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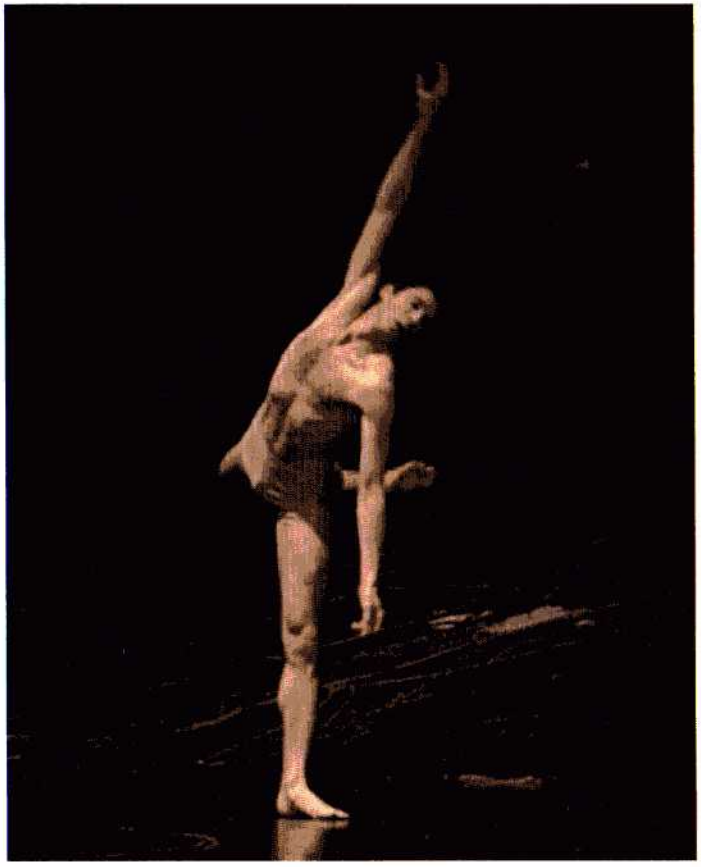

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European Association of Dance Historians
41 Talma Gardens
Twickenham
Middlesex TW2 7RB
UK
eadhcommittee@gmail.com

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Trisha Brown's Choreographic Staging of Rameau's *Pygmalion*

A tri-partite collaboration between dance, music and baroque imagery

By Dominika Hens
(translated from the German by Lucy Renner Jones)

It comes as a surprise when a post-modern choreographer – in whose work over the past few decades the predominant sounds have been that of bodies sliding across the stage, the spoken word or other noises – turns to the field of Baroque opera. In her choreographic staging of Rameau's *Pygmalion*[1], the world premiere of which took place in 2010 at the Théâtre Carré in Amsterdam, Trisha Brown has created a taut

[1] Rameau's *Pygmalion* was commissioned in 1748 by the Paris Opéra to a libretto by Ballot de Savot, which was based on an earlier work by Antoine Houdard de La Motte, who in turn had written the libretto for the opéra-ballet *Le Triomphe des arts* to music by Michel de La Barre in Paris, 1700. This act in de La Motte's work was entitled *La Statue*. The one-act work *Pygmalion* is regarded as an 'acte de ballet' – a blend of the genres of opera and dance – as well as a baroque machine spectacle. The plot is based on a condensed version of the *Pygmalion* episode from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (*Metamorphoses*, X. 243–297); For further information on Rameaus 'acte de ballet', see Mathias Spohr, 'Pigmalion', in *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, ed. by Carl Dahlhaus and the Forschungsinstitut für Musiktheater of the University of Bayreuth under the direction of Sieghart Döhring, 7 vols (Munich: Piper 1986–1997), V (1994), pp. 176–177 (p. 176); On the act of bringing the statue to life in Rameau as well as interferences in the material in stage dance history and the paradox of the 'statue animée', see generally Gabriele Brandstetter, 'Der Tanz der Statue. Zur Repräsentation von Bewegung im Theater des 18. Jahrhunderts', in *Pygmalion. Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abendländischen Kultur*, ed. by. Mathias Mayer and Gerhard Neumann (= Litterae 45) (Freiburg i.Br.: Rombach, 1997), pp. 393–422.

relationship between historical periods and fields of the arts. The composition, libretto and paradigms of baroque imagery contrast here with a post-modern mode of movement that integrates both 'pure movement' and manifold gestures. What unfolds in front of Trisha Brown's sweeping ink drawings and Elizabeth Cannon's loose-fitting, flowing costumes is an enigmatic dialogue between music, dance and baroque imagery.

Trisha Brown's preoccupation with baroque music began in 1995 with *M.O.* This sequentially structured choreography, which is based on her intensive exploration of Johann Sebastian Bach's writings on counterpoint, is arranged to excerpts from Bach's *Musical Offering* (1747). Equally, in her choreographic pieces based on baroque stage works from which *L'Orfeo* (1998), *Pygmalion* (2010) and scenes from *Hippolyte et Aricie* (2009) arose, Brown engaged intensively with composition even during the preparatory stage. Guillaume Bernardi describes this approach as an extension of her ong-term practice of artistic collaboration[2], a concept that she adopted from Merce Cunningham and John Cage.

In contrast to Cunningham's collage-like choreographies, Trisha Brown uses synergies between the participating artists during the process of the production, such as in *Glacial Decoy* (1979), one of her collaborations with Robert Rauschenberg, in which imagery and dance enter into a dialogue on the silence of the room.[3] Yet, even across the

[2] "*In many ways, Brown's opera work was a continuation of her collaborative practice. Just as* M.O. *was a dialogue of equals between Brown and Bach,* L'Orfeo *[...] [was] indeed [a] dialogue [...] between Brown and Monteverdi [...]. She was less intent on furthering the expression of [...] [Monteverdi's] ideas [...] than exploring the possibilities of the dialogue. Brown [...] was able to envision the relationships between the various components of an opera [...], each element responding to the others but keeping its own identity.*" Guillaume Bernardi, ' 'The voice is a muscle': Trisha Brown and opera', in *Trisha Brown: Dance and Art in Dialogue, 1961–2001*, ed. by Hendel Teicher (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 251–255, (p. 253).

[3] See also Louppe, 'Chaos made tangible', in *Danse, précis de liberté*, ed. by Doucet and Boulan, pp. 117–118.

centuries, she does not shy away from seeking a dialogue with the artist. To this end, the acte de ballet *Pygmalion* offers diverse potential for collaborations between dance, imagery and music in its hybrid form of musical theatre.

Pure movement featuring baroque music and imagery

Trisha Brown's choreographies live from a fascination with 'pure movement'. This is illustrated by her interest in "*natural daily movement*"[4] as well as other movements that are biomechanical in nature. This vocabulary of movement, one that consciously seeks to break with classical ballet and modern dance, is rooted in Trisha Brown's artistic disposition as a member of the Judson Dance Theater and The Grand Union in the 1960s-70s. Research ranging from simple movements to complex motion patterns became Trisha Brown's trademark during this time and led to her ideal of 'pure movement':

> Pure movement is a movement that has no other connotations. It is not functional or pantomimic. Mechanical body actions like bending, straightening or rotating would qualify as pure movement providing the context was neutral. I use pure movements, a kind of breakdown of the body's capabilities.[5]

In *Pygmalion*, such post-modern choreographies with an emphasis on movement patterns occur above all in the purely instrumental passages such as the dance suite. Here, Trisha Brown takes up the baroque tradition of the dance 'figure' (French) as will be illustrated.

[4] An-Marie Lambrecht, Kunsten Festival des Arts, 1995; cited by Corinne Diserens, 'Tracé brownien', in *Trisha Brown. Danse, précis de liberté*, ed. by Michèle Doucet and Marie-Sophie Boulan (Marseille: Musées de Marseille, 1998), pp. 9–11 (p. 9).

[5] Trisha Brown, 'A Profile', in *Laurie Anderson, Trisha Brown, Gordon Matta-Clark: pioneers of the downtown scene, New York 1970s*, ed. by Lydia Yee (Munich: Prestel, 2011), pp. 182-185 (p. 184); First published by L&S Graphics (1976, unpaginated); reprinted in Ann Livet (ed.), *Contemporary Dance* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1978), p. 45.

