scenic arts, first devoting himself to puppetry in Paris. He left to live in Buenos Aires where he trained in physical theater and then, following his interest in movement, he joined the junior company of contemporary dance Le Marchepied in Lausanne. He then revisits his practice as a plastic artist through the sensitive experience of the body and its action on matter. He discovers video, as a self-taught, which allows him to document his research on movement.

Fu LE is currently evolving on the border between video, dance and sculpture. He recently continued his research in Taiwan, questioning the social transformations linked to urbanization. Back in France in 2017, he founded the company Tetrapode in order to pursue his own choreographic projects. In 2018, he was a Beaumarchais-SACD winner for dance writing and was part of the 2018-19 promotion of choreographers from La Fabrique de la Danse.

Fu LE, you are a choreographer and author of a dozen dance films, distributed around the world. You stand out by a multiplicity of genres and mastery of the long take, as in your last short film *Mass***, which contains a 10-minute take with 40 dancers. Before talking about** *Mass***, I would like to ask you: how did your video-dance practice begin?**

Video has accompanied my choreographic research from the start. One day, I found a computer on the street, and a few months later I bought myself a small camera that has served me for almost ten years. I started making films because at the time I didn't have the opportunity to present my live work in theaters. I traveled a lot, and video was a way to document my choreographic experiments in places that called out to me… like a sort of logbook.

Video is therefore a tool which has made it possible to extend your possibilities of choreographic production.

The video responded to an insatiable bulimia of creation. I am now trying to get away from it, to favor quality over quantity. This is one of the reasons why I am interested in the long take, it obliges me to respect a kind of artistic ethics... Let me explain: I started making images before the digital era. I was studying applied arts in Paris; with a few friends, we drew a lot, we took photos in medium format, with six shots possible per film. You had to prepare your subject well, silver films were expensive. Our references were monuments like Cartier-Bresson, able to sit for a whole day against the railing of a staircase to wait for a bicycle to pass before pressing the trigger. We then spent our nights developing, printing on baryta paper. I experienced the digital transition as an intrusion into our secret of alchemist, I saw myself overwhelmed by poor quality images on uninteresting subjects. I don't know how many billions of images are produced per second around the world, but it makes you dizzy. So I always try to remember my beginnings, to fight against the frenzy of the image world.

However, all of your films are now shot in digital video format.

My opinion indeed changed when I went from still image to video. Before digital, cinema was reserved for a few privileged people who had access to production equipment. Digital technology has democratized the filmed image, and has opened up an easier dialogue for this medium with other artistic fields. You no longer have to go to high school or have a personal fortune to make a film.

It's the same thing for broadcasting: as a self-taught person, I was able to free myself from elitist cinema networks and distribute my films widely via the Internet. Of course, to obtain high quality images, the material remains expensive and requires real know-how, but creativity always manages to surpass technique.

Digital has indeed become widely accessible, but the material is not enough to make a film. What were the difficulties encountered at the start of your career?

For me, the beginnings were very easy, free from any expectation of production. I enjoyed absolute artistic freedom. The collaborations were completely voluntary. Today, I try to raise my practice to a professional level, and it becomes very difficult to create, with all the administrative and financial constraints that this implies. I remember a sentence by François Truffaut in *La Nuit Américaine* which said: "Before I start a shooting, I want above all to make a film that will be beautiful. As soon as the first troubles arise, I must reduce my ambition, and I find myself simply hoping that we will manage to finish the film."

Fig. 1: poster *Mass* with nominations and awards at festivals

But, why not keep working alone?

I took a liking to teamwork, which allows me not only to film the dance, but to truly choreograph the shooting of the film. It is in this sense that video-dance is a medium that stands out and finds a unique identity. It is not simply a matter of capturing a spectacle, nor producing a succession of rhythmic images in the manner of a video clip, but rather of operating a true fusion of cinematographic and choreographic writing. A dance film is above all a film, but designed according to choreographic principles which govern the subject as much as the technique. The long take allows me to approach this fusion of genres because everything happens at the same time and in the same place. For the shooting of *Mass* for example, Fabienne, who operated the steadicam (Figure 2), performed a real choreographic performance. She had to learn and repeat her movements, and really made it possible to create a link between the technical and artistic teams: she was a "technician" but moved at the pace of the dancers, she sweated with them.

You seem so convinced. Where does this obsession with the long take come from?

At first it was visceral, I no longer wanted to have to deal with a computer. As a dancer and choreographer, I did not recognize myself in this office work. My first films were more classic, so to speak, the filming was more or less improvised, and I spent hours viewing rushes on an old and struggling laptop. I reached saturation. I had put in place techniques to refine the editing, for example I invited a friend to watch the film with a bowl of tea placed on the table. As soon as he drank the tea, I noted the time code: I knew that the film had a weakness at this precise moment and that it was necessary to cross-check. Editing is of course a fascinating work of composing, which is similar to musical composing, but it is another profession. I never said that I would never cut a film again, but I try to avoid it. And then, getting rid of the computer is illusory. There is always a substantial post-production work in my films, but it is more subtle: it consists of slight time compressions and expansions, small cropping, calibration with sometimes visual effects, and above all a musical work that comes to dialogue with the image.

It's not so much the result as the process that interests me. I started dancing as a sculptor, because the repetition of the gestures fascinated me more than the end product. Here it is the same thing: for me, the film is filmed, the rest is only polishing. What interests me is beyond the image, it is the charge it contains, all the energy that had to be concentrated and made to converge to produce this image. On my shoots, the choreography takes place as much in front of as behind the camera: it includes the camera in the center of the action, like a real dancer in itself. Whether it is a subjective camera that reacts or influences the environment, or else completely dispassionate with a continuous trajectory, its presence is real and orchestrated. Each shoot is an experience, for both the dancers and the technicians, an authentic, lively experience.

You speak of authenticity, but does not all this planning come to kill the life that we seek to capture with the camera?

On the contrary! It is true that such a plan requires quite a logistical preparation. But the point of the long take is precisely to rediscover the excitement of the live performance, where everyone's attention is necessary at the time of filming. The team must be united in the face of risks, because the slightest error is fatal for the entire film. We remember the scene of the fire in Tarkovsky's *Sacrifice* which, following a camera failure, had to have the house that had burned completely rebuilt and shoot the scene a second time.

Fig. 2: The camera operator at the steadicam under the direction of Adrien Gontier during the shooting of *Mass*

The shoots are thus much more intense than during my first experiences where I was, either in a documentary mode with quantities of unnecessary rushes, or in a fictional mode which required me to repeat one by one all the scenes while the rest of the team was waiting. You know what they say: "The hardest thing in cinema is to find a chair to sit on".

To continue with the notion of authenticity: the long take therefore implies a certain skill, at the risk of revealing the machinery, as the length of the shot exceeds conventional editing standards. Does this excess of technicality not put a distance between the spectator and the screen?

An extraordinary duration, perhaps, for the habits of the virtual world of video, but which nevertheless corresponds to the normal and continuous time of reality. We are perhaps too conditioned to dynamic images that we zap by reflex, or worse by impatience.

Obviously, there is this risk of being more seduced by technical prowess than by the story ... I tell myself that if that happens, the story was not very interesting. And then, you just need not to do too much, not to give too many effects, keep it simple and also fresh in the way of filming. I prefer to leave a few snags, rather than having a perfectly stabilized floating image.

I understand your enthusiasm for this method and the difficulty that it involves, but we can assume that the audience just wants to see a film that touches them, and is not interested in knowing whether the shooting was difficult or intense. I rephrase my question: does the long take respond to a simple complacency of a filmmaker, or does it present a real interest for the spectator?

The distance of the spectator to the screen is a real question, I find on the contrary that the long take draws the spectator towards the screen, as if to invite him to enter the film.

For a long time, I did not care about this question, the priority for me was to feel whole in my artistic process. But when I think about it, the interest for the audience, even if they do not realize it, is undeniable. A long take has the advantage of a strong, fluid and hypnotic image: when we look at a long take, we are trapped, we can no longer get out, there is no escape. The long take allows you to live a real experience and transmits, in my opinion, the authenticity of a time unfolding in the image.

Let's come to *Mass*, which is part of the sixth edition of the EIVV, the International Meetings of Video-dance and Video-performance, in Valencia (Spain) in 2019. As we can see in the poster (Figure 1), your film has been screened in more than 70 festivals, has received 6 first prizes and numerous mentions. How do you explain such a success?

Lucky, probably. I was able to benefit from a motivated team until the end. Everything came to fruition a week before the shooting, something took hold, a chemistry emerged. But then, it is impossible to predict how a film will be perceived at a festival, it is very subjective. There are so many factors at play, it also depends on the country, the year, the news, etc.

As you said, the long take requires precise planning. How was the production set up *Mass* ?

I was invited to give a series of contemporary dance workshops for the association Danse en Seine in Paris. It is an association that brings together amateur dancers for various projects.

The problem is that there were forty of them at my first class! I wanted to ask them to make a film: having forty dancers on hand doesn't happen every day. I had already choreographed for the camera

3, 4 or even 5 people, but at forty, the geometry is lost, it becomes liquid. I wanted to approach the crowd, it's a theme that has worked on me since my stay in China.

Then everything went very quickly: I found by word of mouth a place for filming; I happened to meet Adrien Gontier, the cinematographer. He bit and wanted to invest more in the project, so we started on a co-realization. He then assembled his team in one week, the shooting was done on a weekend, one day to rehearse, one day to shoot. The choreography was built on site, and the instructions remained improvised until the end (Figure 3).

Fig. 3: The director and choreographer Fu LE during the creation of *Mass*

And all this with amateurs?

For the dancers, yes. The technical team was professional, although voluntary. With all the help for the meals, the preparation of the space, we were sixty on the set. The weekend was trying: we shot at the end of November, it was five degrees, with dust, fatigue. The dancers were extraordinary.

I don't think professional dancers would have done better. Of course we could have gained in precision, in quality of movement, but I prefer to film "normal" people, and see what drives them, what makes them dance. This is also the long take: a direct connection with reality, a cinema of reality.

It was Godard, it seems to me, who said: "A fiction is a documentary on the actors we have chosen.″ *Mass* was done that way. Through the workshops, I spotted what each one had to offer, and I built the scenario on it.

What is the best lesson you have learned from this experience?

At some point, you start to get lost and you have to trust the group. When something emerges from the group, a kind of creative solidarity, it's magnificent. We can then release the moorings and let the ship sail freely for a short time.

What was the biggest difficulty and how did you overcome it?

I am often asked this question. We made the plan in 5 takes, the 4th was the best, it was hard not to make a 6th. It's part of the game. It's the performative aspect of the long take: a place, a team, and we do the best we can in the given time.

Crowd images evoke social movements, and can echo other media images. Is there a political reading to this film?

Politics is everywhere, we live it every day. Certainly the images of crowds, whether for demonstrations, migrations, protest rallies or even celebrations, are in the minds of each of us. It is also quite simply the daily life of all metropolises, where the individual is confronted with the masses, with all the exhilaration that this can inspire (Figure 4).
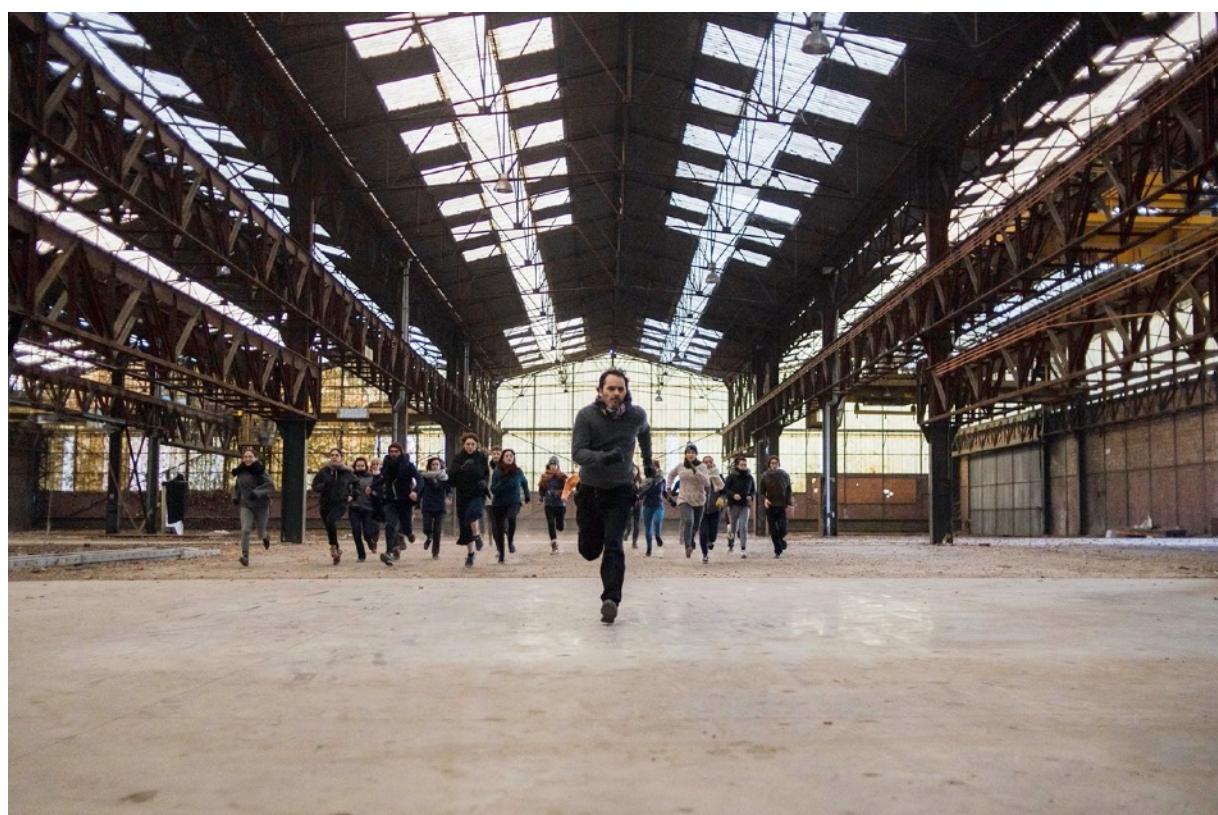
Fig. 4: Image of crowd movement in *Mass*

The film by no means conveys a demagogic message: it focuses on impressions linked to these crowd movements rather than on any kind of judgment. The images then resonate in everyone according to their own experience, this is no longer my domain.

I quote Godard again: "We must not make political films, we must make films politically." For me, the political is already in the very principle of the long take. I come back to this democratization of digital technology which delivers a permanent flow of new images: I feel a need to moderate this overproduction at my level. If I wanted, I could produce ten films a year, all of them as uninteresting as each other. The constraint of the long take is for me part of a fight against the consumer society, the consumption of images. The long take forces us to think ahead, to make choices.

For my first films, I captured as many images as possible, then discarded the majority of them and eventually only published a simple catalog of beautiful images that follow one another. The long take requires you to throw nothing, it is a more ecological practice in a way.

Let's go further on the metaphysical field: one day in Bobo-Dioulasso, a man told me that he did not want to be photographed because "the image damages reality", as if each shot slightly absorbed the soul of the subject photographed. I just smiled in response to what I took for a naive belief. But with hindsight, I realize the truth of these words.

We thus aim for a kind of abstraction through the multiplicity of messages, but we nevertheless feel a semblance of narration. Is it voluntary?

I like to mix genres. *Mass* has the appearance of a fiction film, we follow a thread, but the story is confused. I am more concerned with transmitting sensations than precise feelings. The foreground is very realistic and presents "the hero" to us, but the situation remains abstract, the visual and sound outfields can be perceived differently by each. The second shot is a walk in space where it is impossible to know if the hero enters reality or travels in his psychosis. I don't know myself.

***Mass* is therefore made up of two shots, is this a breach of your ethics?**

I have no fixed principles. Editing remains a great tool, if used wisely. In *Mass*, the shot connection is subtle and allows you to go through a mirror, which makes sense in the film.

It is true that I find it increasingly difficult to cut a shot, it hurts me, as if the image strip was alive, as if I cut my finger. During the shooting of my next film, *The Last Children*, I have met an artist who digs up stones, cleans them, arranges them, caresses them. He told me that the vision of a quarry, of cut rock, deeply hurts him. He experienced it as a rape of the earth ... an extraordinary sensitivity.

I generally find all dance films - and films in general - way too cut. Of course I only deliver a personal opinion. By professional distortion, each time there is a cut in a film, I say to myself: "a pity, too easy". I always wonder if this cut is justified, what it brings to the narrative or aesthetic level. Each cut takes me out of the film, offers me a way out, a moment of respite. Most people do not pay attention, their eyes are used to it. It's like coffee, you can cut it with sugar ... if we suddenly stop sugar, the drink will taste bitter to us; then, after a while, it's sweet coffee that will become sickening.

The very principle of editing, however, constitutes from the outset the key to cinema. Isn't the long take a disavowal of cinema in its entirety?

Again, I do not permanently ban editing, but I believe that each cut, and therefore each connection, must be justified by a deep artistic choice - Kuleshov's studies have demonstrated the influence of editing on the viewer - or by an irreducible technical constraint inherent in the concept of production -

for example when Hitchcock shot *The Rope* in 1948, he was constrained by the size of the reels of the time.

I grant you, editing is the source of the magic of cinema. I grew up among Chaplin's films who, using clever tricks, juggled in the opposite direction or undressed on a wire. If I continue to make films, it is to do things that it would be impossible for me to do "for real", on stage. I'm just trying to include my special effects in the production and not to work on them externally. Continuing the analogy with the circus: if the editing is similar to a prestidigitation act, the long take then proceeds from an acrobatic performance; even if the objective remains the same: the illusion of a sensation.

In an article published in the last edition of Videodance Studies, Simon Fildes (2018) stated: "By choreographing the camera and edit we truly embrace the hybridity of screendance leaving no room for doubt that the work is not just a film of dance." Should we then abandon editing or think of it as an essential element of audiovisual choreography?

The hybridity of video-dance is undoubtedly constitutive of the genre, and editing consists in "choreographing", in "writing for a set" of images. However, this work of composition derives from the choreography of the dancers: it steps in in a second time, and this is what bothers me. I sometimes have the impression that editing cancels more than it increases the choreographic performance of the dancers. It all depends on what state of mind the movement is captured.

I precisely had a discussion with Simon on this subject, during the shooting of my film *Vanity* at Experimental Film Virginia in 2017. Simon defined himself as a fisher of images, probably in analogy to the metaphorical observation that Marx makes of society divided into three areas of activity: fishermen, hunters and shepherds. This thought of the fisher of images resonates with a personal experience a few years ago, on the shores of West Lake in Hangzhou, watching carp jump on the surface. The water is quite dark and carp appear so furtively that it is impossible to see them without patience and diligent concentration. The lake is very beautiful and its banks are submerged by Chinese tourists who shoot pictures of the landscape. I told myself that the greatness of a photographer would be to make only one catch, as a fisherman could wait with confidence for the fish that rises to the surface, without disturbing the murky waters of the lake.

If the hunter corresponds to a camera obsessed with his subject, as found in family films with the child always in the center of the frame, the fisherman evokes the patience of a Cartier-Bresson waiting for the passage of a bicycle.

Simon differentiated my work method and compared me to a farmer - I would rather say a **"shepherd"** - by my obsession with preparing everything, drawing everything, literally directing the film.

Indeed, still in the same article, Simon Fildes distinguishes between:

- **"Farmers" - Plan their shots. Sow, nurture, harvest. Everything is storyboarded and carefully designed.**

- **"Hunter-gatherers" - The camera reacts and responds to the actions of the subject(s) of the film. This approach is often used by documentary filmmakers. It is observational and usually involves a sense of following an unknown subject.**

"Unknown" or "re-known": It is also the way in which press images are made or, as I have just said, family films where the subject is in the center of attention; whereas in my films, the camera is at the core of the action.

… And lastly:

- **"Fishers" - Set up the conditions to catch a shot they think will happen. Throw out a line and hope for the best.**

More generally, we can distinguish an approach that corresponds to exploration, often characteristic of early works, and a more strategic approach, where one prepares the shooting for a defined purpose. Editing can be seen as a collage of improvised moments, but it can also be thought and worked very precisely. The planning of trajectories and movement is therefore not exclusively reserved for the long take.

Indeed, editing can be calculated or improvised, but the long take is never improvised, unless you follow and frame the subject permanently which, cinematographically, is not of great interest. So you have to lead the film like the shepherd leads his flock. Hitchcock himself said in a somewhat boorish formula that the actors should be treated like "cattle". The problem is that wild flesh is always firmer and tastier than farmed one. And it is precisely this flavor of authenticity that we seek to capture with the camera.

The major challenge is to prepare sufficiently in advance the technical movements and the performance of the dancers, while preserving a share of spontaneity and unexpected for the final filming, in order to capture through the palpitations of the flesh, the emotions of the dancers and the palpable tension of the technicians. We must be wary of the hunter's instinct and, so to speak, of the fisherman's faith.

So I always reserve unexpected changes of direction, or calculated pressure, to gradually increase the tension of the shooting. The key is knowing when to act, depending on the available time. I know that the first takes will be missed. As we get closer to the expected result, I try to hold back to give pressure just at the last moment, when I feel that we are on the right take. We thus keep some degree of improvisation, which disturbs the smoothing out from repetitions and gives a more abrupt shaping to the final result. Therein lies all the subtlety of the director to convey the beauty of the moment to the screen. Dance is an ephemeral art.

So the filmed image would have the same temporality as reality?

An image is always stronger than reality - we see it every day, by our addiction to screens - in the sense that it immediately captures attention, but it wears out faster. This is what makes the long take difficult to achieve. The image flattens reality, so you always have to renew it, or make the action constantly surprising to keep the viewer in suspense for the duration of the shot. The "editing" is done, in a way, before the shooting. As there is no possible cut, it is necessary to fill the absence of editing with an internal rhythm in the structure of the film, by offering a variety of shots, dramaturgical surprises, specific camera movements, etc.

Could you give us some substitution secrets for editing in the long takes you have made?

Each film is each time a pretext for new experiences. My first sequence, *Underbridge,* shot in Taiwan in 2016, is a precise ballet that involves three dancers, a camera operator and two light operators. The superposition of these partitions allows for a rich and sustained action throughout the film.

I then directed *Vanity* in the United States. I was working on a feeling of anxiety, with a background of suspicion. The action consisted of a night escape in a train full of mirrors, which enormously complicated the work of the camera operator. The set of mirrors is very interesting because it allows you to bend or even cut the light. It thus offers angularity and ruptures in the same way as an editing would. Here lies the secret of the long take, because if editing allows ellipses in time, the long take inevitably presents an unfolded time in a limited space. We must therefore succeed in sectioning the space to counterbalance this temporal continuity.

For *Mass*, I continue with the mirrors, since we use an effect where the camera literally comes out of the mirror, this is called the "contact" effect, from the eponymous film by Zemeckis. This time, it required VFX (visual effects) post-production because the mirror is encrusted on a moving door.

Finally, I am currently finalizing a fourth film: *The last Children*, made with the children of a primary school on the eve of its closure. Again, we use two effects, an image overlay and a mask to connect shots and provide continuity to the film.

Creating continuity involves editing in post-production… we come back to it.

Even if I try to restrict it, there is still indeed a post-production phase which allows us to considerably improve the film, give it more rhythm, or even offer a second reading between the lines, whether by color grading, or with slight cropping to enhance camera movements. To deprive yourself of it out of pure ideology would be absurd.

And above all, the soundtrack again allows a dialogue with the image, either to support it, or to oppose it, distance it and offer contrast.

There are different ways of using music in video dance, from sound design to musical composition: sometimes dance follows music, sometimes music adapts to the image. How was music treated in *Mass***?**

Music is as important as the image, and I like that it is an original composition to form with the image an irreducible object. Otherwise, I find that the work is only half done. In my logic of the long take, the processing of the soundtrack is a real question. The ideal would be that it takes part in the action filmed to reinforce the feeling of authenticity. The issue is that I tend to speak, or even to shout, during the shooting in order to maintain the rhythm of the action.

For *Mass*, we tried to play music live: two guitarists (Figure 5), Harun and Tom were hidden behind an algeco, with an HF monitor to watch the stage. They were able to rehearse with the dancers and then improvise live during the shooting, energizing the atmosphere of the place in real time. The music was played through an amplifier, and at the same time the direct output of the guitars was recorded, to obtain the music alone without my shouting.

I must admit that it was not a great idea, because it limited sound synchronization: if we shifted the image during editing, we had to automatically synchronize the sound again. So they had to completely review the music in post-production.

I am currently thinking of other methods for my next films, in order to achieve post-production within this logic of the single take.

Fig. 5: Musicians Harun and Tom performing live during the rehearsals of *Mass*

You like complexity. How do you put this planning in place? Do you do a storyboard?

I realize a technical plan to distribute all the movements. Generally, I work more on trajectories than on key images or a storyboard. For *Mass* I did not have time, everything was done on the spot, in action.

A final, more general question: what is your favorite sequence shot?

The history of cinema is full of long takes, from martial arts films to the refined scenes from Bellatar. It is a technical feat that each director wants to try at least once, a kind of small internal challenge to the profession. Some have gone so far as producing a feature film in a single sequence, such as *Russian Ark* by Alexandre Sokourov (2002). The most impressive long takes are those that include a travel in space and time, and are not just still shots.

The opening sequence *Touch Evil* (1958) by Orson Welles is a great example, which makes perfect sense since it shows a border crossing by a booby-trap car. Therefore, it calls into question the spatial discontinuity (the border) by a continuous shot, and reinforces the suspense since the time of the shot corresponds to the count of the explosive placed in the car. I just regret that the final explosion appears - no doubt for technical reasons - in a separate shot. It is for this reason that purists call it a simple long shot, while a sequence shot must have narrative autonomy. It remains nonetheless a magnificent shot.

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Filmography

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Photography credits: Guillermo Gomez - Forêt Fantôme

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About the making of Maids

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Abstract

This article describes how Maids was created and shot, from the conception of the idea to the distribution of the piece. It is a singular piece of video-dance, which started from a literary inspiration and a development of narrative cinema, but which explores in an experimental way the tensions between the imaginary and the physical. This idea was investigated further at all levels of the film's production and here I develop how it was applied in each instance of the design and development of the areas. Without dialogue, a single dancer interprets the corporealities of three characters in a sequence shot calculated down to the last detail. The result is a work that is handled between a classic comedy, a mockery of advertising, a radio soap opera, and an audiovisual piece of physical theatre and contemporary dance.

Biography

Sofía Castro studied art direction for film in Buenos Aires. With "Maids", her first short film, she participated in the Vórtice residence for experimental film and video performance in Valparaíso, in the 16th VideodanzaBA Lab; Leeds Film Festival; Cinedans; In/Motion Chicago; Dance Camera West (with a semi-finalist status) and POFF Black Nights, among forty other international film festivals. In 2019, she was a featured artist in FIVER (Madrid) and the EIVV, International Meeting on Videodance and Videoperformance (Valencia).

In 2020 she was nominated with her work in the British Film Institute's Future Film Festival for young talent. She was also Durban's International Contemporary Dance Festival's first dance on screen curator, and was awarded an Argentinian National Grant for the Arts for her contributions to arts and social transformation. She is currently working on her next project: a documentary short film that explores the relationship between Sign Language and choreography as languages of movement.

Introduction

> "...porque son recibidas como anunciaciones en el momento en que aparecen con su caja de Nescafé o de Kellog's llena de ropa y de peines y de mínimos espejos cubiertos todavía con el polvo de la última irrealidad en que se movieron; porque entonces a todo dicen que sí y parece que ya nunca nos faltará su mano protectora; porque finalmente deciden marcharse como vinieron pero con un conocimiento más profundo de los seres humanos"[1]

Maids is a short film about the blurred boundaries between dreams and reality, and what happens with the body when imagination is set free from its imprisonment of the passive routine. The film was created with the main purpose of exploring the concept of limits. The Maid, not unlike any of us, is torn between her endless imagination and her condition as a "real" being, fighting with the restrains of her own body. This notion runs throughout all aspects of the making of this film: cinematography, sound, acting, art direction; all borders that separate what is, and is not, real. This was my first short film, made while I was studying at Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires. The journey of making it has been (and still is) how I came to love the expressive possibilities that dance and researching movement can provide to film.

Inspired by *Las Criadas de Monterroso* (*Monterroso's Maid*s), this short film combining fiction and screendance presents a maid ballerina embodying the voices of two stock radio drama lovers who plan to murder her with their own hands.

In a theatrical setting and one circular traveling shot, objectivity becomes biased as the body struggles to expose all that is incorporeal, so the question arises as to where the limits between mind and expression are.

Let me introduce you to the different aspects that made the style of *Maids* in the order that they came to place, and how they all came together to explore the same theme.

Fig. 1: Frame of the film at point 0 in floorplan of figure 10

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[1] https://ciudadseva.com/texto/las-criadas/

A funny story that we can all relate to

Fig. 2: Frame of the film at point 1 in floorplan of figure 10

I studied at a film school which has always promoted the making of a traditional type of fictional story with introspective types of characters and storylines; and this was at first what Maids was going to be like. I had been wanting to work with Monterroso's humoristic and ironic writing style for a long time. *Las Criadas* is a very short and relatable yet fantastical analysis of the character of a housemaid and her working space, set in a Guatemalan household in the 1960s. I was aiming to create a story that would be very understandable to everyone, but which would be rooted in Latin American modern culture.

Fig. 3: Frame of the film at point 2

The inspiration from this text was only a starting point from which I created a short script about a character (Maid) who is cleaning an office. She is saving letters on a bookshelf (Fig. 1), dusting, vacuuming. While she is alone performing this duty (it seems a routine of hers) she is listening to a radio station playing romantic music (Fig. 2). Suddenly, a Narrator's voice announces the broadcasting

of "The Crime and the Plot" (Fig. 3). Coming from the radio, the voices of two lovers are heard: María Inés, locked in her room by her jealous father is visited abruptly by José Antonio, her forbidden lover.

Fig. 4: Frame of the film at point 3

Fig. 5: Frame of the film at point 4

Fig. 6: Frame of the film at point 5

While Maid listens to their drama developing, she starts a game of embodying their voices according to her imagination of them (Fig 4). María Inés and José Antonio are plotting to steal her Father's money and escape with it when they overhear Maid's duster falling to the ground (Fig. 5).

Immediately, the lovers start chasing Maid to stop her from revealing their secret. Their voices are their own, but their bodies are still being a part of Maid's imagination. As a consequence, it is herself who runs around holding a vaporizer-gun both to murder herself and to save her own life (Fig. 6). The lover's voices cannot find her, even though they are heard moving her things around. She is sheltered under a desk when she hears footsteps approaching. A male figure is seen at the door violently getting in. José Antonio's voice shouts: "Die, you scoundrel!" Maid points her vaporizer and shoots (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7: Frame of the film at point 6

Fig. 8: Frame of the film at point 7

Gunshot is heard. The male figure falls to the ground dead. The broadcasting is interrupted. Narrator is now advertising "Mr. Cleany", which will clean the toughest stains. Let slavery go, with Mr. Cleany at your hands!».

Music starts again. Maid escapes her shelter. The male figure is gone, but his letters are on the floor of the murder scene. Maid leaves her vaporizer and picks up the letters (Fig. 8). While dancing, she goes back to the bookshelf. She hides them there, and she starts all over again. (Fig. 9)

Fig. 9: Frame of the film at point 8

Something was not "clicking" with me about the story of a woman torn-up between her radio fantasies and her own body being set up in a real office space, with a classic "telenovela" cinematic style.

When the idea to make it a single - shot film, where the interesting bits would be the moments of bodily struggle in which she isn't precisely one character nor the other, but rather an expression of many coming to life through her, that is when the project started moving in the right direction.

Theatrical space and time

Coming from an art direction background, this was maybe the first thing that came to my mind: finding an appropriate setting for a fantastical single-shot. It had to be a circular traveling shot with the action happening in the middle. Space and time have no limits of separation.

The camera would mark the limits of her invisible prison-cell of time and space, be it her mind or the physical space she is not willing to escape from. The dancer would be registered in a single shot to capture her being torn apart, her inability to be three different people at the same time, to be at many different places (real and unreal) at the same time. It also would mark the four stages of the story, each of them in an exact point that the dancer has to be at for the narrative to keep on developing (The question being who is enslaved to the movements of whom?).

Since this is a story that plays with the limits of very dramatic situations with lighthearted humor, the radio in the center is the axis Mundi of this piece. A small pink plastic object decorated with butterfly stickers determines the slaving clock and the moments of freedom, translation of the camera and thus of what we can see of this place. We are standing on the edge of what can be seen, and of blackness, not being able to trespass into "her" space.

To emphasize the difference of character between the protagonist and her "prison", we thought of what each of them stand for: the Maid represents energy in constant movement, and "the space" represents everything material or fixed in time, also traditional Latin American values represented in soap operas that demand whoever works between its walls to be both ever-present and almost invisible. This is why it is composed of rigid lines, immovable and heavy objects, part of an image of a classic and patriarchal space, we used a color and texture palette associated with a "classical" idea of luxury: Bordeaux, woods, deep black, etc. The objects belonging to her, an intruder, as in Monterroso's story, are light, shiny, colorful and made of disposable materials. Her radio and her vaporizer are plastic, her cans are made of aluminum, and her rags are a bit dirty. She is the energy that flows inside a place stopped in time.
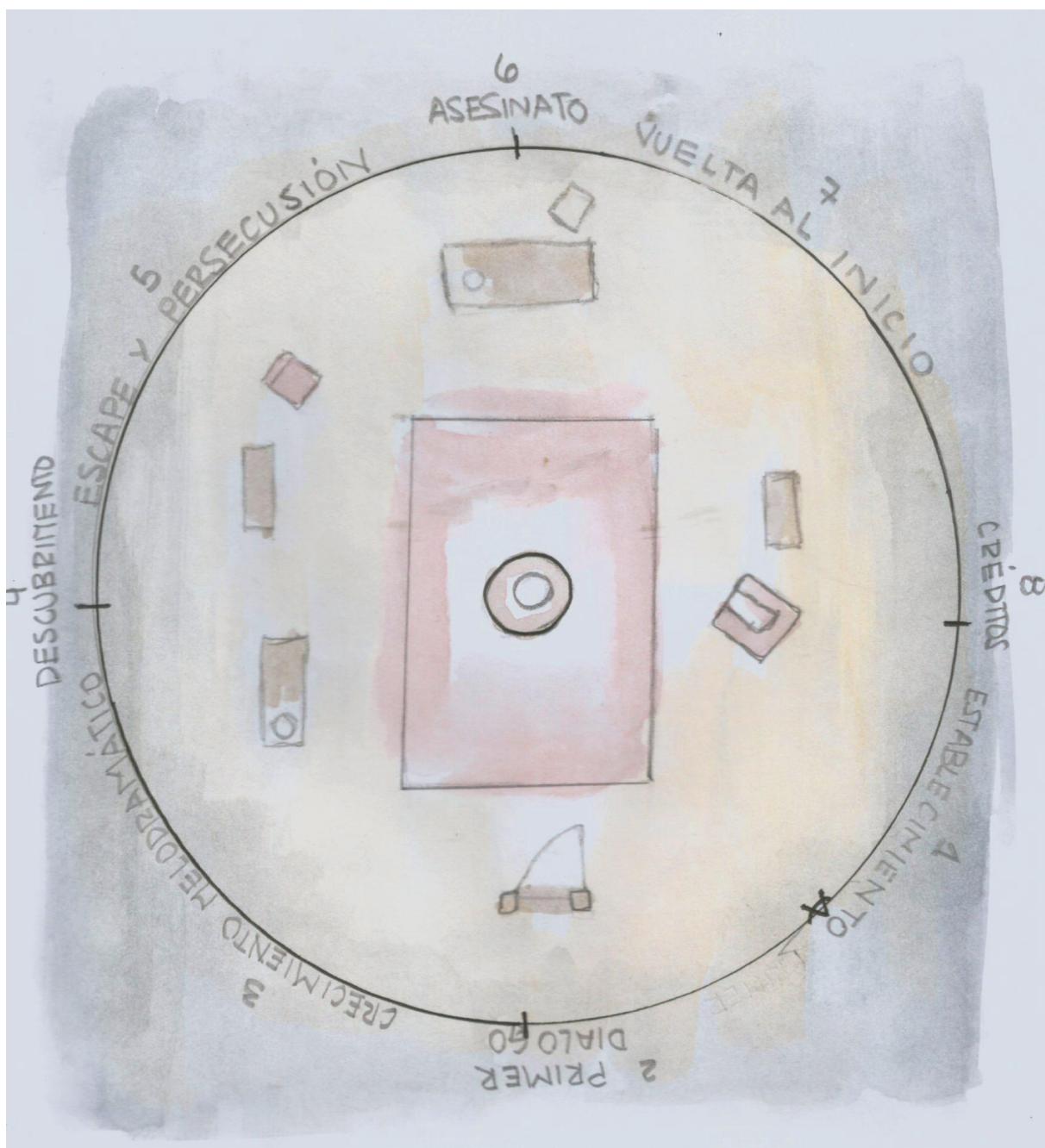

Fig. 10: Floorplan with dramatic structure

The floor plan of the space (fig 10) came in a very early stage of production and was very useful to think about the story (fig 11) and to work on rehearsals. It still depicted a very traditional narrative structure, which allowed us to experiment with acting without losing the story.