The 'figure' initially appears in choreographic-poetic discourse from the 17th and 18th centuries as a technique of movement as well as in formal categories relating to physicality and space. When the term 'figure' is used, it refers to a descriptive, depersonalised figure or a combination of steps. It was Claude-François Ménestrier who first differentiated the term to a further extent by including the spatial alignment of the body and both the individual's and the group's floor paths besides archetypal figures that are marked by distinctive attributes[6]:

> [...] les figures sont les diverses dispositions des danseurs, qui dansent de front, dos contre dos, en rond, en quarré, en croix, en sautoir, en croissant sur une ligne, en évolution, en se poursuivant, en fuyant, en s'entrelassant les uns dans les autres.[7]

Raoul-Auger Feuillet retains the term 'figure' in his notation to refer to the relationship between bodies and space, and divides choreographed floor paths into regular, mirrored, and irregular, parallel movement patterns.[8] Besides its regular form and ornamental character, the dance 'figure' also holds a baroque 'surplus': its allegorical-representative character. Despite its ephemerality as a phenomenon on stage, it contains ambivalent moments of imagery by representing, and at times even reproducing – for instance, in emblematic, choreographies that simulate letters of the alphabet – and in creating or suspending similarities to its object of reference.

[6] Claude-François Ménestrier, *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les Règles du Théâtre* (Paris, 1682), pp. 140–142.

[7] Ménestrier, p. 158.

[8] "*On doit remarquer deux sortes de figures dans la Dance, sçavoir figure reguliere & figure irreguliere. La figure reguliere est quand deux ou plusieurs Danceurs vont par mouvement contraire, c'est-à-dire que tandis que l'un va à droit, l'autre va à gauche. [...] La figure irreguliere est quand les deux Danceurs qui figurent ensemble vont tous deux d'un même côté.*" Raoul-Auger Feuillet, *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de décrire la danse par caractères, figures et signes démonstratifs* (Paris: L'Auteur et M. Brunet, 1700), p. 92.

The following will address the question of whether and in what way Trisha Brown contends with this allegorical surplus of baroque stage dance and the role played by composition, according to Brown's definition of pure movement as a "non-neutral context".

Rameau's dance suite at the end of scene IV, a purely instrumental arrangement, is devised by Trisha Brown using only pure movement. The dance suite is composed in a condensed and abridged way; Rameau forgoes several of the usual repetitions in individual dances, among others, in favour of dramatic tension. The suite, introduced by the Air, is seamlessly followed by several consecutive dances: Gavotte gracieuse, Menuet, Gavotte gaie, Chaconne vive, Loure très grave, Passepied vif, Rigaudon vif, Sarabande, and Tambourin. Trisha Brown does not follow the scene directions in the libretto whereby the graces teach the statue the various 'caractères de la danse' and thereby introduce her to court etiquette. Instead, the dancers, without the singer performer, enter into a tightly woven dialogue with the music.

During the introductory air in 3/4 time, two pairs of dancers attempt simultaneous swings that course not only through their own bodies but also incorporate the bodies of their partners, continuing there. The rhythmically lively Gavotte gracieuse in alla breve time is designed to make a choreographic transition: on the repetition of the melody, the formation is extended by a third pair thereby creating a choreographic equivalence to the musical phrasing. The Menuet in 3/4 time is choreographed sequentially by Trisha Brown. Lined up on a diagonal that serves to establish a geometric pattern from the front right to the back left, the three pairs carry out the same dance phrases with a time delay. The choreographic phrase lasts eight measures, just as the musical phrase does. However, only the front pair dances their phrase for eight measures. The pairs in the middle and furthest back begin their movement material each with a one-measure delay so that choreographic "overhangs" of one or two measures result. The repetition of the phrase is similarly sequential but is carried out with other movement material. During the Gavotte gaie, the pairs re-establish simultaneity by taking out the "overhangs" from which the second pair then liberates itself from with its own movement phrase, becomes the focus and thereby establishes a choreographic centre of

stage for a brief moment. In the Chaconne vive, the simultaneous movement sequences follow the ostinato 4-measure accompaniment in basso continuo. The minimal harmony and melody variations of phrase A in A' | A'' | A''' are not played out as such by the choreography i.e. in the mutual embracing and retracing of the body's silhouette. In the Loure très grave on the other hand, Trisha Brown differentiates the two parts of the A | A' form in more detail. Instead of a virtuoso baroque loure with numerous batterie jumps and turns, Brown establishes a complex choreography in the variation A' via a sequential series of movements within the group: after part A has been danced in unison, consecutive instrument cues in A' trigger choreographic sequences between the pairs. At the Passepied vif and the Rigaudon vif, the group returns to a mode of simultaneous movement. Whereas in the Passepied the lively tempo is taken up in the choreography, the quiet, almost halted movements in the Rigaudon form a contrast to the dynamism of the music. In the flow of movement, the pairs simply strike a new pose every six measures that embody the baroque compositional principles of tension and dynamism. The tri-partite Sarabande forms a contemplative caesura in the dance suite with its slow and serious musical character. A very un-baroque pas de deux unfolds to the exchange between flute and strings. Instead of common sarabande steps such as pas de sissone or glissard, a study of the body occurs that takes up the tradition of contact improvisation: the dancers establish a counterpoint that, while varied in its localisation, is almost always uninterrupted. In this case, the movement is not usually caused by the dancer's own body but by the dancer's partner in sculptural convolutions. The suite ends with a powerful, very fast Tambourin.

Just as Rameau demonstrates his virtuosity through sequencing, melodic and rhythmic phrase extension [|| Prelude | A :||: B | A :||], Trisha Brown skilfully plays with various changes in formation and sequentially-occurring choreographic phrasing. Whereas initially there are two pairs and a dancer on the stage, the ensemble is later on increased by one more pair who dance in from offstage, overlapping the stage boundaries, and a solo dancer towards the end of part A's repetition. In these duo, trio and solo constellations, identical and new movement phrases are danced consecutively, whereby newly found constellations

disperse and regroup. This group dynamic means that there is no centre stage: each movement phrase carries equal weight in the style of Merce Cunningham. Only in the repetition of part ||: B | A :|| do the ensemble form four pairs that dance simultaneously on a diagonal and thereby take on a baroque 'figure' according to Ménestrier's definition.

Gestural dance language featuring baroque lyrics and imagery

In stage dance discourse of the 18th century, the choreographic 'geste' gained importance as a counter model to the 'figure'.[9] Likewise, Louis de Cahusac notes in the introduction to *La Danse ancienne et moderne* (1754): "*En écrivant de la* Danse, *je suppose de même les pas & les figures, qui ne sont que les lettres & les mots de cet Art.*"[10] By contrast, he sees more than mere movement material in the geste.

> DANSE […] mouvemens reglés du corps, sauts, & pas mesurés […]. Les sensations ont éte d'abord exprimées par les différens mouvemens du corps & du visage. Le plaisir & la douleur en se faisant sentir à l'ame, ont donné au corps des mouvemens qui peignoient au - dehors ces différentes impressions: c'est ce qu'on a nommé geste.[11]

Trisha Brown is not interested in making this kind of gestural, affective expression through dance in her choreographic staging of the singer performer; her gestures range from the "*tautological gesture*

[9] On the transition to court-influenced dancing between the late 17th and early 18th centuries, see generally Stephanie Schroedter, *Vom „Affect" zur „Action". Quellenstudien zur Poetik der Tanzkunst vom späten. Ballet de Cour bis zum frühen Ballet en Action* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004).

[10] Louis De Cahusac, *La Danse Ancienne ou Moderne ou Traité Historique de la Danse* (La Haye: Jean Neaulme 1754), p. xxxij.

[11] Louis de Cahusac, 'DANSE', in *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. by Jean Le Rond d'Alembert and Denis Diderot, 35 vols (Paris: Briasson, David l'ainé, Le Breton & Durand, 1751–1780), 4 (1754), p. 623 [emphasis mine].

referring only to itself"[12] in her early work, to non-decorative gestures that were choreographically accumulated and isolated in her 1970s *Accumulation* cycle, and extend from the mid-1980s on to include conscious choreographic reflection on unconscious gestures that were permitted in rehearsals.[13] Trisha Brown herself emphasizes the ambivalence of what for her is a personal gesture and the reception of others:

> I also use quirky, personal gestures, things that have specific meaning to me but probably appear abstract to others. I may perform an everyday gesture so that the audience does not know whether I have stopped dancing or not [...].[14]

In *Pygmalion* Trisha Brown's gestures reference the libretto score. She seems to introduce the hand of the Pygmalion performer as a leitmotif for the artistic conflict that is sung about in the first aria, "Fatal Amour". Starting with the prelude, the performer observes his hand at face level and in what follows, manual gestures are introduced with clear reference to the text. On the cue of the verb 'percer', for example, Pygmalion passes his left hand in a cutting motion along the outside of his right, stretched-out arm, and at the word 'maître', he clasps his own head with his arms and hands as if it were a foreign object. Another example is the entwining of hands with interlocked fingers when he is singing of his conflicted love for his self-created work of art, the statue. Besides these abstract and socially codified gestures, there are also tautological gestures, such as holding hands at heart level on the word 'cœur' or trembling hands at the word 'main'.

[12] Louppe, 'Chaos made tangible', in *Danse, précis de liberté*, ed. by Doucet and Boulan, p. 114.
[13] On the role of gesture in Brown's oeuvre, see Joyce Morgenroth, *Speaking of Dance. TwelvTContemporary Choreographers on Their Craft* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 60–61; see also Trisha Brown, Hendel Teicher, 'Dancing and Drawing' (Interview), in *Trisha Brown. Danse, précis de liberté*, ed. by Michèle Doucet and Marie-Sophie Boulan (Marseille: Musées de Marseille, 1998), pp. 13–33 (pp. 19, 23).
[14] Brown, *A Profile*, p. 184.

This spectrum of gestures is used by Trisha Brown to underlay the libretto with a metaphorical subtext that aims not to reproduce the spoken word but to access a new world of thought. However, a strong textual reference in Brown's oeuvre is not uncommon. This is illustrated by her borrowing of Anna Halprin's "*experimentation with sound – verbalization and singing as a material*"[15], which clearly guided Trisha Brown in *Locus* (1975). In this piece, *"[d]ancers' gestures literally spelled out sentences from a statement written by Brown [...]."*[16]

In addition to this, the interplay of gestures and pure movement creates visual moments that follow baroque spatial and compositional principles. This occurs for example in the aria "Règne Amour" when the dancers and the performer representing Pygmalion reassemble from their fragile equilibrium of voluminous and intertwined poses that display a delicate balance to a highly tense group of sculptures without halting their movements to create these "images".

A collaboration between post-modern dance and baroque art and music

Trisha Brown's choreographic staging of Rameau's *Pygmalion* moves between the poles of various art disciplines. At the interface of self-reflexive movement and baroque music on the one hand, and diverse, sometimes enigmatic gestures and libretto on the other, moments of baroque imagery materialise.

In dialogue with Rameau's music, Trisha Brown is above all in search of friction. Consequently, the musical phrasing inspires the choreographic phrasing but musical variations and repetitions do not presuppose a choreographic equivalent. Instead of the music imposing a form onto the choreography, the dance often enters into a relationship

[15] Ibid., p. 182.
[16] Marianne Goldberg, 'Trisha Brown, U.S. Dance, and Visual Arts: Composing structure', in *Trisha Brown: Dance and Art in Dialogue, 1961–2001*, ed. by Hendel Teicher (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 29–44, (p. 39).

of tension with the music, as in when slow movements contrast a dynamic musical passage. Unlike the baroque treatment of music in choreography, which consists mostly of leg and footwork, Trisha Brown uses the dancers' entire bodies. She is not so much concerned with an exact reproduction of musical embellishment and timing through technical sophistication such as batterie jumps in dance; rather, she is far more interested in the musical rhetoric of the phrasing. She thereby enters into compositional question-response interplay, sighs and the use of consecutive voices. By using sequential pure movements, she establishes a post-modern counterpart to baroque, figural dance expression.

In a highly differentiated and reduced manner, Trisha Brown uses gestural movement in the aria passages, which nevertheless display strong textual references and by no means attempt an affective baroque effect. They do indeed contain a visual subtext on occasion that in turn is occasionally enigmatic and resists decoding. By contrast, Trisha Brown's movement vocabulary in purely instrumental passages such as the dance suite does not aim at interpretation. Pure movement such as poses or the embracing and retracing of the partner's silhouette positively exhibit the movement form. This reference to the materiality of the body is also shown when, as happens in the loure, the partner's body is lifted like a doll and mobilised, or when the partner's leg is mobilised from the hip joint in order to rotate it in the extension.

In the lifts and sculptural convolutions of the bodies, synergies between the bodies are also set free, which reach beyond mere drifting together and apart. With regard to the anatomic observation of the other's body contours, the question crops up time and again of how the body of the other can be integrated into the hollows formed by one's own body. At the same time, the body intuitively fits into the silhouette and movements of the other when the arms continually form an arch. Within this concept, which is mainly indebted to pure movement, baroque composition and especially its musical form is by no means a neutral context but an equal dialogue partner between the musical and choreographic sequences. The allegorical, conventionalised surplus of

the baroque choreographic 'figure' is overridden in favour of a post-modern, enigmatic surplus in the form of synergies between the arts. In this way, the space between dance, music and libretto is filled with baroque imagery and sculptural quality that open up new ambivalent worlds of thought.

Orpheus und Eurydike according Bausch / Gluck

By Susanna Avanzini

Orpheus und Eurydike is a dance-opera created by Pina Bausch and performed in 1975; using a German version of the original Calzabigi libretto, it is based on Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.[1] My work is based on the spectacle performed in may 2005 by the Parisian's Opera Ballet, for which it was renewed, without any changes: apparently Bausch considered it still completely relevant. In fact, as the booklet included to the DVD of the piece declares, for quite a long time the spectacle was out of the active repertory of the Wuppertal Company, since it was first resumed in 1991, with the support of the original performers Dominique Mercy and Malou Airaudo, 'seeking it out, fragment by fragment, from the depths of the memory'.[2] Even if *Orpheus und Eurydike* is one of her first creations, in which modern

[1] *Orpheus*: Oper in drei Akten / Chr. W. von Gluck; in Partitur herausgegeben von Alfred Dörffel (Leipzig: Edition Peters, 5518 [19..]). The Library of the Conservatorio di Musica G. Tartini (Trieste, Italy) holds this score, which I compared with the one used for the live performance by the conductor Thomas Hengelbrock. My thanks to Katrin Wolff, of the Balthasar-Neumann-Chor und –Ensemble, Freiburg, who sent me some copies taken from that score.

[2] *Orpheus und Eurydike* by Christoph W. Gluck, dance-opera by Pina Bausch. A film by Vincent Bataillon (Bel Air Classiques, 2009), p. 15.

dance still prevails, it already seems to present the basic principles of 'Bausch's method':

1. The Pathos-figures, or leading-figures or routine-figures (a number of its dance sequences seem to be analogous to some of *Café Müller*, the *Stück* which gave Bausch world fame), although the movement quality is still strictly related to Limón or Joos-Lederer dance techniques;
2. Scenery has not only a decorative role, but also a symbolic one: here the gaunt remnants of a cypress tree, which refer to the libretto's setting indications, bring with them a hidden meaning of death. They have a performative goal too: the singers and dancers can get into the branches' structure and lay in it or can stretch out their white shrouds on it;
3. The expressive intention, which is the will not to simply tell a story, but to represent emotions through body movement and treatment of music. To this purpose Gluck's score is submitted to formal elaboration with respect to choreography, as we will later see. We can presume that, since the beginning, as Odette Aslan too suggests, music was never Bausch's primary stimuli as choreographic starting point, but to accentuate, emphasize or change the meaning of one particular gestural element it was associated to the movement through multiple attempts.[3]

Bausch's method – which would be developed beginning with 1977 *Blaubart* (*Bluebeard*)[4] and the 1978 turning point pieces (like *Er nimmt sie an der Hand)*– and which revolutionised the way of conceiving and constructing performances – was for the contemporary dance, according to Brigitte Gautier, 'the equivalent of the 1830 *querelle des*

[3] Cf. Odette Aslan, 'Collage et montage', *Danse/Théâtre/Pina Bausch. II. D'Essen à Wuppertal, Théâtre/Public*, 139 (gennaio-febbraio 1998), p. 42.