The points/numbers in the floorplan in figure 10 correspond to the following events in the shortfilm:

- Stage 8/0: Credits
- Stage 1: Stablishing shot
- Stage 2: First Dialogue (Narrator)
- Stage 3: Dramatic development
- Stage 4: Discovery
- Stage 5: Escape and persecution
- Stage 6: Murder
- Stage 7: Back to begining
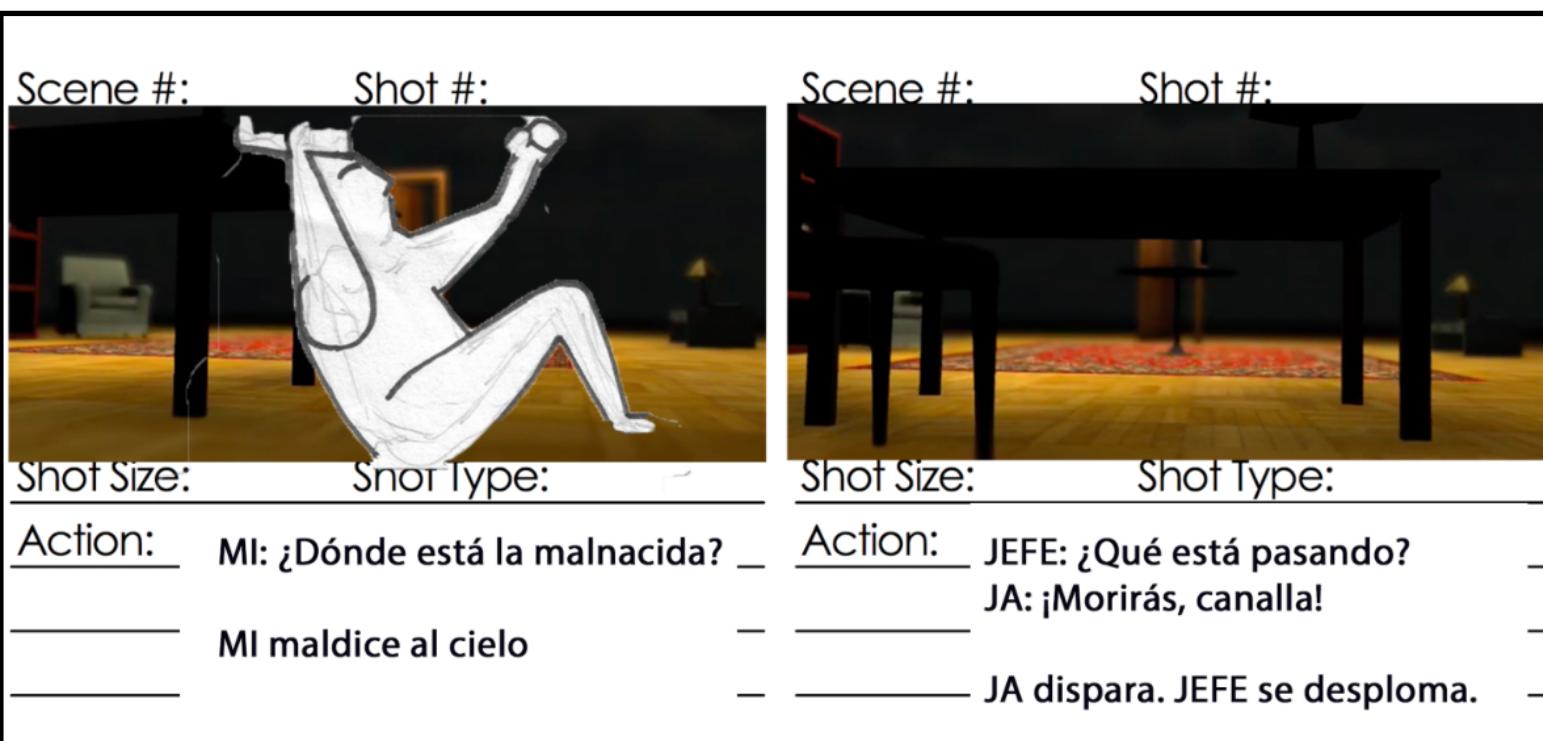
Fig. 11: Frames of the storyboard at point 6

Giving it voices

The sound design of the film involved finding a way of respecting the "circularity" that the narrative was to have. I also wanted the film to have a musical element that could help link to the culture of South America, and to what would be typically played on this radio. The music chosen (a Bolero called "El Reloj" - "The Clock" interpreted by Los De Seda) has a dramatic theme to it, and it has a very constant rhythm which is easily recognizable at the end of the film when it starts over, after having been played at the very beginning. The same song fades in at the starting credits, and starts again after the ad accompanying the ending credits, reinforcing the repetition of the beginning and ending point of the film (as seen on Fig. 8 & 9); and the idea of a "never ending cycle".
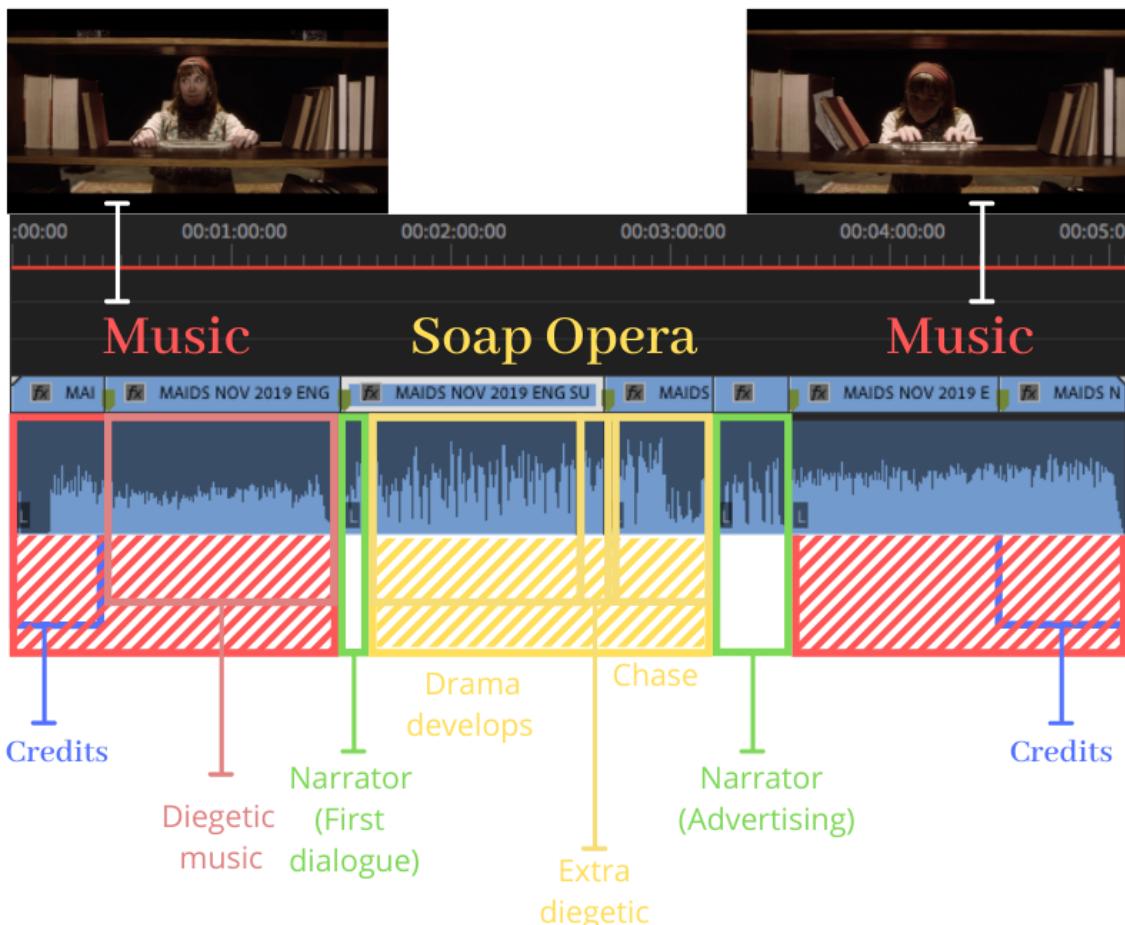
Fig. 12: Sound analysis structure

The fact that it is a funny-sounding romantic song contrasts very well with the violent twist of the murder and the prison-like and murderer-like movements of the Maid going back to the starting point. The lyrics also are embedded of an ironic twist at the end, even if they are the same as in the beginning:

Clock, don't mark the hours	Reloj no marques las horas
because I'm gonna go crazy	porque voy a enloquecer
She'll be gone forever	Ella se irá para siempre
when the sun rises again	cuando amanezca otra vez
There's only tonight left	Nomás nos queda esta noche
to live our love	para vivir nuestro amor
And your ding-dang reminds me	Y tu tic-tac me recuerda
Of my irreparable pain	Mi irremediable dolor
Clock, stop your way!	Reloj detén tu camino
Because my life is going out	Porque mi vida se apaga
She is the star that lights up my being	Ella es la estrella que alumbra mi ser
Without her love I am nothing	Yo sin su amor no soy nada
Stop time in your hands	Detén el tiempo en tus manos
Make this night perpetual	Haz esta noche perpetua
So that she never leaves me.	Para que nunca se vaya de mi

Since the song was mixed with an effect to make it sound diegetic, it might be disconcerting to hear it accompanying the starting credits, but this fades away as Maid and set appear. The song seems to become "a regular song", only to recover its crucial component when it closes the film.
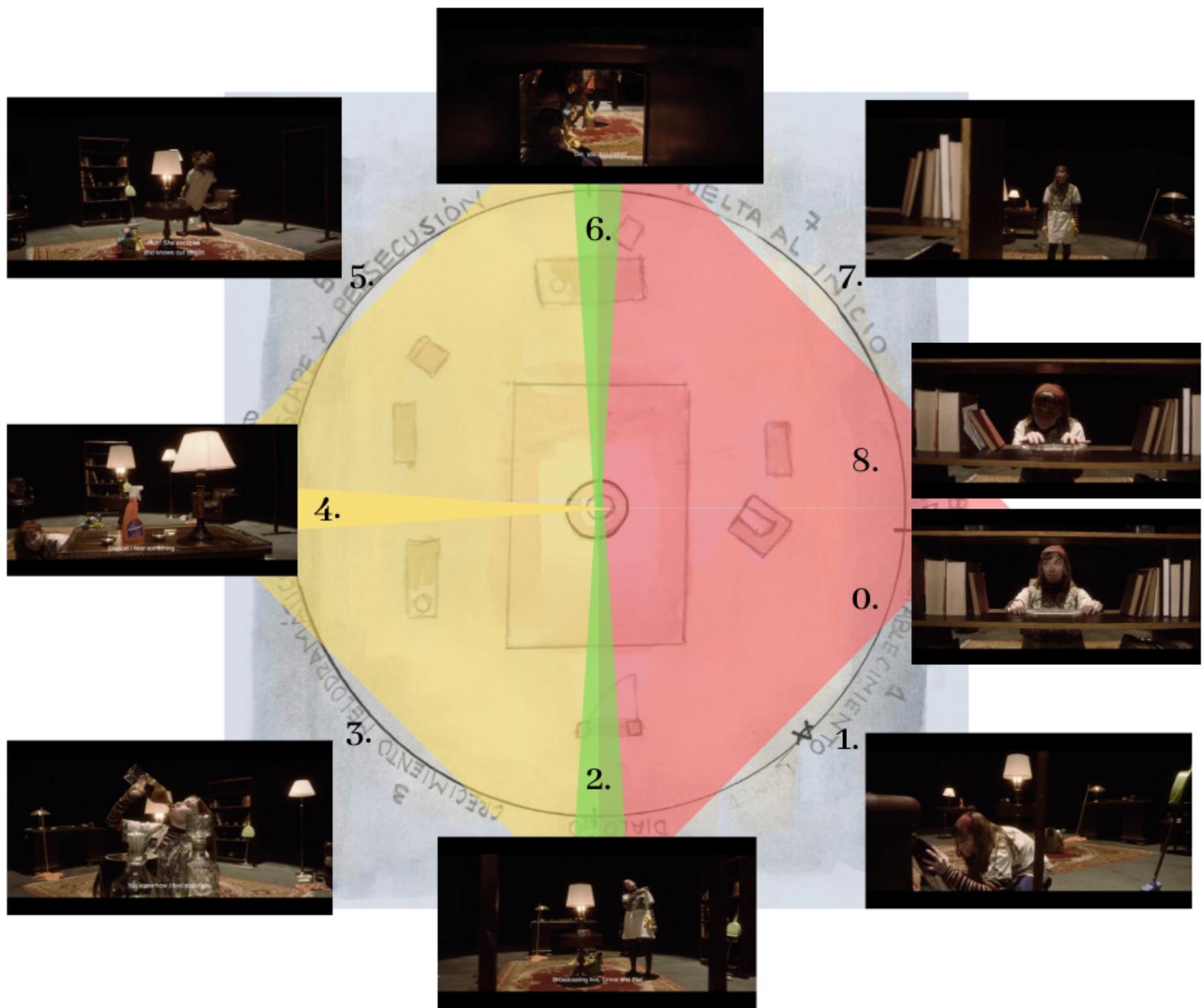
Fig. 13: Floorplan with the numbers and the corresponding images in the film

The interpreters in the film are divided into two groups, and so was the production of the film.

First, we cast the voices for the radio characters and worked with them to record a rough maquette that would be used for the single month of rehearsals. The Soap Opera was scripted beforehand, following the style of retro broadcasting ways of speech. It was fun to write this.

After shooting was completed, this maquette was polished, and during this post-production stage, we also worked on the rest of the sound design, involving a very complex (but also very enjoyable to imagine and to work on) mix of "how every space sounds like". This meant building an appropriate

room tone for the space in which the radio characters are, imagining the quality of the inexistent floor and how tall José Ignacio is and how his boots would resonate in it, what María Inés is doing when she is interrupted by him, etc. In a way, we were putting ourselves in the Maid's position. Then we added a dimension of the sound of their imagined romantic getaway. These two had to be mixed as well, sometimes in a more noticeable way than others, with the room tone of the fantasy theatrical world the maid is in. This place is supposed to have no limits among the blackness, so how it sounds had to be created using lots of effects on top of the actual room tone of the set. To make this a little bit clear, I have made this:

Going back to Fig. 12, it is visible how the sound design is very structured to emulate the Floor Plan and narrative structure (Fig. 13), having three blocks of the same length at the beginning, middle and end, separated by the narrator's voice, who both starts and finishes the violent act. The soap opera also has two phases, (3 and 5 in Fig. 13), separated by moment 4, which is a Level 3 of extra-diegetic sound, interrupted by the plot twist of the maid being discovered.

Casting a dancer

Julieta Ferraro, the main dancer, came to an open casting call and we started working on rehearsals the following week. We only had a month to prepare and we had to move fast. Not coming from a dancing background, I had an idea of the physicality of the fictional characters, and we worked with many references from art history and the notions we have in our imaginations having been brought up in Latin America. My first idea was to convey this physical violence through two strong references: on the one hand, the static dramatic poses of Romantic painting, and on the other, the dynamic violence of the trace of Abstract Expressionism. I had that in mind as a very open direction for how the body would express, meaning the Maid would have to give the viewer the impression of being an "undefined trace" in the space, instead of posing.

Fig. 14: The dancer posing as «María Inés»

To shape the concept and the movement we also worked around clichés for male and female roles in media. We mixed references of roman sculptures, thus guiding the movement of José Antonio from a rock-solid chest, and cartoons of princesses for those of María Inés, who moves her arms and legs with the lightness of a bubble (Fig. 14). The protagonist is a combination of both, she moves from one to

another not representing either. She has a stumbling energy which sometimes takes part-representation from definitions built by the history of occidental representation of what is male and what is female. It is interesting to add that we based the movement mostly on what has been fixed, in marble, in canvas, in our imagination.

As a result, she staggers with color-blasting unstoppable energy around what resembles a stereotypical study, with unmovable, well-defined, everlasting furniture. Her abstract movement conveys this violent, internal struggle. And yet, she smiles, finding the idea of her own prison sentence amusing., To be trapped within this time and space and within herself is delightful if only, even knowing what will become of her, she gets on time to hear her soap opera once more.

On this note, the movie was built around a soap opera for several reasons. Generations of Latin-American families have gathered silently around radios (and televisions), building for ages what is still seen as the stereotypical "Latin Macho" (Fig. 15)and his hopeless lady in need. Maids were choreographed and written using these images, present even in European romanticism and classic opera, and even roman sculptures before that. The Maid dances, for a few minutes, with the burden of ages of western civilization for the definitions of Man and Woman to act upon her. In the end, she frees herself and accomplishes to become neither one.

Fig. 15: The dancer posing as «José Antonio»

Cinematography for a fantasy universe

The direction of photography was an abysmal job. The line of direction was the same: a soft light that bathes the space with a sleepy atmosphere, marking a wall that does not exist, a limit from which the camera sees but cannot cross, governed by the exact center of the plastic radio. Nor do we know who is a slave to whose movements, if she is dragged by a camera that advances non-stop like a clock, or if it is this the one that, curiously, follows the steps of the plot.

When going back to the floorplan and the single-shot travelling as well as to the narrative structure, it was important that not only the dancer rehearsed where to be at each precise moment, but also the camera crew had some choreography to follow. The action was divided into a circle with four phases. At first, the space and the maid are discovered in their most everyday actions. At 90 degrees the game

begins. At 180 degrees the lovers discover her. At 270 degrees the murder happens. This was all timed to last approximately one minute each. Then everything resumes, giving the impression of an action that will happen again and that has happened before; that we are in the moment, witnesses of an infinite cycle reinforced by sensation of astrange staging in which we are immersed.

During the single-shot, the camera comes across a few pieces of furniture that enclose the image of Maid, providing a sense of editing and claustrophobia. This can be seen going once again to the frames.

Technically, the staging consisted of an HMI hung about 12 meters high, generating a diameter of light in which the scene occurs and around which the camera moved. This displacement was made on a dolly on which a crane allowed to make the changes of camera height. Given the fantastic space, all the cables of the props were hidden. On the other hand, the single-shot movement demanded as many wireless elements in set as possible. Still, one person from the team was assigned to prevent the dolly from accidentally stepping on the cables.

Almost the entire crew was working behind a black curtain on the set. The camera crew, however, of four people handling the dolly and the crane, had to be very careful not to hinder the work of the sound engineers.

We had a day of prelighting, in which the crew accommodated to the times of the choreography (approximately one minute per quadrant of the space). The rigorous storyboard was very useful as a tool for this. This day was also used to set up the light. This was a difficult process since the light was screened with a 4 meter diameter filter hung about 4 meters from the HMI's focus. The next day it was used almost completely for the shooting of 22 takes.

Even during the shooting of Maids, the limits were blurred between what was happening in front of the camera and what was happening behind the scenes.

Experimental Fiction

A new limitless form of fiction, where the body of the interpreter represents more and has a different process, is an undefined form of narrative and experimental art. Everybody dances all of the time, we cannot help but keep being in motion. Dance is to intertwined with our realities that it should find a way through a new narrative. Maids has been a part of genre narrative film festivals showcasing horror films, comedy films, dance, student, experimental, bizarre. I will pursue to keep on representing the place of indetermination.

This work acquired a much higher level of expression when it was transformed from a fiction into a screendance: by exploring with a non-speaking body the corporeality of three different characters and the tensions between the physical and the imaginary, it was possible to move from a short narrative film to an experimental piece of greater value. Cinematography accompanied this change and deepened it, generating a new synthesis that generates the empathy of fictional comedy and also awakens the active spectator of experimental cinema.

In my brief experience as a spectator and participant of screendance works, I have found that most of these start from the idea of communicating basic social elements, but in the technique or way of

communicating, the message ends up getting lost, only to reach a select group of experts in choreography and contemporary dance, trained in patience and abstract thinking. I believe in betting on that intermediate that can perhaps reach deeper into the person who sees it, that can connect with a non-verbal language that we share, and that can, just as it happened with me, help find a new universe in ways of narrating what happens to us.

Part 3

Creative duos: choreography and filmmaking

Duos creativos: coreografía y realización

This part includes articles written in duo by the creators that have worked also in duo to combine the dance and choreography united with the filming and editing.

Fenia Kotsopoulou (Greece, UK) and Daz Disley (UK) combine their approaches, as well as Heike Salzer (Germany, UK) and Ana Baer (México, USA), and choreographer and dancer Sandra Kramerová (Slovakia, Netherlands) also writes in duo with filmmaker Álvaro Congosto (Spain, USA).

These articles show the importance for videodance of combining and thinking together about body movement and filmmaking from the inception of the idea.

Framing and reframing screendance: A site-specific practice

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Abstract

In this article artists Ana Baer and Heike Salzer share their experiential perspectives of screendance making with their company WECreate Production. By reflecting on the work Wild-er-ness *(2017-20) they explore how their trajectory of collaborative making has developed towards a site-specific screendance practice in which embodied accounts of place are transmitted through the choreography, the camera and the edit (Salzer, 2019). In* Wild-er-ness *the team for the first-time combined traditional camera work with drone technology, exploring the opportunities that arise for the dancer-camera relationship, as well as for the composition of the frames in the edit and the various modes of presentation. The authors discuss three versions,* Wild-er-ness *the live performance with projecting images (2017),* Wild-er-ness Reframed, *a multi-screen looping installation piece which forms part of the touring exhibition Latent Spaces (2018-2020) and the screendance* Wild-er-ness *(2019), a 6.23 Minute film version developed for the screening at film festivals. The article presents individual reflections of the artists, which are presented throughout the text as separate voices. They provide insights from the perspective of the dancer, and how 'dancing with a drone' challenges traditional choreographic principles and expands the spatial and dynamic choreographic opportunities of the dancer-site-camera relationship, and from the viewpoint of the camera, considering how the multiple viewpoints that can be achieved through a combination of the traditional and the flying camera allows for an editing process that plays with numerous perspectives, producing an immersive sensation through the play of rhythm, scale and dimensions.*

Biography

WECreate Productions is the transcontinental company of screendance artists Ana Baer (MX/US) and Heike Salzer (DE/UK). Committed to exploring the possibilities of digital technology in service of collaborative art creation, they produce site-specific interdisciplinary works inspired by their shared fascination of extreme landscapes, place and narratives of sites. Their journeys encompass urban and rural landscapes, seeking to discover the unseen, the in-betweenness and the things that are in transformation. By engaging with environments in visceral dialogues, placing the body at the centre of the sensations, their poetic works capture the atmosphere of sites, and offer experiential embodied accounts of the places encountered. Their works have been invited by film festivals worldwide and the screendance Wild-er-ness *(2019) won the Innovation award of the Jeju Drone Film Festival 2019, in Korea.*

Ana Baer is Professor of Dance at Texas State University and holds an MFA in Dance with an emphasis on Video from the University of Colorado. Heike Salzer is Senior Lecturer in Dance Professional Practice at the University of Roehampton, where she gained a PhD by Published Works in Screendance.

Introduction

This article provides artist reflections on the creative process of the development of the *Wild-er-ness* project (Fig.1), a series of works which have been jointly devised by Ana Baer and Heike Salzer under the name of their company WECreate Productions.

Inspired by the lushness of the North Yorkshire Moors 'one of the largest continuous expanses of moorland in England and Wales' (North York Moors National Park), *Wild-er-ness* was developed as a site specific screendance in a range of formats: a live performance with projecting images, performed at international venues (2017), a multi-screen looping installation as part of the touring exhibition *Latent Spaces* (2018-2020) and a screendance (2019) which has been selected by national and international screendance festivals.

Written from the artist's individual perspectives Ana Baer and Heike Salzer reflect on their trajectory of collaborative screendance making. Offering insights into each artistic process, they discuss the project's different stages, from its conception of the initial research, to the filming and final production of the various modes of presentation, illustrating the framing and reframing of the work as a site-specific practice.

WECreate Productions – collaborative screendance making
Heike Salzer

WECreate Productions was founded in 2014 and since then we have produced several works together, gradually developing a practice of collaborative screendance making.

Fig. 1: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Screenshot, Direction: Baer A. & Salzer H., Dancers: Salzer H. & Nance M.

Our journey started initially with the piece *Home* (2014, Fig,1) which was filmed on a railway track in Texas, San Marcos, US. We had only just met and decided to get to know each other's arts practice by filming a site-specific work together. Heike in the role of the dancer and Ana behind the camera. Our work is developed through dance/camera improvisation as well as movement/camera scores, establishing a trialogue between the site-dance-camera, in which the somatic experience of the site influences all decision making, the dancer, the camera and the edit. Heike has described this somatic process of screendance making as the 'Wanderers method' (Salzer, 2019, p. 84). Having both directed and edited previous works that we produced independently from each other, for this piece we each edited a version based on our experience of the shot and combined the two films as a dual split screen final film. It presents the different viewpoints and felt rhythms, that however originate from the same footage and moment in time.

Fig. 2: *Home* (2014), Screenshot, Direction: Baer A. & Salzer H.

This concept of multiple perspectives and the interplay of rhythms of the movement in the frames and on the screen, that is provided by the split screen display of several frames, has become one of our shared interests in screendance.

Fig. 3: *Hnjúkalúr/Sleeping Summit* in *Thule-Beyond the borders of the known world* (2019), Screenshot, Direction: Baer A. & Salzer H.

Our second work, the project *WECreate Ice/Thule-Beyond the borders of the known world* (2016-2019, Fig.3) included a range of multiple screen sections, each time exploring ways in which the split screen editing might support our interest of capturing the atmosphere of places through the composition of the frames and the rhythm of the edit. To translate the felt vastness of the landscapes that we travelled in Iceland, the three frame edit as a triptych in *Sleeping Summit*, for example offered the chance to

develop a sensation of expansiveness, almost a 360° immersiveness that a single frame would have not provided.

Wild-er-ness (2017), the third piece that we developed together, while still being a low budget project, allowed us to work in a bigger team, using multiple cameras, combining traditional camera work with drone technology. Furthermore, we collaborated with textile designer, Robert Burton who developed garments inspired by the landscapes of the North Yorkshire Moors, UK, the area where we were filming.

In this article we reflect on our making processes and the final outcomes of *Wild-er-ness*, a live performance with projecting images, an installation and a screendance. The first section discusses the choreographic implications of dancing with a drone, with particular focus on the dancer-site-camera relationship, aspects such as dimensions and scales, as well as aesthetic choices of the design of the body in space. The second part offers insights on the connectedness of the practices of filming and editing. Additionally, it exposes the artists' process when transforming the media to fit new venues.

Dancing with a Drone

Heike Salzer

As a site-specific screendance artist, I have experience of being in front and behind the camera. *Wild-er-ness* offered me the opportunity for the first time to explore the application of drone cinematography and expand my understanding of the potential for my practice.

Having directed, filmed, edited and danced in my own screendances, I have developed what I call *site-specific screendance performance*. With this, I refer to the trialogue of the *site – performer – camera* and the ability as a dancer of the 'instant composition of the live body and the screen body.' This means, as a dancer I engage 'in site-specific performance, dancing on the real site, while at the same time imagining the design of the screen site in the camera frame' (Salzer, 2019, p. 3).

When filming with a camera person such as Ana, who draws on her somatic awareness of being on a location, our relationship becomes one of an improvised trio. We both react to the site, as well as to each other, developing *site-specific cinematography* that is based on our shared visceral experience of the site. I have argued that this way of filming is a holistic strategy that creates a *somatic camera* (Salzer, 2019, p. 74-84). This means that our 'usual' way of working involves the possibility of instant reaction, improvising in the moment and making movement and camera decisions that are not pre-planned.

Fig. 4+5: *Thule-Beyond the borders of the known world* (2019), Screenshot, Direction: Baer A. & Salzer H.

This awareness of the site is central in our work, and it is not only through the site-specific dance but also via the choices of the framing the body in locations. We had explored this relationship with the landscape in *Thule* (2019, Fig. 4+5) placing the female body within the expansive environment, using scale and proportion, in which the dancer and the landscape become partners in the frame. Engaging for example with the vastness by zooming from far to close, or split screen (as pictured above Fig. 3), enhanced by the contrast of closeness, capturing moving environmental textures such as steam or grass.

Having the opportunity to film with a flying and moving camera for *Wild-er-ness*, I was interested in how the site could still be central in our engagement. How might the additional possibilities of the birds-eye view, the filming from even greater distances with a flying moving camera, be employed to develop footage in which the positioning of the bodies in landscape illustrates an even greater immersion? Furthermore, I was intrigued how the features of landscape might become dancing elements by the view of the moving camera lens of the drone. While moving grass, or clouds in the sky could be captured with a traditional shot on the ground, a flying drone offers the chance to move at a much greater speed and distance, creating pathways and patterns that make the landscape move on the screen.

Improvising with a Drone

The use of drone cinematography has been seen in various works, for example capturing dancing bodies in landscapes as in Millar & Silva's *Pilgrimage* (2017) and *Traverse* (2017), increasing the motion and dynamic by flying alongside or in front of a dancer as in *321* (Kind Motion Pictures & The Motion Dance Collective, 2017) or compositions purely based on drone cinematography such as the *The Shadow Drone Project* (Linhan, 2017). Besides these practical examples, however, there have been no publications that discuss the relationship between the dancer and camera in drone cinematography.

When working with camera operators who are positioned at a greater distance, as it will be when filming with a drone, the physicality and presence of the 'camera partner/s' cannot be felt. Therefore, it seemed that our established somatic method of improvised screendance making would not be possible. However, since site-specific improvisation is at the core of our screendance practice, it did not feel appropriate to our practice to use a strategy that Fildes calls the 'Farmers' (Fildes, 2018, p. 192), i.e. carefully setting choreography and storyboarding the camera perspectives. I was keen to see, as a director and performer of this work, if the relationship with an inanimate flying object still could offer the possibility of a dialogue, a 'dancing with' rather than 'dancing for' or 'being filmed by'.

To explore the above, Ian Bailey, who joined our team as drone operator, and I set up to research the practical possibilities and the limitations of filming a dancer in landscape. Our goal was to acquaint ourselves with this new tool, and establish some choreographic and cinematic principles. We were supported by TJ Simon who operated the camera while Ian was flying the drone. Working on a very limited budget and a tight timeframe for the actual shoot when the rest of the team, Ana Baer (Direction, Camera, Edit), Michelle Nance (Dance), and Rob Burton (Textile Artist), were joining for the actual shooting days, we were keen to provide the others beforehand with 'flying choreography duets' to be able to develop scores on the actual filming days.

The findings of our research sessions provided valuable practical and aesthetic insights which we employed in the following shooting days and I will reflect on in the following section. A compilation of the research footage that we produced in several research days (Fig. 6+7) can be accessed here. https://vimeo.com/205591629

Fig. 6+7: Screenshot of research footage for *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Dancer: Salzer H; Drone and Camera operators: Bailey I. & Simon TJ

Weather, time limitations and shifting the mode of performance

Fig. 8: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Photo on location, Beer J. Left: A. Baer, Middle: H. Salzer, Right: M. Nance

One constraint that became apparent was the effect the weather had on the functionality of the drone and consequently influenced my performance mode. The weather in the North East of England is

unpredictable, and rain, wind and fog impacted on the possibility of flying the drone, limiting the actual filming time. A time constraint that was new to us. In our improvised practice, the length of each shot used to be determined by our intuitive feeling of when a conversation with a site and each other had come to an end. (Salzer, 2019, p. 56). This new time constraint impacted on my 'somatic mode of attention' (Csordas in Reeve, 2011, p. 19) during my improvisation, becoming more focused on ensuring that I included 'aesthetically useful' designs of compositional structures, within the camera frame, rather than following my visceral intuition.

When filming with a ground camera, Ana and I, as mentioned above, shoot as an improvising contact duet/trio, reading each other's movement where the camera follows the dancers, or the dancers follow directions that are led by the camera position (Fig. 8). Often, we supplement this dialogue with our voices, giving verbal feedback and directions, for example with regard to framing, perspectives, space, pathways or dynamic. This communication is based on an understanding of sharing the same space through a somatic encounter of the site, and acknowledging each other as dance partners. An improvised dance/camera choreography that allows for instant composition of the dance and the camera, both parties actively leading or following, reading each other's actions in space.

Fig. 9: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Photograph on location, Beer J., Dancer: Salzer H.

When dancing and filming with a drone, due to the distances between the dancer and the position of the camera, the camera operator cannot read the dancer's movements and instantly react, nor can the camera person and dancers exchange verbal clues to provide directions. Dancing with a drone means dancing with an inanimate, non-sensitive and non-reactive object (Fig.9), I often felt a little lost in the landscape and disconnected from my team, as the verbal and sometimes even visual communication channels were not accessible anymore.

As a dancer who considers the camera a duet partner, and while performing is continuously conscious about the design of the body on the screen, the lack of communication and somatic connection with the camera person posed a challenge. Without this somatic exchange between sensitive bodies, I discovered that in order to achieve the same kind of aesthetic design in the frame, I needed to predict where the drone might be flying, and therefore re-adjust my improvisation method. It became a contact improvisation duet with a technical tool, where the camera provided the impetus and I am, as the dancer the follower, having little opportunity to react on my instinct that might be triggered by my camera partner, or the surroundings, but instead focusing on the choreography of the camera and following its lead.

Another purely practical consideration is the aspect of safety. Although I knew in theory that the drone camera has the capacity of travelling great distances at fast speed, the visceral experience of the pace and the magnitude possible was an impressive discovery which took time to become accustomed to. Furthermore, to prevent collision a couple of metres of distance between dancer and drone are required. My reaction time and ability to create distance is much quicker than the operator's ability to negotiate a precise flying pathway. This process demanded more focus and responsibility on practicalities in my role as the dancer.

In an ideal world a shoot might include a flying score for the drone, a camera score and the development of a movement score, which could be realised with radio connections and a team of people, however with environmental constraints and the low budget team of only a drone operator, two camera people and two dancers, this kind of meticulous planning was out of our reach, and perhaps not even desired, as it could lose the improvised character of our work that leaves many decisions to the sensations of the moment, which in itself forms part of our interest as site-specific screendance artists (Salzer, 2019). One of the most intriguing discoveries of the exploration was the shifting of compositional principles of the design of the body in space which I will illustrate in the next paragraphs.

Speed and pathways

Fig. 10: Screenshot *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Baer A. & Salzer H., Dancer: Salzer H.

The aspects of speed and pathways that the drone can fly, allows for a camera choreography that shapes the textures of the landscape into choreographed elements. This can place the viewer into a sensation of dancing, a kinesthetic camera choreography initiating a visceral sensation for the viewer.

Here the environment dances (with the viewer), even without dancing bodies within the shoot, placing the site at the centre of the attention, highlighting its spatial and textural features.

Distance, scale and dimension

Fig. 11: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Screenshot, Direction: Baer A. & Salzer H., Dancer: Salzer H.

The drone camera's ability to capture the body in landscape from a great distance, presenting a small human figure in a vast environment, emphasises the scale of the body in a landscape through contrast. With regard to movement design, this distance influences the size and complexity of the vocabulary: 'grand gestures' and simple movement patterns such as for example a wide standing position with upwards focus and far reaching arms, laying on our backs in heather, or walking/running pathways, seem to offer a dance-site-camera relationship that places the site at the centre of the shot while still capturing specificity of movement design. The rather bombastic drone cinematography pictured in Fig. 10 is contrasted with close-ups capturing subtle details of the textures of the garments, and the environment such as grass and flowers, offering a kinaesthetic sensation of both the vastness of space as well as the details of the landscape as seen in Fig. 11.

Composing movement in the horizontal plane

Framing the body via bird's-eye view, positions the viewer looking down from a top view perspective (Fig. 12). This means that the dancer can compose the movement in the horizontal upwards facing plane.

If a body is captured from above while being in a vertical position, for example walking, only the head is seen and there is little volume of the body. The challenge of the horizontal plane is in composing movement that aesthetically functions from the bird's eye view frame. This spatial possibility can be quite demanding on the body, especially when aiming for an upwards focus towards the camera or

wanting to create spatial volume through lines and length of the body. Laying on the ground is a simple solution, designing travelling movements for an audience that is positioned above the head is much more difficult.

Through the contrast of the dimension and scale and the additional perspective of the body and landscape from above, the footage of *Wild-er-ness* seems to offer a three-dimensional and textural view of the body in the site, placing the dancing body and the landscape as equal choreographic partners on the screen and drawing the viewer into the frame through an immersive encounter with landscape.

Fig.12: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Screenshot, Direction: Baer A. & Salzer H., Dancers: Salzer H. & Nance M.

Dancing with a drone in *Wild-er-ness* has provided me with a new mode of attention for improvisational landscape screendance. There is an excitement of the unpredictability of the activity of the drone which keeps me as an improvising dancer on a positive high alert. I am continuously negotiating the movement on the site itself, my relationship with the flying drone, anticipating its next actions, while at the same trying to envisage the composition of the movement within the screen site of the camera. While in the past this negotiation of space involved a human camera partner, in which I could rely to some extent on my somatic dialogue with another human, dancing with a drone is a playful game of changing circumstances, non-predictable and full of surprises.

Filming with the editing in mind

Ana Baer

In this section I share some of the benefits of acting as both, the cinematographer and the editor during the making of *Wild-er-ness*.

It is hard for me to separate the experiences of filming from editing. I have found that many of the filming decisions that we take are in part considering the editing. During our filming sessions, the light was ideal, although we were constantly interrupted by the rain (Fig. 13). I was concentrating on capturing the movement of both dancers from different angles. This can be a challenge when there is

no set choreography, especially when shooting close ups. Having worked with both dancers extensively, (Heike and Michelle), my camera has learned how to improvise as a third dancer. I was focused on capturing gestures, details from the costumes, the environment, their relationship to each other and the environment. I responded to the dancers, to the cold and windy environment, to the sunlight, and to the cadence and weight of each movement (Fig. 14).

Fig.13: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Photograph on location, Beer J., Dancers: Salzer H. & Nance M.

Digital technology has provided screendance artists the freedom to experiment and improvise, walking away from traditional story-boarding. As a cinematographer, I find myself improvising to the stimulus of both, the dancers and the environment alike. I consider this way of working to be a phenomenological approach to art creation in which the triad between dancers, camera and environment is at the core of the creation of the piece. Never-the-less, and particularly while filming *Wild-er-ness*, we followed clear parameters and created some structure during the filming process. Each shot required vast preparation due to the complexity of the multi-camera shots and the incorporation of drone technology. In total, we had three cameras on the ground and a fourth one flying around with a drone.

The research footage previously captured by part of the team allowed me to see the site before I arrived there. We knew we were dealing with the lush vegetation of the North Yorkshire Moors that included blooming heather flowers, tall grasses, extensive wooded areas and moss. This landscape, with its bleak and dreamy environments, has influenced writers such as Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), which is believed to take place in the Yorkshire Moorlands close to Haworth village where she lived (no date). Her description of the novel's surroundings captures the uncanny atmosphere of the moorlands: 'One may guess the power of the north wind blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few stunted firs at the end of the house; and by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun.' Similar to the way this English writer

was inspired, our team was stimulated by the environment. We too, walked along the paths that took us to our locations feeling the weight of the gloomy summer and like them, we attempted to create work to share our experience of place with others.

Fig. 14: *Wild-er-ness* (2017), Photograph, Beer J., Dancers: Salzer H. & Nance M.

Before our filming sessions, we had been invited to present *Wild-er-ness* as a multimedia performance with live dance, live music and projecting images. We also knew we wanted to craft this piece as a stand-alone screendance work. One of our priorities while shooting was to ensure we had sufficient high-quality footage to accomplish the different ways and formats of presenting the work. That said, prior to our shoot, we established the need to capture:

1. The lushness of the environment with long clips of B roll in extreme long shots ELS, as well as in close up CU, (for textures)
2. Birds-eye view footage from the drone
3. The dancers' intimacy with each other, the environment and the camera

Dealing with a drone for the first time, one of the biggest considerations was to avoid seductive drone clips without direct connection to our work. Inspired by the environment, our work became about memories, nostalgia, pathways, intimacy, sisterhood, and at the forefront, a site-specific experience.