[4] Cf. 'Interviews mit Pina Bausch. Man muß ganz wach, sensibel, und empfindsam sein' (30 settembre 1995), in Norbert Servos, *Pina Bausch. Tanztheater* (München: K. Kieser Verlag, 2008), pp. 253-60 (p. 255).

anciens et des modernes provoked by Hernani'.[5] It consists in stimulating the dancers to improvise by asking them questions that imply the elaboration of life experiences. The answers take the form of sequences of dance movements or everyday gestures, words or singing. The choreographer chooses some and 'cleanses them' to reduce them to the essentials. Some later gestural elaboration proceedings – such as the 'amplification' of a movement through repetition of a solo sequence by the whole group of dancers or the extrapolation of a solo sequence from a duet –are already present. Some fragments or units – repeated, modified or reversed – are then assembled, edited or counterpointed to produce a fixed choreography, which is the form in images of the originally set theme. The new figurative aesthetics abandons the traditional narrative sequences; in Turin, during a 1992 academic symposium, Bausch, talking about her *Stücke* and her dancers, declared: «Of course it's a story, but that's not important. It's about what happened to them and the feelings they had».[6] Bausch tries not to create definite roles, but to express universally recognisable feelings – a desire she shares with the librettist Calzabigi. Every singer has a 'double-dancer' or, better, every dancer has a 'double-singer', who gives expression to the drama, which is contemporarily explained through music and words. The above-mentioned form, one where all the components have an equal role, is therefore the 'structural framework' of emotions or precise situations; in this form, the music – which in the 'mature' pieces is a collage of different styles – becomes essential in the process of producing meaning. The fundamental Bausch topic, which focuses on man-woman conflicting relationships, is going to be expressed in the same way in every *Stück* so that all her production can be considered a 'corpus' of emotions.

[5] Brigitte Gautier, 'Chez Pina Bausch, le theâtre sert d'infrastructure à la danse, 'Théâtre et danse. Un croisement moderne et contemporain' vol. I 'Filiation historiques et positions actuelles', *Études théâtrales*, 47 & 48 (2010), pp. 110-125 (p. 116).

[6] Deirdre Mulrooney, *Orientalism, Orientation, and the Nomadic work of Pina Bausch* (n.p.: Peter Lang, 2002), p. 111; see also 'Incontro con Pina Bausch' in *Pina Bausch. Teatro dell'esperienza, danza della vita. Atti del Convegno Internazionale. Torino, 2-5 giugno 1992*, ed. by Elisa Vaccarino (Genova: Edizioni Costa & Nolan, 1993), p.188.

According to Deirdre Mulrooney, a scientific research lies at the bottom of Bausch's choreography. Her questions cause the beginning of a journey, which is not limited to gestures alone (as Bausch explores sensations and primarily hers) and whose destination is unknown. Interiority in the building up of choreographic forms seems to be important even in the creations preceding the 'improvisational turning point'. One can maybe find a confirmation in Christina Thurner's analysis of Bausch's *Sacre*, where she maintains that movement – especially women's movement – arises from the solar plexus region. Convulsive arm movements specifically emphasize this zone, which is at the same time extremely vital and vulnerable and is considered, from an exterior point of view, as fundamental for the occurring of emotions.[7]

In *Orpheus* too, movement isn't produced by dancers' improvisation, but its construction and relationship to music seem to let out a precise formal intention; the division of the opera in four parts – *Mourning*, *Violence*, *Peace*, *Death* – instead of the three traditional acts of Gluck's score, shifts its focal point on the themes and on the emotions. Men and women can't meet: even if they keep on looking for each other, their union ends up in failure, both in life as in death. To outline her idea, the choreographer considerably modifies the form of the opera. She doesn't accept either Orpheus's Ovidian myth or Gluck's happy ending: Amor doesn't have the decisive role, which Calzabigi assigned her; instead Bausch replicates in the last part – *Death* – the scene of the second part, the one where the Furies take Eurydice to the Hades; but now it is Orpheus's body they have to deal with. The repetition of the same gestural sequence has a very strong assertive and closing effect (cf. figures 1, 2).

[7] Cf. Christina Thurner, 'Prekäre physische Zone: Reflexionen zur Aufführungsanalyse von Pina Bauschs Le sacre du Printemps', in *Methoden der Tanzwissenshaft. Modellanalysen zu Pina Bauschs "Le Sacre du Printemps"*, ed. by G. Brandstetter und G. Klein (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2007), pp. 47-58.

Figure 1: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch, *Violence*, stop-motion; a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 2: *Death*, stop-motion; a film by Vincent Bataillon.

To outline it still more clearly Bausch elaborates the musical form too, completely eliminating the Ouverture in C major – which otherwise, as Patricia Howard notes, has no relation to the atmosphere

of the drama[8] – and maintaining only the first scene of the third act of Gluck's score. At this point she resumes some parts of the second and first act (cf. figures 3a, 3b and table 1) and transforms them in Orpheus's mourning scene.

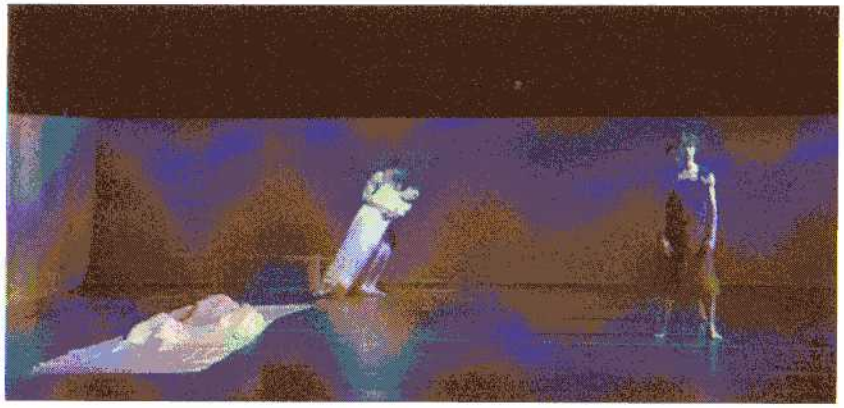


Figure 3a: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch, *Violence*, stop-motion; a film by Vincent Bataillon.

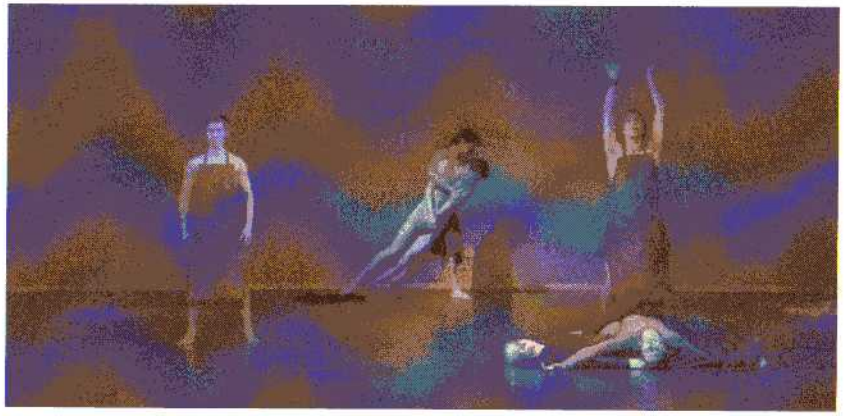


Figure 3b: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch, *Death*, stop-motion; a film by Vincent Bataillon

[8] Cf. *C. W. von Gluck: Orpheus*, ed. by Patricia Howard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 27.

After the Aria *Ach, ich habe sie verloren (What Shall I Do Without Eurydice)* she continues with the Recitative and Adagio *So mag der tiefe Schmerz mit meinem Leben enden (Ah! May Grief End My Life)*, but instead of the great scene and happy ending brought about by Amor the *deus ex machina* – she inserts here no.18, the Dance of the Furies, followed by the chorus no. 4 *O wenn in diesen dunklen Hainen (Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn)* and then no. 6, the instrumental ritornello, which closes the opera.