Manipulating the Media to fit new parameters, a site-specific practice
Ana Baer

During this section I examine the versatility of the work *Wild-er-ness* while being transformed to fit different modes of presentation. With new opportunities come new challenges. *Wild-er-ness* has gone through a few reiterations since its inception. The form has been dictated by the mode of presentation.

Originally, this piece was conceived as a multimedia performance for a proscenium stage, secondly as a video installation and lastly as a screendance.

1. *Wild-er-ness* (2017) as a live performance with multiple projecting screens and live music

The challenge for this mode of presentation was to allow time and space for each element to be displayed without hierarchy. The main focus was to direct the audience's attention by giving unity to the presentation. Some of the strategies that I tried following are discoveries from previous similar works that I have engaged with, either as a co-creator or as an audience member.

I utilized the following principles as a starting point and then deviated from them to include further experimentation:

A) Live dancers without projecting image
B) Projecting images without live dance
C) The integration of live dance and projecting images
D) Showcasing each dancer by herself and as part of a duet

Fig. 15+16: *Wild-er-ness-Performance* (2017), Photograph, Akiyama J., Dancer/s: Left: Nance M.; Right: Salzer H. & Nance M.

The piece opened with a solo dancer swirling on stage wearing a dress in which video textures were projected onto (Fig 15). Minutes later, two white panels placed on the downstage most legs were revealed with additional projections of textures, soon after, two more panels on each side were similarly revealed and projected onto (Fig. 16).

The second dancer came on stage and both dancers performed a short duet while textures were projected on the six panels arranged to create more depth and to fragment the visuals. The first dancers exits stage leaving the second one immerse in textured footage projected on six different screens. Afterwards, the first dancer slowly comes back walking from upstage left to upstage right and revealing a large screen on the cyclorama as she passes.

The rest of the performance displays the interaction of the multiple screens and both dancers. During this section, there were moments of complex choreography while the video displayed footage from one slow take from the drone flying closer and closer to the dancers as they both laid down on the grass motionless. Afterwards, the choreography became intentionally simplistic to allow the audience to grasp in full the video projections, which proportionally became more sophisticated. Even though the dancers from the projections and the dancers performing live were the same and they were also wearing unchanged outfits, unity kept being one of my main concerns.

Choreographically, we worked to unify the live and mediated choreography. We re-created selected moments of the mediated choreography performed by the dancers in the environment and placed the live dancers strategically so the audience could absorb both, live and mediated choreography. During the last part of this multimedia performance, there were clear moments of unison between live and projected images as seen in Fig. 17+18.

Fig. 17+18: *Wild-er-ness-Performance* (2017), Photograph: Akiyama J., Dancers: Salzer H. & Nance M.

2. *Wild-er-ness* (2018-20) as part of a video installation

In 2018 we were invited to create an installation of our screendance works including this piece. The exhibit called *Latent Spaces* is a compilation of screendance works created within the realms of site-specific work. The challenge here was to transform the work previously shown as a multimedia performance to fit the norms of a Gallery space.

Adapting the black box work to fit the requirements and expectations of work displayed in the white box. The transformation was dictated by the limitations of the new location, (TXST Gallery), their equipment and their aesthetic requirements. For this, I found myself collaborating intimately with curator Margo Handerker, who offered many suggestions and ideas for a seamless transformation.

One of the objectives of *Latent Spaces* was to experiment with proportion and dimension, as well as with perspectives and points of view within site-specific screendance work. After studying the space, we decided to showcase *Wild-er-ness* as a two-part installation. The first part consisted of a multi-projection where the same footage was simultaneously projected on a wall and on the floor. The second part was created by a triptych of small projections side by side (Fig. 19).

Fig. 19: *Wild-er-ness-Installation* (2018), Photograph: Texas State University Marketing

Fig. 20: *Wild-er-ness-Installation* (2018), Photograph: Burton R.

An element that we were able to bring to the forefront was the textile art created by Robert Burton. The venue of the Gallery space provided us with the opportunity to experience the work in a-typical ways. From the inception of our collaboration, Robert created two long dresses with the pattern of the North Yorkshire Moors, (our filming location). Robert took a few exploratory journeys to the location to integrate elements from the environment into the costumes. For the installation, Robert created a surface with similar patterns and fabric that we placed on the floor and projected onto.

Fig. 21: *Wild-er-ness-Installation* (2018), Photograph: Baer S.

This video included footage captured from the drone at different distances while the dancers are laying on the moss. Through a media splitter, the signal was screened simultaneously on the wall and the textile art set on the floor.

The distinctive top shot from the drone projected from a top projector into Robert's Textile art as seen in Fig. 20, alongside the simultaneously projected shot from the front into the wall created a slightly dis-locating effect, but, more than that by installing the footage in the horizontal and frontal plane, it provided a unique way to experience the material in an immersive way.

The triptych consisted of three small screens placed on a row side to side as pictured in Fig 21. The footage included the dancers as well as the environment. Having three surfaces invited me to play with the continuity of movement from one screen to the other, with mirroring the side images, with unison, cannon, and other simple editing/choreographic tools. We also included fragmentation of the body, repetition, repetition with variations, sequential edits, superimposition and layering.

Similarly, to the drone setup, the triptych provided contradictory readings. It showed extreme wide angles in juxtaposition with the screen size, followed by textured footage of the smallest vegetation.

3. *Wild-er-ness* (2019) as a Screendance

After presenting our work as a multimedia event and a video installation, I got to know our footage in detail. The challenge for this form was to create a stand-alone video that would intrigue the audience and communicate our fascination with the site. I decided to keep the triptych format and included what I thought was the footage that could communicate our experience with more depth.

The split screen allowed for multiple points of views, showing slightly different moments from different perspectives. Viewing similar, yet not the same moments of a location simultaneously on three screens provided multiple viewpoints and offered depth of texture, colours and energy of movement. I also experimented with revealing the screens by key-framing the cropping effect and reversed it for a defined ending.

Fig. 22: *Wild-er-ness-Screendance* (2019), Screenshot, Dancers: Salzer H. & Nance M.

We used the composition by Richard D. Hall throughout the three formats. The music was composed to fit the live performance, however, it also offered a structure for the installation and screendance alike. Richard's composition included a drone-like soundscape in addition to percussion and other instrumental music. The structure provided me with a beginning, middle and end as well as with a climatic moment, however, it allowed freedom to experiment during the re-editing process to fit the demands of each presentation.

Conclusions

Ana Baer & Heike Salzer

As a creative collective entity, WECreate Productions has embraced the experimental arena of dance, cinematography and the in-between places of both fields. The journey has been abundant with discoveries, challenges and new knowledge within the collaborative arts processes and production. The *Wild-er-ness* project has provided opportunities to explore the application of drone cinematography and a range of presentation modes, reframing the work in each iteration.

The exploration of dancing with a drone revealed how the dancer-site-camera relationship transforms the somatic interconnection between the dancer and a cameraperson, to a duet between a dancer and an inanimate object, demanding the dancer to develop a new mode of attention for improvisational landscape screendance making. Furthermore, a shift of compositional principles was identified, firstly the possibility of a kinesthetic camera choreography which shapes the textures of the landscape into choreographed elements and secondly the aesthetic and physical challenges of the development of movement, designed to be captured from the perspectives of the drone camera. Aspects such as speed and pathways, distance, scale and dimension, and the composition of movement in the horizontal plane are discussed, and illustrate how these influence the size, and complexity of the movement design.

The three different modes of presentation of *Wild-er-ness,* the live performance with projected images, the gallery installation and the screendance are considered, demonstrating how the specific parameters of the site of the venue enables the framing of the footage in different set-ups. By *reframing* the footage each format becomes a transformed version of the piece, offering multiple editions of the same account of a location. While keeping the essence of the specificity of the impressions of the original site, the framing and reframing of the work provides multiple audience experiences, each iteration highlighting slightly different aspects of the work.

The live performance with projected images plays with the perceptions of scale. The huge size of the proscenium gauze in contrast to the live bodies on stage enhances the distances and dimensions, seemingly bringing the vastness of the location into the theatre. The installation draws the viewer into the work through the possibility of 'being within' or walking 'among the images'. The ability to get close to the textiles on the ground, and the feeling of the light of the projections and reflections on the viewer"s body, offers the audience a felt kinesthetic experience. The last iteration of *Wild-er-ness* as a screendance presents the work in a two-dimensional format, transforming the previous three-dimensional multi-screen set-ups, onto a single screen flat projection surface. Here the triptych split screen edit presents multiple perspectives of slightly different moments in time, enhancing the volume and physicality of the bodies as well as the materials of the landscape.

Site specificity is at the core of WECreate Productions practice. Framing embodied accounts on the original site and reframing these in several contexts has become a common practice for the team. Embracing the use of drone technology and developing several editions of the same lived experience has enriched our making process, and enabled us to explore and innovate our collaborative practice.

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"Dear Diane…": Reflections in the form of letters

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Abstract

Relating to the video dance piece This Dance Has No End[1] *(2018), its creators Fenia Kotsopoulou and Daz Disley write letters to the work's dedicatee, the late artist, Drag King, and gender activist Diane Torr (1948-2017). The letters digest and discuss the (and also the "lack" of) formalities of the work, and their trajectories, working together leading up to the creation of* This Dance Has No End. *The act of "claiming space" was central to Torr's female-to-male-transformation workshop Man for a day, of which Fenia participated in 2012, and in the letters we see how this act is relevant in various forms to the work of both Fenia and Daz. As their collaboration has progressed over time, we read how they've approached building trust and parity in the performative aspects of the dancer-camera-relationship as they create a joint-practice exploring both temporal and spatial aspects of co-creation, seeded from their differing positions habituated of the different disciplines they are backgrounded in.*

Biography

Fenia Kotsopoulou (GR 21.09.81) is a cross-disciplinary artist, working in the fields of dance, video, performance, photography, and curation.

Daz Disley (UK 13.04.77) is a (mostly) digital artist, who works with sound, video, photography, and facilitation.

Whilst both have discrete independent practices and have each been shown at a large number of festivals, art platforms, and curation related activities both in their resident country of England, and also internationally; their collaborative practice sees them create works in the space of video-dance, live-art, and experimental performance, and has earned them several awards and prizes for their video pieces.

They both teach on the Masters of Theatre Practices MA course at the ArtEZ Institute of the Arts, in the Netherlands, and when not tied-up in their own creativity and teaching, they contribute to the durational socially engaged project x-church with the UK company SlumGothic, encouraging and presenting arts and arts-practices as "social glue" in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Europe.

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[1] A video of the presentation made by Fenia Kotsopoulou during the 6th EIVV (International Meeting on Videodance and Videoperformance) of these works can be found at https://videodance.blogs.upv.es/2019-eivv/

Introduction

> *What happens when someone dies is that we, the living, contain their memory within us … They will live on in us, and we will celebrate them. And dance like there is no tomorrow.*
>
> Diane Torr

In 2012, Fenia Kotsopoulou attended performance artist and gender activist Diane Torr's drag king workshop *Man for a day*. The following year her long-term collaboration with Daz Disley began. Five years later, Diane passed away, and a year-to-the-day of the announcement of her death, together they created the video piece *This Dance Has No End* in her memory (Fig.1).

Fig.1: Still image from the video-dance*This Dance Has No End"* (2018)

Rather than seek to codify and analyse the work here in an academic framework, instead both have chosen to talk about the piece in the form of individual letters entitled "Dear Diane…", in which they reveal elements of, and the evolution of, their common practice in screendance during the course of the six years of their collaboration.

Letter 1: Dear Diane

I am writing this letter to share with you some thoughts regarding a video-dance piece created in collaboration with my partner the artist Daz Disley; a work dedicated to you, one year after your passing. The video is called *This Dance Has No End* and it starts with your own words that I read somewhere, long time ago, and I find them now in my diary: "What happens when someone dies is that we, the living, contain their memory within us…They will live on in us, and we will celebrate them. And dance like there is no tomorrow".

A dance, an ode to life and death. Because death too deserves to be celebrated.

Actually, I would love when I die for people to dance and sing for me. Just now comes to mind the final scene of a Greek movie by Kostas Ferris, called *Rembetiko* (1983), in which people dance, play music and sing during the funeral of the singer Marika Niniou. (Fig.2)

Fig. 2: Still image from the last scene of the film *Rembetiko* (1983), directed by Kostas Ferris

But I am not in a funeral. I am not in a cemetery. I am in a black space and I stand still. I wear a black dress down to my knees, with white and grey patterns; black shoes with low heels. I have applied hair to my face, and light makeup to emphasise my thick eyebrows and add some stronger angles and lines around my jaw, which gives me a more masculine look without completely altering my characteristics. I am dressed with the attitude you demonstrated, among with many other things, during your workshop "Man for a day" in Berlin in April 2012 (Fig. 8), which still resonates within me as one of the strongest and richest experiences I have had regarding identity, gender and performativity.

So, I am ready to dance for you. It is late afternoon on the 31st of May 2018; exactly one year from your death. In the room with me is Daz who accompanies me in this dance ritual with the camera. He knows what this specific dance means to me, as well as its histories, both personal and cultural. You knew these things too. This is not an easy task for him: to follow me with the camera, being part of the ritualistic dance without invading my space, respecting the intensity without breaking flow. He has only one chance. I dance once, he films once; a single shot, a single improvisation. Both of us in the "here and now". No music this time, just my inner rhythm guiding my body in the space. As I concentrate and dive in, your voice arrives as echoes in my head: "Claim and own your space". I am ready. It's the moment. The camera comes closer and, after a while, I slowly start lifting my arms (Fig. 3).

Here we are now: a new other, a hybrid, fluid : "me", oscillating between polarities, ready to step-foot on the ground to manifest myself. After three minutes, my first step breaks the silence, and from stillness the dance has begun.

Fig.3: Still image from the video-dance *This Dance Has No End"* (2018)

This dance has its roots in the past. Throughout history, *Zeibekiko* has been known as an intensely personal dance where people express their individuality. *Zeibekiko* has been incorporated into the context of *Rebetiko*: a genre closely intertwined with migration, having multicultural origins drawn from Ottoman-Greek, Ottoman-Turkish, Greek, Arabic, Slavic, and Balkan elements, dating back to the around the turn of the 20th century. Within the authentic context of *Rebetiko*, only one man at a time may dance, and if another rises to dance, it is potential cause for conflict and possibly even violence. This is not a dance to entertain an audience, but is instead a deposition of the suffering soul, a personal statement, and urge to find catharsis.

The music would begin, the rhythm insistent, the voice harsh and metallic, and the dancer would rise as if compelled to make his statement. Eyes half-closed, trance-like absorption, cigarette hanging from his lips, arms outstretched as if to keep his balance, he would begin to slowly circle (Holst-Warhaft, p.11-12).

Although apparently it was (and still is) considered a "male dance", I've been performing it since my youth as a matter of inner urge, especially during moments of emotional pain and loss.

You witnessed me dancing it once, after the workshop and still cross-dressed as my drag-king alter-ego: Leo, in a small pub in Berlin during a *Rebetiko* night we joined. There is nothing left from that night other than the echoes of the experience in my body. Do your remember?...But what remains now is this video of almost 11 minutes. A dance in ode to life and death, with following camera a respectful participant. An empty room with no music; with no edits or retakes; not aiming to please or excite but to offer myself as site for collective unburdening.

But who owns this work? Is it really mine?

Let's rewind.

My collaboration with Daz started in 2013. It started as an attempt to find a common language between our disciplines of performance and dance/instant composition, technology and programming in order to represent and transliterate emotional states present in and generated by situation, architecture and space. Through iterative dialogue we started building a production process to take account of the boundaries and dialogues between space and movement, pixels and code, in order to realise a unified expressive output where the results of code become integral to the expression. The first screendance video work that came out of our collaboration was *IN-ner Space revisited* (2013). This was the result of a rather unorthodox process. In 2012, I shot a site-specific improvised performance in Beelitz- Heilstaetten, a TB clinic and sanatorium turned military hospital outside of Berlin, where both Hitler and Honecker were patients. Now an abandoned place, haunting and eerie, shrouded in mystery, and occupied by the accumulated memories of thousands of patients. The dance was a spontaneous reaction to the site. I both moved and shot by myself using a basic fixed camera, performing in front of it in different rooms of the complex (Fig. 4).

Fig.4 and 5: Still images from the video-dance *IN-ner Space revisited* (2013)

I didn't use or edit the raw material until 2013 when I met Daz who asked me if he could edit and process it applying some of the fragmentation effect we had developed together. The effect gives a fragmented appearance to movement and functions as a metaphor and communication channel for the myriad distressed psyches informing the performance. I handed the raw material to him, and in this work, Daz stepped for the first time into the role of editor-as-choreographer. American author Karen Pearlman compares editors with choreographers and states

> like choreographers, editors shape the trajectories of movement across shots, scenes, and sequences, the transitions of movement between the shots. Like choreographers, editors work with the temporal and spatial dynamics of movement to create a flow of moving images that carries meaning (Pearlman, 2016, p 27).

Daz comes from a musical background and this certainly has an impact on his editing, which is very different to mine. I would say that he edits like a musician, and I edit like a dancer. We both relate with the spatio-temporal dimensions of the movement - but from different angles and with a different focus. When I saw the final output I felt this piece no longer belonged to me – even if the initial idea, filming, composition, and performance happened before we even meet and was based on my aesthetic and expressive needs. With his intervention and manipulation of the image, the piece gained another life, a different form, and a co-ownership. Author Darren Hudson Hick states

authorship is centrally a matter of responsibility, power, and creation, and distinguishing between authors and contributors rests on determining who has and employs the power to select and arrange elements as constitutive of a work and so has ultimate responsibility for that work's form and content (Hick Hudson, 2014, p. 153).

Choices and decisions were made by both of us in different phases of the process, and these choices determined the final output shared with the viewer. So in the end, *IN-ner Space revisited* was clearly the result of a co-authorship: a fusion of our visions. During the following years of our collaboration, the roles within our shared creative process will often become blurred, blending such that co-authorship and co-production comes to define our collaboration.

In the case of *This Dance Has No End* the question of "who owns the piece?" was also clear in the beginning for both that this was a personal project, but also this answer to the question changed along the way. This video work is part of an on going research linked to previous outputs. For example, your death, Diane, happened during the period in which I participate in the Venice International Performance Art Week | Workshop Series, Joint Performance Summer Class by La Pocha Nostra and VestAndPage in 2017. Within this context my interest and research in Zeibekiko was revived. At the end of the workshop I performed *Apocalyptic Zeibekiko* which took place as a live durational performance on the 5th of June 2017 at C32, Forte Maghera, Venice (Italy). I performed naked an improvisation of Zeibekiko, in an attempt to subvert the form through repetition and exhaustion, for almost two hours with the same piece of music on loop. The performance was filmed with a GoPro camera placed on the ceiling (Fig. 6).


Fig. 6: Still images from the video-dance *TAXIMI* (2018)

The full, unedited version was projected on a door surface in the C32 performing art workspace during the final public presentation on the following day, and it was on that day that I learned you had recently passed away. Some months later, I decided to recycle and edit the two hour long video and create a new short video-dance piece, titled *TAXIMI*: a 3'56 minutes (Fig. 7) of heavily edited

video using soundtrack of music related to *Rebetiko* improvised by my brother Kostis Kotsopoulos, and Takis Doxas. But I was not satisfied. Something didn't work for me. It was then that I started thinking of making a video-tribute to you, including elements of *Zeibekiko*. For months, I was working in my head. Possible scenes, and a structure. I never use storyboard or mood-boards, as it is enough for me to imagine, and in any case, the outcome will never exactly fit any plan - imagined or even scripted. The days passed and it was no longer realistic to make what I had imagined, given that I had only few days left before the anniversary of your passing.

Fig. 7 : Still images from the video-dance *TAXIMI* (2018)

The decision was made : less is more. I booked a black-box studio at the University of Lincoln (UK), for a single hour-long slot. I would dance for you and Daz would film. There was no time for additional complication. I had to trust him and surrender to the moment. No time to plan, to discuss, to agree, or even disagree. I got prepared. He got prepared. minutes later we were ready to return home.

I watched the footage. And the first thing that came to mind was: how can I edit it to make it more "interesting" for the viewer? What music I can add to make it more "engaging"? I didn't even try because this would simply kill the piece, the moment, the ritual itself. As I kept watching it, it become clear that this dance was the most honest offer from my side. Until that point I considered this work as "mine", and I had a very strong emotional attachment to it. While the video was rendering, I didn't consider that this work would particularly arrive with the viewer. Not because of the camera work, not because of the performance, but instead because it goes against certain established standards within the (mainstream) field. As a viewer you need to commit until the end, or simply don't watch it: and you need to not expect. There is no "exciting" music. There is no captivating or virtuosic movement. There is no skillful editing. You need to *listen* with your eyes.

But my bias of what will or won't engage was proved wrong. Although I still consider this video-work perhaps "not easy" to watch, it managed to communicate with others. It received four awards and it

has been included in a variety of screening programs at festivals, and other art-platforms encompassing video art, screendance, queer art and performance art. The reception of the work made me reflect on different matters, including the issue of authorship.

In my opinion this work could never manage to break the wall of conventions and arrive with viewers who are not informed about its context and layers of meaning, if it was not for the camera work of Daz. He managed not to simply direct the gaze of the viewer but to "accompany" the viewer who decided to set off with this visual, ritualistic: journey. The camera became an active agent, and partner. Although my emotional attachment is still strong, and despite the majority of decisions being made by me, I don't feel any more that I fully and exclusively own this piece. Daz was not just a huge support in practical terms: reflecting on and reconsidering his role, I realise that he became a co-author and co-performer in this work, and this shift became more visible because of video's potential to communicate *something* to the viewer.

But maybe at the end of the day, nobody owns this work anymore, but it is just out there, in the virtual realm, accessible, open, lost in the myriad maze of moving images, ready to be found and then forgotten. However, this dance has no end. And for sure it is dedicated. To you.

Truly yours

Fenia K.

Fig. 8: Image during the workshop "Man for a day" in Berlin 2012, with Diane Torr and Fenia Kotsopoulou

Letter 2: Dear Diane

Starting a letter like this one to you feels quite an odd thing for me to do. You didn't know me, because we've never met, and whilst I often hear of the influence you still have on Fenia, I'll only ever know your face from Google searches and YouTube clips.

And still, I feel I want to wish you a heartfelt thank you. You must have been quite a figure indeed for your influence to continue its ricochet, and eventually reach me: at a step remove, after you are gone. For me too, it has been a journey, and I'm delighted to have rested at the way-marker of *This Dance has No End* as I continue along my path.

My journey started with music, and a realisation of the synergy created between music and dance - a transient magic, somehow shared when the passage of time unites with movement through space. I never set-out to find this part of the territory : I just somehow arrived here, because it felt right to pass-by this way.

And now, I realise also, that this same magic can still somehow exist with many fewer formalities. Gone is the stage. Absent, the colour. The piece, stripped back to its bare-essentials, not so much by design: but by the happening. Even so far as to the removal of music: what remains is a rawness in delicate balance.

Over time, and as I stepped-up into video making, I've learned about dance. Not in any formal sense, but in the more intangible sense of presence and how to dwell in those gaps in-between. I've worked in close-quarters with a dozens of dancers, and specifically during the making of a series of short pieces called *Traversal* (2018, 2019) my focus has been on sharing and exploring both space and movement as we create together (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9: Still image from the video-dance *Traversal #9* (2018), with dancer Alexandra Kostopoulou

And I say "together" deliberately. Yes, I hold a camera, and to some extent I represent the camera, with my responsibility split between the "performer" and the audience. You might say I am but a tour-guide to the ephemeral moments unfolding in-front of me, but I've never wanted to be just an observer or an agent of the gaze. Instead, I've sought to be a participant in the dance, and partner in

the movement. Sure, there is space within which the movement occurs, and it is my privilege to share in this movement, but I've found the more important space in these contexts, is the space between the dancer and myself, by which I don't really mean physical space.

Formalities of visual composition, setting-up a camera's parameters for a shot; finding, framing, focussing, following. Whilst every "shot" can be analysed in these terms, they are usually the last things in my mind when I'm sharing space with dance, and especially with this endless dance. If I dig into it, I think perhaps the space is in the listening. The shared focus. Listening with my eyes, with my feet, attempting to sense breathe, and the heartbeat of the other. And sure, there's prediction. Where am I likely to be moving next for the shot to "work", and for the movement to be represented? But the prediction is less a calculation than it is a feeling of the way forwards. I can no more plan a moving shot with an improvisation than the improviser plans their movement from moment to moment (Fig.10).

Fig.10: Still image from the video-dance *Traversal #3* (2018), with dancer Julia Traber-Metzger

Learning to sense Fenia's vocabulary of movement is something which has taken me time, and has also been informed by the movement I've shared with others, but to boil it all down to vocabulary is to miss-out on the intricacies of syntax, and as soon as these parameters begin to pile-up they very quickly become unmanageable. Language is open-ended, so it is unimaginable to account for all the probabilities of direction no matter how well versed in the possibilities I might become.

So I too, have learned to "own my space", and in perhaps the same way as *Zeibekiko* owns space in order to hold space for the other, my aim with this making was to make, and own, a part of shared space in order to hold space in that space-between, in service of the present collective, with the hope of encountering a passing moment where time begins to dissolve, and flow makes itself felt. With *This Dance Has No End*, the "lack" of music means there is no "external" rhythm to act as provocation or interruption. The "lack" of scenography means there's no indication of the wider spatial context. The "lack" of colour brings my psychosomatic focus out of the here-and-now and into the offering for the viewer. We are here. We are now. And this is only ever possible because of everything intangible which exists in the spaces between us, and to find, protect, and coax-out those spaces requires a certain level of intimacy, and trusting that trust itself is a very real form of nourishment.

But before this gets too dense, too serious, and perhaps even bordering on the esoteric, I should also mention the importance to us both of play. As a musician, play comes naturally - it's all a musician ever really does : we play. Bringing playfulness into both movement, and work with video has been a large part of the collaboration we share, and we take our play so seriously that to find that a viewer of our videos somehow connects or relates with the "work" has repeatedly taken us both by surprise. The joyous moment of discovering that an output has won an award, seemingly amplified by the memory of the playfulness in the moments of creation, as we relate through space.

Our video *Carriage Return* (2017) is another example where a playful moment received such recognition. It too is an unedited, single-shot, improvised piece where the camera plays at chasing the dancer as both entities move around a table. Whilst the output may be seen by some as somehow sophisticated, complex, or fulfilling some notable parameter or other; the input, the provocation, the simplicity, and action: are all the result of play, and holding seriously the spaces between us as sites of shared discovery (Fig.11).

Fig. 11: Still image from the video-dance *Carriage Return* (2017)

My journey to here from music took me into the world of software development, first making tools for audio production, and then moving into writing code to tackle visuals. In another of our videos, *Here But Not Here At All At The Same Time* (2014) our playfulness took a contrasting approach to not just time and space, but also the use of colour, editing, and sound, and an almost anarchic approach to choreography by using Fenia's static body in a sea of autonomously choreographed passers-by who were subjected to some quite serious amounts of effects processing. A static camera captures two scenes, both on the street at a busy time of day. Fenia stands or crouches staring into the centre of the frame wearing a red dress as the public bodies (in black & white) move around and past her. The shots were captured at high frame rate, and the slowed-down footage is remixed using a slit-scan regime, the result of which is that all the moving parts of the shot (the passers-by, and traffic) are distorted, and smeared around the frame, and the static parts of the shot (Fenia, and buildings) remain in recognisable form (Fig.12). We were deliberately trying to talk about isolation, difference, and

alienation with this work, and questioning what happens to choreography when the movement of the "performer" is removed and the otherwise "audience" of a public performance become the performers. Furthermore Fenia being the immigrant in this piece and the only person to make it through the effects process largely unaltered (whilst the "locals" become distorted and transformed), questions who is "other" or "alien" in the situation.

Fig. 12: Still from the video *Here But Not Here At All At The Same Time (2014)*

Despite the apparent density and complexity of *Here But Not Here At All At The Same Time* it is rooted in simplicity, just like *Carriage Return* and *This Dance Has No End*. They are all non-linear. They are all non-narrative. They were all shot somewhat casually but with serious commitment to the process. They all come from a place of play, and have all reached audiences to a degree neither planned or anticipated by either of us. If there is such a thing as a trajectory which our practice together shares or follows, it is very much one of "taking our space for play". Sometimes simplicity becomes evident within the complexity, and at other times complexity can be found wrapped-up in simplicity.

Stripping things back as we did with *This Dance Has No End* in some ways opens-up space for honesty to make-it past the camera sensor and rendering process. Despite or even because of the "lack" of edits and "lack" of the other usual formalities of video-dance, what is there is all that is there. There's no hiding of a failed virtuosic moment from either camera or performer, and no dubbing of sound to mask the creaking of my hands gripping the camera stabiliser. Of course, all moving image work relies on a huge number of constructs in the communication of its "message", but perhaps in our playfulness we are less concerned with the further construction of constructs and more focussed on just being, well : present.

I too continue to claim my space amongst strong competent bodies regardless my situation to some degree meaning I feel less entitled to claim this space than those I encounter in the process of my work. Rather than my gender being the excluding factor, instead the *trainedness* and performative usefulness of my body in the context of dance is what I seek to challenge when working with video dance.

So thank you, Diane. May your influence, like this dance : have no end.

Sincerely

Daz D.

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LADIA, From Stage to Screen

Or How to adapt a Live Performance into a Dance Film in 9 Steps

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Abstract

LADIA *tracks the journey of filmmaker Álvaro Congosto and choreographer and performer Sandra Kramerová from the early stages of conceiving their Dance Film* LADIA *towards the final completion of the project. Álvaro and Sandra explain in this article their process of shaping the original stage material and choreography for Screen Dance, including the stages of location scouting and adapting the dance material to the chosen location. These steps are followed by revealing how the choreographic material transformed into film language, addressing the process of directing the Dance Film and performing for the screen in comparison to the stage. Finally, you will read about elements of post-production - choreographic editing, sound design and reshaping choreographic material after the creation of the Dance Film. Álvaro and Sandra offer insights into their collaboration, sharing practical challenges and artistic lessons learned along the way, hoping to inspire other makers in their creative endeavor. The text reflects a personal process of conception and realization of* LADIA, *communicating professional steps undertaken in the project to fellow film and dance makers and anyone else interested in the medium of Dance Film and Screen Dance.*

Biography

Álvaro Congosto is a Spanish independent filmmaker and Film Production Professor at Boston University. With his short film The Suitor (2016) he received the filmmakers from Spain prize by EGEDA in 2016 and a dozen more of principal awards in more than 80 International Film festivals such as Montreal World Film Festival, USA Film Festival or Fort Lauderdale Film Festival. His latest project, LADIA, a dance film co-created with choreographer Sandra Kramerová, has been awarded in Portland Dance Fest, Braga International Video Dance Festival and Arts Triangle Dance Film Festival among others, and screened at festivals like San Francisco Dance Film Festival and Cinedans. Álvaro is currently developing his first narrative feature film, based on the graphic novel A Taste of Chlorine by Bastien Vivès, while co-directing and editing his first feature documentary Discovering Gea, based on the life of the Croatian photographer Gea Koenig.

Sandra Kramerová is an Amsterdam based dance maker originally from Slovakia currently supported by Fonds Podiumkunsten (NL) and closely collaborating with Theater de Generator in Leiden. As a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College (NY) with MFA in Dance Sandra focuses on contemporary dance and physical theatre. Sandra's dances have been presented at BAM Fisher, Danspace Project and Dixon Place in NYC, Dansmakers, CC Amstel, Frascati and Theater De Generator in The Netherlands. Her latest multimedia solo Body as a Weapon, highlighting Eastern European female physicality, is touring theaters in The Netherlands.

Note: The sections of the article written by Álvaro are indicated with an (A) and the sections written by Sandra with a (S).

Step 1. Preliminary thoughts

(A) Between 2011 and 2016 Sandra and I used to live in NYC. She was dancing for several companies and performing her own work as a choreographer and I was freelancing as an editor and camera operator. During that time I filmed numerous dance shows where Sandra took part. The results were rarely satisfactory, sometimes for me, sometimes for her, sometimes for both. If I came too close with my camera, she would complain about me cutting certain parts of her movements (mostly with the limbs) that were important for the audience to understand the choreography. If I decided to move further away with the camera then I would start losing that personal connection and expression that the camera is able to establish so powerfully with the subject and the audience.

But besides compositional choices, there were also some logistical problems. If I decided to set my camera at the back of the theater, then it was impossible to not show the audience's heads. Yes, I could raise my tripod as high as possible and zoom in until I could frame the heads out, but then my shot was again too tight and it was a real challenge to keep all the dancers in frame all the time.

It became clear that some compromises needed to be made and none of the options seemed to satisfy Sandra or me, most importantly because the results didn't do justice to Sandra´s work. So I started to give a lot of thought to this challenge: How can I film dance so that the people who watch the images on screen later on can have a similar experience as the audience who attended the theater?

And the truth is that after a lot of trial and error, I found a few effective solutions to work out some of the problems mentioned above, but still - the material was not even close to experiencing Sandra's dance on stage.

That's when the idea came to my mind - what if I could apply the visual and sound storytelling tools that I use as a fiction filmmaker in order to translate Sandra's performances into screen language? Obviously, I'm not inventing the wheel. What I was trying to make is called Dance Film and it existed long before I was born. This is just the way we came to it. Sandra studied Dance Film in her Master's program in Dance at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY, and she was as excited as I was about the idea of making one together. Now it was just a matter of finding the right material for it, and it wasn't until months later that it came about.

Step 2. Choosing the Choreographic Material

(A) On Friday, December 11, 2015, Sandra performed *Lara_conditional resident_on default* at the Bessie Schoenberg Theater as part of her MFA program in dance at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY. As soon as I saw it, I knew we will make a film of it. The piece was very powerful and intense, and the audience was still trying to catch their breath after it ended. But that´s not why I chose it: I did because it felt real. And by that I mean that there was no representational element in it. Performance arts audiences are usually more tolerant with the suspension of disbelief than film audience. Here is a basic example to clarify what I mean: if I show up on a stage with some fake tree leaves hanging from my body and I make a circle with my arms around my head as if I were a tree, the audience will understand I am representing a tree and that would not pull them out of the fictional experience they

are witnessing. However, if I show up in front of a camera with fake tree leaves hanging from my body and I make a circle with my arms over my head, all that people are going to see is a person with fake tree leaves and his arms around his head. They will think I am a tree and if you, as a maker, ask them to do so they will pull out of the fictional experience and wonder: why did you not film a real tree instead? Film is a literal medium where what you see is what you get. We culturally believe that a camera has the ability to capture reality and therefore we expect it to do so. That is why film does not tolerate representational experiments well. You can trick the audience and make them believe that something not real it is happening for real, but it does need to feel real. You cannot show the trick; otherwise you lose your audience. Bruce Lee was very aware of it and that is why he filmed all his fights in wide shots. There was no cinematic trick involved to hide the kick or the punch. They were happening for real. On the other extreme, you have the films from Bud Spencer and Terrence Hill, where the notoriously fake punches and hits where always used as a detached parody that never pretended to be a believable immersive experience.

When choosing choreographic material to be translated into film, it is crucial for me that the original material has no representational element either. Otherwise I might end up with beautiful images but I will never be able to create a psychologically immersive experience for the audience, and ultimately that is my only interest as a filmmaker. *Lara_conditional resident on default* was full of real actions that I could fully understand and that were executed intentionally on stage. They were not gestures trying to represent something that wasn't being performed, They were real kicks, and hits, and jumps that only were meant to be that: kick, hits and jumps. As simple as it seems, finding this type of material is a challenge and a real blessing when it happens. As a fiction filmmaker, the most difficult part of the job is to create a reality in front of the camera that exists in itself; where people are not representing a story but instead they are actually living it. in *Lara_conditional resident_on default* had this very unique character and that is the reason why I decided to go ahead and tried to tell her story through film language.

Sandra agreed to perform and adapt the work for the camera and we talked about possible titles for the Dance Film and decided to name it *LADIA* - an abbreviation of LA(ra) Croft and (Na)DIA Comaneci, who were the heroic female inspirations for the piece. Later on, Sandra ended up renaming her stage performance *Lara_conditional resident_on default* to *LADIA*, as that seemed more powerful and simple.

After we discussed the idea, I started the whole fiction preproduction machinery. Since Sandra was the one and only performer of the piece, I didn't have to find actors this time, which is usually where I begin, so we went straight onto the next step: finding a location.

Step 3. Choosing the Space and Adapting the choreographic material to it

 (A) I guess we could have done it in a theatrical black box, but, as I said before, the whole choreography was lacking representational elements, therefore we decided to film it in a space that presented us with physical elements that have a function in daily life. My Boston friends from Auspicious Phoenix Productions had recently rented a big dusty basement in an industrial building as the headquarters for their company, but they were just starting the renovations, so the place still had a very raw and unwelcoming feeling that was great for the tone of the piece. It also had some dominant

physical elements, such as pillars and rusty doors, which I thought could be great specific obstacles to integrate into the piece. (See Figure 1).
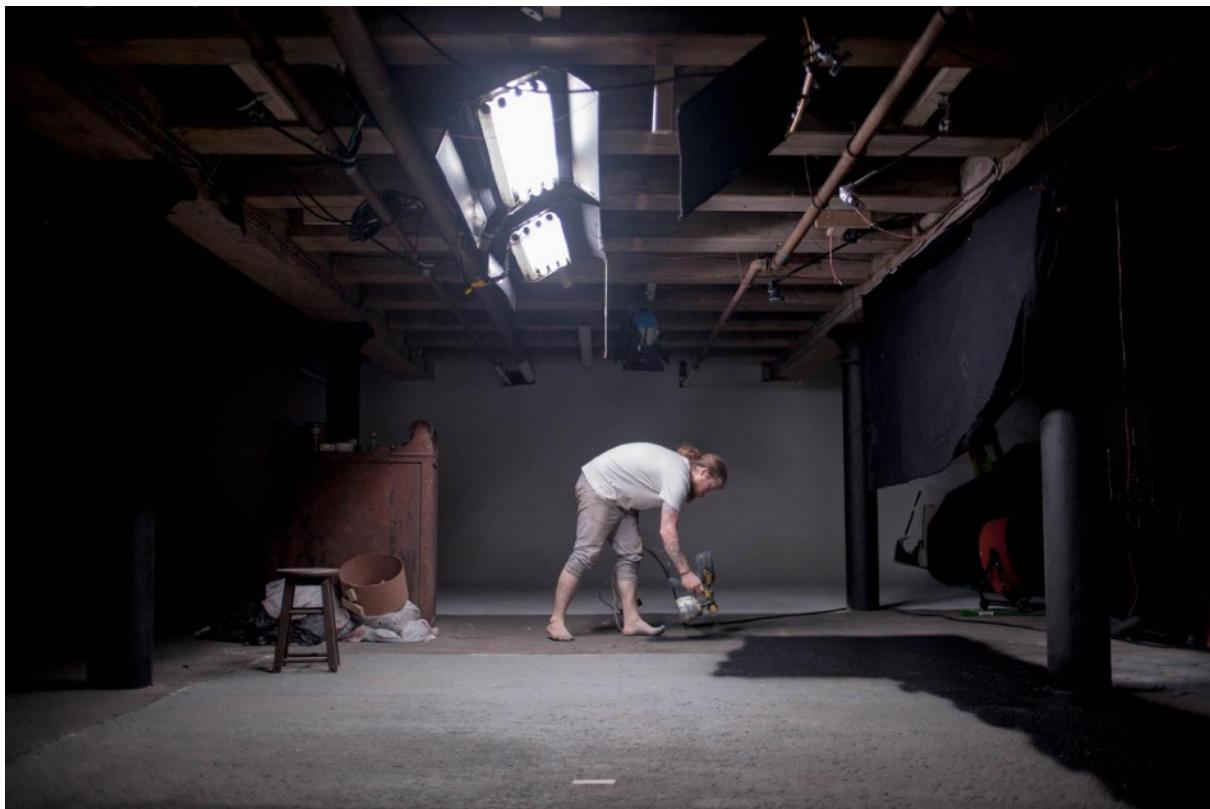
Fig. 1: Cinematographer Jim DanDee paints the floor of The Space Studio black in preparation for the first day of production on *LADIA*. (Jim DanDee/Auspicious Phoenix Productions)

(S) When I saw the basement space for the first time, I thought it would be a nice challenge to make the choreography alive in such a cold and industrial environment. It had a dark underground feeling with rusty pipes and dust all over the place. The stage space where *LADIA* was performed originally (still with the title of *Lara_conditional resident_on default*) was utterly different in many ways. The theater was much bigger, with a solid long wall framing the space from the back. The basement was not an empty space: there were multiple pillars dominating the room, as well as a freight door in the back.