The global form, which completes the full range of Orpheus's emotions, is now defined not only by the recurrence of the same choreographic sequence, but also by the creation of a circularity, produced by a sort of musical Recapitulation. Stephanie Jordan, listing the parallelisms between music and dance, calls 'return' this particular kind of closure, which marks a final event.[9] Now both the performer and scenography, which employs here costumes and colours different from the white of the second part, have changed: Bausch indicates in this way that nobody will come to help, there's no hope any more.

Even if the collage, which characterizes the next creations, is not yet present, the musical form is just a function of the theme chosen by Bausch: the association with the choreography delineates precisely the form of the emotion. The established circularity gives the performance a very strong dramatic effect, that of an unavoidable, tragic destiny, which differs from the one narrated by the myth. While according to the myth Orpheus dies dismembered by the Maenads, in Bausch's version he dies annihilated by Eurydice's death, which he himself has provoked: he is destroyed by his own action. He crouches motionless (figure 4) at the end of the stage, his back to the public, while his double sings his last Aria. Both dancing and singing Eurydices are lying, cross-shaped, one across the other, while the "double" Orpheus

[9] Cf. Stephanie Jordan, 'Hearing the Dance, Watching the Music', in *Moving Music: Dialogues with Music in Twentieth-Century Ballet*. (London: Dance Books LtD, 2000), p. 86.

sings, kneeling behind them, as in a sort of *Pietà* image. To the same music as the one of the second part, the Furies pick Orpheus up (cf. figure 5) and transport him across the stage to lay him beside the lifeless body of his bride (cf. figure 6). In the final scene Eurydice wears a symbolically red costume. Already in the first scene (cf. figure 7), where she dominates the stage from above, sitting on a bridal chair, which is also her tomb, wearing a snow-white dress, which is also her shroud, she shows the mark of predestination by holding a bunch of red roses on her lap.

In addition to the formal plane, there are in my opinion other representational ones: grief is represented and in a way 'written' by the bodies of the dancing 'choir' through segmentation, folding, continuous tension towards two opposite points[10] (cf. figures 8, 9). The choir, who certainly doesn't have the role of commentator and doesn't represent shepherds or ghosts any more, but Orpheus's torment (it's in fact his 'double') dances to a two-two time (*alla breve*) music, which is static both because of the inexorably constant bass line rhythmic pattern and because of the melody, homophonically produced by the chorus and the orchestra (cf. figure 10). The association of both components produces the form of constant, irredeemable grief. The duplication or multiplication of the movement doesn't reproduce the multiple aspects of Orpheus's personality, but, kaleidoscopically, the same emotion through different subjects (cf. figures 11a, 11b).

Table 1: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, Schemes.

Dörffel- Gluck	Bausch- Gluck
ACT I **Ouverture - C major**	
Scene I (Orpheus and Chorus of his followers) No. 1 Chorus: *O wenn in diesen dunkeln Hainen* (*Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn*) (C miNo.)	**TRAUER - MOURNING** No. 1 Chorus: *O wenn in diesen dunkeln Hainen* (*Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn*) (C miNo.)

[10] Cf. Odette Aslan, 'Orphée et Eurydice', 'Dance/Théâtre/ Pina Bausch I', *Théâtre/Public*, 138 (1997), pp. 16-18.

Dörffel- Gluck	Bausch- Gluck
No. 2 Recitative, Orphée: *O Freunde, dieses Klagen* (*Hear the Plaints, the Laments, the Sighs*) (G min) No. 3 Pantomime (E flat maj.) No. 4 Chorus: *O wenn in diesen dunkeln Hainen* (*Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn*) (C min.) No. 5 Recitative, Orpheus: *Laßt mich allein* (*Enough, Enough, My Friends!*) (C min.) No. 6 Ritornell (C min.)	No. 2 Recitative, Orpheus: *O Freunde, dieses Klagen* (*Hear the Plaints, the Laments, the Sighs*) (G min) No. 3 Pantomime (E flat maj.) No. 4 Chorus: *O wenn in diesen dunkeln Hainen* (*Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn*) (C min.) No. 5 Recitative, Orpheus: *Laßt mich allein* (*Enough, Enough, My Friends!*) (C min.) No. 6 Ritornell (C min.)
Scene II (Orpheus alone) No. 7 Aria: *So klag ich ihren Tod* (*Thus Do I Call My Love*) (F maj.)(a) No. 8 Recitative: *Eurydike, teurer Schatten* (*Eurydice, Eurydice, Beloved Shade,*) (F min.-C maj.) (b) No. 9 Aria: *Wehklagend irr ich so* (*Thus Do I Seek My Love*) (F maj.)(a) No. 10 Recitative: *Eurydike! Dein süßer Name* (*Eurydice, Eurydice! Ah, That name*) (F maj.) (c) No. 11 Aria: *Mein trübes Auge weint* (*Thus Do I Mourn My Love*) (F maj.) (a) No. 12 Recitative: *Grausame Götter Acherons* (*Oh Gods, Cruel Gods!*) (D min.- G min.- F maj.)	No 7 Aria: *So klag ich ihren Tod* (*Thus Do I Call My Love*) (F maj.)(a) No 8 Recitative: *Eurydike, teurer Schatten* (*Eurydice, Eurydice, Beloved Shade,*) (F min.-C maj.) (b) No. 9 Aria: *Wehklagend irr ich so* (*Thus Do I Seek My Love*) (Fmaj.)(a) No. 10 Recitative: *Eurydike! Dein süßer Name* (*Eurydice, Eurydice! Ah, That name*) (F maj.) (c) No. 11 Aria: *Mein trübes Auge weint* (*Thus Do I Mourn My Love*) (F maj.) (a) No. 12 Recitative: *Grausame Götter Acherons* (*Oh Gods, Cruel Gods!*) (D min.- G min.- F maj.)
Scene III (Amor, Orpheus) No. 13. Recitative and Aria, Amor: *Dein Saitenspiels Harmonien* (*Love Will Assist You!*) (F maj.) A B A' B' No. 14. Recitative, Amor, Orpheus: *Wie, ich soll sie wiedersehen* (*But How? And When?*) (E min. – D maj.) No. 15. Aria, Amor:: *Mit Freuden den Willen* (*Restrain Your Glances,*) (G maj.) A b A' Ab'	No. 13. Recitative and Aria, Amor: *Dein Saitenspiels Harmonien* (*Love Will Assist You!*) (F maj.) A B A' B' No. 14. Recitative, Amor, Orpheus: *Wie, ich soll sie wiedersehen* (*But How? And When?*) (E min. – D maj.) No. 15. Aria, Amor:: *Mit Freuden den Willen* (*Restrain Your Glances,*) (G maj.) A b A' Ab'

Dörffel- Gluck	Bausch- Gluck
Scene IV (Orpheus alone) No. 16 Recitative: *Was sprach er? Hört ich recht?* (*What Said He? What Did I Hear?*) (C maj.-D maj.) (No. 17 Aria: *Entflieht, entflieht, all ihr Klagen*)	No. 16 *Recitative: Was sprach er? Hört ich recht?* (*What Said He? What Did I Hear?*) (C maj.-D maj.)
ACT II	
Scene I (Orpheus and chorus of Furies and monsters) No. 18 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (E flat maj.) No. 19 Prelude of the harp and Chorus: *Wer ist der Sterbliche* (*Who Is This Who Draws Near to Us*) (C min.) No. 20 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (C min.) No. 21 Chorus: *Wer ist der Sterbliche* (*Who Is This Who Draws Near to Us*) (C min.) No. 22 Orpheus, (Prelude of the harp): *Ach, erbarmet, erbarmet euch mein* (*Oh Be Merciful to Me,*) (E flat maj.) No. 23 *Chorus: Jammernder Sterblicher* (*Wretched Youth, What Seek You?*) (E flat min.) No. 24 Aria, Orpheus: *Tausend Qualen* (*A Thousand Pangs I Too Suffer*) (F min.-C min.) No. 25 Chorus: *Welch ungewohnter Trieb* (*Ah! What Unknown Feeling of Pity*) (F min.) No. 26 Aria, Orpheus: *Meine Bitten, meine Klagen* (*Ah! You Would Be Less Harsh*) (F min.) No. 27 Chorus: *Sein sanftes Trauerlied* (*Ah! What Unknown Feeling of Pity*) (F min.) No. 28 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (D min)	**GEWALT - VIOLENCE** No. 18 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (E flat maj.) No. 19 Prelude of the harp and Chorus: *Wer ist der Sterbliche* (*Who Is This Who Draws Near to Us*) (C min.) No. 20 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (C min.) No. 21 Chorus: *Wer ist der Sterbliche* (*Who Is This Who Draws Near to Us*) (C min.) No. 22 Orpheus, (Prelude of the harp): *Ach, erbarmet, erbarmet euch mein* (*Oh Be Merciful to Me,*) (E flat maj.) No. 23 Chorus: *Jammernder Sterblicher* (*Wretched Youth, What Seek You?*) (E flat min.) No. 24 Aria, Orpheus: *Tausend Qualen* (*A Thousand Pangs I Too Suffer*) (F min.-C min.) No. 25 Chorus: *Welch ungewohnter Trieb* (*Ah! What Unknown Feeling of Pity*) (F min.) No. 26 Aria, Orpheus: *Meine Bitten, meine Klagen* (*Ah! You Would Be Less Harsh*) (F min.) No. 27 Chorus: *Sein sanftes Trauerlied* (*Ah! What Unknown Feeling of Pity*) (F min.) No. 28 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (D min)
Scene II (Chorus of heroes and heroines) No. 29 Ballet (F maj.)	**FRIEDEN- PEACE** No. 29 Ballet (F maj.)

Dörffel- Gluck	Bausch- Gluck
No. 30 Ballet (D min.) No. 31 Ballet (C maj./C min.) No. 32 Aria, Eurydice, Chorus: *Diese Auen sind seligem Frieden* (); Ritornell (F maj.) A (F) b (V/C) A'(F)	No. 30 Ballet (D min.) No. 31 Ballet (C maj./C min.) No. 32 Aria, Eurydice, Chorus: *Diese Auen sind seligem Frieden* (); Ritornell (F maj.) A (F) b (V/C) A'(F)
Scene III (Orphée seul; Orpheus alone) No. 33 Aria, Orpheus, Chorus: *Welch reiner Himmel deckt diesen Ort (How Clear the Sky! How Bright the Sun!)* (C maj.)	No. 33 Aria, Orpheus, Chorus: *Welch reiner Himmel deckt diesen Ort (How Clear the Sky! How Bright the Sun!)* (C maj.
Scene IV No. 34 Chorus: *Komm ins Reich beglückter Schatten (Come to the Realms of Bliss)* (F maj.) No. 35 Ballet (B flat maj.) No. 36 Recitative and chorus, Orphée, esprits: *O selge, beglückte Schatten (Kind Spirits)* (G min. - C maj.)	No. 34 Chorus: *Komm ins Reich beglückter Schatten (Come to the Realms of Bliss)* (F maj.) No. 35 Ballet (B flat maj.) No. 36 Recitative and chorus, Orphée, esprits: *O selge, beglückte Schatten (Kind Spirits)* (G min. - C maj.)
Scene V (Eurydice, Orpheus, chorus of the spirits) No. 37 *Aus dem Reich, beglückter Schatten (Return, Fair One, to Your Husband)* (F maj.)	No. 37 *Aus dem Reich, beglückter Schatten (Return, Fair One, to Your Husband)* (F maj.)
ACT III	
Scene I No. 38 Recitative, Orpheus, Eurydice: *So komm, Eurydike, folge mir (Come, Follow My Steps)* (F min.- D min.) No. 39 Duet, Orpheus, Eurydice: *Komm! Komm! Und vertrau meiner Treue (Beloved Wife)* (G maj.) No. 40 Recitative, Eurydice: *Ach, warum bleibet er in diesem starren Schweigen (You Do Not Embrace Me? Nor Speak?)* (D maj.-C min.) No. 41 Aria and Duet, Eurydice, Orpheus: *Welch grausame Wandlung (Oh Bitter Moment!)* (C min)	**STERBEN - DEATH** No. 38 Recitative, Orpheus, Eurydice: *So komm, Eurydike, folge mir (Come, Follow My Steps)* (F min.- D min.) No. 39 Duet, Orpheus, Eurydice: *Komm! Komm! Und vertrau meiner Treue (Beloved Wife)* (G maj.) No. 40 Recitative, Eurydice: *Ach, warum bleibet er in diesem starren Schweigen (You Do Not Embrace Me? Nor Speak?)* (D maj.-C min.) No. 41 Aria and Duet, Eurydice, Orpheus: *Welch grausame Wandlung (Oh Bitter Moment!)* (C min)

Dörffel- Gluck	Bausch- Gluck
No. 42 Recitative, Orpheus, Eurydice: *Ach, nun erneut sich mein Jammer (Here Is a New Torment)* (E flat maj.-C maj.) No. 43 Aria, Orpheus: *Ach, ich habe sie verloren (What Shall I Do Without Eurydice?)* (C maj.) AbAcA' No. 44 Recitative and Adagio, Orpheus: *So mag der tiefe Schmerz mit meinem Leben enden (Ah! May Grief End My Life,)* (C maj.-C min); *Ja, nur nach dir (Yes, Wait)* (A flat maj.)	No. 42 Recitative, Orpheus, Eurydice: *Ach, nun erneut sich mein Jammer (Here Is a New Torment)* (E flat maj.-C maj.) No. 43 Aria, Orpheus: *Ach, ich habe sie verloren (What Shall I Do Without Eurydice?)* (C maj.) AbAcA' No. 44 Recitative and Adagio, Orpheus: *So mag der tiefe Schmerz mit meinem Leben enden (Ah! May Grief End My Life,)* (C maj.-C min); *Ja, nur nach dir (Yes, Wait)* (A flat maj.)
Scene II (Amor, Orpheus, Eurydice) Recitative, Amor: *Halt ein! Was tuts du (Orpheus,What Are You Doing?)*	No. 18 Furientanz (Dance of the Furies) (E flat maj.) No. 4 Chorus: *O wenn in diesen dunkeln Hainen (Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn)* (C min.)
Scene III (Amor, Orpheus, Eurydice, Sheperds) No. 45 Chorus and Orpheus: *Triumph sei Amor (Let Amor Triumph)* No. 46 Ballet No. 47 Gavotte No. 48 Ballet No. 49 Minuet No. 50 Trio, Amor, Eurydice, Orpheus: *Süße Liebe, deine Fesseln (Never Was Sweeter)* No. 51 Ballet No. 52 Ballet No. 53 Chaconne	No. 6 Ritornell (C min.)

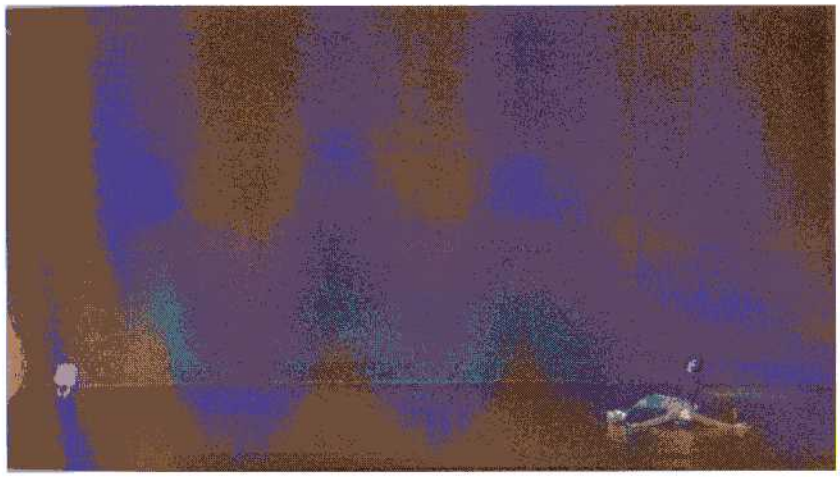


Figure 4: Yann Bridard, Julia Kleiter, Marie-Agnès Gillot, Maria Riccarda Wesseling; *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; *Sterben*, Orpheus and the *Pietà* image. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 5: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; the Furies pick Orpheus up. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 6: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; Orpheus beside the lifeless body of his bride. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 7: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; Eurydice on the bridal chair. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

We therefore have a sort of amplification, a crescendo of the emotion, based not only on rhythmic and spatial variations in the dance

sequences, but also on a different expressive quality of the dancers. Bausch widely uses this procedure: in *Peace* for example, the group of dancers repeats Eurydice's choreography according to the same modalities.