During my rehearsals on this shooting location, I spent quite some time figuring out how the movement could potentially fit this new "framing". Some movement excerpts were easier to adapt, as they had simple spacing and did not move too far away from the same spot. That is something I realized soon enough: whenever we were shooting close-ups, I had to hit the exact same spot every time in precisely the same way, which was almost an impossible task. Even when I stepped on the right mark, the position of the arms and the rotation of the torso/head would appear on screen slightly different in each take. (see Figure 2).

What became important in the adaptation of the movement were the specifics of the given location – rough floor, four massive pillars, rusty back wall. There is a part in the original choreography that represents Ladia fighting her way out of the confines of her "prison", the world she is stuck in.

Fig. 2: Four different takes of Sandra's Gymnastic pose
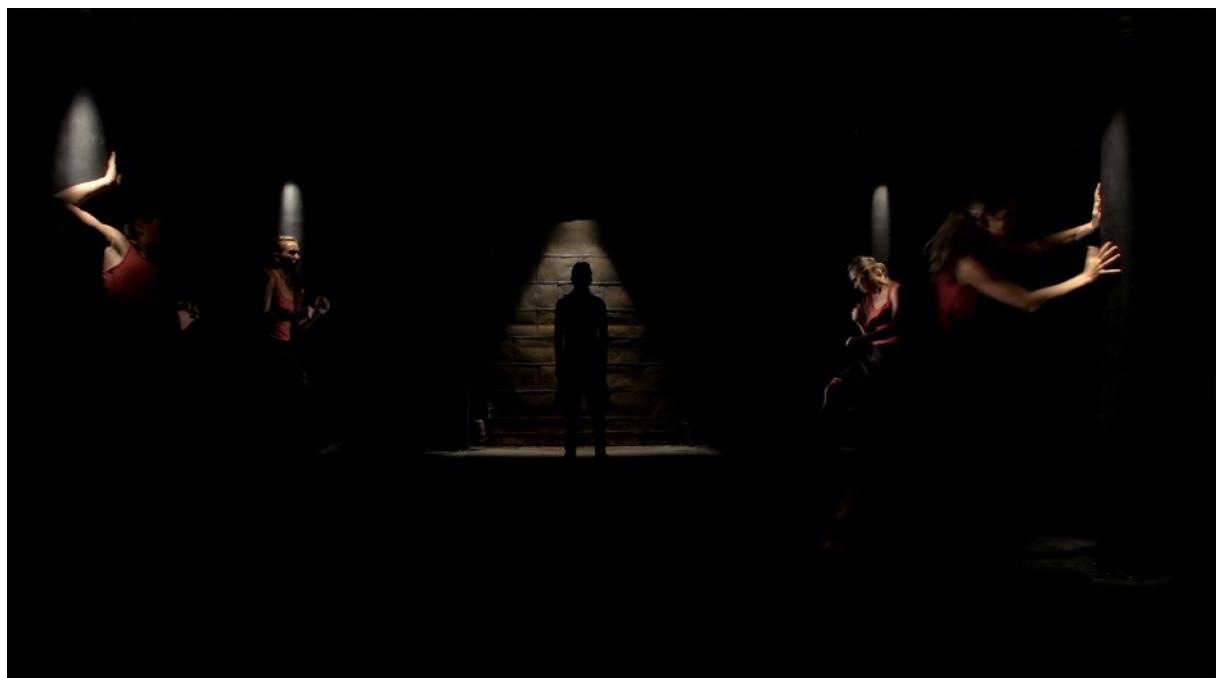
Fig. 3: Sandra Kramerová fighting against pillars and door in *LADIA* (2018)

On stage, this was depicted by constant change of direction, traveling through space, with abrupt pulls and falls from and to the floor. Since the basement where we were shooting featured those four

massive pillars, it was handy to use them as limitations and eventually fight those in Ladia's desire to escape. The original pulls and falls to the floor and hectic traveling through space were replaced by accelerated pushing and leaning against the pillars with a final crashing catharsis against the rusty, old, dungeon-like back wall (see Figure 3).
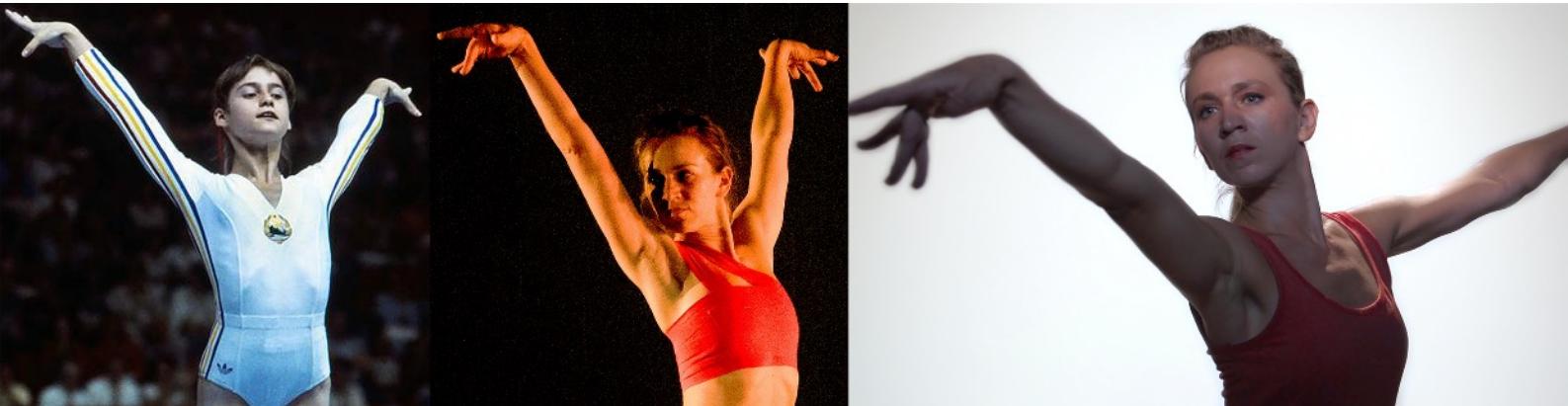
Fig. 4: From left to right: Nadia Comaneci, Ladia (Sandra Kramerová) on stage (2015), Ladia (Sandra Kramerová) in Dance Film (2018)

Fig. 5: Multiple from *LADIA* (2018), with dancer Sandra Kramerová

There is a long diagonal moving phrase in the original stage choreography representing a "gymnastic pass" – a diagonal that gymnasts would normally perform their mandatory routine on. Using this idea, from upstage right to downstage left, I repeated a short gymnastic phrase over and over again, creating a sense of exhilaration and frenzy. Due to the constraints of the shooting space, the diagonal pass had to be reconceived completely. Even though some gymnastic gestures remained (see figure 4), the frenzy and exhilaration is now created through the multiplication of small dancing figures (all of them being Ladia, as we can see in Figure 5) over a white dreamy background. The choreography gained a greater sense of urgency and joy, making it even more clear that this part feels like a parallel

universe, like a dream, separate from all of the other ones which are filled with darkness and more violent movement.

Step 4. Transforming the choreographic material into film language

(A) After Sandra finished adapting the choreography to the new location and had rehearsed it enough times to feel confident, she called Jim Dandee (Director of Photography) and I into the space. Jim placed a camera in front of her, where the audience would normally be in the stage version, and he mounted the widest possible lens on it. He pressed record and we sat next to it, looking at Sandra performing in front of us. One take was enough: there was no need to get her tired just yet. It was now time for us to do our work.

nº	Part	Order	Action	Shot Description	Notes	Camera notes	Time code
1	1	4th	She is getting ready, walks to her initial position and starts jumping	We see shadow in the back until her feet show up in the foreground. follow feet until starting position.	how do we track the feet using the established lighting	Slow Mo / Doorway dolly?	0-0:20
2	1	1st	She jumps higher and higher	Top of her head getting closer to the pipe.	You mentioned a similar version to this but with the shadow of the pipe. That's OK too	Slow Mo	0:12-0:28
3	1	2nd	She starts to swing while jumping from side to side	We see her ponytail swinging		Slow Mo	0:28-0:35
4	1	3rd	She lifts up her fists	Close up of the Fists		Slow Mo	0:32-0:35
5	1	5th	She starts boxing and kicking	Starts on wide where we see only her silhouette. We push in to a close up where we don't see the face.	Columns, face and back door remain dark. We see only the shoulders up/down in a CU	Doorway dolly?	0:35-1:07
7	2	6th	She boxes again but now her arm gets pulled back	MCU from the left side. She moves back and forth within the frame until she drops.	**Go back to Part 1 lighting, but do it with Kinos/soft lighting, like part 2 of test shot 170, **Do it in a CU as well**		1:07-1:44
8	2	7th	Her feet boxing, then knees bend over	MCU of her feet that becomes a shot of her full body at doggie position. She jumps until she collapses			1:44-2:07
9	2	8th	She is collapsed on the floor and tries to crawl	Overhead Wide	Do we need 8 or is 7 enough		1:44-2:11
11	3	9th?	She is collapsed and has spasms	Overhead Wide	edge light, nothing on the floor--how to keep her from being fully lighted?		2:11-2:22
12	3	10th	She has spasms and stands up	Tight shots of her muscles, face, etc during the spasms. It ends on her face leaving frame from the top.	Same as above		2:17-2:37
13	3	11th	She holds her head walking around	Series of shots of her head in different parts of the frame, facing different ways	edge light, but with fill as well now--still no color		2:35-3:05
14	3	12th	She starts jumping and releasing her whole body	Start with the last CU of the series and end on a full body shot of her where she extends arm/leg	strobe/unedited bear		

Table 1. Shot list and camera setups for the first day of shooting

nº	Part	Order	Action	Shot Description	Notes	Camera notes	Time code
10	3	13th	She flips over, becomes a siren and crawls sideways	Full body shot. She comes into frame L to R. Camera catches up with her crawl and pushes into M	Change of light when she becomes a siren		3:10-3:24
6	2	14th	Her hands lift up and she passes her head through	Same Close up from the end of 5.	It'd be nice to find something to cut to so doing 5 and 6 in one continuous shot doesn't become a nightmare.		3:20-3:45
15	4	15th	Exhausted, hands on knees	MCU from the side	edge light with fill, Column lights brightens her face to draw her attention		3:42-3:50
16	4	16th	Sandra approaches column and bounces	Wide shot. Sandra right side, column left side. From Column to column	each one lights up		3:45-5:03
17	4	17th	Sandra hits the back right column, then the front	each column close up	Test strobes, beams and columns of light in fog		5:03-5:35
17	4	18th	Sandra sees the light and runs towards the door	Continuation. Sandra runs towards camera, we picked on her and follow her on the dolly until she hits the wall	A big source of daylight catches her, we dolly back until she's in close up	Slow Mo	5:03-5:35
18	4	19th	Sandra hits herself against the wall and gives up	Wide shot. We see the door for the first time	Wide shot as she hits, picks up again in profile		5:19-5:46
19	5	20th	Sandra becomes a gymnast	MCU.	Dreamy pleasant lighting	might require some tracking	5:45-6:01
20	5	21st	Sandra doing pirouettes	Wide shot. Final Push in from 6:21 to 6;35. From Wide to MCU	There will be more time to push in since she will continue her pirouettes static		5:45-6:35
20		22nd	Sandra continues with static pirouettes until she drops exhausted				
				SKIP FROM 6:35 TO 7:15 . SHE WON'T PERFORM THIS PART AS WE DISCUSSED.			
21	6	23rd	Sandra sitting on the ground	Full Body or MCU.	Dream is over. Should feel exhausted and back to raw lighting		7:25-7:45
				SKIP FROM 7:45 to 8:07. SHE WON'T PERFORM THIS PART.			
22	6	24th	Sandra lays to sleep but ends with spasms again	Overhead shot with a ceiling reference.	Dollies out to darkness leaving her there. I would love a flickering light for this**	**24 & 1 shootable at once?	

Table 2. Shot list and camera setups for the second day of shooting

I watched the material numerous times and broke the choreography down into six different parts, as if they were film sequences. Each of them had a different narrative function in the story and would require its own visual approach. Then I broke down each of these sequences into the smallest possible actions/movements I could distinguish. I wrote each of these actions (and how I wanted them to feel) in a spreadsheet and shared this document with Jim.

Then I met with him and he proposed his ideas on how to photograph each of the actions and how to light each sequence. I also shared mine, as well as some preliminary thoughts I already had. Out of that dialogue we ended up having a detailed shot list with a total of 22 camera setups (see tables 1 and 2). That is an average of 3 and half setups per sequence, which is quite a small number, especially for a choreography full of action such as this one. We really tried hard to keep the shot list to its bare minimum so we could spend the right amount of time shooting each camera setup right, especially those that involved complicated lighting and camera movement. We chose quality over quantity and looking back at it now, I could not be happier about that choice. Once we both agreed on all the setups, we discussed the logistics involved in making them possible with Jim taking care of the preproduction details that were needed to fully realize them.

Fig. 6: From Left to Right, Sandra on stage performing *Lara_conditional resident_on default;* Ladia's boxing shoes; Sandra in *LADIA* (2018)

In terms of designing the visual language of the film, we decided to keep the elements that were already working in the actual stage piece: hard lighting, bare room, black background and similar costume design. We replaced the athletic tape that Sandra wore around her chest for a sports tank top of the same color and we bought a pair of red boxing shoes to reinforce the color palette and to protect her from hurting herself with the concrete floor where she had to perform it this time - the stage version was performed barefoot (See Figure 6). We designed our camera choices with the intention of mimicking the attention process that an audience member could have when watching the performance live: tighter frames when the action was focused on one part of her body, camera movements to travel with her when she is in motion or to get close to her when she is still, wider frames when she is at the back of the stage, slow motion to highlight a gesture or to expand the passage of time, etc. Our brain is making all these internal choices when we watch a live show (for example, the brain tells the eye to close the iris when the lights are too bright and open it when the lights are too low) but unfortunately the camera does not have a brain, so we needed to provide one (and adjust, for example, our camera exposure settings in order to get an image that is not too bright neither too dark to be captured). While a choreographer uses primarily body movement to guide the audience's attention, the visual choices (composition, camera movement, lighting, focus…) are the tools that a filmmaker has to tell the audience where to look.

Even though the original Choreography is 9 minutes long, we planned for a 7-minute film because I thought some of the parts could be compressed. Live Performance and film have different tempos, and, the economy of the narration is much more accentuated in film mostly due to the expensive nature of its costs. Since its origins, film is an intrinsically economic medium. It is based on a flaw of the eye, the persistence of vision. When the eye is exposed to several still images that capture slight

variations in movement and they are played at a certain minimum speed, the human brain is unable to perceive them as separate still images and instead perceives them as one continuous moving image. Based on this principle, film developed as a language using 24 frames per second, which is one of the lowest speeds where the eye still can't see the trick. The reason why the film industry adopted this frame rate instead of a higher one is purely economic. Shooting at 48 fps means spending twice more money in film stock and twice more money developing it. The amount of machinery, technical equipment, human labor and time involved in a film production produces ridiculously high costs, therefore film has always tried to keep the narration as effective as possible in order to save up costs. From the point of view of the maker, this explains why a shorter narrative is always more effective.

But it is also a matter of respect for the audience. Why making them spend extra time in watching extra footage that is not necessary to understand the story? You are not making them a favor (they could spend that time of their lives in something more productive for themselves) neither to yourself (irrelevant images will make them pull out of the immersive experience that your film is trying to create for them). Sandra and I discussed what moments could be taken out and she adjusted the choreography for it. This was the first reshaping of the material that happened along the process. It saved us time, money and energy, especially for the performer. *LADIA* is a physically demanding piece and there was no point in exhausting Sandra by performing movements that I knew I was not going to use in the film. By saving her energy in unnecessary parts I was giving her more energy for the necessary ones. The sooner these decisions are made, the smoother the process becomes.

Step 5. Directing the Dance Film

(A) When I direct narrative film, most of my energy goes into developing the dynamics between the actors and the conflict of the scene. Eventually I do like to see how it looks on camera, but, as long as the cinematographer is capturing the action the way we discussed it, I do not care much about what lens or lights he is using. That is his job. He takes care of what happens behind the camera and I take care of what happens in front. Whatever that is, I make sure that it feels real and has the right emotional curve and tempo.

That is usually my job, but in *LADIA* Sandra already provided all of that. She obviously knew the choreography and how to perform it much better than I could ever do, so it would have been pointless to give her directions in this regard. However, since we divided the piece into little fragments that were filmed out of order, it turned out to be very important to always keep Sandra informed of what was coming next. Before each take we always had to be very specific about the beginning and the end of the action we wanted her to perform. This allowed Sandra to prepare and build the right intensity for the moment we were about to capture. Sometimes it was also helpful for her to start the action a bit earlier in the piece so she could build the momentum off camera and jump into frame already with the right energy, which must have been a challenge for her.

When applying the workflow of a narrative production into dance material it is crucial to be very aware of the physical effort involved for the performer. Knowing Sandra, I was certain she would want to give it all in each take, but sometimes that would just be physically impossible. I am used to actors getting emotionally tired but here we were dealing with the physical limits of the body. Some camera setups required more complicated lighting effects or camera movements, which involved demanding focus pulling among other technical challenges. Therefore, we had to repeat those takes

more times to get them right. I didn't want to exhaust Sandra before we managed to get the technical elements straightened out, so it was quite helpful for both, the performer and the camera crew, to have Sandra just mark the action before we shot it. That way, the camera crew could rehearse focus and lighting marks for as many times as needed without wearing Sandra out. That way, we could match Sandra's full performance with the most technically proficient results.

We shot two days in a row for a minimum of 14 hours a day. Obviously, Sandra wasn't performing continuously all that time. Every department has their peak of work at different moments, but there are also a lot of dead times. When a new camera set up is being prepared, lighting & Grip department work intensively, but performers rest. When the actual take is being shot it happens the other way around. The challenge was to give Sandra enough time to rest in between takes but not too much so she could stay warm and ready for the next take. The bigger your crew, the less time it takes to prepare each camera set up, but at the same time you need to trust more people and communication needs to be much more effective. In our case, we had a very small crew, so that resulted in breaks that were often much too long for the performer.

Step 6: Performing for the screen as opposed to the stage
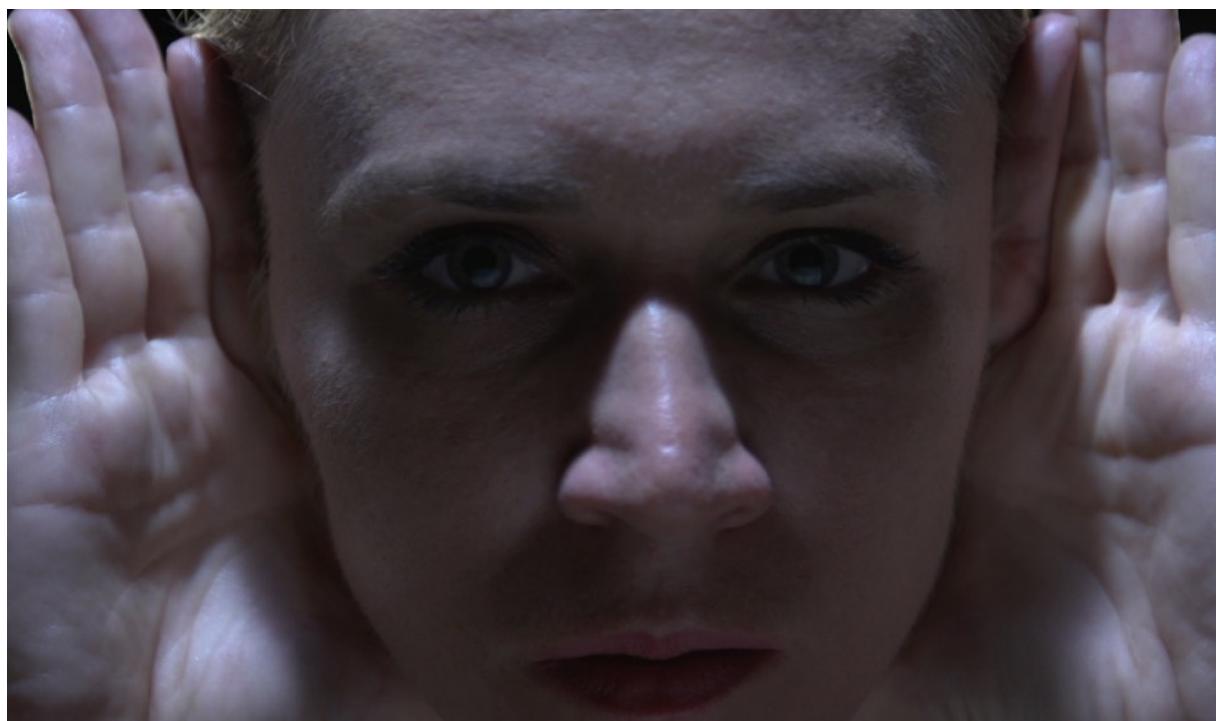
Fig. 7: Close up of Sandra Kramerová in *LADIA* (2018)

(S) Being a performer usually means there is an audience to perform for. It is assumed that there are eyes on you as you are moving, dancing, being in action. In that regard, both theater and the camera provide these eyes that are following you around. Being on stage, one can usually "feel" the room, the audience's reactions, breathing… Performing for the camera, oddly enough, felt in a way very similar. There was an attentive focus drawn to my actions and nowhere to escape. It was challenging for me to get myself fully into the role and feel prepared for each action separately, as they were mostly performed out of context, and as Álvaro mentioned already, with long breaks in between. The original

choreography was based on the idea of exhaustion and revival; one movement excerpt leading to another, slowly building up the feeling of tension, intensity and effort. This took quite some time in the original stage performance, as one action (for example jumping or boxing) would happen over a period of minutes and through repetition and rising intensity of the action, I became truly exhausted and could literally not physically continue anymore. The sense of physical tiredness and seeing the dancer being out of breath on stage creates kinesthetic empathy among the audience (a kind of perception in which, even while sitting still, spectators are in some way participating in the action).

However, while shooting *LADIA* for the screen, we were focusing on little fragments of action and movement that were not following each other in the original order. This made the actual performance of the movement much harder. First of all, I had less time to get to the "climax" of the action and secondly, we were shooting later fragments early on, which was challenging to master physically. In the stage version I had time to progressively warm up into each action, by repetition and the consecutive order of the scenes, which was completely altered during the film shoot.

Performing for the screen can also feel different in case the camera comes close and captures details such as the facial expression and the muscular tonus. It feels like one pair of eyes is watching instead of a hundred. This might be, however, confusing. Just because the camera is so near it does not mean the movement should be less intensely performed (at least in my opinion). I experienced the camera being a great tool for feedback regarding believability of the performance and the feeling of "not being able to hide anywhere" applies here even more so than on stage. (See facial expression in Figure 7 or muscular tonus as seen in the right image of Figure 6).

The workflow of this film production had its own challenges – from the roughness of the shooting location (the cold harsh dirty floor and the surroundings) through the long waiting time between takes and to the physically tiring scenes being scheduled out of the original order and context – but these challenges only added to the desired idea of struggle and raw effort of the piece. All in all, tiredness was reached in a different way in filming compared to stage performance. While performing on stage, I had all the control to manage my efforts and choreograph my exhaustion to fit the envisioned dramaturgy, during filming, the exhaustion came from a real experience of tiredness due to a long and draining filming process.
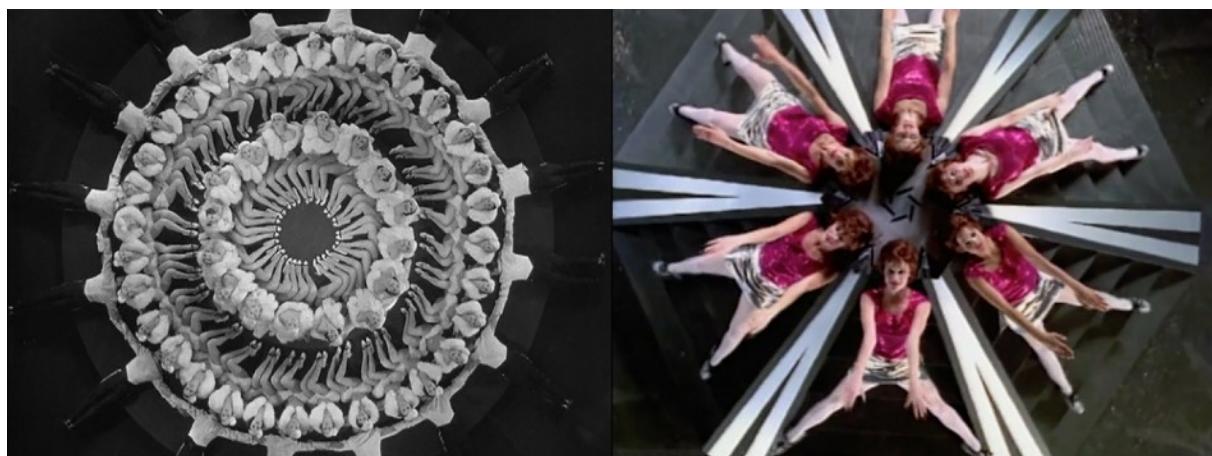

Fig. 8. Left: *42nd Street* (1933) by Busby Berkeley. Right: *Let forever* be (1999) by Michel Gondry

Step 7: Choreographic Editing.

(A) In narrative filmmaking, Image and Sound are edited separately. First, the image goes through several stages of refinement, from an assembly cut to what we call picture locked. At that stage, once we know there is no extra or missing frame in the film, the cut gets sent to the sound department in order to design the score, sound effects and other sounds that create the full soundscape. Sound is always in relation to the image and not the other way around. They are both obviously equally important; while the image tells the story, the sound provides realism and dramatic effect, although sometimes it is also used for storytelling purposes (think of a Voice Over, for example).

When I first edit the footage of a fiction film, I intend to be as loyal as possible to what I had planned when I shot it. I always imagine the order that the scenes are going to have in the film, so when I get to the editing room, I often try that first. It never works, but it is important for me to do it, so I can understand what is missing and depart from it. It is comforting for me to think: "OK, this is what we planned, we tried it and it doesn't work, so now, what do we do?" And this is exactly what happened with *LADIA* as well. I edited the first cut based on what I planned and when I showed it to Sandra we were both extremely disappointed. This first version followed the original choreography very accurately in terms of movements and actions but watching it didn't feel the same at all. What worked on stage clearly wasn't working on the screen. The question was: why?

Fig. 9: Different frames of *LADIA* where her image has been multiplied in post

The choreography on stage was able to create a very intense feeling that was a mixture of pain, restlessness and extreme physicality. None of them were on the screen yet. Yes, the movements were there, but they felt dull. All the build-ups and down times that Sandra performed so effectively in the theater were just not there. And obviously the problem wasn't in Sandra's performance. Neither it was in Jim's work. He had lit and shot all the actions very effectively. The movements have been captured but the feelings that these movements were able to produce in the theater have been not. Therefore, we were back to the initial challenge: how to create an audiovisual experience that could somehow resemble what the audience feels when watching a performance live?

Again, I had to go back to my filmmaker toolbox to look for the answer. The beauty of the editing room is that you can alter the length, the tempo and the frequency of the material. You can repeat a shot multiple times, cut it in pieces, put it upside down, play it backwards, play it faster, play it slower; there are infinite possibilities. In a way, the editor is just a choreographer for the screen. And that is exactly what I realized I had to do: create a new choreography for the screen that could convey the themes and emotions that Sandra was conveying so powerfully on stage.

I rearranged the order of the scenes, shortened some of them, expanded others and even cut out some parts. Since Sandra's piece is a solo with many standing moments, it sometimes became a challenge to build visual intensity with only one vertical body in a horizontal frame. Here is where multiplying her figure became a helpful device. This narrative tool has been used since the early days of filmmaking and it is present in the work of musical filmmakers like Busby Berkeley and contemporary artists such as Michel Gondry (See figure 8). In the case of *LADIA*, this technique helped me immensely to build tension, create dynamism within the frame and make seamless transitions between scenes. The repetition of Sandra's body provided unity and almost became a motif (See Figure 9).

Step 8. Sound Design: Layering emotion and realism

(A) If editing the image was painful and incredibly time consuming (a 20 seconds sequence took about a week to be composed in After Effects, partially due to my clumsiness with post-production softwares), the challenging part with the soundscape was the conception. Initially, I tried laying out some of the actual sounds recorded during the production, but it was not working for several reasons. First, the sounds of her jumping and hitting the concrete floor did not have the same presence as hearing Sandra jumping on the theater stage. Second, it was almost impossible to get a boom pole close enough to capture Sandra's intimate sounds (like breathing) without being seen on camera, especially in the wider frames. And lastly, the location where we shot is not a soundstage and therefore some environmental sounds got in the way. The basement is situated in a big building and some local bands use other floors of the space for rehearsal purposes. Even though we had a lucky day, there were still takes where you could hear their instruments. In a way, none of this is surprising because getting the images right was the one and only priority we had on set. Looking back, I still think that was the right choice. Recording sound should not compromise any of the visual choices because it can always be redone afterwards with much smaller costs than what it would take to remake the images. It just takes time and work. And that is exactly what we needed. We had to start the whole sound design from scratch and I realized I couldn't do it myself. So I looked for help.

Joy Song was the first person that came on board. She is a former student from my Film Production class at Boston University and I was always impressed by her sound work. She did a first pass on the

soundscape for the film and she was able to come up with some brilliant sounds, like the bone cracking effect, which still causes one of the most effective audience responses in the entire film. Her soundscape was also able to provide a certain atmosphere for the piece. It wasn't exactly the right tone since her style is more inclined towards terror than what the film required, but it definitely gave me a direction to work with. I wasn't lost anymore.

Since the soundscape still needed further work I decided to call Jon Lloyd. He designed the soundtrack for the stage version, so it was a nice way to close the circle. After Joy's work I knew what we had and what we missed, so I had a very clear idea of what to tell Jon. I wanted him to work on three different layers of sound.

The first and inner layer would be created solely by the intimate sounds that the character makes: her breathing, sighing, punching, jumping and all of her collisions against physical elements. This first layer would allow the audience to experience the film much closer to the character, as if they are right next to her. We were looking for a similar effect to what happened on stage, where everyone was dead silent and you could hear even Sandra's breathing. So we took Sandra to a quiet space and recorded every sound that came out of her mouth while she performed some of the actions from the piece. There was no need to do the full thing again because we knew exactly what sounds we needed for which part. This is one of the advantages of focusing on sound after the image is locked.

The second layer was designed to create spatial dimensionality, but always from a subjective perspective. I was not interested in reproducing how the space would sound from a realistic approach. Instead, I wanted the audience to feel how the space sounded in the character's head. Jon designed very subjective ambiences that produced in the audience the same anxiety and struggle that the character is feeling. Again, the goal with this layer was to make the experience as subjective as possible so the audience can experience the pain and frustration of the character.

Finally, the third layer was designed to reinforce the narrative arc of the film. Any film's soundscape has moments of high intensity, moments of tension and moments of rest or joy. The goal of this layer was to make those moments match with the journey of the character, so the emotional experience can be fully complete. Jon, who is not only a great sound designer but also a musician and composer, designed a very effective score for this third layer.

It took several revisions and many minor adjustments, but once we had all these sounds layered, it was just a matter of mixing the three layers properly so each of them had the right importance at the right moment.

The Full *LADIA* experience was finally complete, from the Theater to the Screen. That is usually the end of the journey, but Sandra decided to take it one step further and complete the circle: Ladia was coming back to the stage.

Step 9: Reshaping the material for the Stage

(S) In May 2017, we decided to screen *LADIA,* the film, as a performance number in the New York's premiere of my evening length dance work *GAME ON!.* After the screening finished, leaving Ladia laying on the floor in a corner in the last shot, I appeared in that same exact position on stage. I then continued from there, slowly and in silence, bridging the virtual and the real, emerging as Ladia in a

different form. This second part of the dance, and of the story, was like a silent "coda" after the movie, slow movement bringing Ladia back to life, back to the theater world (see Figure 11). The audience responded with full attention, as though they were with me throughout the whole journey, which I felt they truly were. Being pulled into Ladia´s world on screen and then witnessing her live was the envisioned idea and I think it came across strongly. This event gave me encouragement for playing with the material further.

Fig. 11: Image from *LADIA* on stage (2017), with dancer Sandra Kramerová, photo by Paula Court

Since the US premiere, I had other opportunities to perform *LADIA* live. After seeing the completed Dance Film version of *LADIA* I felt inspired to slightly deconstruct the original choreography (see a capture in Figure 11) and change parts that did not feel relevant anymore. For example, for performances at Microteatro in Amsterdam and Theater De Generator in Leiden, I decided to cut out a whole section in which I am speaking about how I feel in that moment, escalating into an utburst of frustration (this section was never a part of the film). This vocal explosion no longer felt needed after I made some other prior parts rhythmically tighter and chose to do less to achieve more. In addition, I also continued to experiment with the athletic tape that constitutes the top part of my stage costume and that I am wrapped inside of. I played with ways to remove it from my body, or even engage the audience in helping me with this task. The exploration regarding the tape/costume removal is still ongoing. Moreover, I replaced the idea of dancing barefoot with wearing the boxing shoes for live performances too. It gives me a more grounded and realistic feeling, embodying a true boxer, a fighter, being able to jump as much as I want and bang against the floor while protecting my feet from potential injuries.

After shooting and seeing *LADIA* on screen, I am more familiar with the subtleties of the work, with the character of Ladia, with her as a fighter and as a woman and with her message to the world, which to me now communicates: Fight to stay vulnerable, suffer if you have to, it will make you stronger!

(**A**) After a full year presenting *LADIA* in Film Festivals all over the world, we were commissioned by CC Amstel in Amsterdam to present a new version of it that will include the stage performance mixed with images from the film. This request has forced us to rethink and reshape the work in a new format, which has opened endless narrative possibilities. Which moments should we be looking at a screen? What moments should we be looking at Ladia on stage? What moments should we be looking at both? Should Ladia on stage look at Ladia on screen? These are some of the questions we have asked ourselves in the process, which main challenge has been to let both voices (the film and the stage performer) reinforce each other without overlapping or being reiterative in the narration.

At this point it feels like *LADIA* continues its journey by itself, reshaping into different narrative forms. Adapting the material from one language to another has given us a much broader perspective of our own practices and much deeper knowledge and respect for our respective artforms.

If you are curious about seeing *LADIA*, please reach out to us at <u>alvaro.congosto@gmail.com</u> or <u>sandra.kramerova@gmail.com</u>. We will be happy to share our work with you!

Part 4

Dance films explained by their filmmakers

Films de danza explicados por sus realizadores

This part includes analysis articles where the filmmakers give us an insight into the process and intentions of the works. Filmmaker Rodrigo Rocha Campos (Canada) analyzes the process and different elements contributing to his screendance work *4~*

Mitten is a documentary film on the process of choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker which is explained by filmmakers Gerard-Jan CLAES and Olivia ROCHETTE (Belgium)

Rafel Arnal (Spain) analyzes the background and traditional roots of *Brujas*, a videodance made in Mexico in collaboration with Grupo de Danza Gineceo.

4~ From Precision to Chaos

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Abstract

4~ is a screen dance film that explores the close relationship between precision and chaos. Its plot revolves around concepts of human versus machine, oppression, psychological decay, and of human experiment. Set in a minimalist world devoid of life 4 ~ unfolds through contemporary dance, unsettling sounds and dark visuals.

This article examines the creative process from concept to finished work exposing key aspects of film production that supports, first and foremost, its storytelling. It also exposes the many production challenges and constraints, which ultimately evolved into creative solutions that became part of the film. The article also reveals idiosyncrasies of the production process from screenplay to photography, and the need of myriad visual effects in order to get across crucial story points.

Biography

Rodrigo Rocha-Campos has been teaching the art and technique of camera and lighting for over 14 years as an educator in film schools in Vancouver, Canada and across film schools in Florida. About 6 years ago, he started an additional career path by creating and producing content using screendance as the format. To this date, Rodrigo has directed and produced 5 screendance films with growing international exposure including festivals in North and South America, Europe, the Middle East and Australia. Currently, he's in the development process of his sixth dance piece.

Introduction: The Concept of 4~

The central concept of 4~ revolves around the theme of precision versus chaos, the somewhat fine line between sanity and insanity; and, the obsession of achieving perfection, which ultimately causes its downfall. The precision versus chaos idea evolved from the live performance named *8Bitself* by the dance group Farouche Collective[1], (performance by Mitsuhashi, Erika, and Lau, Felicia, directed by Mahaila Patterson O'Brien, Vancouver, Canada, Nov. 2016). Their futuristic performance, even though based on the theme of precision, was created on a different framework, scenario, and emotional content. But, the central idea became fascinating to me. As conversations with Farouche took place, a decision was made to develop a storyline incorporating themes such as precision versus chaos and human versus machine. In regards to scenarios, I decided on an oppressive, prison-like setting with subjects being watched by surveillance cameras 24/7. In Figure 1, the character identified as 4~ climbs a stairwell of an oppressive establishment devoid of life.