Figure 8: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; *Mourning*, the tension toward two opposite points. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 9: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; *Death*, the tension toward two opposite points. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Orpheus's mood – the form of grief and furthermore of disconcertment – is articulated on another representative plane, by organizing in relation to the music the images 'written' by the soloist. I'm taking into account the solo in *Mourning*, built on the first act second scene. The Aria (cf. figure 12) is in Rondo form (ABACA) and is constituted by three bipartite strophes of 34 measures each. The tonality is F major, a lyric and consolatory one, which seems to connote Orpheus as a divine singer, one who doesn't let himself be involved in passion. This key contrasts in fact with the one of the preceding chorus, the more mournful C minor. Though, the alternation of the strophes with the recitative and a more exhaustive analysis of the strophic sections reveal the appearance of a more human suffering.

The undulating singing line fluctuates up and down, changing, as Adolf Bernhard Marx sustains, from touching heights to choked-back tears.[11] Its fragmentation in groups of 1+ (3 + 3 + 3 + 4) + 2 + (3+ 3+ (5=2+3) + 1+ (4) + 2 measures by means of pauses, serves to 'the most accurate expression of the scene',[12] that is, the metric irregularity reveals Orpheus's unrest. According to Siegfried Mauser, (cf. figure 13) it is the two formal sections of the Aria which instead represent Orpheus's two conflictual aspects: the first one, with its fragmented melody, represents Orpheus's human side, while the more balanced lyricism of the second is remindful of Orpheus's divine side.[13] In the first, the quatrain which is produced by the textual repetition is not necessary, as the three identified melodic arcs, of three measures each, delimited by a cadence correspond already to the poetic content: it serves instead to produce formal irregularity. In fact, we don't have the conventional subdivision (3+3+3) typical of the declamatory lied

[11] Adolf Bernhard Marx, 'Die Komposition' in *Gluck und die Oper* (Hildesheim, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1980), p. 314.
[12] *Ibid.* p. 315.
[13] Cf. Siegfried Mauser, 'Musikalische Dramaturgie und Phänomene der Personcharakteristik in Glucks "Orpheus"', in *Gluck in Wien, Kongreßbericht, Wien, 12. 16. November 1987*, ed. by G. Croll and M. Woitas (Kassel, Basel, London: Bärenreiter, 1989), pp.124-30.

according to the style of the period,[14] or the subdivision in an antecedent (3+3) and consequent (3+4). The four measures addition serves on the one hand as an 'isolated confirmation of the consequent which precedes it',[15] on the other, due to the fact that it already modulates to the dominant (cf. figure 12), as a link to the strophe's second section, whose melodic line, compared to the first section's fragmented one, has more dynamic impulse. The second section (cf. figure 13) consists of a (3+3) measures' antecedent and a (2+3) measures' consequent: here the addition, which serves to close the melody, is necessary to counterbalance the two members.

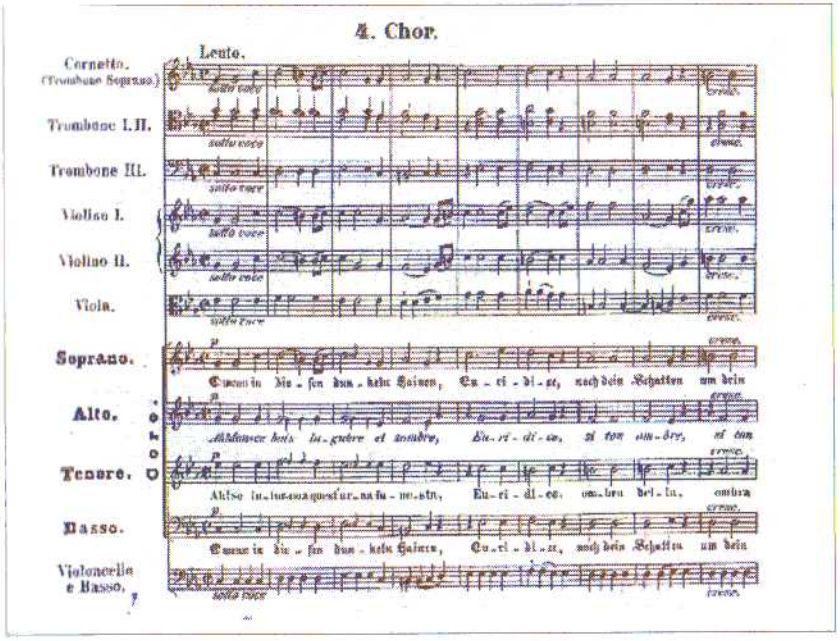


Figure 10: Chr. W. Gluck, *Orpheus*, Chorus no. 4, *O wenn in diesen dunkeln Hainen (Ah! If Around This Funeral Urn)*; the melody, homophonically produced by chorus and orchestra; Leipzig: Edition Peters, 5518, p. 13.

[14] Cf. *ibidem.*
[15] *Ibidem*, p. 125.

Figure 11: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; the duplication or multiplication of the movement. 11a *Violence*, 11b *Death*. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

For Bausch instead, the human side predominates over the divine. The three strophes differ essentially in the instrumental timber and in little variations in the vocal line, which depend on the poetic text; the dance sequence instead, which in the first strophe respects the melodic arcs of the musical form, is not identically repeated for three times. In contrast with the static quality of the strophes, which leave it to the recitative to describe Orpheus's changing feelings, Bausch creates a sort of rudimentary collage obtained by interpolation, 'diminution' and exchange of choreographic fragments. Increasingly, Orpheus includes in his dance sequence movements 'stolen' from the recitative: he can't execute the sequence correctly any more, as we can see below.

To the music of the first strophe (14 +1 + 17 +2), which is divided, also choreographically, into two parts, and which includes a Prelude and a short instrumental Postlude (echo), the movement is executed frontally. At measures 15 and 16 only the echo of the orchestra resounds off-stage.

- First section: 14 measures including the instrumental 'upbeat' (cf. Figure 14) ((4=1+3)+3+3+4). The 15th and 16th measures identify a pause during which Orpheus kneels;
- Second section: four measures (3 + upbeat of the 17th) to stand up again (cf. figure 15) and execute the last danced sequence of the chorus No. 1: *attitude pliée*, *penché*, rising up the right arm. Then closure, *plié*: leaning the chest to the right, hands join together, while the head lay on them. The danced phrase continues, ending with the final movement of the second choreographic fragment of the first part (cf. figure 16). Then, there is a recapitulation of the opening choreography (cf. figure 17): the gestural group succession results therefore inverted and is moreover 'compressed' by a kind of acceleration, which is comparable to a sort of diminution. On the echo of 'antwortet nimmer' (never answers) there is a sort of 'breath': from a crouched down position a shoulder's opening-closing gesture, guided by the head. The last two instrumental measures consist only of the echo, played by the orchestra off-stage and serves Orpheus to stand up and to prepare for the new strophe.

- The second strophe is executed along the right diagonal; the choreographic sequence is varied by interpolation of some movements taken from the recitative (cf. figures 18, 19); on the echo the 'breath' is re-proposed. The third repetition begins with the second section of the first strophe – that is by inverting the movements' sequence – and seems therefore to be late with relation to the music.