A couple of months went by before a treatment and character breakdown had been completed. More meetings followed with the Farouche integrants where choreographic themes were workshopped and character roles assigned. At that point, the story lived only as paragraphs in a treatment and in a preliminary character, beat-by-beat. As story points multiplied and the plot thickened, it was becoming more and more evident that the combination of paperwork I was producing was not effective enough in keeping up with so many details. At that time, 4~ was my fourth screendance film and I was just repeating the same "modus operandi" as before, which had worked for the kind of screendance I was creating. However, without realizing at the time, I was crossing over the screendance format and moving toward a more motion-picture like format, driven mostly by storytelling than by dancing for the screen. Consequently, a screenplay had to be generated to facilitate the communication between cast and crew; and making sure plot details were captured the right way.

Fig. 1 - The character identified as 4~ (Felicia Lau) lives a desolate life in an oppressive retro-future world devoid of life and emotion. [screen grab]

The Script, Scenarios & Motifs

It came time to dust off my writing skills using the mainstay screenplay software *Final Draft™*. I have not touched the software since the time I was attending grad school, over a decade ago. But, due to the short nature of the project I was dealing with it didn't take long to recall the basic software operation.

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[1] O'Brien, Mahaila Patterson, Mitsuhashi, Erika, and Lau, Felicia. Farouche Collective Website. (2016). www.farouchecollective.com

A seven-page script materialized after a few weeks consisting of pure scene description and character beats, and without a single line of dialog; something not very common in the world of film production.

Fig. 2 - 4~ (Felicia Lau) in the foreground and her opponent (Erika Mitsuhashi) in the background displaying machine-like movements for her oppressive boss. [photo by Duy N. Bui]

Fig. 3 - In the middle, 4~ (Felicia Lau) takes directives from her oppressive boss (Mahaila Patterson O'Brien) in the foreground. Her opponent (Erika Mitsuhashi) slightly behind puts 4~ on the edge. [photo by Duy N. Bui]

The screenplay incorporated all the story elements from the treatment, which had been roughly broken-up into three sections as a) Clockwork b) Parts That Fail c) Of Oil and Blood. In broad strokes, the first part, Clockwork, establishes the rules of the world the characters live in and brings forth the struggles the protagonist 4~ has to deal with between her opponent and her oppressive boss. It also establishes the precision quality of the choreography (see Figs. 2 and 3). In Parts That Fail, 4~ descends to one of her lowest psychological moments, her confidence being wrecked by successive crumbling performances. And finally, Of Oil and Blood, 4~ crosses the threshold of sanity to obsession, going to the dark side. She finds a way to get rid of her competitor, but is completely unaware of twists that are about to take place.

As development and rehearsals went by, the screenplay became progressively more complex. Different scenes and sets were added, as well as character beats, motifs and set decor elements that help explain the non-verbal dialog. Some of these elements include the spinning top, the tattoo, the retro speakers, the "taser", the oil blob, and of course the surveillance cameras.

The surveillance cameras are everywhere and are always watching. They are present in every room, stairwells and hallways watching every action that takes place in this establishment. The central idea of the surveillance cameras in the story was manifold: for its intrusive and oppressive qualities, especially upon 4~, as well as for the mystery they produce in the audience's mind (see Fig. 4). A variety of questions are naturally brought forth: who's watching, why, and what for? But, none of these questions are overtly answered, leaving for the audience to collect clues and make their own conclusions.

Fig. 4 - The main protagonist 4~ (Felicia Lau) is always under the scrutiny of the surveillance cameras. [screen grab]

The film deals in many ways with the idea of being watched, glanced at, gazed at, examined, observed, scrutinized, openly or secretly, not only from the surveillance cameras, or whomever is "behind" them, but also from the judgemental eyes of the domineering boss. Even 4~ is not excluded from that same action. She watches her competitor examining every movement, and at the same time, trying to get a sense of who she is dealing with. Interestingly enough, the audience is not exempt from the same action. We all engage in the act of gazing, watching, scrutinizing every element in the frame just as the cameras and boss. Is there a case here for insinuating that the audience is ultimately the one behind the surveillance cameras?

The spinning top is also worth commenting for its dual purpose in the narrative. I wanted to create a metaphor for the struggles the main character endures and at the same time use it as a real object, in which 4~, would interact with. As I was brainstorming during script development the idea of using a toy ballerina came to my mind; an idea embedded in my brain probably from films, in which a ballerina spins on top of a vintage music box. Even though I was attracted by this idea, as it fitted some of my requisites, it also had a few disadvantages. For instance, it was too obvious, too stereotypical, and perhaps, too melodramatic in the context of the film. So, what else could be used that would fit my needs without these drawbacks? That's when the spinning top idea came about. It would avoid the stereotypical, over dramatic association by simultaneously being more original and small enough that 4~ could easily have with her at all times (see Fig. 5). It would also better represent her struggles in a more organic way as the toy itself intrinsically wobbles from side to side as it loses momentum.

Throughout the narrative, the audience sees 4~ interacting with the top as she struggles to keep it spinning up-right. On the other hand, when the top is by itself it spins freely as if by some magical power or surreal state. At these moments the top acquires a metaphorical identity bridging the real to the surreal, perhaps to the astonishment of the audience. Thus, the spinning top, more than any other device in the film, carries the message the world 4~ lives in is not quite the same one we do.

Fig. 5 - 4~ (Felicia Lau) struggles with the spinning top which sometimes acts as a toy, sometimes as a metaphor. [screen grab]

Is this a world of dreams or one that exists in people's subconscious? Are there any other underlying meanings in which the spinning top represents? Is there any other connection between the top and 4~? Is there a history? I could go on posing questions like these ones, but in reality I'm not interested in answering them. I prefer letting the audience connect the dots the way it suits them. Personally, this is a more interesting kind of filmmaking and storytelling than to spoon-feed every answer.

Choreography and Movement: Farouche Collective

Fig. 6 - From left to right: Mahaila Patterson O'Brien, Felicia Lau and Erika Mitsuhashi, integrants of Farouche Collective taking a small break on the set of 4~ [photo by Duy N. Bui]

The integrants of Farouche Collective back then, and as of the writing of this paper, Mahaila Patterson O'Brien, Felicia Lau and Erika Mitsihashi (see Fig. 6) accepted the collaboration and were responsible, as a group, to develop the choreography for the film. The group, which is based in Vancouver, Canada, works primarily with contemporary dance by "integrating the mediums of choreography, new media projections and light." Their interests consist of "improvisation, thinking bodies, formal clarity, clean lines and visual design" (Farouche Collective).

Farouche created a choreography based on ideas we had discussed at our initial meetings. It would comprise of machine-like and clockwork movements, repetition, synchronization just to name a few. As we workshopped these ideas, the time came to assign roles to each one of them: no easy task, but we agreed on the intention of Felicia taking the role of 4~, Mahaila as the oppressive boss and Erika, the android.

My task in the development process was to make sure aspects like story points, characters' beats, and shooting details were coordinated, properly planned and communicated. Additionally, a few story points in the film involved minimum movement, or none at all, so the group was curious about it. More and more, I have been embracing moments with minimum or no movement in my screendance work as it gives a brief relief to the idea of dancing for the screen, blurring the lines of dance performance and acting. For example, this approach is seen during scenes taking place in the protagonist's bunker (Fig. 7). It is in her bunker that we see the psychological downfall and complexity of her character changing very vividly from defeat to obsessive-compulsive, crossing over the threshold of sanity. Moreover, the absence of, or minimum movement, also suggests an interesting blend of screendance format with cinema. For a moment the audience might very well forget they are watching a dance film and experience it in the traditional way.

Lastly, 4~ was rehearsed and shot without music playback on the set. This idea even though strange to me at the time, was the preference of the dancers. Farouche did a fantastic job throughout the process and their delivery was never out of synch. The set was the quietest one I have ever worked on.

Fig. 7 - The protagonist 4~ (Felicia Lau) hears the klaxxon going off from her bunker
and suspects the boss is up to something. [screen grab]

The Design

Set Design

4~ was shot in the studios and facilities of the Vancouver Film School. The Production Designer, Jessica Kish and the creative team decided for a minimalist approach to the sets including: the White Room, the Bunker, the Stairwell and Hallway. These rooms would have minimal dressing to support the cold and oppressive world and at the same time display a vintage flavor. The film has a 1950's vibe with a touch of retro-future style for dressing, props and wardrobe. Wood was mixed with metal for their specific textures and feel.

Fig. 8 - From left to right: the Android (Erika Mitsuhashi), the Replacement (Linnea Gwiazda) and the Boss (Mahaila Patterson O'Brien) repeat the process again. [screen grab]

The White Room presented a few challenges for the design team, but its advantages were far greater. The studio, which is mostly used at the film school as a large green screen, was spacious, wide, and tall enough to be imposing and appropriate for the story. No sets were built for the film. Instead, they were dressed and manipulated. Items such as bench, speakers, ventilation grid, surveillance cameras were brought and placed in strategic places. The other element present in the White Room is the large, rectangular light panel located behind the bench. This item, constructed by the lighting and grip teams had the dual function of decor and lighting the characters. Fig. 8 displays the architecture of the White Room with its imposing height and curved walls, as well as the wood versus metal approach. The tall light fixture was used as dressing and as the subjects' light.

The Bunker set where 4~ lives was chosen for its interesting shape and appropriate feel. It was dressed with minimal furniture and lit in a very stark manner (see Fig. 7). Even though the actual room is used as storage place, it has a quite peculiar and unique shape as it connects two different studios: one with a straight wall, while the other, curved. It's walls painted dark grey were ideal for us, as well as its main concrete column. The same room was also used for the Android character suggesting every dweller in the establishment lives in the same confined spaces. For the latter character, however, different dressing was used and an image flop during editing for a slight differentiation.

The Wardrobe

Costume Designers Brandon Peterson and Julian LeClerc created the outfits from scratch (Figures 8a & 8b show sketches created by Peterson). For the dancers, the idea was to have a more utilitarian

purpose that implies an uniform-like look and a lower status than the boss. It also needed to fit the retro-future and austere style of the post-war era. A full body, off-white leotard and a belt completed the look. For the boss, on the other hand, we decided for an edgier look with a higher status. A black leotard was used instead, as well as a black apron and the long sleeve latex gloves (Fig. 9)
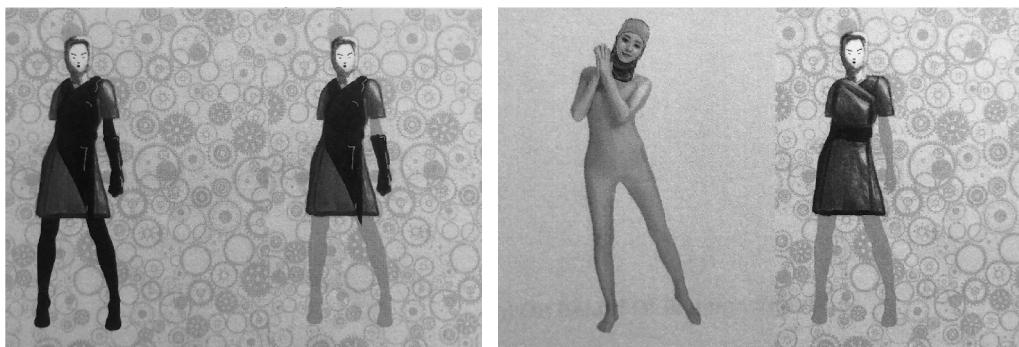
Figs. 8a & 8b - Sketches from Costume Designer Brandon Peterson for the Boss (left) and for the Dancers suggesting a hierarchy between them (right).

Props and Dressing

Several props and dressing items had to be sourced or created. The ones worth mentioning are items carefully included in the screenplay as story points. Some of the sourced items include the vintage speakers for the sound of the klaxxon, the heart-monitoring machine for the surreal sequence, the ventilation grid with the air-flow switched on for the White Room and off for the Bunker where 4~ lives, as well as the already mentioned items like surveillance cameras and spinning top.

On the other hand, a few special items had to be fabricated including the "taser" and the oil blob (Fig. 10). The taser was made by Prop-Master Chase Duff and animated by VFX Artist and Director of Photography Robert Riendeau. For legal and safety reasons a mock-up apparatus was put together keeping size and low profile in mind, after all the boss would "have it" with her all the time. However, its full effect did not come to fruition until the visual effects were added featuring a front grid emitting light. It is not a recognizable item, but in the context of the scene and added sound design, VFX, along with performance, the message is clear -- it is a weapon.

Fig. 9 - From left to right: Erika Mitsuhashi, Felicia Lau and Mahaila Patterson O'Brien on the set of 4~ [photo by Duy N. Bui]

Another example of the synergy between Art and the VFX departments was the animation of the oil blob. This time, it was the creation of Make-up & Hair Megan Mitchell. The "blob" implied by the texture and viscosity was made of a gelatin-like material. During the pre-production phase, the team had decided on a material that was easy to work with, have the right appearance and most importantly would not cause stains to the wardrobe and to the set. That way, multiple takes could be achieved without time-consuming resets or potential mishaps. It was also during pre-pro that the idea of animating the oil was brought forth, just slightly enough to give life to the liquid and drama to the scene. This is a good section to watch closely more than once.

Fig. 10 - 4~ (Felicia Lau) collapses on top of the broken-down Android (Erika Mitsuhashi). From behind, the Boss (Mahaila Patterson O'Brien) mercilessly tasers 4~ unexpectedly. [screen grab]

The Photography

The photography was accomplished by long time collaborator Director of Photography and VFX Artist Robert Riendeau. Robert brings a level of technique and creative input that is hard to match. At early stages of development, many complex situations challenged the creative team and solutions to these problems opened many interesting possibilities. Some of the most challenging curved-balls the production encountered involved shooting in the White Room for its large size, its "problematic" color, lighting restrictions and amount of visual effects required. The latter is discussed in the Post-Production section.

The White Room, at the basement of the film school, is used as a multi-purpose room for students in different programs. The curved walls, vertically and horizontally, were ideal for the film as well as its sheer height. However, the room is an enormous Green Screen studio! (See Fig. 11). To circumvent this problem, it was decided to shoot the film black & white and create a camera preset to provide an instant result for all departments to see during the shoot. At the beginning, standing inside an enormous green "bowl" was quite disorienting to say the least, and especially tricky was trying to imagine what the set up would look like in black and white. Needless to say, without the camera preset there was no way to judge the various works from the make-up to the photography.

Another challenge for the Cinematography department was the restrictions in regards to lighting the actors in a large room, where everything is in the frame. Although a small lighting grid takes care of the illumination of the background, it does not do much for the actors, with light levels being quite low. The subjects' lighting needed to be on the ground and near them. Therefore, a large soft-box

fabricated as if it is part of the decor was proposed by the director of photography. As the pre-pro progressed, Robert and I discussed the idea of having the soft box positioned behind the boss to express a bold concept of pairing together light with evil. Consequently, the idea of a light that would express a negative notion came forth. As a result, Robert created a lightbox with an overpowering quality and overbearing brightness that spoke about the oppressive relationship between the boss and the dwellers of this establishment.

4~ Director Rodrigo Rocha-Campos - Cinematographer Robert Riendeau

Fig. 11 - The "White" Room set with its original color [photo by Robert Riendeau]

Most often, light is associated with good, wisdom, and spirituality, but in the case of 4~, the bright light crossed the threshold of positive, and thus, becoming negative (see Fig. 12). It is only bright in the White Room. Every place else is either dull or dark. It feels quite greedy in that way.

4~ was shot with two RED Epics at 6K resolution. A 2.35:1 aspect ratio composed the dimensions of the image and a black & white preset created during pre-pro. The short was lensed by Zeiss CP2s primes and the camera movement accomplished by dolly and jib.
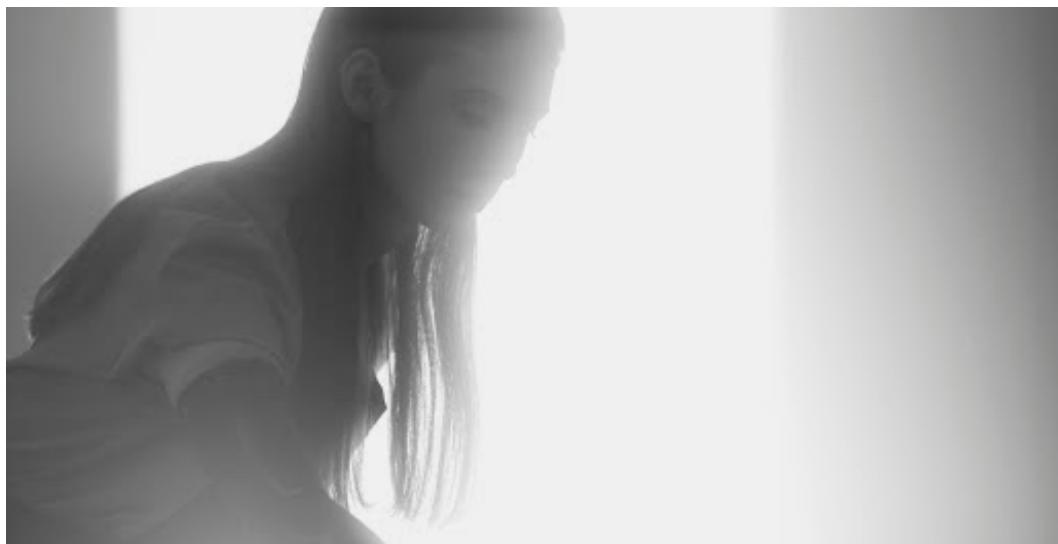

Fig. 12 - The oppressive Boss (Mahaila Patterson O'Brien) juxtaposed with the overbearing light on the set of 4~ [screen grab]

The Post-Production Process: From VFX to Sound Design

VFX

As mentioned before, the visual effects of the show were handled by the VFX Artist and Director of Photography Robert Riendeau. During pre-pro, Robert and I discussed several possible ideas of how to achieve many story points such as the spinning top, the sparks coming out of the android's leg, the taser and the possibility of animating the oil blob. Each one of these ideas had to be implemented to several different camera set-ups, which meant a quite laborious vfx process for such a low budget short. We proceeded the pre-production process identifying the several camera angles needed, tallying the total number of shots. I must say I was quite nervous about the visual effects for not being very common to my filmmaking process and the scary idea of stepping into the "unknown".
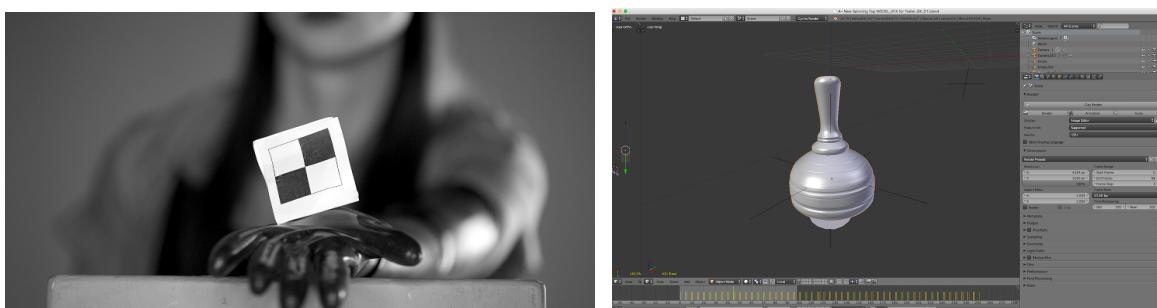
Fig. 13 a & b - The oppressive Boss (Mahaila Patterson O'Brien) holds a marker (a) where the computer- generated top (b) will be placed on [screen grab].

Fig. 14 - Final composite showing the computer-generated spinning top reproduced and animated by VFX Artist Robert Riendeau [screen grab]

The spinning top featured throughout the film alternates from being a real prop and a computer-generated one. This comes as a surprise for many people when the trick is revealed, as the final reproduction is uncanny. For the instances the real prop toy was used it posed challenges for the crew to capture it properly, either from a framing and focus stand-point; or, whenever it needed to share the frame with one of the dancers. On the other hand, the challenges for the computer-generated one were more in terms of acquiring the right set-ups needed by the VFX artist from a technical and emotional stand-point. Figures 13 and 14 show the before and after of a particular set up which would be impossible to have achieved without the use of visual effects.

Another quite challenging idea was creating the sparks coming out of the android's legs. As being part of one of the most dramatic moments of the third part of the film, several shots needed to be worked on for this particular effect. This was another anxiety-ridden moment as the veracity of the effect was crucial for the tone and genre of film we were presenting. The plan moved forward during pre-production with the number of set-ups required, but it wasn't until picture-lock that the official count was agreed on. Great work was done by Robert Riendeau, alongside the post-sound team, bringing a realistic and yet rich experience. Amazing synergy across different departments.

Besides the already mentioned visual effects the short film ended up going through a handful of additional work that became apparent only during post, such as the concealing of electrical cables, a ceiling replacement for the White Room and other minor fixes. Over 40 shots ended up having some sort of VFX treatment. Lastly, the film was edited and color graded by Arlein Wharf-Garcia who had collaborated on the preceding screendance short and handled the daunting post process with clarity and ease.

Post Sound

The post-production sound is just as rich as the visuals. Long time collaborator, Will Meadows was in charge of sound design, music, atmosphere and final mix. On the other hand, Daniel Bidal came to the project as Foley Artist and was in charge of recreating every sound the dancers execute on the screen. Daniel was also responsible for designing the sound of the spinning top. The use of foley work in my screendance films has become increasingly more noticeable and cared for since 4~. For me, not only it brings a heightened sense of the subject's performance, but it also feeds on the idea that what the audience is experiencing is real, from an aural point of view. Foley work can be quite a daunting job as it requires great technique and creativity when re-creating and re-recording sounds. The Foley Artist redoes every minute action on or off-screen and re-interprets it by taking into consideration emotion, speed, synchronization, and which materials should be sourced. However, the result of this difficult process is incredible for the high quality acquisition of sounds and their great flexibility during sound mixing.

The music inspiration for the film came from the on-line clip on YouTube called: *All Planets Sounds from Space*. The clip's spooky sounds, credited to NASA[2], were achieved by transforming electromagnetic waves into sound waves resulting in eerie sounds. The ominous and dark quality of these sounds were of great inspiration during the screenplay phase; and then, later discussed with the composer to be considered as a starting point for the work. Another source of inspiration Will Meadows brought to the score was the industrial music style notorious for its electronic and harsh vibes, which were mixed-in with steampunk sounds. In order to achieve this, the composer used various unorthodox devices such as prepared up-right piano, drainage metal pipes, a bicycle wheel, and a violin bow on different surfaces, as well as traditional instruments like the violin and electric guitar.

Lastly, the final mixed was performed at the Vancouver Film School Sound Design campus, a process that I have always enjoyed for I consider the last creative opportunity for storytelling before the project is ready for delivery.

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[2] YouTube, uploaded by Aryanatomy, June 3, 2016, youtu.be/IQL53eQ0cNA

Conclusion

It was an arduous process to complete 4~, not to mention time-consuming if we go back as far as the story development (18 months in total). But in film production, completing a project is more important than starting one. The sense of fulfillment is priceless and each conquered obstacle gives great relief. Obstacles and constraints also shape up a film, and even though they are a source of stress, they can lead to a great source of creative ideas too. At the start of the marketing and festival phase, I had no idea how the film would be received. At the back of my mind I knew I had blended formats between screendance and cinema, and feared the film would not have a place to go. In hindsight, my anxieties proved to be futile as the short has been featured in festivals across the globe from Europe to North and South America, Iran and Australia. Fig. 15 displays a widely used image of the film during the festival run of 2019.

Fig. 15 - The oppressive Boss (Mahaila Patterson O'Brien) on the set of 4~ [photo by Duy N. Bui]

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the help and support of Vancouver Film School for allowing myself, cast and crew to use the facilities, from studios to post-production rooms, as well as film equipment required by the production. Without this support, it would be nearly impossible to create this film from a logistics and financial standpoint.

Gravitating to the Centre

Gerard-Jan CLAES and Olivia ROCHETTE

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Abstract

The documentary Mitten *tells the story of the making of the performance* Mitten wir im Leben sind / Bach 6 Cello suites *by choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker in collaboration with the world-renowned cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras. Filmmakers Gerard-Jan Claes and Olivia Rochette talk about their film, and their goal to create an objective representation of the rehearsal process, showing the final stages of the musical scores analysis and the creation of the choreography, without including any interviews or explanations. The dance is filmed in full shot, showing the entire choreography.*

This interview was conducted by Floor Keersmaekers. The text was first published by Sabzian at https://sabzian.be/article/gravitating-to-the-centre.

Biography

Olivia Rochette (Belgium, 1987) and Gerard-Jan Claes (Belgium, 1987) live and work in Brussels. They studied film together at the KASK / School of Arts Ghent. Their graduation work Because We Are Visual *(2010), a mid-length documentary, allows the viewer to discover the world of public video journals. Because We Are Visual was shown at national and international film festivals such as International Film Festival Rotterdam, International Documentary Festival Amsterdam, Videoex (Zürich, Switzerland), and was exhibited in museums such as S.M.A.K. (Ghent, Belgium) and MAC's (Grand-Hornu, Belgium).*

In 2012 they finished Rain*, a documentary about the transmission of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's contemporary choreography* Rain *to the Ballet de l'Opéra national de Paris. The documentary focuses on how De Keersmaeker and the Rosas dancers convey the dance idiom of the choreographer to the classically trained ballet dancers.* Rain *premiered nationally at the International Film Festival Ghent and was released in Belgian cinemas onwards. At the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam the documentary had it's international premiere. The film was shown at other international festivals such as Cinéma du Réel at Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), Internationalen Dokumentarfilmfestivals München and Los Angeles Film Festival.*

In 2013 they co-founded Sabzian. The website is a collection of online reflections on cinema and an agenda listing cinephile events in Belgium and surroundings.

*From 2013 to 2016, they were artists in residence at the Beursschouwburg in Brussels. In 2016 they closed their residency with a screening of Gra*nds travaux *at the Beursschouwburg as part of the Kunstenfestivaldesarts. The film* Grands travaux *is set in the Institute Anneessens-Funck, and had its international premiere at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.*

Their newest film, Mitten *(2019), follows the final weeks of rehearsal of* Mitten wir im Leben sind*, a performance by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, her company Rosas and cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras, based on the six cello suites by Johann Sebastian Bach.*

They are currently working on a new film, Kind Hearts, produced by Accattone films.

Can you tell us something about the way this project came about?

<u>Gerard-Jan Claes</u>: Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker asked us to make recordings of the rehearsal process. Both Jean-Guihen and Anne Teresa felt the need to record this exceptional collaboration between choreographer, dancers and musician. They found that a thorough inspection of the score revealed something special, a longing for precision, and they wanted to preserve some traces of that.

<u>Olivia Rochette</u>: We filmed during a specific period in 2017: a few separate days in June and the last week of rehearsals in July at Rosas as well as the week before the première in Gladbeck, in late August.

<u>Claes</u>: Anne Teresa wanted us to film on the days Jean-Guihen was present as well because to her, the focus needed to be on their joint work process, together with the dancers. The other aspects to the development of a production were of secondary importance in that respect.

Fig.1: Images of Jean-Guihen Queyras and Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker analysing musical scores.

How determining a factor was it that you joined at a later stage of the rehearsal process?

<u>Rochette</u>: There were two consequences to our joining in medias res. The rehearsal process had already been going for a while so part of the course had been set. And even though we have some knowledge of Anne Teresa's working method, it remains an enigmatic process to us as well. Arriving later in the process therefore did present an additional difficulty. The group had developed a certain 'language', terms to refer to certain movements and they had made considerable progress into the score analysis (figure 1). We didn't always know what exactly was being discussed. Be that as it may, we did find that the work in and of itself spoke of a certain enthusiasm. Even without much background information, it was clear that the score analysis was very thorough, that they had a clear desire to get to the bottom of Bach's composition. Anne Teresa's almost obsessive way of working, paying a great deal of attention to the composition and to detail, has always fascinated us. This was our primary focus. Another consequence of the in medias res situation was that our imagination was taken out of the equation. We couldn't dream up the film beforehand because we landed right in the middle of it. That made things very concrete very quickly which seemed to argue in favour of a certain clarity and directness.

<u>Claes</u>: The fact that we hadn't witnessed the rehearsal process from the beginning also made things difficult as regards an audience. Just like us while filming, the viewer does not have all information available. But there is also the position of the audience in relation to such a specific and detailed work process that has such a long history and that uses an idiosyncratic and technical language. Especially during the editing stage, we realised we couldn't expect the audience to understand every detail of what Anne Teresa, Jean-Guihen and the dancers were doing. We made the conscious decision not to

include any interviews or ask for explanations to gain greater insight. We chose observation, our observation, and wanted to capture on tape the fascination that goes with it and bring that across to the audience. The challenge of editing was, on the one hand, to hold on to the fascination and, on the other, not to impose on the audience a trivial anecdote of the rehearsal process or a desire to follow the process in all its technical precision. It had to be and to continue to be a contemplative look that is given the space to become fascinated by the work process.

Fig.2: Images from *Mitten* showing elaboration process at the rehearsal spaces at Rosas in Brussels

This is the first time that you shot video of a Rosas performance that was still being created, even before the première[1]. Was that the logical next step on your common path?

Rochette: A creation like this is an intimate process and it's not easy letting 'outsiders' in. But because we have been working with Anne Teresa for such a long time and have become familiar with each other, I take it that it was not such a big step and that the threshold was lower.

Claes: What I find interesting looking back on the collaboration over the last few years is that there has been a shift in the way Anne Teresa presents her work. We were looking for an objective clarity for this film and I feel that has increasingly become part of Anne Teresa's work these last few years. Our first trailers for her pieces were more lyrical and poetic with much more close-ups or imagery aiming for more direct abstraction. There has been a noticeable shift in this respect these past years. As I said before, we chose to go for a certain clarity. For instance, dancers are filmed in their entirety (figures 2, 3, 4), from the feet up. That is in part because Anne Teresa sends us in that direction. She has done the same thing in Rosas's most recent creations: laying bare the way a performance is made, showing the structure and the building stones to the audience. We had to adapt to that but we also intended to film it this way. It didn't feel like something forced. It is, I believe, a mutual desire for a form that contains within itself a degree of independence.

Were you able to give direction or steer the content while you were filming or was it mostly a matter of registering and observing at that point?

Rochette: We started by observing but as documentary makers we also look for a certain style, which means a rhythm and composition. Achieving that requires a certain consistency of form. In a way this seems contrary to the notion of documentary which in turn depends greatly on coincidence. In this film, we intervened very little and there was really no time or space to repeat conversations or actions. The 'organisation' of the scenes was mostly a matter of good preparation and a meticulous approach. We made sure we knew exactly what was taking place on any given day. As such, we were continuously occupied with setting the stage and steering the footage. As far as possible, we asked Anne Teresa or Jean-Guihen to take a position here or there because we already had a framing angle in the back of our mind. It is a constant interplay between predetermination and happenstance.

After getting the footage it is time for editing. How was the collaboration with Anne Teresa at this stage?

Claes: Our main objective was for the film's scope to be clear. To that end, we worked with editor Dieter Diependaele. Editing a film is a difficult process: on the one hand all avenues are open, every scene can end up anywhere in the film, on the other, the material is what it is, it has become immutable. So certain questions come up during the editing stage. These can be the more obvious, formal kind about the amount of information a viewer needs, the length of the scenes, things that work or don't work. It is a very concrete process during which you try to arrange the material in a certain way. In the case of *Mitten*, we decided quite quickly that it wouldn't be a fragmentary tale but that we would follow the line from the rehearsals to the première.

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[1] Claes and Rochette have been creating trailers and image recordings of Rosas performances since 2009. In 2012, *Rain* was released, a documentary about the transmission, by Rosas, of the eponymous choreography to the ballet dancers of the Opéra de Paris.

At a fairly late stage, we went on to show a version to Anne Teresa. Of course, she is an experienced editor in film as well as in dance. She knows what it means to look for the right dynamic. So she made very specific suggestions aimed at the whole curve, the division of energy within the whole.

Rochette: Her remarks were predominantly directed at dance scenes because naturally she has certain wishes about how her work is presented. Also, you cannot simply start cutting into Bach's music, you have to respect a certain phrasing. In that sense, we were grateful for Anne Teresa's insight and preference to select material. Even though this remains a searching process, ultimately, even Bach's music becomes material you have to work with and so it must bend to the logic of your editing.

Fig.3: Images from *Mitten* during the rehearsal/elaboration at at the Ruhrtriënnale in Gladbeck

For a 53-minute film you most likely had to be very stringent in the selection of materials. What criteria did you use to that end?

<u>Claes</u>: The film was made based on the 52-minute television format. So first and foremost, time dictates a certain logic. The first scene of *Grands travaux*[2], for instance, lasts nine minutes. This presumes a longer course. Had we done the same with *Mitten*, a fifth of the film would have finished after the first scene. So setting up the proportions was a different process entirely.

<u>Rochette</u>: We also wanted to introduce a clear structure into the film. Not only based on the setting, the rehearsal spaces at Rosas in Brussels (figure 2) and the première location at the Ruhrtriënnale in Gladbeck (fugres 3, 4), but also depending on the kind of scene. We decided, for instance, to show only one rehearsal session with each dancer. We could then juxtapose these images against each other. Boštjan Antončič's dance, for instance, is slow and steady, whereas Marie Goudot's is much more energetic.

<u>Claes</u>: The line that divides what is interesting from what isn't is very thin. Part of the challenge is to keep a certain distance and concentration in this search.

<u>Rochette</u>: We filmed the opening scene with a single camera and it is the result of a day of filming even though the editing makes it seem a continuous conversation of minutes. It requires long and dedicated film work followed by editing work with the editor with a great deal of cutting and searching for that one word or one image to make it a continuous whole.
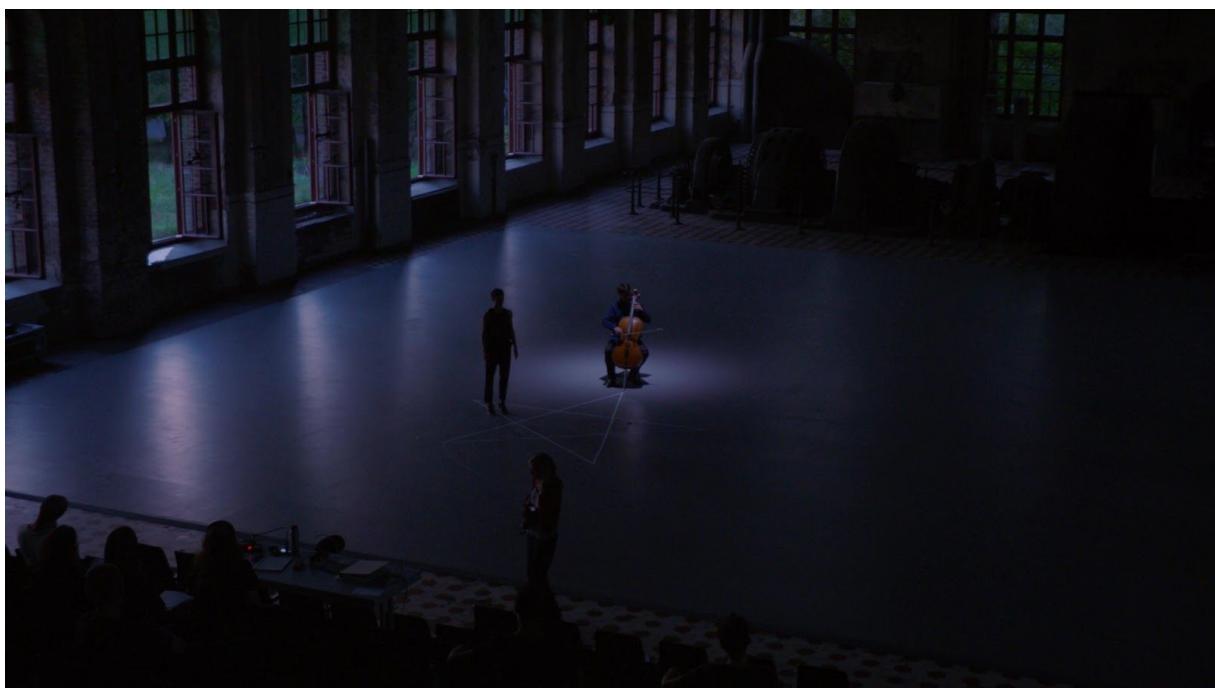

Fig.4: Image from *Mitten* of the première at the Ruhrtriënnale in Gladbeck

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[2] *Grands travaux* (2016) is the previous film by Claes & Rochette. The documentary follows a few students from the Anneessens-Funck Brussels vocational school

What do you believe is the essence of the film, the predominant theme? From an objective point of view, it is easy to say that the film follows the creative process of the performance, but what is the story behind this?

Claes: During the editing process we realised fairly early on that the film is mostly about concentration. Not only human concentration during a working process but also in terms of a propelling dynamic. A creation process of Anne Teresa clearly works towards something, towards a point that is actually unattainable. Or maybe towards a certain degree of precision or accuracy. Our goal was to show that abstraction, that special situation of a group of people setting off towards a final destination they actually will not be able to reach. The work never ends, not even after the première. When you stop and think about it, the title of the film *Mitten* may not only refer to the performance *Mitten wir im Leben sind* but also to the condition of being 'in the middle of'. You see people heading to a point which requires them to work with increasing precision.

You are familiar with the work of Rosas and with recording it. What turned out to be the greatest challenge in the making of **Mitten?**

Rochette: The difficulty of a rehearsal process is already captured in the word 'rehearsal': the repetition of certain acts over and over again. There is a danger that this will come across as trivial so you have to find what is exciting in or about this repetition. Also the space tends to remain the same. In Gladbeck (figure 4), where the première of *Mitten wir im Leben sind* took place, the space was exciting but the rehearsal space at Rosas can in no way be compared to, for instance, the Paris Opera, where *Rain* was filmed. In a manner of speaking, that set had a whole cinematic world ready and waiting. The Rosas Performance Space, by comparison, is a bare, uniform space without much in the way of traffic. But there are ways to work with that as well. Such a black box may be bare, but it provides abstraction, too.

Claes: It was the hard part of the situation but, at the same time, it was also the goal. Film is at some point always about something strange you want to discover as the maker. That is why we specifically did not want to discuss things that were outside of the working process, like the figure of Anne Teresa or the unavoidable struggle such a creation is.

Rochette: We make films based on observation. It is not part of our style of film making to shed light on all aspects and interview everyone involved.

Claes: You could say that *Mitten* contains a dream about objectivity and intent simply does not enter into the equation. Although it is not about showing things the way they are because by definition that is impossible. Filming always adds an angle, a filter. But we wanted to keep our interest pure. It is about daring to acknowledge the independence of the material: 'this is enough'.

Brujas: de la coreografía escénica a la videodanza

Rafel ARNAL

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Resumen

En este artículo se explica el proceso de creación de la videodanza Brujas, *a partir de una coreografía preexistente para escena que se adapta a un espacio no teatral como es el bosque de Río Caliente en Zapopan (Jalisco, México). Esta pieza audiovisual reconstruye los vínculos originales de la coreografía con la danza mexicana tradicional del mismo nombre, añadiendo improvisaciones de movimiento in situ en el mismo espacio natural mediante ejercicios a partir de referencias visuales extraídas de obras de arte históricas que tratan directamente o apelan a la figura clásica de la bruja, y propone una visualidad en pantalla partida a través de la edición en postproducción.*

Biografía

Rafel Arnal es doctor en Música, especializado en Estudios en Danza, por la Universitat Politècnica de València. Formado como bailarín, músico y artista plástico, actualmente es asesor en el ámbito artístico-expresivo de los Centros de Formación, Innovación y Recursos Educativos (CEFIRE) de la Comunitat Valenciana, co-dirige el EIVV - Encontre Internacional de Videodansa i Videoperformance de València y es director del festival Poliritmia - Concerts i formació en músiques i danses de la mediterrània en la misma ciudad.

Baila y dirige numerosas piezas de videodanza, trabajos que han sido seleccionados en festivales tanto estatales como internacionales, y es finalista en el concurso internacional de videoarte "MACHT KUNST! City video future 2017" otorgado por UFA y Deutsche Bank Art, Culture & Sports en Berlín (Alemania). Ha impartido cursos y seminarios de música, danza y videodanza en la Universidad de El Cairo y la Universidad de Helwan (Egipto), la Universidad de Zaragoza y la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia (España), y la Universidad de Colima y el Laboratorio de Arte Jorge Martínez de la Universidad de Guadalajara (México).

Introducción

Brujas es una pieza de videodanza que empezó a gestarse tras la visita del Grupo de Danza Gineceo A.C. de Guadalajara (Jalisco, México) a la ciudad de València (España) durante el otoño de 2017, con motivo de una gira por diversas ciudades y pueblos del País Valenciano. La coreografía de esta video-danza es una amalgama de muchas referencias visuales y dancísticas, pero sobre todo bebe de la coreografía escénica original firmada por Edgar Reyes - bajo la supervisión de la maestra y directora de la compañía Patricia Aguirre - que a su vez forma parte de un cuadro de escenas contenidas en el espectáculo "Música en Movimiento"[1] en el que se realiza un recorrido dancístico por las músicas populares y tradicionales mexicanas compuestas por Agustín Lara, Consuelo Velázquez o el tradicional "Huapango" de Moncayo, entre otras.

En este espectáculo encontramos la escena de *La Bruja*, una adaptación coreográfica en lenguaje moderno de la danza tradicional que lleva el mismo nombre, y que utiliza la versión musical de Tlen Huicani & Lino Chávez sobre esta conocida partitura tradicional mexicana. En esta coreografía Reyes desarrolla una composición de movimientos de carácter colectivo, en la que 7 bailarinas representan con sus gestos y danzas el ritual llevado a cabo por un grupo de brujas.

En este artículo estudiaremos la transformación de esta coreografía tradicional a coreografía moderna para escena, y cómo se ha llevado a cabo su adaptación a la videodanza. Analizaremos la evolución específica de lenguajes y medios en este caso concreto, enfocando el estudio en el paso de la pieza escénica a la obra videográfica. Por último, trataremos las virtudes, los hallazgos y los defectos encontrados durante la producción, el rodaje y la postproducción de *Brujas*, estrenada finalmente el 8 de octubre de 2018 en la plataforma youtube.

Primera parte

Análisis coreomusical de la danza tradicional

En la danza original de la bruja, de corte tradicional, las bailarinas se desplazan por el espacio con pasos cortos y rápidos mientras sostienen una vela o un vaso de vidrio sobre la cabeza[2]. Esta danza escenifica una de tantas leyendas derivadas de la tradición oral mediante el estilo musical del son, y narra en formato de copla versada las vicisitudes mágicas - no exentas de ciertas dosis de erotismo - de este ser fantástico, perteneciente a la mitología y la imaginería social de la comunidad jarocha.

Estamos pues ante una danza original del pueblo jarocho[3], aunque hay una corriente del Movimiento Jaranero que sostiene que "no se considera como parte de la tradición pues al ser interpretada en ritmo de vals y en tono menor, se ha sugerido que puede ser originario de la región istmeña del estado de Oaxaca" (Hernández, 2016). Aun con estas diferenciaciones, estamos hablando de un mismo género lírico-coreográfico de carácter festivo interpretado principalmente por la población mestiza de

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[1] Estreno de la obra en el Teatro Montecarlo de Buñol (València) el 22 de octubre de 2017: https://youtu.be/Fj2x_bvdC-I

[2] También se han visto adaptaciones en las que el bailarín hombre es quien sostiene esta utilería o *attrezzo* mientras baila: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98WZprlDKKw

[3] Término con el que se denomina a los afro-mestizos de Veracruz (México)

las costas y tierra adentro de México, que literariamente viene a distinguirse en dos estilos: el son jarocho que "se practica en una amplia región del estado de Veracruz, desde la zona del puerto y sus alrededores hasta sus límites con los estados de Oaxaca y Tabasco, pasando por la cuenca del Papaloapan, la región de Los Tuxtlas y la de Coatzacoalcos y Minatitlán", y el son huapango que "se interpreta a lo largo y ancho de la Huasteca (….) La región abarca parte de los estados de Veracruz, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosí e Hidalgo, y porciones pequeñas de Puebla y Querétaro." (Sánchez, 2002).

El ritmo de vals al cual se refiere Hernández para detallar la métrica de la bruja es en realidad un 6/8 o compás binario de subdivisión ternaria, con estructura armónica de tónica-subdominante-dominante, y que como todo vals está hecho para ser bailado[4]. Aunque parezca extraño referirse aquí al vals, una danza europea que surge de un proceso cuyo origen son las danzas populares alemanas (concretamente austríacas) de fines del siglo XVIII, lo cierto es que el son mexicano "es un género en cuya creación intervinieron numerosos ritmos musicales, bailes teatrales y géneros líricos de diferente tipo introducidos en Centroamérica a lo largo de los siglos XVII y XVIII" (Mendoza, 1984). El concepto de vals proviene del alemán *walzen*, que significa "rodar, girar", y esa es precisamente la base coreográfica de esta danza tradicional de la bruja, que posteriormente analizaremos con más detalle.

Fig. 1: A la izquierda, el Ballet Folklórico del Puerto de Veracruz; a la derecha, detalle de La Bruja bailada en la Gala de AVVA AWARDS 2019, fotografiada por Fernando Farfan

Del análisis coreográfico sobre registros en video de esta danza tradicional, se extrae que el baile de la bruja respira al son de la música, y las estrofas de la canción marcan los inicios de secuencias de movimiento durante toda la pieza. Este dato fue la primera evidencia estructural de la coreografía que encontré en mis primeros visionados, y algo que tuve bien claro que utilizaría, aunque no de igual manera, en la obra final de videodanza.

Los movimientos de grupo originales se desarrollan manteniendo una disposición y dinámicas circulares durante la mayor parte del tiempo (como ocurre en el vals), aunque en la introducción, el desarrollo de las estrofas y los interludios musicales se desplazan en formación lineal, y también encontramos momentos en los que se crean formaciones por parejas o pequeños grupos.

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[4] Aquí nos referimos exactamente a la versión musical de *La Bruja* contenida en la video-danza, que pertenece a Tlen Huicani & Lino Chávez

Fig. 2: A la izquierda, escena circular de *La Bruja*[5] (2016) extraída del evento Xcaret Mexico en Veracruz; a la derecha, el Ballet Folklórico Tlen Touaxca interpreta *La Bruja* en el Festival La muerte es parte de lo nuestro 2016

Los desplazamientos en el espacio son de velocidad moderada y sin cambios bruscos, las bailarinas caminan a pasos cortos y ocupan mayormente el centro de la escena. El círculo se expande y se contrae momentáneamente, formando líneas perpendiculares que giran sobre sí mismas, para volver a la disposición de grupo inicial y dirigir los movimientos hacia el patio de butacas.
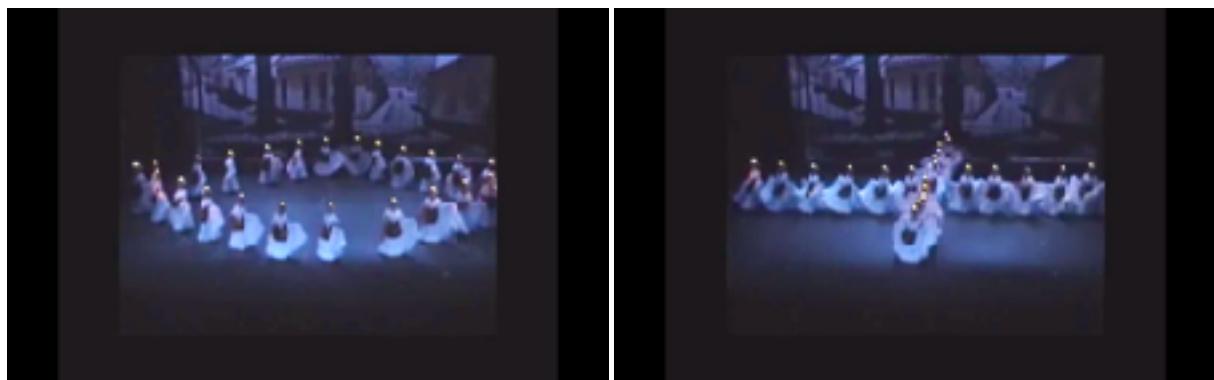
Fig. 3: Ballet Folklórico Policromía Mexicana en el Teatro de la Ciudad de Monterrey, dentro del programa XVII Mitote Folklórico (2008)

La danza en todo momento se lleva a cabo desde la posición erguida, o de pie, las bailarinas nunca descienden al suelo salvo una pequeña inclinación que hacen al principio de la danza para situarse las velas o vasos en la cabeza.

A nivel gestual, las bailarinas tan solo alcanzan a levantar con sus manos la falda para sujetarla en el aire formando una cruz, con los brazos a ambos lados del cuerpo, y manteniendo este gesto durante todo el rato que dura la pieza. Con esta posición sujetan la postura, generando una forma equilibrada que permitirá el desplazamiento del cuerpo sin que peligre la estabilidad del vaso o la vela que mantienen en la base de la cabeza.

El Ballet Folklórico del estado de Veracruz publicó hace tres años un vídeo pedagógico sobre los pasos y el desarrollo coreográfico de *La Bruja*, donde podemos encontrar una guía útil para el montaje

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[5] Herrera, Fernando (Director Artístico) (2016). La Bruja.... Veracruz.. Xcaret Mexico.. 2016 [Danza filmada]. México. 3m08. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmxfxAn084g

artístico y eficaz de este baile tradicional dirigida al profesorado. En este vídeo distinguen 4 momentos coreográficos (que ellos llaman pasos, y que los inician contando desde el número 6 hasta el 9 por razones que desconocemos). La secuencia coreográfica sigue este procedimiento:

1. El ballet empieza con este paso nº 7 desde una posición frontal al público en la escena, separadas en tres núcleos de bailarinas diferentes (central y laterales), que levantan sus faldas a la altura de la cintura con cada uno de sus brazos (Fig. 4, izquierda) en posición de cruz. Cuando se inicia la música, los grupos situados en los extremos avanzan hacia la boca central del escenario caminado en diagonal hasta contar quince veces el Paso 7 (Fig. 4, derecha). Este tipo de paso se compone de las siguientes acciones: un paso a la vez que un semigiro leve del tren superior del cuerpo en el mismo sentido.

Fig. 4: Paso 7 o inicial de la danza de *La Bruja*, realizado por el Ballet Folklórico del estado de Veracruz: a la izquierda la posición de inicio; a la derecha, la posición final de esta secuencia tras dar los quince pasos nº 7

2. En esta secuencia, prima el Paso nº 8: un paso de avance con semi-giro troncal en el mismo sentido más dos pasos sin avance o desplazamiento marcando posición (Fig. 5, izquierda). Todo esto repetido dieciséis veces (según rezan los títulos del vídeo).

Fig. 5: Paso 8 o segunda sección de la danza de *La Bruja*: a la izquierda en formación de flecha hacia el público, a la derecha en posición de 4ª repetición o "vez" marcando filas paralelas

Desde el inicio de secuencia, en la que parten de una formación de grupo en flecha hacia el público hasta separarse en dos filas paralelas, pasan cuatro "veces" o repeticiones de Paso 8, y no será hasta la 8ª repetición del paso que no desharán las filas paralelas (Fig. 5, derecha). Tal y como vemos en la Fig. 6 izquierda, cuando llegan a la 10ª repetición, el grupo ya se encuentra en posición de flecha invertida (la punta hacia el interior del escenario). Las posteriores "veces" o repeticiones del Paso 8 irán encaminadas a conformar una nueva forma separando en tres grupos a las bailarinas, que quedarán en paralelo mirando hacia el público (Fig. 6, derecha).

Fig. 6: Más imágenes del Paso 8: a la izquierda, grupo en forma de flecha hacia el interior del escenario, a la derecha en posición final con los tres grupos mirando hacia el público en formaciones paralelas

3. El Paso 9 se compone de un total de cuatro avances (pasos) con sus semi-giros de tronco respectivos. Presenta un alto nivel de desplazamiento (de ahí que cada repetición suponga cuatro pasos de avance) que busca plegar el grupo en sí mismo de fuera hacia dentro para terminar en una forma final con dos grupos separados (ver secuencia completa de la Fig. 7).

Fig. 7: arriba a la izquierda, inicio del Paso 9; arriba a la derecha, momento de la segunda repetición del Paso 9, en la que se conforma el desplazamiento de pliegue del grupo de fuera hacia dentro; abajo a la izquierda, entrada a posición central del grupo en la cuarta repetición; abajo a la derecha , posición final del Paso 9

4. El Paso 6 dobla la velocidad de los pasos o avances anteriores marcados por las bailarinas. El desplazamiento por lo tanto es mas dinámico, el movimiento abarca toda la escena en su amplitud, y la secuencia se completa con un mayor número de pasos (cincuenta veces, según marca el texto del vídeo). Esta secuencia busca conformar coreográficamente tres grupos separados de bailarinas

(Fig. 8, izquierda) que se unirán en forma de estrella por las puntas de las manos y girarán en torno

a sí mismas (Fig. 8, derecha).

Fig. 8: a la izquierda, inicio de la secuencia del Paso 6; a la derecha, detalle del giro sobre si mismo de uno de los grupos en la secuencia del Paso 6

5. De nuevo la danza vuelve a utilizar el Paso nº 7 para deshacer los grupos que giran en sí mismos y hacer que las bailarinas avancen (Fig. 9, izquierda) hacia una única formación en fila que cruza el escenario en diagonal (Fig. 9, derecha).

Fig. 9: a la izquierda, las bailarinas deshacen los grupos que giran en sí mismos usando el Paso 7 de nuevo; a la derecha, final de esta secuencia, con el cuerpo de baile en fila marcando una diagonal

6. Las bailarinas marcan ocho veces el Paso nº 8: un paso con semi-giro troncal en el mismo sentido más dos pasos marcando posición. La diferencia con respecto a la secuencia 2 de este análisis es que aquí no hay desplazamiento, tan solo "abren" la diagonal marcada inicialmente mientras entran en escena los bailarines (Fig. 10).

Fig. 10: a la izquierda, inicio de la secuencia 6 con el Paso 8; a la derecha, cambio de posición en la diagonal mientras acceden los bailarines a escena

7. La secuencia 7 se compone de la repetición seis veces del Paso 9, y como novedad introduce a los bailarines en escena, que caminan de manera rutinaria hasta llegar a sus parejas respectivas, alcanzándolas en el momento justo en que termina la música. Las bailarinas han mantenido una misma posición en la secuencia mientras entraban los bailarines, girando levemente los cuerpos al son de la música, tan solo modificándola leve y paulatinamente para conformar una única línea de cuerpos frontal preparada para la llegada de los cuerpos masculinos - que se colocan por detrás de ellas - y realizar juntos el cuadro final (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11: a la izquierda, inicio de la entrada de los bailarines en la secuencia 7; a la derecha, posición final con el cuadro de bailarines al completo

Adaptación moderna de la danza tradicional para escena

En la adaptación moderna de esta danza tradicional, creada por el Taller Universitario de Danza Gineceo A.C. para escena, el grupo salta, avanza y retrocede, se lanza al suelo y se levanta haciendo y deshaciendo la formación en círculo, y la coreografía mantiene una homogeneidad dinámica en el cuerpo de baile aunque a veces se rompa la uniformidad del movimiento y cada bailarina desarrolle pasos diferentes (Fig. 12). Aun en estos casos, la música prevalece y "dirige" la coreografía, tanto que parece que las bailarinas responden al unísono mientras bailan con gestualidades divergentes.

Fig. 12: Dos imágenes de la pieza *La Bruja*, bailada por el Taller Universitario de Danza Gineceo A.C.: a la izquierda en el Teatro Montecarlo de Buñol, acompañadas por la música en vivo de la Orquesta SM «La Artística» de Buñol (22(10/2017) y a la derecha en la Sala Matilde Salvador de La Nau - UV de València (23/10/2017)

Para el análisis de esta pieza, escogimos el registro en vídeo de la representación que se llevó a cabo en la Sala Matilde Salvador de La Nau de la Universitat de València el 23 de octubre de 2017.

Aunque no vayamos a detallar todos y cada uno de los pasos transferidos desde la coreografía tradicional hasta la versión moderna que nos ocupa, entre otras cosas porque no se trata este de un artículo centrado en su comparativa, sí que detallaremos la adaptación que se ha llevado a cabo y sus consecuencias a nivel de composición y dramaturgia a partir de las diferencias o similitudes más destacables encontradas entre ambas:

De entrada, esta versión moderna contiene una intención cómica, tal vez demasiado ilustrativa, en la descripción de los personajes: se trata de brujas no solo porque van vestidas como tal, sino porque actúan como "brujas" ante el público, encorvándose, afeando los gestos o dando a entender que son libertinas y malignas (Fig. 13). A continuación, los ejemplos donde se ilustra esto que apuntamos.

Fig. 13: Diferentes imágenes que ilustran los gestos y actitudes teatrales en diversos momentos de la coreografía que las bailarinas realizan para evidenciar que son "brujas", algunas con un toque ciertamente cómico

En esta versión moderna, las referencias a la imagen de un grupo de brujas las encontramos en la propia composición de carácter ritual (el círculo, la contracción y expansión del círculo, el centro, el acceso al suelo), pero también en el gesto y las acciones, mediante formas que generan las bailarinas con sus brazos y piernas (en ocasiones vuelan, desde la posición de pie o saltando o desde el propio suelo, giran sobre si mismas, atrapan el aire con sus manos y caminan con rotundidad por el espacio).

La gestualidad es una de las grandes diferencias entre ambas versiones: mientras en la tradicional el gesto representativo y permanente es la posición de brazos en cruz sujetando la falda con ambas manos, en la versión moderna de Gineceo A.C. las manos y los brazos están liberados, abandonan la rigidez y se usan como extremidades expresivas y funcionales al servicio de la psicomotricidad del cuerpo.

Fig. 14: Comparativa entre los brazos de la versión tradicional (izquierda) y la moderna (derecha)

En la versión moderna también hay momentos donde los personajes caminan muy rápido y con pasos cortos para desplazarse entre secuencia y secuencia hasta ocupar determinadas posiciones en el espacio, al estilo del Paso 6 en la versión tradicional (ver Fig. 15)
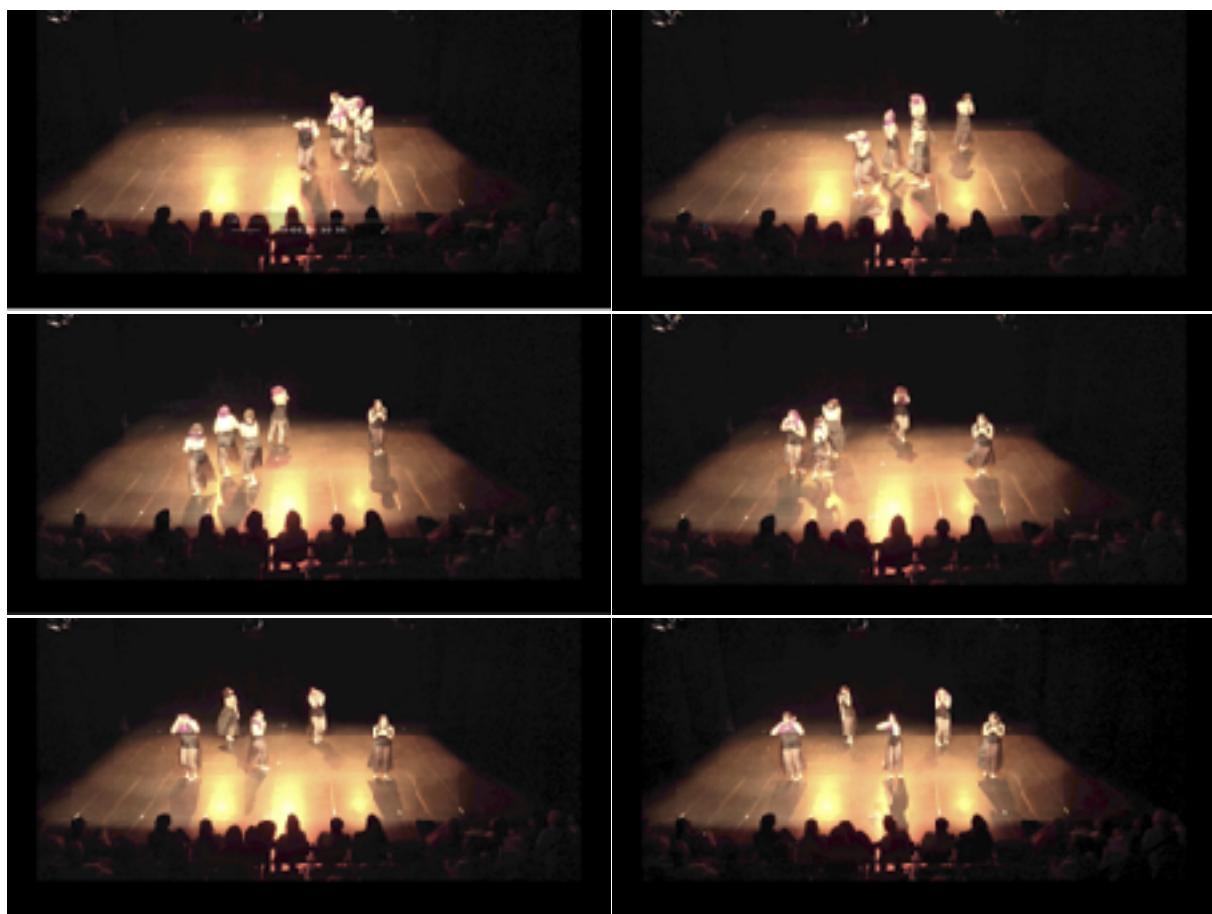

Fig. 15: secuencia del caminar apresurado con pasos cortos de la versión moderna que emula la danza tradicional

Tal y como ocurre en la danza tradicional, las secuencias que componen la versión moderna combinan la misma coreografía para todo el grupo (Fig. 16) con el baile separado por grupos (Fig. 17). En esta versión moderna, y a diferencia del baile tradicional, se incorpora la posibilidad de que cada bailarina realice un baile distinto (Fig. 18)

Fig. 16: Ejemplos de misma coreografía para todo el grupo

Fig. 17: Ejemplos de coreografías distintas simultáneas para cada grupo

Fig. 18: Ejemplos de coreografías distintas simultáneas para cada bailarina
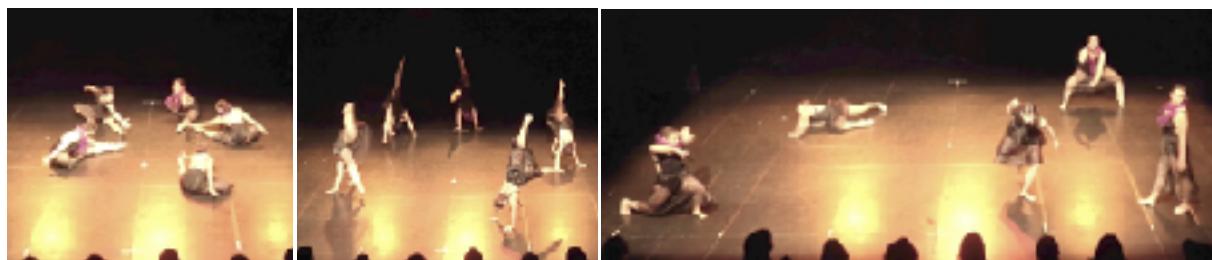
Fig. 19: Diferentes momentos de la coreografía, en los que se hace uso del suelo

Otra de las diferencias remarcables es el uso que hace del suelo la coreografía moderna, recurso que en su versión tradicional no existe (Fig. 19): el suelo y su uso para la danza, inexistente en la danza de la bruja tradicional, será uno de los recursos que más aplicaremos en la adaptación de esta coreografía a la videodanza por su potencialidad plástica y por las posibilidades expresivas que propone.

Segunda parte

El primer paso tras la decisión de rodar esta videodanza fue analizar coreográficamente la versión de *La Bruja* propuesta por Gineceo A.C., puesto que de esta fuente debía extraer la máxima información posible para aplicarla a una nueva obra cinematográfica. Dado que era la primera vez que convertía una coreografía creada para la escena en un material audiovisual, hice muchos visionados de diversas fuentes de video que contenían esta coreografía registrada para comprender su estructura, analizar su

gramática compositiva y desglosar las frases de movimiento y de desplazamiento en el espacio que las bailarinas ejecutaban.

Así pues, y partiendo de una coreografía preexistente, creada *ex profeso* para escena, lo primero que pensé fue en sacar esta danza a la naturaleza y rodar en espacios externos a un teatro; empecé a imaginar localizaciones naturales tales como un bosque, un río o similares en los que situar diferentes escenas de danza. Dado que el contexto de partida que visualizaba en mi cabeza era tan diferente a lo que ya teníamos entre manos, y una vez analizada toda la parte coreográfica (tanto la propuesta por el baile tradicional como la versión de Gineceo A.C.), llegué a la conclusión que debía alejarme radicalmente de cualquier referencialidad espacial o coreográfica previa si quería crear algo realmente nuevo.

Adaptación coreográfica de La Bruja *para videodanza*

Adaptar la danza de *La Bruja* a videodanza fue un trabajo de reducción al máximo de la estructura coreográfica planteada para escena, hasta el punto de que modificamos por completo el *leitmotiv* inicial de la coreografía en pro de una fragmentación de movimientos y gestos representativos de la pieza que pudiesen ser bailados indistintamente por una o más bailarinas en cualquier entorno, sin ninguna justificación dramatúrgica o compositiva. La coreografía de la videodanza sería por tanto un *puzzle* de momentos desordenados que generaría su propio orden una vez iniciásemos el trabajo de edición y montaje de la pieza en el ordenador.

Fig. 20: Diferentes momentos de la coreografía, en los que se hace uso del suelo: arriba sobre barro seco, abajo sobre césped

Partimos de la pieza moderna, puesto que era la que habían bailado las chicas, para seleccionar movimientos que pudieran ser reproducidos en otros contextos que no fueran el escenario teatral. El resto de movimientos aportados en la videodanza surgieron por medio de la improvisación de las bailarinas en el propio espacio, o por referencias previas derivadas del estudio de imágenes sobre brujas. A continuación detallamos punto por punto las aportaciones coreográficas de la videodanza.

El suelo: recurso coreográfico primordial y nuevos movimientos

Una de las medidas que tomamos a nivel coreográfico para la videodanza fue trabajar más en el suelo. Se seleccionaron las secuencias escénicas de suelo y las bailarinas las practicaron en los espacios naturales que iban a ser posibles localizaciones de rodaje. También dimos rienda suelta a la improvisación de movimientos que pasaran o se desarrollaran por completo en el suelo natural de los paisajes escogidos. La idea era ver la adaptabilidad de ciertos momentos de la coreografía en otros suelos, pero también buscábamos realzar la "animalidad", el lado salvaje de los personajes bruja, y extraer así el aspecto lírico o ballético de las coreografías precedentes que nos ligaban a una idea de danza escénica que queríamos superar.

En ese sentido, exploramos distintos tipos de suelo en localizaciones naturales cercanas a Guadalajara (Jalisco) y probamos la respuesta de algunas secuencias originales de la coreografía moderna escénica en suelos de barro, de hierba o de piedra.

El suelo que resultó más agradable para bailar fue el de barro seco (Fig. 20, izquierda), por su uniformidad, textura y exento de accidentes destacables en su relieve, muy similar al suelo escénico. Este tipo de suelo permitió desarrollar las secuencias originales de la adaptación moderna para escena en las que una parte importante del cuerpo, o bien todo él, baila en contacto y/o apoyándose en el suelo, y la diversidad de niveles que registra en concreto la secuencia coreográfica que se ve en la Fig. 20 – que pasó a ser la primera secuencia de la videodanza, grabada en una de las lagunas secas cercanas al Rio Caliente en Zapopan (Jalisco) – donde el cuerpo se mueve en los tres niveles alto, medio y bajo, nos dio la clave para convertirlo en el *leit motiv* propio de la obra de videodanza. Más adelante, esta secuencia se repetiría bailada por el grupo de brujas bajo la lluvia en un jardín con suelo de hierba cortada, momento coreográfico central en la pieza de videodanza (Fig. 20, abajo).


Fig. 21: Imágenes con las bailarinas en diferentes suelos, como hojas secas, musgo y flores o piedra

En otros suelos como los cubiertos de hierba salvaje, de roca caliza o sobre un manto de hojas secas, por el contrario, tuvimos que improvisar diferentes movimientos y posiciones para integrar los cuerpos en el medio dada la dificultad de adaptación de la coreografía de referencia (Fig. 21). Así fue entonces como empezamos a obviar la coreografía original, y construimos otras coreografías con los

cuerpos interactuando *in situ* en el espacio, pensando más en el encuadre de la cámara y las posibilidades físicas que surgían de la limitación de movimiento a causa de los elementos en juego, anulando los desplazamientos o cambios bruscos de dinámica en la coreografía, y también componiendo variaciones gestuales y corporales más propicias a los materiales y texturas del propio contexto.

Uno de estos suelos especiales fue el de un tronco que encontramos de camino a Rio Caliente, un abeto gigante caído (Fig. 22, arriba) que posibilitaba acoger los cuerpos del grupo completo de bailarinas a modo de suelo suspendido. En este caso introducimos la quietud de los cuerpos inertes como elemento coreográfico (Fig. 22, abajo), debido al miedo que despertaba en las bailarinas realizar cualquier movimiento sobre el tronco y caer al vacío por un paso mal dado. La suspensión de cuerpos en el aire es una imagen recurrente en esta videodanza, y más adelante veremos los referentes visuales que estudiamos para llevar a cabo la grabación de distintos cuerpos en esta posición con sus variaciones de localización.

Fig. 22: Arriba, árbol caído que encontramos de camino al rodaje, abajo toma final con las bailarinas sobre el árbol

Durante las improvisaciones, hubo un movimiento con desplazamiento incluido que se introdujo *in situ* y que resultó muy interesante: la marcha del cuerpo sobre cuatro apoyos, a modo del caminar de

los cuadrúpedos. Siguiendo la idea de lo salvaje antes apuntada, este paso en acción construía una imagen poderosa de las brujas, y rápidamente lo repetimos en diversas localizaciones, grabando tanto el caminar en grupo como el individual (Fig. 23) así como las posiciones fijas sobre cuatro apoyos, sin desplazamiento.

Fig. 23: Cuatro planos diversos en los que se puede ver la marcha del cuerpo sobre cuatro apoyos con y sin desplazamiento

En este sentido, cabe resaltar la disparidad de suelos con los que experimentamos la posición cuadrúpeda, ya sea caminando o en reposo. De piedra, de hierba/césped, de roca de río (con agua), en todos estos enclaves naturales el cuerpo de las brujas recobraba un significado diferente al ir desplazándose sobre cuatro apoyos, y así esta acción se convirtió en secuencia coreográfica por sí misma dentro de la videodanza.

La coreografía escénica (o fragmentos de ella) en espacios exteriores

A continuación destacamos diversos momentos de la videodanza en los que la coreografía escénica se traslada al espacio natural en exteriores sin ninguna adaptación específica por razones del medio. El primer caso que destacaremos es un movimiento de giro sobre un mismo eje que en escena representa un gesto recurrente dentro de una secuencia, pero que en este caso lo convertimos en secuencia *per se*, repitiéndolo una y otra vez en grupo sobre una colina, movimiento que las bailarinas realizaron en un sentido y otro, mientras la cámara realizaba un *zoom* desde otra colina situada a pocos metros del lugar donde danzaban (Fig. 24).

Fig. 24: Momento del giro sobre un mismo eje realizado por el grupo de bailarinas sobre una colina

El siguiente momento (Fig. 25) representa una secuencia completa contenida en la obra escénica, que las bailarinas realizaron en un jardín situado en Pueblo de la Cañada (Jalisco), localidad muy cercana a Rio Caliente.

Fig. 25: Dos tomas distintas de la secuencia en el jardín de Pueblo de la Cañada (Jalisco)

Aquí la secuencia coreográfica se realizó completa, sin ningún cambio respecto de su versión escénica, tan solo destacar que en ese momento llovía insistentemente y eso añadió cierto dramatismo al resultado en cámara. Respecto a la edición desarrollada en post-producción, comentar que es el único momento en la pieza audiovisual en que encontramos la misma secuencia coreográfica a izquierda y derecha de la pantalla, aunque desde distintos puntos de vista. Dado que la secuencia se grabó desde puntos diversos del jardín, la doble pantalla final busca equilibrar en este caso las tomas de suelo con las frontales, y las tomas de grupo con las individuales.

El vuelo del cuerpo en **Brujas**

Fig. 26: A la izquierda, movimiento original de la versión moderna a partir del cual se proponen los movimientos de las bailarinas boca abajo y boca arriba en la videodanza; a la derecha, una toma contenida en la videodanza en posición decúbito prono

Fig. 27: A la izquierda, la obra *Vuelo de brujas* (1797) de Francisco de Goya (fuente: internet); a la derecha, detalle de la misma

Cuando pensé en realizar una obra de videodanza con *La Bruja*, encontré una gran potencialidad en determinados movimientos y secuencias con los que llevar a cabo el traspaso de la escena al fotograma. Uno de los movimientos de la coreografía escénica que generó más posibilidades plásticas en la videodanza fue el de los cuerpos en el suelo, boca abajo, que contiene la propuesta de Gineceo A.C. (Fig. 26). En escena, este movimiento da a entender que las bailarinas están volando aún cuando se encuentran tumbadas en el suelo, y después de revisar todo el material grabado para encontrar

pasos interesantes, este se convirtió en el movimiento clave de muchas de las ideas coreográficas apuntadas en la pieza audiovisual.

La posibilidad principal que resultaba más excitante a partir de este movimiento se resumía en poder hacer volar los cuerpos de las bailarinas, tal y como imaginamos que hacen las brujas en los relatos fantásticos, y que para hacerlo real en escena - no figurado, como ocurre en la coreografía de Gineceo A.C. - resulta más complicado dado que requiere de cables, arneses, poleas y demás artilugios escenográficos con los que realizar la ilusión de la danza aérea (Abad Carlés, 2004).

Fig. 28: Arriba izquierda, "método" de sujeción de las bailarinas sobre la cubierta de la camioneta, arriba derecha espacio trasero de la cabina donde se producía la sujeción de las bailarinas; abajo, resultado a cámara

Para ello, no solo recurrí a los cuentos de hadas para tomar ideas; otro de los aspectos que desarrollé en paralelo al análisis de la coreografía durante esta primera etapa del proyecto fue el de buscar referencias visuales que me ayudaran a construir la obra audiovisual. Se trataba de generar una pieza nueva a partir de la coreografía que diese el salto hacia una narratividad más cinematográfica, compleja y con una fuerte referencialidad visual que enriqueciera el relato dancístico,

> puesto que la clave comunicativa principal es la del lenguaje de la danza, pero donde la clave audiovisual es la que prevalece (encuadre, toma, espacio, movimiento de cámara, cadencia de los planos, ritmo, luz, color, arte…), lo cual genera un reto, y también una dificultad por el sobreesfuerzo de acercamiento a los parámetros del cine por un lado, y la huida de lo que por otro lado se puede convertir en una simple "coreografía filmada". (Andrés Lacasta, 2018, p. 265)

Una de las primeras referencias que revisé fue la serie de pinturas de Francisco de Goya sobre brujas, concretamente la conocida como *Seis asuntos de brujas*. Me interesó especialmente la obra *Vuelo de brujas* (1797) por su referencia al vuelo pero también porque presenta una puesta en escena grupal que me recordaba a los diferentes movimientos en grupo de la coreografía moderna llevada a escena por Gineceo A.C. Lo interesante de esta pintura es la posición de la figura central superior (Fig. 27), en la que observamos a un hombre desnudo en brazos de tres hombres semi-vestidos con faldillas y tocados

en forma de cono, que están tratando de insuflar aire soplando sobre el cuerpo que sujetan (Fig. 27, derecha). La idea del cuerpo flotando, suspendido en el aire y con esa posición entregada a los otros cuerpos en señal de pérdida de los sentidos, marca la composición visual de una parte importante de la video-danza, y en este caso resulta determinante puesto que el personaje boca arriba llevado en volandas influencia directamente la propuesta corporal y visual de diversas escenas.
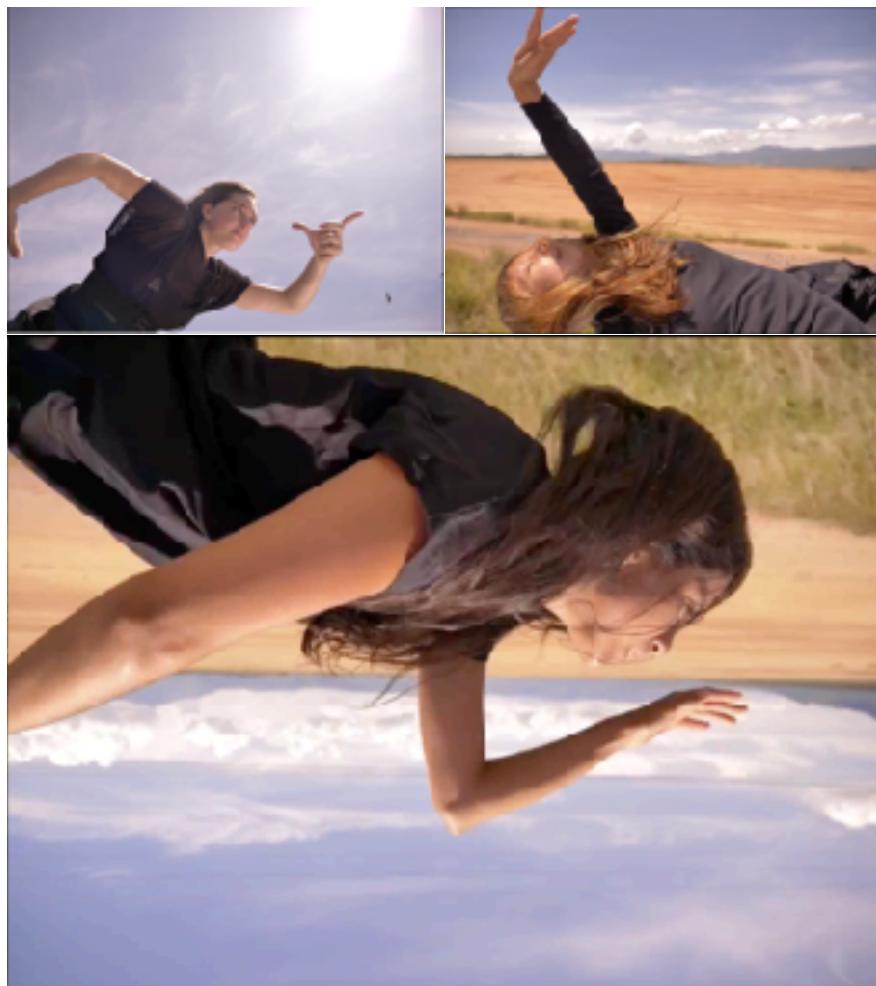

Fig. 29: Arriba a la izquierda, toma del cuerpo boca abajo, y a la izquierda toma del cuerpo boca arriba; abajo, giro de 180º de la toma boca arriba, para dar más sensación de ingravidez

Fig. 30: A la izquierda, fase de contorsión (arco circular), dibujo extraído del estudio clínico de Paul Richer (1885. Fuente: Internet); a la derecha, imagen extraída de la videodanza Brujas (2018)
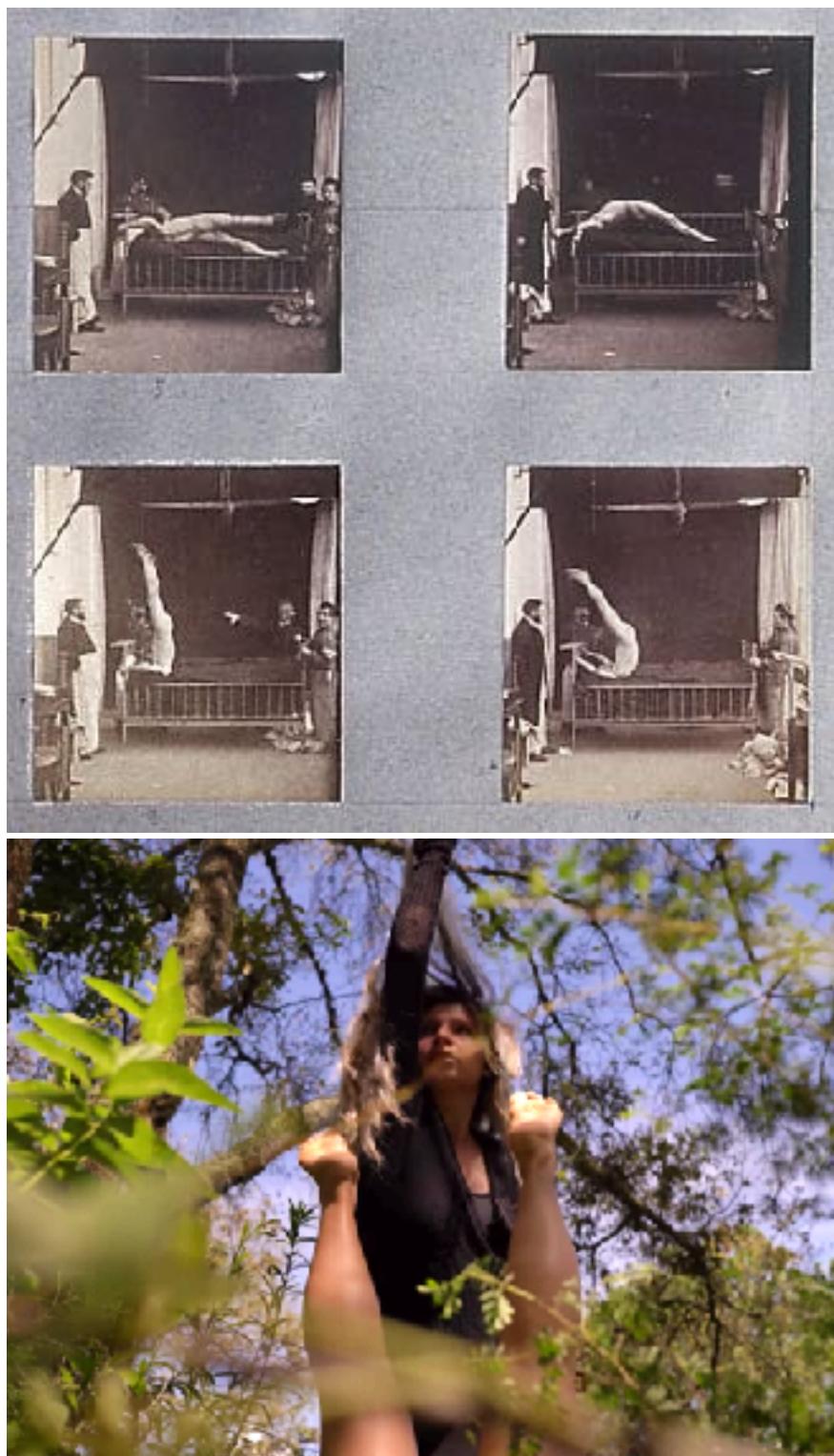
Fig. 31: Arriba, serie fotográfica de Albert Londe, de un paciente diagnosticado de histeria en el hospital La Salpêtrière de París (1885); abajo, composición coreográfica creada en la videodanza *Brujas* a partir de la inversión corporal apuntada en los estudios de Londe

En las tomas realizadas con las bailarinas (Fig. 28) podemos ver cómo sus cuerpos "vuelan" alrededor de un vasto llano cercano al Río Caliente, en Jalisco, imágenes que emulan la posición remarcada del personaje en volandas del cuadro de Goya, aunque aquí se nos pretende hacer creer que están volando de verdad sin ayuda de un grupo de brujas que las sustenten. Esa "trampa" cinética se grabó sobre

una camioneta estilo *pickup* en la que subíamos a las bailarinas de una en una sobre la estructura externa de la parte descubierta que quedaba arriba de la cabina delantera, y sacando medio cuerpo por encima de esta estructura mientras eran sujetadas por una o dos compañeras, realizaban este tipo de gestualidad con los brazos y la parte superior del cuerpo que emulaba el vuelo libre de una bruja (Fig. 28, arriba).

Las tomas boca arriba de las bailarinas voladoras resultaban mucho más difíciles de sostener, por razones obvias de resistencia física, que las realizadas boca abajo, aunque en ambas el cuerpo reposara a la altura de la cadera sobre el borde de la estructura exterior de la camioneta. Por eso hicimos diversas grabaciones en ambos sentidos de la posición (Fig. 29, arriba). Posteriormente en la edición llevada a cabo de las imágenes, también se optó por girar 180 grados algunas de las tomas originales porque nos ofrecían una sensación de ingravidez y extrañeza interesante (Fig. 29, abajo).

El cuerpo en delirio

Fig. 32: Arriba a la izquierda, *Ofelia*, Óleo sobre tela (1852) pintado por John Everett Millais, y arriba a la derecha detalle de este cuadro; abajo, dos momentos en la videodanza en homenaje a esta imagen

Estas posiciones boca abajo y boca arriba de las bailarinas extraídas originalmente de la coreografía moderna nos llevaron a otro tipo de movimiento: en los ejercicios improvisados en el mismo espacio de grabación surgieron otras posiciones que trataban de mostrar el cuerpo de una bruja en su doliente proceso de metamorfosis o conversión física - de lo reposado hacia lo salvaje o mágico - buscando la

gestualidad y la respiración de ciertas imágenes que nos remiten a los estados cercanos a la histeria y a lo epiléptico, como bien nos muestran los estudios clínicos de finales del siglo XIX llevados a cabo por Paul Richer (Fig. 30 izquierda) y la imagen resultante de este referente en la videodanza *Brujas* (Fig. 30, derecha); o el catálogo visual de poses, ataques, gritos, delirios y estados de éxtasis fotografiados por Albert Londe (Schäuble, 2016) entre 1876 y 1880 en el hospital Salpêtrière de Paris (Fig. 31).

Estas imágenes de Londe, en las que vemos como un cuerpo pasa por diferentes estados físicos hasta la inversión completa sobre una cama, nos dio la clave para desarrollar una escena de la videodanza en la que dos bailarinas realizan una posición invertida de la que sale un cuerpo de bruja a modo de alumbramiento por entre las piernas de la bailarina en posición de inversión (Fig. 31, abajo).

Otra de las referencias visuales representadas en esta videodanza, a modo de cuerpo quebrado en posición decúbito supino, nos remite al cuadro de Ofelia pintado por Millais en 1852 (Fig. 32, arriba). John Everett Millais formaba parte del movimiento prerrafaelista, en el cual se encontraban un grupo de pintores y poetas de la Inglaterra de mediados del siglo XIX, y la imagen que retrató de Ofelia, el trágico personaje joven del drama Hamlet de Shakespeare que ensimismada y profundamente afligida cae al agua y termina ahogándose, nos removió tanto que tratamos de localizar distintos escenarios naturales en los que llevar a cabo el *reenactment* para ofrecer una versión de las brujas más melancólica y trágica. Así pues, decidimos rendirle un pequeño homenaje a esta muchacha, prometida del atormentado Hamlet (príncipe de Dinamarca), que perdió la razón cuando este su futuro marido mató a Polonio (padre de Ofelia), y en dos momentos de la videodanza reprodujimos la misma posición de abandono y desolación del cuadro original (Fig. 32, abajo), que aunque no representa en sí un vuelo físico del cuerpo, sí que propone una idea de la mente ida, que no está presente…al fin y al cabo, un vuelo mental como resultado de la desgracia humana.

El cuerpo en suspensión

Por último, cabe destacar otro de los recursos visuales construidos mediante el uso del cuerpo en el espacio que tomé como referente para reproducir en distintos planos de la videodanza: el cuerpo en suspensión. Las imágenes icónicas que me sirvieron de referencia cruzan el tiempo y el espacio, y pertenecen a distintos momentos del arte, desde el mismo Goya llegando a Charles Ray (Fig. 33).

Fig. 33: Izquierda, el aguafuerte *Grande hazaña, ¡con muertos!* (1810 - 1815) de la serie *Los desastres de la guerra* de Francisco de Goya (Museo del Prado. Madrid); derecha, *Plank Piece I–II* (1973) de Charles Ray (fuente: internet)

Tal y como se observa en las imágenes de la Fig. 34, lo importante era recrear la posición del cuerpo en suspenso sobre "suelos" tales como troncos, desde donde sujetarse con las manos dejando caer el peso del cuerpo hacia el suelo, a reposar sobre él a modo de colchón sobre el que desbordaban los miembros o las extremidades, o directamente colgarse a la altura de las caderas para que la imagen final partiese el cuerpo en dos, ofreciendo una sensación de gravedad y ligereza al mismo tiempo. El objetivo era conseguir una imagen entre la "gravidez demoníaca" a la cual se refería Susan Sontag (1996, p.6), en la que el peso del cuerpo está íntimamente ligado al paso del tiempo y la enfermedad - y por eso el cuerpo busca su alivio deshaciéndose de su materia mediante la ingravidez - y el cuerpo "liminal" que define Pedro A. Cruz Sánchez:

> Como bien es conocido, la "liminalidad" es la cualidad de aquellas personas situadas entre los diferentes lugares asignados por la costumbre, la ley y la liturgia. Su étimo no es otro que el latín *limen*, que significa literalmente "umbral" y que, por tanto, alude a toda aquella persona que habita espacios no localizados "ni dentro ni fuera de la casa" esto es, de la sociedad (…) Un cuerpo liminal es exactamente un cuerpo que *pliega* el espacio a fin de acotar una distancia entre dos puntos, insalvable *a priori* por la lógica. Su función de *in-betweener* le viene dada por la capacidad para doblar la topografía racional de la realidad y generar así superposiciones de significados todavía no codificadas. (Cruz Sánchez, 2013, p. 86)
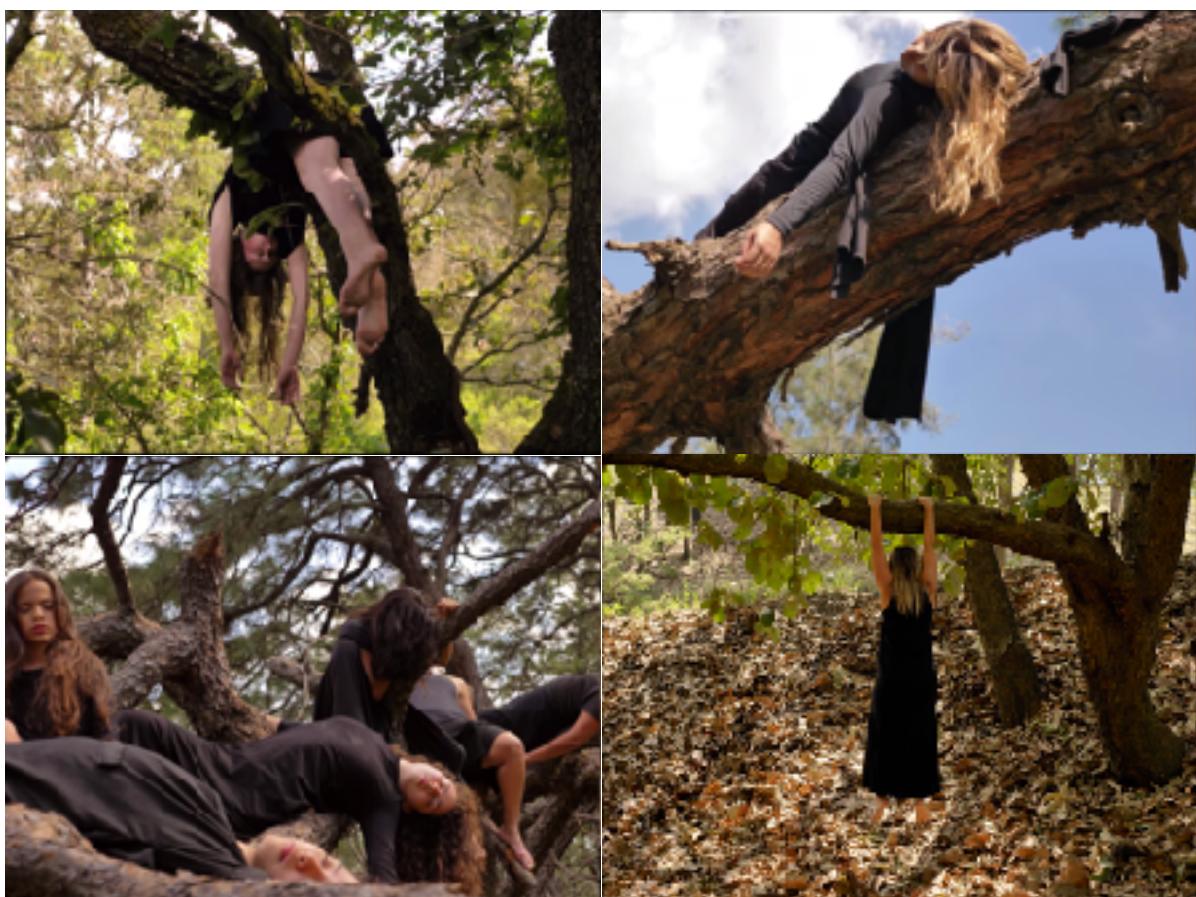
Fig. 34: Diversas tomas de cuerpos suspendidos, realizadas en distintas localizaciones de rodaje en Rio Caliente, Zapopan (Jalisco)

La ingravidez, una de las cualidades innatas de las brujas que vuelan sobre escobas (aunque también de los ángeles), se convierte en este sentido en una imagen con un fuerte motivo terapéutico a la vez que resiliente; todo el peso que denotaban las brujas desplazándose sobre cuatro apoyos en otros

momentos de la videodanza, aquí se destruye en pos de un cuerpo que lucha por desaparecer, por "diluirse en lo ilimitado de la luz/oscuridad" (ídem, p. 93). Y precisamente esa constante paradoja de sentidos apuntada a lo largo de la pieza, entre la tradición y la modernidad, entre lo escénico y lo fílmico, entre el espacio interior y el exterior, entre el peso de lo oscuro, lo salvaje (aquí denotando un sentido negativo) y la ausencia de gravedad de una figura como la bruja etérea que vuela, me llevó a pensar que tal vez esta videodanza necesitaba de un trabajo de postproducción que registrara esta confrontación de significados a través de una propuesta en multipantalla.

Post-producción: la pantalla partida como recurso expresivo y rítmico añadido

La pantalla partida presente en toda la pieza constituye el efecto de post-producción clave en la videodanza de *Brujas*. Con un afán por mostrar el máximo de imágenes rodadas estando sujetos a una duración muy concreta de la música que ejercía como banda sonora de la pieza, pero también atendiendo a las múltiples dualidades temáticas planteadas en este trabajo, cabe decir que la pantalla partida no fue un recurso preexistente en la idea original del rodaje ni en el proceso mismo de grabación llevado a cabo.

Fig. 35: Cambio de planos simultáneo que entra en la primera estrofa cantada tras la introducción musical (minuto 0:25)

Una vez revisado todo el material grabado, realicé diversas pruebas para comprobar que la dinámica de la edición en pantalla partida (*split-screen*) le sumaba un sentido del ritmo y un fuerte sentido musical añadido al material en bruto grabado, y el posterior trabajo con el color y la luz siguiendo esta estrategia de contrastes entre pantallas proporcionaba todo junto una fuerte plasticidad en el ejercicio de yuxtaposición de momentos y espacios. Fue aquí cuando decidí que la videodanza debía ser compuesta en su totalidad usando el montaje espacial (Manovich, 2001, p. 269), una alternativa a la tradición del montaje temporal cinematográfico que reemplaza el modo secuencial tradicional por uno donde prima la construcción de una lógica de presentación de imágenes juntas, en las que el cineasta debe decidir cuando aparecen y qué tipo de relaciones establecen entre sí.

Los cambios de plano se realizaron sin atender escrupulosamente a la estructura de la música, aunque en el paso de la introducción musical a la parte vocal o primera estrofa (Fig. 35), así como en el paso de las estrofas a los interludios instrumentales y de vuelta a las estrofas, sí que hay una constante, en la que ambos lados de la pantalla partida siempre cambian de plano con el primer golpe fuerte de la música.

El resultado final ofrece un juego de contrastes, de diálogo entre imágenes, que a mi modo de ver aporta riqueza a la lectura final de la pieza, y que torna a su fin justo en los últimos compases musicales donde todas las brujas mantienen una postura erguida y mirando a lo lejos en lo alto de una colina, como una despedida, momento justo en el que la videodanza abandona la pantalla partida para ofrecer un único plano en pantalla, mediante un *travelling* circular, de todo el grupo (Fig. 37).

Fig. 36: Arriba, cambio de planos simultáneo que entra en la parte fuerte del primer compás del primer interludio musical, tras la primera parte cantada (minuto 1:36); abajo, cambio de planos simultáneo cuando pasamos del interludio a la segunda parte cantada de la canción (minuto 1:53)

Fig. 37: Travelling circular, que cierra la videodanza (a partir del minuto 4:19)

Conclusiones

La videodanza *Brujas* toma como pretexto la coreografía realizada para escena por Gineceo Danza A.C. y selecciona partes de esta para adaptarla y que sea bailable en un entorno natural. En la fase inicial del trabajo, y tras analizar la coreografía escénica, entendí que no toda la pieza preexistente podía ser trasladada a un espacio exterior por lógica coreográfica, pero además porque no tenía sentido repetirla entera en un contexto como el bosque de Rio Caliente en Zapopan (Jalisco) debido a la convención teatral con que estaba concebida (cuarta pared) en la que la coreografía perdía automáticamente eficacia en este nuevo espacio y donde el contexto de naturaleza salvaje, con tanto estímulo sensitivo, le restaba interés; y también por la propia geomorfología del lugar, de gran belleza y diversidad biológico-forestal que nada más pisarlo invitaba a descubrir la adaptabilidad de unos movimientos en favor de otros y ofrecía múltiples oportunidades plásticas de movimiento. La pieza audiovisual por lo tanto parte de una coreografía preexistente que se abandona durante el proceso de rodaje para dar paso a una danza hecha casi por completo para la pantalla, con pequeños apuntes de la coreografía original adaptados al entorno.

En este ejercicio descubrimos la importancia del suelo como espacio dancístico, dado que las diferentes localizaciones en las que rodamos posibilitaron secuencias coreográficas de sumo interés que se acoplaban perfectamente a la idea de *Brujas*. Encontramos suelos de barro, de hierba, de hojarasca o de agua volcánica que permitieron desarrollar movimientos improvisados a partir de las imágenes artísticas planteadas o derivados de la coreografía escénica previa, suelos que resultaron fundamentales para reescribir la coreografía para la pantalla. En la videodanza final, las secuencias de suelo ganan en presencialidad con respecto a la coreografía escénica - que apenas lo usa - por su potencial plástico y expresivo del cuerpo.

La aplicación de la pantalla partida en post-producción aporta más sentido rítmico a la pieza, hace bailar las imágenes mas allá del *tempo di valse* aportado por la música, y enfatiza el sentido de los planos-imagen por contraste.

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El cuerpo en el lugar

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Abstract

"El cuerpo en el lugar" es la línea que conecta los tres últimos trabajos de videodanza realizados en colaboración con Kepa Landa y Conchi del Río. En esta investigación, realizada durante los últimos cuatro años, se confronta el cuerpo a distintos espacios a través de la improvisación, provocando una reflexión en torno a los conceptos de estructura, habitabilidad, percepción, tiempo y memoria. Observamos el papel del cuerpo (y sus crisis) en la ciudad, en el paisaje, seguimos a Pallasmaa (2006) en su propuesta de percepción háptica, que nos envuelve en la experiencia de la urbe. Las prácticas de embodiment y corporeality (Preston-Dunlop y Sanchez-Coldberg) aparecen como un canal bidireccional en el diálogo entre el cuerpo y el espacio trasladando significados y realidades del individuo al lugar y viceversa. El tiempo y la memoria aparecen como elementos fundamentales del habitar (Pallasmaa, 2006), modulando la percepción, significación y construcción de los lugares. Nos situamos en el territorio permeable que existe entre la investigación académica tradicional y la práctica artística (Boyce-Tillman, 2012), generando un conocimiento transdisciplinar construido desde la praxis. Durante el texto explicaremos a través de cuatro proyectos, cómo ha ido evolucionando el rol del video en este trabajo, pasando de ser soporte documental a intervenir en el discurso de la pieza.

Biography

Desde la práctica artística de la danza investigo los estados del cuerpo en múltiples paisajes físicos y conceptuales. La percepción, la permeabilidad de los límites, la memoria del cuerpo y la poética de la imagen aparecen como temas centrales que abordo en resonancia con territorios como la arquitectura, la fotografía, la filosofía y últimamente, el cine. Formada en danza contemporánea en el RCPD de Madrid y doctora por la UPM con la tesis "Análisis del espacio en la danza teatral", mantengo un entrenamiento permanente en diferentes lenguajes de movimiento, acercándome últimamente a los universos creativos de Jurij Konjar, Mónica Valenciano, María Muñoz y recientemente – este viaje apenas ha comenzado – Jonathan Martineau. El conocimiento de estos autores prácticos se integra en el cuerpo-archivo con la investigación académica, fomentando la ida y vuelta constante de la investigación performativa.

Como docente imparto talleres y conferencias en distintas instituciones como la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, el Espacio Fundación Telefónica, la New York University - Madrid. Los últimos años he estado como profesora especialista en el el Conservatorio Superior de Danza de Madrid y como tutora del programa de emprendimiento de la Escuela de Música Reina Sofía. En paralelo comparto los resultados de la investigación en curso en congresos como el celebrado en la School of Performing Arts de Malta la primavera de 2018 o en la UNED - Centro de Danza Canal

en junio de 2019 y festivales como el Stokholm Dancefilm Festival o el Videoskin International Filmfestival de Canadá.

Introducción

En este texto explicaré a través de cuatro proyectos de danza realizados con video, cómo va cambiando la función de este soporte durante el proyecto de investigación "El cuerpo en el lugar", que he desarrollado durante los últimos cuatro años. El interés por estudiar el espacio surge durante mi formación de danza contemporánea en el conservatorio de Madrid, por la observación de la relevancia en la toma de decisiones "arquitectónicas" durante los procesos de creación en los que participé como intérprete, en coreografías de Pedro Berdayes, José Reches e Itzik Galili. Surge, por tanto, de la práctica artística y se formaliza años después en la tesis doctoral "Análisis del espacio en danza teatral". Tras este primer enfoque teórico surge la necesidad de repensarlo, abordándolo ésta vez desde el cuerpo, desde la acción, desde la práctica artística. Los videos *VD01*, *Habitar* y *Land*, son formalizaciones de tres momentos concretos de esta investigación, rodados en espacios de características muy diferentes: uno arquitectónico, un pueblo deshabitado y un paisaje desértico. La investigación parte del movimiento apoyándose en diferentes técnicas de improvisación de danza contemporánea. El terreno de la improvisación me interesa como sistema que permite por su apertura la inclusión de áreas de conocimiento, identidades y escenarios distintos, y que genera la suficiente cohesión como para dirigirnos hacia un objetivo concreto (Albright, 2013). El video en este contexto se convierte en algo necesario, tanto para la documentación del proceso, como para su análisis - dado que la investigadora e intérprete es la misma persona - y para poder articular un posterior ciclo de debates y exposiciones en los que se comparte y discute sobre el material, que se proyecta durante las conferencias y talleres. Poco a poco este soporte se convierte en una amplificación del espacio escénico y un verdadero estímulo para mí como *mover*.

Los resultados de esta investigación no tienen vocación de ser generalizables, sino de activar el conocimiento corporeizado y generar, desde la experiencia personal e individual, debate, pensamiento y acción en torno a conceptos como habitar, memoria y estructura.[1]

Amphibia (2016). El precedente

Este proyecto es la primera experiencia de "bailar la tesis". Se plantea como una investigación que parte de la acción para llegar a las preguntas. Viajar. Explorar una ciudad. Visitar paisajes urbanos, naturales, fronterizos. Poner el cuerpo a disposición del juego y la interacción. Permitir el error como parte indispensable del arte procesual y de la investigación.

Los interrogantes surgen desde la primera práctica: ¿cuánto nos afecta un paisaje? ¿cómo percibimos el lugar en el que estamos? ¿cuándo somos ajenos a él? ¿cómo nos influye la presencia del otro y de la cámara? ¿cómo gestionamos la incertidumbre? ¿cómo es nuestra toma de decisiones? ¿hasta dónde sostenemos una idea?

Amphibia parte del deseo, la acción y la contemplación del paisaje.

Las ideas y preguntas surgen de la práctica artística.

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[1] Los enlaces a los videos permanecerán con clave mientras se estén difundiendo en festivales, pues es requisito de alguno de ellos. Si alguien está interesado en consultarlos por favor contactemos sin compromiso, hablemos, organizamos.

Como en coreografía, la formalización del proyecto emerge del proceso de investigación (Green y Stinston, 1999, p. 95).

El cuerpo como lugar de pensamiento. El paisaje como interlocutor.

El viaje y el movimiento como terreno de juego.

La cámara en esta primera aproximación hace de testigo. Colocada en un punto fijo y con un encuadre amplio, no condiciona la improvisación sino que funciona como archivo, posibilitando el visionado del material posteriormente y el análisis de la interacción espontánea del cuerpo con la linea del horizonte en un salto, como podemos ver en la figura 1.

Fig. 1: Dos imágenes del proyecto *Amphibia* (2016) en las que la imagen del cuerpo interactúa con la línea del horizonte, provocando un juego de escalas -izquierda- o cierra la línea de huellas que lo ha llevado allí -derecha-.

VD01 (2018), con Kepa Landa

VD01 es una colaboración con el realizador audiovisual Kepa Landa, cuya propuesta parte de la elección de un espacio singular y un concepto. El tema central de este trabajo es la imposibilidad de conclusión en la búsqueda del conocimiento, en la práctica del arte, el cuestionamiento de la perfección o el híper-rendimiento como finalidad. Trabajamos continuamente desde la fórmula de exposición y variación sin llegar a una conclusión definitiva, integrando el error, el accidente, como parte esencial del proceso creativo. Este planteamiento responde a una visión fragmentaria de la realidad, construida por la suma de múltiples puntos de vista. La repetición emerge como estructura compositiva que alude al proceso de búsqueda, de avance.

Arrancamos en una escalera de materiales industriales. Realizamos una primera lectura de la arquitectura desnuda, sin cuerpo, desde las cámaras, observando los puntos de vista que éstas nos facilitan. Esta fase nos permitió observar la fuerza de la geometría, el interés de los planos cortos, la plasticidad de los materiales y las posibilidades que estos espacios generaban para desarrollar un diálogo entre el cuerpo y el espacio, en el que la arquitectura ocurra mientras la mirada circula (Le Corbusier en Llorente, 2016. p. 69).

En una segunda fase trabajamos desde la improvisación dejando que el movimiento surja desde el bagaje de mi formación en reacción al espacio, desborde y vuelva a cada uno de aquellos encuadres que se habían estudiado previamente. En los visionados del material de las primeras sesiones aparecen una serie de binomios que se van instalando como territorios a explorar desde el movimiento: estructura arquitectónica/ orgánica, composición cartesiana/ desbordamiento visceral, marco/ discurso.

El uso permanente de las tres cámaras sobre el espacio arquitectónico propicia la creación de un formato coreográfico específico. El solapamiento de los tres micro y macro-escenarios en los que se trabaja de manera simultánea provoca en el intérprete que improvisa la atención a la fragmentación y la multicentricidad del cuerpo y el movimiento (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Fotogramas de *VD01* en el que se solapan tres encuadres con diferentes ángulos y zooms generando un escenario expandido para la improvisación.

El espacio arquitectónico seleccionado confronta a una estructura rígida, cartesiana y modular reaccionando con distintas estrategias de adaptación y rechazo. La percepción del espacio es mayoritariamente visual, el entorno es estable y la interacción con los materiales está pensada para una acción funcional y veloz.

Los tópicos de discusión que emergen del trabajo (posteriores a la realización) son: dicotomía, geometría-organicidad, estructura, fragmentación.

El proceso de creación parte del concepto, esta vez, con un planteamiento verbal y una visita al espacio. En segundo lugar entran las cámaras a realizar un estudio de los posibles encuadres desde la fotografía. Esto provoca que cuando entra el cuerpo el proceso de trabajo ya ha comenzado y hay cuestiones, tanto conceptuales como a nivel de producción, que ya condicionan la improvisación además del espacio en cuestión. En ese momento, comenzamos a grabar varias sesiones de improvisación, se instalan algunos materiales, temas, herramientas, que permanecen abiertos, pero no se llega a la composición. Alternamos estas sesiones con el visionado del material, trabajo en sala sobre el mismo y la construcción de temas de movimiento. Continuamos con la sesión de grabación con vestuario definitivo, control de la luz exterior, etc. y el montaje del video por Kepa Landa que plantea el esquema de la imagen 3, similar a la pregunta sin respuesta de Ives. Comienza por la selección y acumulación de fragmentos de video e incorpora el sonido de Richard Sudney, seleccionado por responder a las ideas minimalistas de repetición, sencillez y atmósfera industrial que se planteó en el comienzo del trabajo.
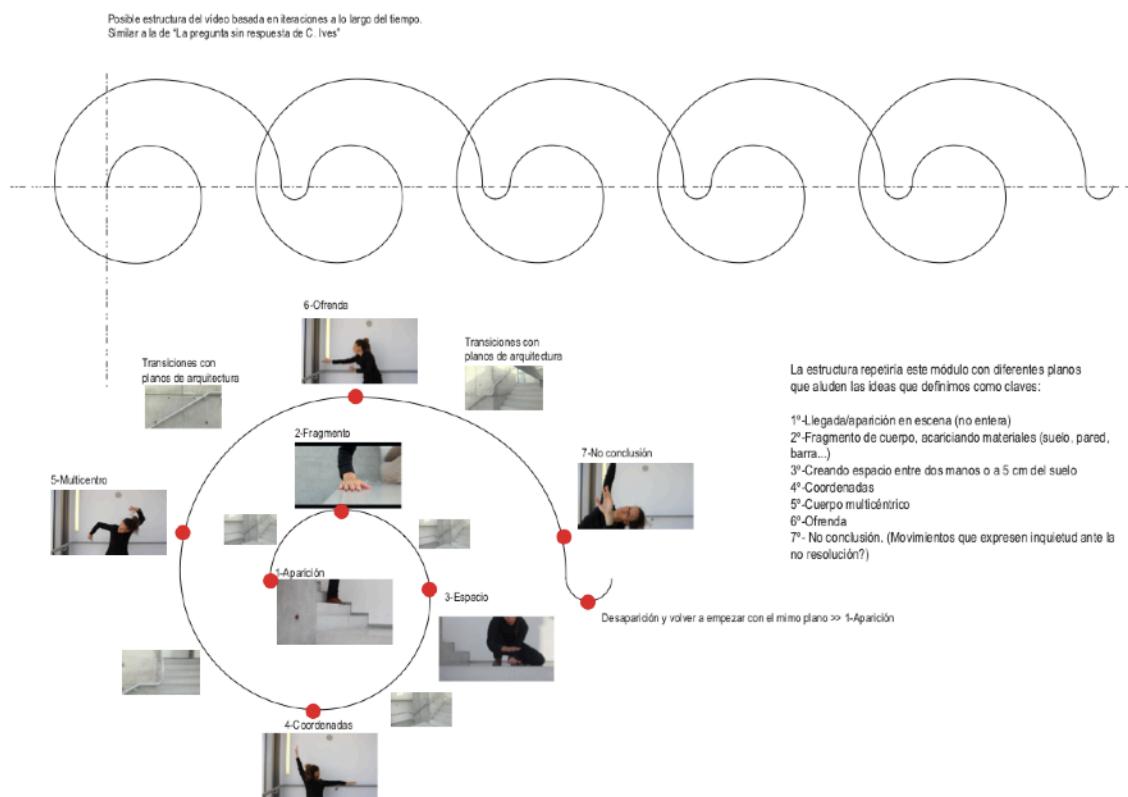
Fig 3. Estructura de edición del video con un esquema de reiteración no conclusiva basada en la pregunta sin respuesta de Ives. Idea e imagen: Kepa Landa.

Habitar (2018), con Conchi del Río

Esta obra ha sido grabada en un pueblo abandonado de la sierra de Ayllón, La Vereda, perteneciente a la arquitectura negra, patrimonio cultural de la Comunidad Europea. Aquí la construcción urbana tiene una escala más humana y el territorio es más cambiante, por lo que el estado del cuerpo es también diferente, más alerta, menos visual y más táctil. El planteamiento inicial es recorrer el espacio, cámara e intérprete juntas, seleccionar varias localizaciones y comenzar a improvisar sin plan previo, durante tres días seguidos, analizando las imágenes al final del día. La edición del material se realiza posteriormente, encontrando la estructura narrativa de la pieza a partir de lo que teníamos grabado. El sonido ambiente se mantiene y amplifica en algunos momentos, dando relevancia a la interacción del cuerpo con los materiales y se incorporan otras dos capas de sonido de las que hablaremos después. El trabajo de video, desde la grabación hasta la edición final es de Conchi del Río.

Notas al visionado, montaje y sonido

El video abre con la presentación del espacio desde los materiales en planos detalle que ponen de relevancia las texturas de la madera y la piedra, amplificando su tamaño y presencia (Fig. 4). En segundo lugar aparece el cuerpo en interacción directa con éstos, mezclando el sonido real de las acciones -aumentado en postproducción-, con el paisaje sonoro y un tema de Melbourne Stimuline que se introduce en el video de manera fragmentada, alterado. La edición se realiza en un ajuste mutuo de imagen y sonido en torno a un ritmo de tensión creciente generada por cambios constantes en ambos. Recogemos movimientos de cámara (utilizando cámara en mano) y desenfoques que

interesa mantener junto a imágenes más delicadas, trasladando la idea de mirada poética lejos del marco de lo correcto/incorrecto en favor de la plasticidad y la observación de una realidad que ofrece múltiples capas, enfoques y puntos de vista que coexisten.

Fig. 4: Presentación de los materiales y su textura en la apertura de *Habitar* (2018)

Fig. 5: Momento del videodanza en el que el cuerpo busca la máxima estabilidad para contrarrestar el desequilibrio que provocan los troncos sueltos bajo los pies.

El sonido se trabaja en varias capas. Una dirige la atención al espacio natural en el que nos encontramos, al contacto del cuerpo con los materiales y al ruido de la acción. Otra genera tensión, fragmentando y recomponiendo el trabajo del músico francés. En el tema original el sonido aparece en varios planos generando profundidad y distancia, viaja de derecha a izquierda, lo que provoca una especialización que nos interesa. En la recomposición mantenemos esto, y multiplicamos las capas superponiendo fragmentos del tema sobre sí mismo, jugando con la saturación y el vaciado para crear la estructura del video, que construye la misma sensación desde la imagen. La composición subraya la inestabilidad que vive el cuerpo que improvisa en un terreno desconocido y cambiante (Fig. 5) y que por tanto busca el equilibrio.

A mitad de video, una pausa: negro y silencio. Una base electrónica grave que recuerda al latido aparece con la imagen del cuerpo estático tumbado sobre la piedra llevando al espectador a la relación orgánica de materia viva e inerte que se acentúa en la permanencia. (Fig. 5). Se acentúa la sensación con un plano que recorre el cuerpo con un plano corto.
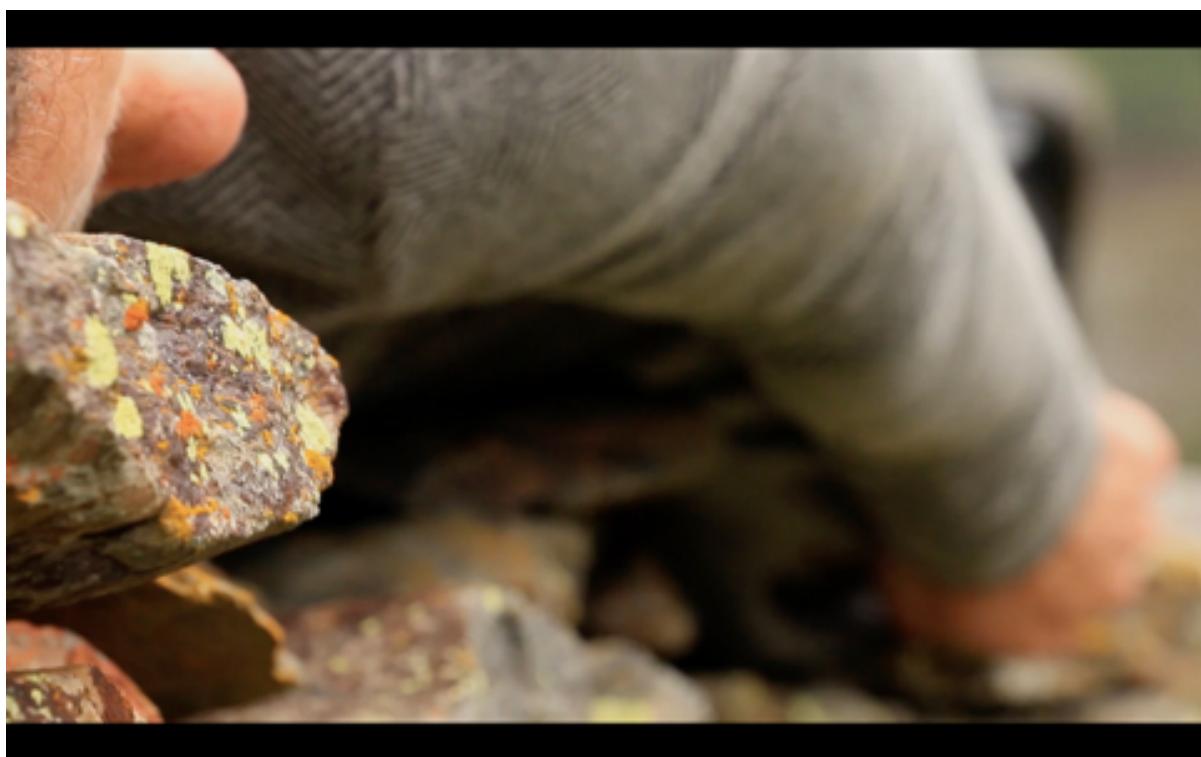
Fig 6. Plano corto que pone de relevancia la relación del cuerpo y los materiales.

En la tercera escena conviven todos los materiales previos, solapando las ideas de conflicto y permanencia que conviven en el concepto "habitar".

En este trabajo lo previsible, lo comprensible desde la óptica y la lógica geométrica que aparecían en *VD01*, desaparecen. Se activa un sistema perceptivo más global, menos focalizado, desplazando parte de la atención de la producción del movimiento y las sensaciones cinestésicas desvinculadas del entorno que pueden darse cuando éste es neutro y perfectamente acondicionado para la danza. La ciudad derruida y deshabitada es un lugar que ya no cumple su función, que no es fácil de leer y en el que la interacción se apoya en un terreno de incertidumbre. Esto me sitúa en un estado de consciencia y percepción más dirigidas a la relación física del cuerpo y su entorno. Llegamos así al cuestionamiento que hacen distintos autores de los modos de habitar en las ciudades contemporáneas

invadidas de velocidad y funcionalidad. "La ciudad contemporánea es la ciudad del ojo. Sus movimientos rápidos y mecanizados nos alejan de un contacto corporal e íntimo con la ciudad". (Pallasmaa, 2006, p. 47)

Los conceptos que surgen de este trabajo y que se desarrollan y conceptualizan a partir del material gráfico son: habitar, ciudad, crisis, escala, tiempo y permanencia. Sobre ellos se han desarrollado los artículos y conferencias relativos al tríptico de estos tres videos.[2]

Land (2018), con Conchi del Río

Rodado en las dunas de Bolonia, Cádiz, donde la fluidez y plasticidad de la arena hacen que la obra se distancie más de un trabajo escénico, pues involucra el uso de un suelo reactivo, un medio que condiciona el movimiento (Payri y Arnal, 2016). Esto, sumado al constante cambio del entorno, hacen que la obra funcione como contrapunto a los otros dos trabajos.
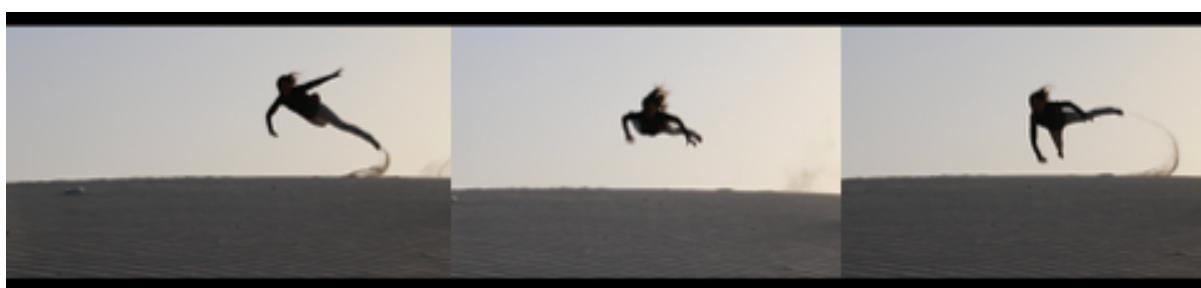
Fig. 7: Secuencia de *Land* en el que se ve el arrastre de la arena en el impulso y la posibilidad de riesgo que ofrece por otro lado.

El proceso de trabajo fue muy similar al anterior, con la diferencia de que el espacio cambiaba constantemente durante el rodaje, no pudiendo esperar nada de un día para otro en cuanto a texturas, volúmenes y demás elementos del entorno. El viento y el sol hicieron la situación bastante extrema, lo que se unía al cansancio de desplazarse en arena por lo que el tema, *Land* (tierra/aterrizaje), surgió de manera inevitable en cuanto comenzamos a desplazarnos por las dunas, así como la interacción mutua: el cuerpo modifica el entorno (Fig. 7) y la arena condiciona completamente el movimiento. Podemos decir que la estructura rígida que encontrábamos en *VD01*, y la inestabilidad de *Habitar,* aquí quedan diluidas en un soporte plástico que reacciona al movimiento, estable -absorbe impactos y desequilibrios-, en ocasiones frustrante al amortiguar impulsos y ralentizar saltos y desplazamientos, sin embargo permite entradas al suelo con más riesgo.

Notas al visionado, montaje y sonido

Como en el trabajo anterior, diariamente veíamos las imágenes y el material se fue organizando en las categorías de subida, desplazamiento (Fig. 8), pausa y bajada (Fig. 9), estructura que tomamos al final convirtiendo el video en una continua y densa escalada hacia un descanso que acaba en un aterrizaje.

El sonido vuelve a trabajar con la imagen como en *Habitar*, articulándose mutuamente y trabajando ambos en favor de la estructura dramatúrgica, generando tensión, fricción y esfuerzo en la subida y dejando que la bajada se deslice con suavidad. En este caso se mezclan el sonido ambiente que es fundamentalmente viento, con un tema de Jose Luis Carles, compositor y ecólogo que trabaja habitualmente con paisaje sonoro.

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[2] Se pueden consultar los textos en http://www.martabotana.com/publicaciones/

Fig. 8: Ejemplo de materiales de desplazamiento.

Fig. 9: Ejemplo de materiales de caída.

Los conceptos que surgen de este trabajo y que se desarrollan y conceptualizan a partir del material gráfico son: Caída, flujo, memoria, entorno líquido, hapticidad.

Otros formatos que explora esta investigación

El cuerpo en el lugar como proyecto de investigación ha llegado a una fase en la que abrimos la participación a otra escala. Actualmente, trabajamos con grupos grandes en sesiones de improvisación y reflexión sobre los conceptos clave que nos interesan y atendemos a las relaciones, no sólo del cuerpo con el espacio, sino también del cuerpo con otros cuerpos. Tratamos de estimular el pensamiento colectivo, la cognición distribuida hacia los conceptos que nos interesa abordar. Así surgen los talleres cuerpo-ciudad, en los que tomamos la sala de ensayo como laboratorio y la ciudad como territorio de experimentación, lugar de lenguajes, texturas y corporalidades múltiples. El taller se adapta al colectivo con el que se trabaja. Por ejemplo, con los estudiantes del máster de Estudios Culturales de la New York University - Madrid nos acercamos al estudio de la gentrificación con una deriva por Lavapiés y una conferencia y práctica de improvisación en el campus.

Fig. 10: Taller *Lapso* en el Congreso de Filosofía de la Danza, Centro Canal, UNED, UCM, CSIC.

Surge así *Lapso* (Fig. 10), estrenado en el Centro de Danza Canal el pasado junio de 2019. *Lapso* es un taller de improvisación donde ponemos el foco fuera del cuerpo y la acción, en los paisajes intermedios, en lo relacional. La incorporación de conceptos del cine como el tiempo fílmico y herramientas como la elipsis, el fuera de campo o el montaje sirven para cuestionar la construcción de la mirada funcional cotidiana y darán paso a la subjetivación del suceder. El participante -o *mover*- participa en esta experiencia con un cuerpo disponible donde la improvisación será el marco en el que podamos visitar distintos posicionamientos y sumarnos en líneas de investigación comunes. El *mover* acciona desde su realidad y reacciona a la realidad del entorno. Activamos la presencia de cuerpos comprometidos (Albright, 2013), aquellos en los que la cultura y la identidad somática toman cuerpo en la propia acción. Lapso guía al participante por estos territorios a través de pautas de experimentación físicas abordables, desde las acciones sencillas de caminar, detenerse y observar, pudiendo desbordarse y ramificarse en movimientos más complejos. Incorporamos el error (lapsus) como ese bienvenido accidente que desestabiliza por un instante la funcionalidad, la productividad y el control, permitiendo emerger lo espontáneo.

Este tipo de investigación es particularmente interesante porque nos permite formalizar el trabajo de forma que se pueda compartir en ámbito artístico -videodanza, festivales- y académico -talleres, conferencias- trabajando en el enlace de ambas esferas, estimulando la generación de conocimiento desde la práctica artística de la danza.

Agradecimientos

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Landa, Kepa (Dirección) y Botana, Marta (Coreografía) (2018) *VD01* [Videodanza]. Madrid. 9min58. https://vimeo.com/282179163

Videodanza como herramienta pedagógica: algunos casos de su aplicación en el Aula de las Artes de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

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Abstract

La misión del Aula de las Artes de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid es acercar el arte a diferentes colectivos de la comunidad educativa y social. Uno de los vehículos empleados para ello es la videocreación y la videodanza, a través de las cuales se facilitan procesos creativos colectivos destinados al desarrollo comunitario y educativo. En este artículo se presentan algunos casos de aplicación y su metodología, para ilustrar distintas posibilidades del empleo de la videodanza y de la labor del realizador/a-coreógrafo/a en el ámbito educativo.

En particular, dado el ámbito de aplicación concreto de estos ejemplos, el artículo se centra en la posibilidad de emplear la videodanza para concretar determinados contenidos de divulgación científica, así como en el espacio de exploración híbrida entre la investigación académica y la creación artística.

Los casos presentados no tienen pretensión de configurar un manual de buenas prácticas, tan sólo son un pequeño corpus de experiencias de aplicación que recorren el trabajo de un videocreador y docente, Alfredo Miralles, a lo largo de cinco años (2014-2019) en proyectos educativos de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

Biography

Alfredo Miralles (Madrid, 1987) es gestor cultural, docente y creador. Su trabajo en producción de artes escénicas aúna sus tres trayectorias profesionales: la danza (es bailarín, coreógrafo y crítico de danza), la gestión de proyectos (es licenciado en Administración y Dirección de Empresas) y la docencia (actualmente cursando el Máster de Innovación Educativa).

Trabaja desde el año 2009 en el Aula de las Artes de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M), donde crea y dirige la Plataforma de Arte y Ciencia, destinada a la creación de espacios de diálogo interdisciplinar que incluyen la danza, la tecnología y el cine, entre otras.

Incorpora la videocreación en los procesos pedagógicos en los que participa en la universidad. En este contexto ha puesto en marcha un documental sobre danza site-specific - Post Nubila (Primer premio en la Bienal de Arte Contemporáneo Bacos San Miguel, finalista en Fiver Festival, proyecciones en Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, México e India) - o coreografiado el largometraje internacional You Are Mythical (Premio del público en el Art Film Festival de Los Ángeles, premio al mejor largometraje internacional en el Borobudur Film Festival de Indonesia, proyecciones en Ecuador, Grecia, India y Jordania).

También realiza microcreaciones como forma de vehicular contenidos dentro de los talleres que imparte a adolescentes y en su labor de divulgación científica.

Introducción y contexto[1]

El Aula de las Artes de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid tiene entre sus objetivos principales el acercamiento de las artes a los estudiantes universitarios y pre-universitarios, como forma de desarrollo integral de las personas y la comunidad. Esta concepción holística de los proyectos educativos explica la existencia de un servicio dedicado al arte en una universidad que no cuenta con una Facultad específica de Bellas Artes, a la vez que constituye un espacio transversal que potencialmente incorpore el arte en todos los demás estratos de la institución educativa superior. Por otro lado, la existencia del Aula de las Artes justifica la presencia de un equipo de artistas y gestores culturales impulsando proyectos de innovación educativa a través de las artes en la universidad.

Desde esa posición de servicio transversal surge la posibilidad de emplear el arte y la videodanza a favor de los objetivos generales de la universidad. Entre estos objetivos se encuentran:

- La divulgación científica y la transferencia del conocimiento a la sociedad.
- El trabajo con el territorio: la población local cercana geográficamente a los campus de la universidad, con especial atención a los adolescentes.
- La cohesión social y el desarrollo sostenible.
- La internacionalización.

El Aula de las Artes hace suyos estos objetivos bajo lo que denomina el proyecto "IN": innovación educativa, interdisciplinariedad, inclusión social e internacionalización. Este artículo recorrerá algunas videocreaciones que tienen como meta la consecución de uno o varios de estos objetivos.

El propósito es ilustrar la figura del videocreador (realizador, coreógrafo) como agente educativo, y los procesos creativos de videodanza como vertebradores de contenidos y de divulgación de conocimientos. Este texto no pretende servir como una metodología probada o un manual de buenas prácticas, sino como una serie de experiencias prácticas del trabajo de un creador - Alfredo Miralles, que escribe estas líneas - en el terreno de la videodanza, en el contexto educativo concreto de esta universidad entre los años 2014 y 2019.

Dancing in the rain

Dancing in the rain (Miralles, 2015) es un videodanza de 1 minuto de duración producido junto al IES Julio Verne de Leganés.

Se trata de una videocreación generada como respuesta a la convocatoria del Festival de Videodanza de Bourgogne (Francia), que promovía en su edición del 2015 un homenaje al cine clásico con el objetivo de recuperar y dar a conocer títulos de la historia del cine a los nuevos públicos. Constituye una manera práctica de trabajar la alfabetización audiovisual e introducir a los estudiantes el interés en el cine más allá de las películas de gran distribución para reconocer el género cinematográfico con un componente diferente del entretenimiento.

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[1] Una presentación de estos contenidos se encuentra en la conferencia dada en el Encontre Internacional de Videodansa i Videoperformance, Valencia 2019. https://videodance.blogs.upv.es/2019-eivv/

Fig.1: recorte de un frame del videominuto *Dancing in the rain* (Miralles, 2016)

Fue también una manera de introducir por primera vez la videodanza dentro de este centro educativo de Leganés. Un oportunidad para acercar la danza y el trabajo con el cuerpo a los adolescentes, cuyo sistema educativo obliga a estar sentados y quietos la mayor parte del tiempo. Los momentos de disciplina corporal suelen ser reducidos y estar destinados al cuerpo mecánico - productivo (educación física) en detrimento de un cuerpo sensible y social. La creación y el rodaje de este videodanza permitió hacer un trabajo basado en la improvisación y la escucha colectiva. A través de ciertas pautas coreográficas y de movimiento (caminar, generar figuras en el espacio como una línea, iniciar una acción juntos, el canon…) los estudiantes -convertidos en bailarines- debían tomar decisiones conjuntas sobre su trayectoria, ritmo y desplazamiento; con la responsabilidad de componer juntos y a tiempo real una escena/momento concretos de la dramaturgia general del vídeo.

El blanco y negro y la banda sonora hacen clara referencia al cine clásico, pero el contenido coreográfico está desvinculado de la película a la que homenajea. Está enfocado, sin embargo, al trabajo de la improvisación como entrenamiento de la escucha, de la relación del individuo con el grupo y la consciencia corporal. Algunas preguntas que se hicieron a los participantes durante la práctica, para su reflexión en movimiento fueron: ¿he tomado durante la improvisación alguna vez la iniciativa? ¿soy capaz de liderar el grupo o he mantenido en todo momento el rol de seguidor? ¿hay espacios por los que no transito? ¿soy capaz de adueñarme del espacio cercano a la cámara, a la mirada? ¿me doy cuenta tarde de las decisiones que toma el grupo? ¿utilizo varios canales perceptivos para comunicarme con mis compañeros o necesito ver con los ojos claramente lo que sucede para entenderlo? La improvisación da la posibilidad de trabajar estas aptitudes con facilidad, mientras que en otras materias curriculares es complicado hacer énfasis en ellas. Además fomenta el trabajo en equipo y eleva la motivación de los participantes. En ese sentido fue especialmente relevante el hecho de que el videominuto producido tuviera una distribución internacional[2].

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[2] Premio del jurado Centre de Videodanse de Bourgogne (Francia)
Muestra Internacional Cineminuto de Córdoba (Argentina)
Selección oficial en el Festival CTRL59 de Navarra (España)
Selección en el 6º EIVV Encontre Internacional de Videodansa i Videoperformance (Valencia, España)

Aún más breve

Aún más breve (Miralles, 2019) es un videodanza de 1 minuto de duración resultado de una serie de talleres y espectáculos[3] en homenaje a Stephen Hawing en el primer aniversario de su fallecimiento. Surge en el contexto del proyecto de divulgación científica "Cultura con C de Cosmos" del Centro de Astrobiología del CSIC vinculado a la NASA Astrobiology Institute y al FECYT, Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología.

Esta producción está alineada con el objetivo de la universidad de generar propuestas de divulgación científica a través de las artes. En concreto, el guión del videodanza describe la estructura de los capítulos principales del libro más famoso del físico inglés. Stephen Hawing, con sus teorías, revolucionó la física moderna, pero además fue un gran divulgador científico. Escribió en 1988 *Breve historia del Tiempo* para dar a conocer al público general los conceptos más importantes sobre el universo. Pero resultó ser demasiado complejo para el entendimiento de la gente, por lo que decidió reescribirlo en 2005 titulándolo *Brevísima historia del tiempo* (Hawing & Mlodinow, 2005). Este videodanza pretende simplificar aún más sus contenidos y ofrecer la posibilidad de vivenciarlos desde el cuerpo y la imagen.

Fig. 2: recorte de un frame del videodanza *Aún más breve* (Miralles, 2018)

Como en la pieza anteriormente presentada, todas las dinámicas de danza que se introdujeron en el taller destinado al rodaje de este videodanza ofrecen la oportunidad para trabajar diferentes aspectos de la escucha colectiva y la consciencia corporal, así como la cohesión social[4]. Sin embargo, en esta ocasión nos centraremos en abordar la traducción de un libro de ensayo a un guión cinematográfico para un videodanza.

El objetivo del vídeo resultado del proceso no es la divulgación en sí de los contenidos del libro, sino la excusa para trabajar los conceptos del libro con los participantes-bailarines. Es decir, la divulgación científica no se obtiene de la visualización del videodanza, sino de la participación activa en su creación. Es por ello que de nuevo los intérpretes de esta pieza audiovisual no son bailarines profesionales, sino estudiantes de disciplinas no científicas y público general.

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[3] La versión escénica se estrenó en el Festival Se Alquila Tiempo (junio 2018) y en la Semana de la Ciencia de la Comunidad de Madrid (octubre 2018).
Selección del vídeo en el 6º EIVV Encontre Internacional de Videodansa i Videoperformance (Valencia, España)

[4] En este taller participaron estudiantes de edad universitaria de diferentes carreras, especialmente de ciencias sociales, jurídicas y humanidades; y personas de colectivos de diversidad funcional asociados a Plena Inclusión.

El principal reto de este trabajo fue crear una estructura que permitiese la explicación sencilla de la historia de la física traducida enteramente a imágenes y dinámicas corporales. Para ello se descompuso el relato en 3 momentos claramente diferenciados: en primer lugar se presentó el origen de la astronomía, del interés humano de mirar a las estrellas (gesto que se recupera como cierre del vídeo). Se explicaron los cambios de paradigma de Aristóteles, Ptolomeo, Copérnico y Galileo en torno al movimiento de los cuerpos celestes, de la relación entre la Tierra y el Sol. Para ello se emplearon linternas y se reprodujo en el espacio del aula una galaxia, con el desplazamiento de los cuerpos de los participantes como si fueran los cuerpos celestes. En una segunda parte aparecen las leyes de la física clásica establecidas por Newton: los cuerpos permanecen estáticos a no ser que una fuerza actúe sobre ellos (primera ley). Se trabajó entonces a partir de los toques y la manipulación; cuerpos que se transforman mediante el contacto y que convierten la energía que reciben en nuevos movimientos. Y la gravedad (segunda ley de Newton), para la que se trabajó a partir de la caída y el peso. Finalmente, para conciliar ambas escalas, la astrofísica de los cuerpos celestes y la escala pequeña de los objetivos de la física clásica, se presentó el trabajo de Stephen Hawing y su búsqueda de la Teoría del Todo. Las dinámicas finales del videodanza con el inflado de globos responden al tercer momento del guión del videodanza: si se dibujan dos puntos en la superficie de un globo y éste se hincha, esos puntos se separan. Como es conocido que el universo está en expansión, eso implica que si se rebobina el tiempo, todos esos puntos estuvieron juntos en algún momento. Como cuando sueltas un globo hinchado. Es decir, la teoría del Big Bang de Stephen Hawing explicada con un globo. El universo contenido en una sala de ensayo, la experiencia entera de la historia de la física vivida desde el cuerpo.

Post Nubila

Post Nubila (Miralles & Fernández, 2016) es un cortometraje documental enmarcado dentro de la línea de interdisciplinariedad del Aula de las Artes. En concreto pone a dialogar el cine, la danza y la arquitectura en un proceso creativo de videodanza site-specific.

Fig. 3: recorte de una prueba de cámara del documental *Post Nubila*.

Este proyecto forma parte del laboratorio Dispares[5], en el que dos personas (pares) generan un proyecto de creación desde el encuentro de sus diferentes disciplinas (distantes). En este caso se trató de un alumno del Máster en Documental y Reportaje Transmedia - Luis Manuel Fernández- y de un coreógrafo - Alfredo Miralles -, que trabajaron juntos en un proceso de videocreación en compromiso

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[5] El laboratorio Dispares forma parte del proyecto Conjuntos, apoyado por la Fundación Daniel y Nina Carasso.

con el espacio del patio Sabatini, en el campus de Leganés. El resultando del proyecto fue la grabación de una pieza de videodanza - *Oedipus' game* (Miralles & Fernández, 2016)- y un documental sobre su rodaje.

Fig. 4: Dos frames de distintos momentos del videodanza *Oedipus' Game*

En este trabajo de videocreación, la característica fundamental es que se trata de un meta-videodanza: un videodanza sobre la grabación de un videodanza. En él se recorren todas las decisiones a las que un realizador-coreógrafo tiene que hacer frente en su proceso creativo y se hacen explícitas, se ponen a la vista del espectador. El documental comienza incluso con la propia explicación del término danza site-specific y sus posibles graduaciones según la relación concreta de la creación coreográfica con el espacio específico de su representación. Y consecuentemente con ello, la pieza recurre al espacio para la toma de decisiones de todos los aspectos creativos de la pieza audiovisual: desde los colores, guión, discurso de planos…

El espacio en el que se sitúa esta videocreación, y del cual emana todo el material de trabajo, es el patio de un edificio diseñado por el famoso arquitecto italiano de la corte de Carlos III, Francesco Sabatini. Es un patio con estructura completamente rectilínea, lo que hizo pensar al equipo creativo en una danza con importancia en las trayectorias. Esas trayectorias se conectaron rápidamente con las jugadas del ajedrez (ver la figura 4), de manera que cada sesión de rodaje comenzaba con una partida de ajedrez como calentamiento y se establecieron las normas de este juego para todos los desplazamientos de los intérpretes en el espacio. De esta conexión derivan también aspectos como el guión basado en la historia de Edipo y otras tomas de desiciones como el blanco y negro (por las fichas), el punto de vista de la cámara (siguiendo algunas referencias cinematográficas como *Edipo Re* de Pasolini) y la propuesta de narrativa (inspirada en la obra *Tebas Land* de Sergio Blanco), como se explica en profundidad en el documental. Durante el rodaje de este videodanza el Aula de las Artes estaba coordinando un proyecto europeo de cultura -Crossing Stages- sobre la relectura del mito clásico desde el pensamiento contemporáneo, que sirvió de marco conceptual para este proyecto. Este documental configuró el trabajo fin de máster del estudiante y por tanto se insertó totalmente en la investigación académica, pero fue un primer acercamiento al trabajo híbrido con la investigación artística; y, de hecho, tuvo una fantástica acogida en el circuito de festivales de cine[6].

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[6] Finalista en la categoría documental del FIVER Festival (Logroño)
Primer Premio en la categoría audiovisual en la Bienal de Arte Contemporáneo Bacos San Miguel (Tenerife)
Festival Dance Brigdes (Calcuta, India)
X Encuentro Hispanoamericano de Cine y Video documental (México)
Festival de Largos y Cortos de Santiago- felacos (Chile)
Muestra Internacional de Cine Independiente Otros Cines (San Nicolás, Argentina)
Festival de Cine Caótico (La Paz, Bolivia)
Congreso de danza y filosofía, Centro de Danza Canal (España)

You are mythical

You are mythical (Valiente, 2018) es un largometraje documental que supuso la consolidación del formato descrito en el trabajo anterior. También tomó como marco conceptual el proyecto europeo Crossing Stages sobre mito clásico. En esta ocasión se involucró a siete jóvenes europeos en el trabajo de co-escritura de un guión en el que se conjugasen mito clásico y vida cotidiana contemporánea. Se partió de la hipótesis de que si continuamos contando las historias contenidas en la mitología es porque de alguna manera son relatos que apelan a características esenciales - de la esencia - del ser humano, y que por tanto trascienden la narrativa de sus personajes y situaciones para hablarnos de la condición humana. Cada participante[7] seleccionó un mito clásico con el que sintiese que su vida tenía cierta relación, como si ese mito clásico narrase de manera metafórica alguna de sus preocupaciones vitales. En concreto se trabajó con Antígona, Penélope, Jasón, las sirenas de La Odisea, Edipo, Narciso y Ulises[8], seleccionados por los propios participantes.
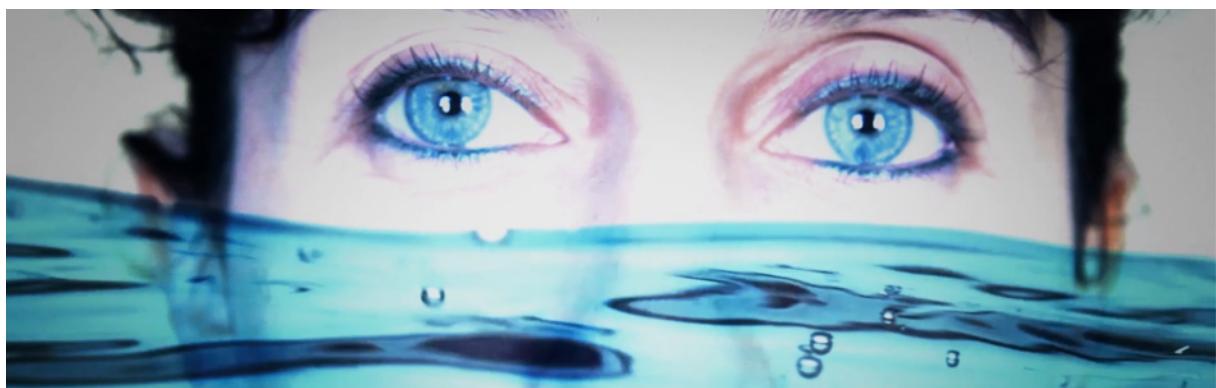
Fig. 5: recorte de un frame del documental *You are mythical* con un primer plano de Aline Jaulin.

La estructura narrativa se configura con la sucesión de las historias de los siete participantes, con una duración de siete minutos cada una y con una estructura interna que respeta siempre el mismo esquema:

- una animación en la que se introduce el mito (3min) - ver primera columna de la fig. 6
- un relato de la conexión de ese mito con la vida personal del participante (4min) - segunda columna de la fig. 6
- una videocreación final inspirada en el mito y la persona (3min) - tercera columna de la fig. 6.

Tiene especial relevancia el proceso creativo para la construcción de los 3 minutos finales de cada historia, ya que es en esos momentos donde existió la posibilidad más clara de trabajar el videodanza con los participantes. El reto consistía en hacer referencia expresa al mito, pero introducir elementos concretos de la historia de cada persona y traducir todo ello a imágenes.

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[7] Nótese que se insiste en el empleo del concepto *participante* frente al de *bailarín, intérprete* o *actor,* porque la participación en estos proyectos audiovisuales contempla perfiles de backgrounds diferentes: estudiantes de la universidad, doctorandos, jóvenes investigadores… con mayor o menor trayectoria en el mundo de las artes escénicas. Algunos de ellos se dedican de manera profesional al arte y otros tienen una relación más académica con la investigación.

[8] Orden en el que aparecen en el largometraje y al que responden también cada una de las filas de la figura 6.
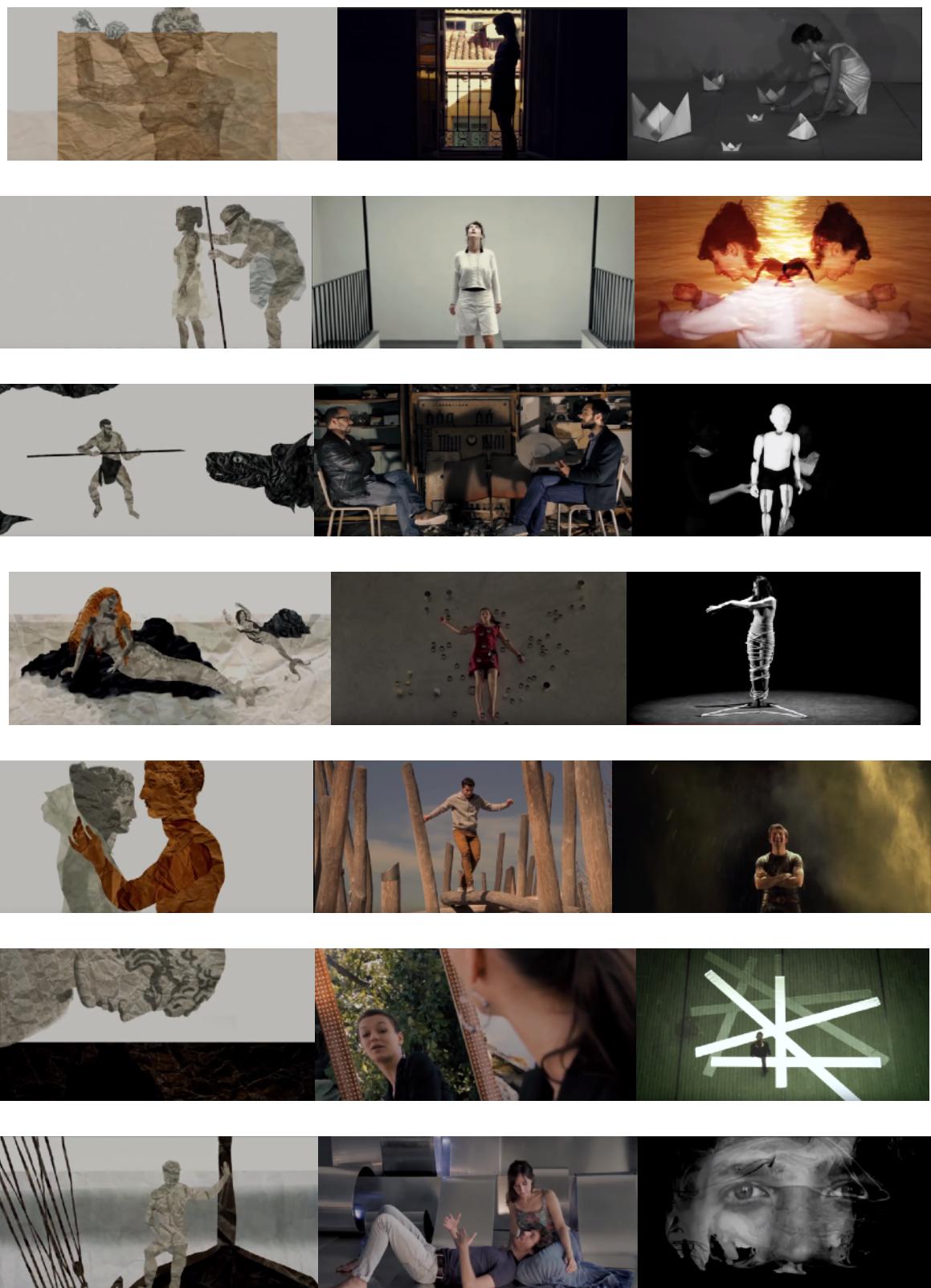
Fig. 6: Recortes de fotogramas del largometraje "You are mythical" (Valiente 2018).

Son especialmente claros tres de los ejemplos: En el caso de Penélope (Paloma Zavala), el videodanza final retrata una acción obsesiva de crear barquitos de papel y anotar los días que pasan en una pared. En las sirenas de la Odisea (que encarna Marta Rodríguez) se trabajó sobre el deseo y las cuerdas que

ataron a Ulises al mástil -para no sucumbir al canto de las sirenas- se convierten simbólicamente en la propia cola de la sirena. Finalmente, en el caso del videodanza de Narciso (Mihaela Wabra) crea una superficie de espejo con papel de aluminio a modo de lago para buscar su reflejo; sólo para descubrir que la imagen es algo muy frágil/quebradizo y acabar completamente envuelta en ese material, prisionera de su imagen.

Cada videodanza fue grabado durante las actividades del propio proyecto europeo, por lo que cada personaje habla en un idioma (italiano, francés, portugués, inglés, español, esloveno y griego) y el rodaje se extendió durante dos años en cinco países. La vocación internacional del proyecto se materializó también en la distribución del resultado final[9].

Conclusiones

El objetivo de este texto ha sido presentar algunas experiencias educativas que, gracias al videodanza, no supongan un consumo pasivo de contenidos, sino una construcción de conocimiento a través del cuerpo. Apunta, por tanto, hacia una propuesta de innovación educativa en el modelo existente de divulgación científica; y asume un cambio en el papel del estudiante: desde la posición de espectador hacia una participación activa en el rodaje de un videodanza como intérprete amateur.

Uno de los mayores reformistas educativos del siglo XX, John Dewey, ya señaló la importancia del cuerpo en el proceso de aprendizaje (Dewey apud Dougherty, 2012) y el valor de aprender haciendo ("learning by doing" Dewey 1986). Esto supone poner el cuerpo del estudiante en el centro del proceso educativo y entender que el aprendizaje sucede derivado de su acción e indisoluble de su experiencia corporal. Esta concepción está alineada con la teoría constructivista del aprendizaje: "el aprendizaje es un proceso activo de construcción por parte del sujeto, más que de adquisición de conocimientos; y la enseñanza es el proceso de apoyo de dicha construcción, más que la transmisión o comunicación de conocimientos" (Duffy y Cunningham, 1996, apud Adell y Castañeda 2012).

Los casos de estudio expuestos en este artículo se asientan en las premisas de la metodología del Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos (ABP), que es una pedagogía activa en la que todo el proceso de aprendizaje se organiza en torno a un objetivo concreto y común: la grabación de un videodanza.

La literatura científica ha estudiado ampliamente las virtudes de esta pedagogía emergente en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. El ABP mejora las competencias de trabajo en equipo, la motivación por aprender, facilita la adquisición de una base de conocimientos flexible y contextualizado, el cambio conceptual, el pensamiento crítico y las habilidades de autorregulación y solución de problemas (Montanero Fernández, 2019). Todavía queda mucho recorrido de estudio en los resultados sobre el aprendizaje específicos del empleo de la videodanza como herramienta educativa, y estos casos de estudio asumen sus limitaciones en la generación de conocimiento

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[9] Premio del Público; Expression Art Movie Film Festival 2018 (Los Angeles, EEUU)
Premio de Excelencia Fest Internacional de Cine de Borobudur 208 (Indonesia)
Open Window International Film Challenge 2018, (Kolkata, India)
Semana Internacional de Cine de Autor de Lugo 2018 (España)
Festival Internacional de Documentales Premios Ierapetra 2018 (Grecia)
Festival Mundial de Cine Independiente de Quito, (Ecuador)
Congreso "Mito y Creación Audiovisual" 2018, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (España)
Royal Film Commission (Amán, Jordania)
Jordan Writers Society (Amán, Jordania)

extrapolable, pero aportan sus procedimientos desde la perspectiva de la investigación-acción para configurar una experiencia documentada que pueda servir a futuras investigaciones en la materia. Contribuye de esta forma a nutrir la bibliografía junto con otros proyectos de videodanza con estudiantes, como los realizados por compañías tan relevantes como las de Teresa de Keersmaeker ("Re:Rosas!") o la de Pina Bausch ("Dance! The Nelken-line") como apunta Payri (2018, p.53).

Los procesos de investigación-acción, en los que este artículo se apoya, consisten en expandir el rol del docente hacia una reflexión en la práctica que redunde en la innovación y mejora educativa. Estos procedimientos han sido ampliamente estudiados por investigadores como Lawrence Stenhause, fundador del Centre for Applied Research in Education en la Universidad de East Anglia (UK) y ampliados por otros especialistas en investigación básica y aplicada del aprendizaje. Stenhause incentiva a que los profesores produzcan literatura sobre casos de estudio de su propia práctica en el aula como contribución al conocimiento de campo (Stenhouse 1978, apud Somekh & Zeichner 2009). Así pues, este texto pretendía responder a este llamamiento y formar parte de los casos de estudio disponibles para explorar el potencial de la danza como vehículo posible para trabajar la divulgación científica.

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