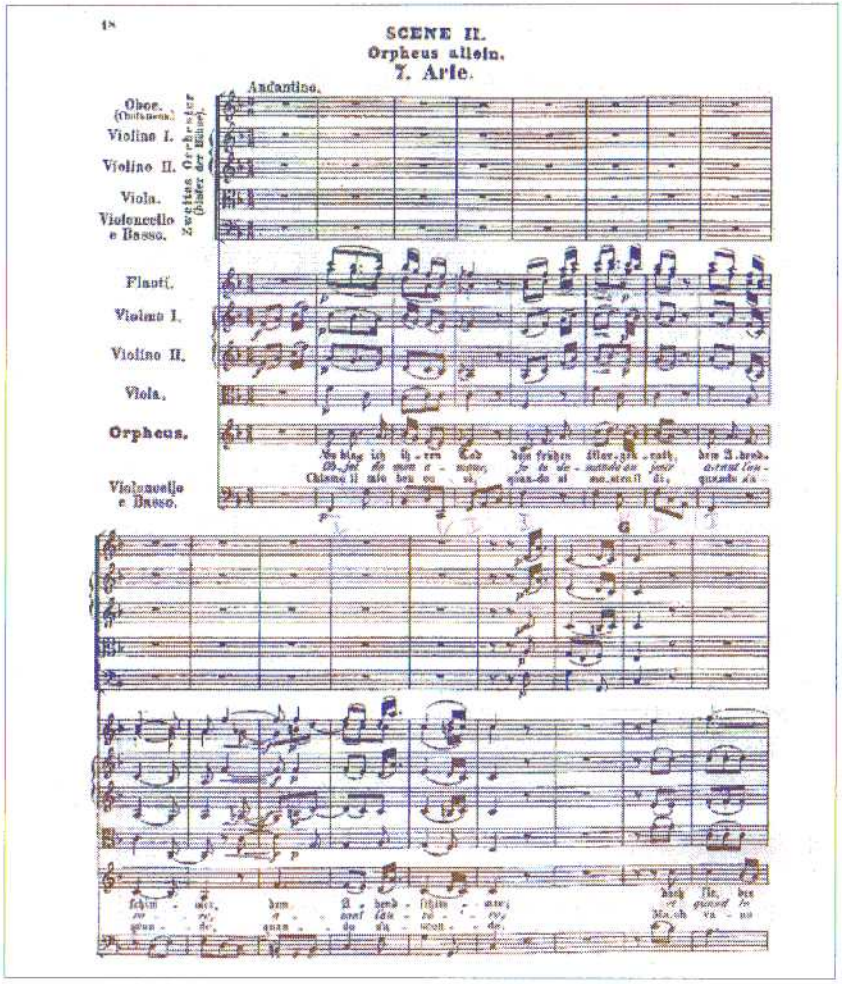


Figure 12: Chr. W. Gluck, *Orpheus*, Aria no. 7; Leipzig: Edition Peters, 5518, p. 18.

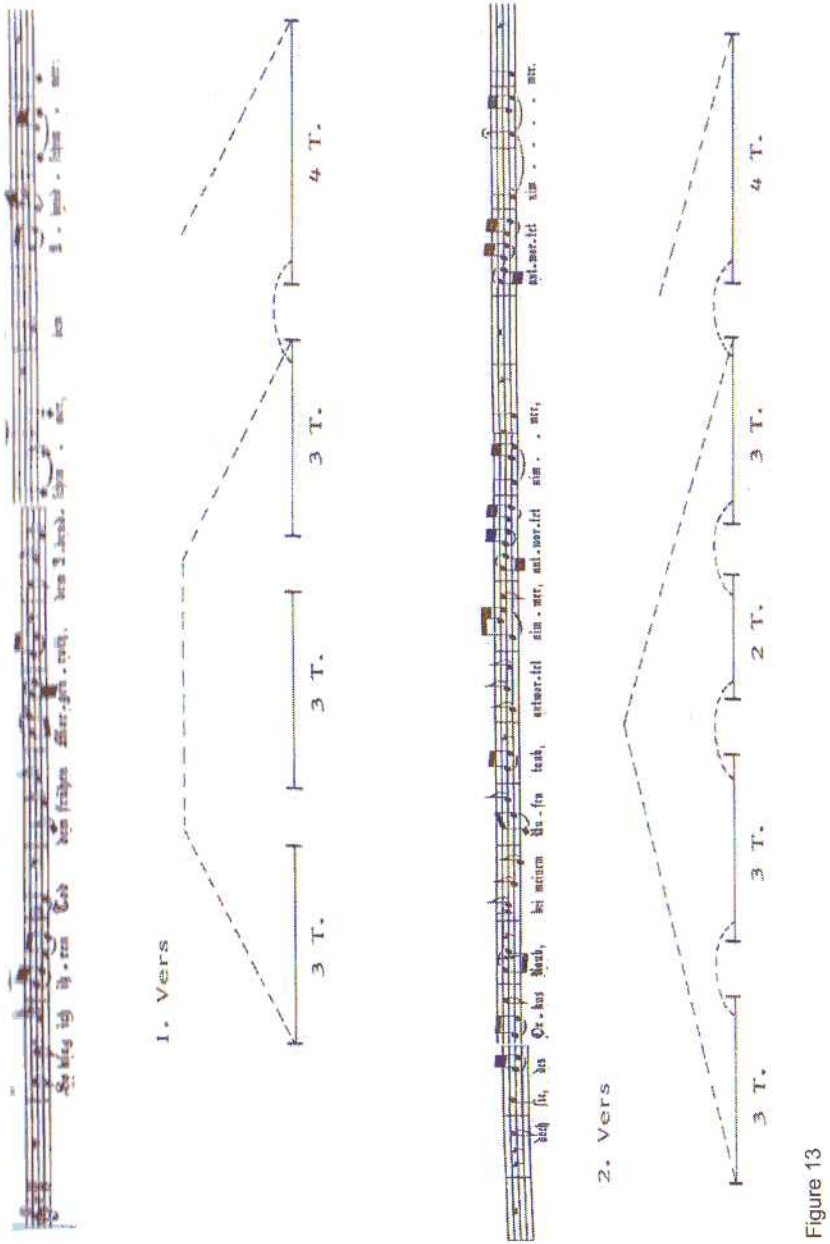


Figure 13

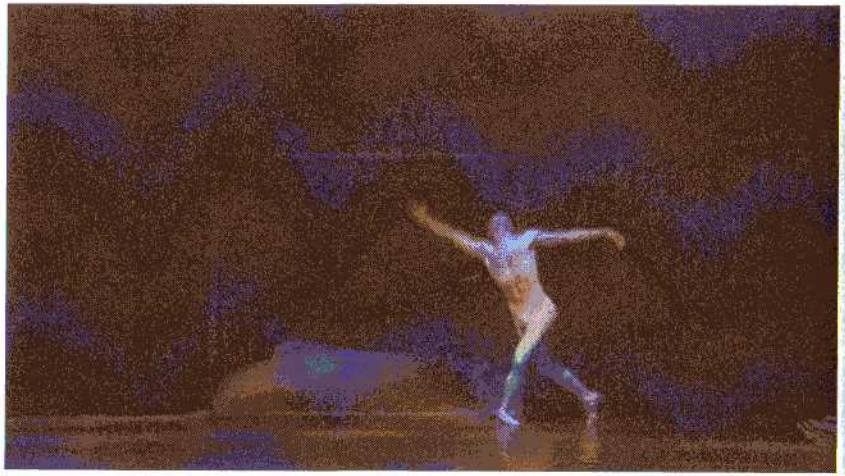


Figure 14: Yann Bridard; *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; the choreographic movement on the instrumental 'upbeat' of the Aria no. 7. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 15: the last movement of the danced sequence of the chorus No. 1. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon

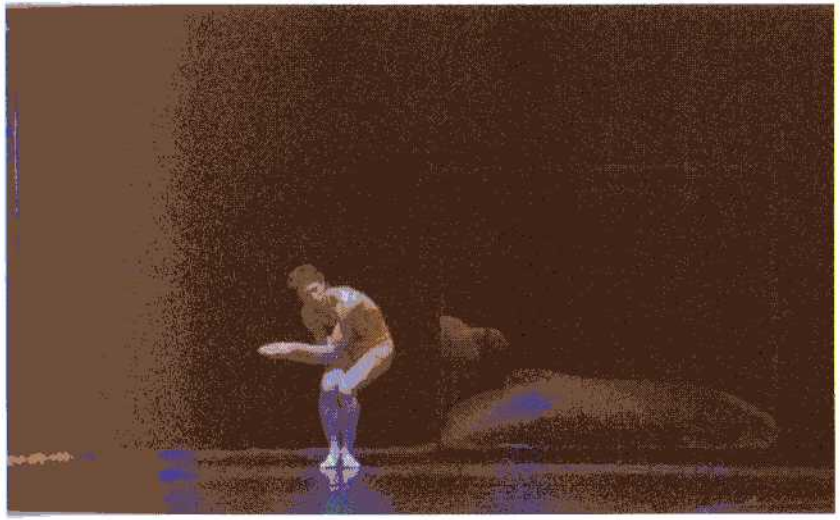
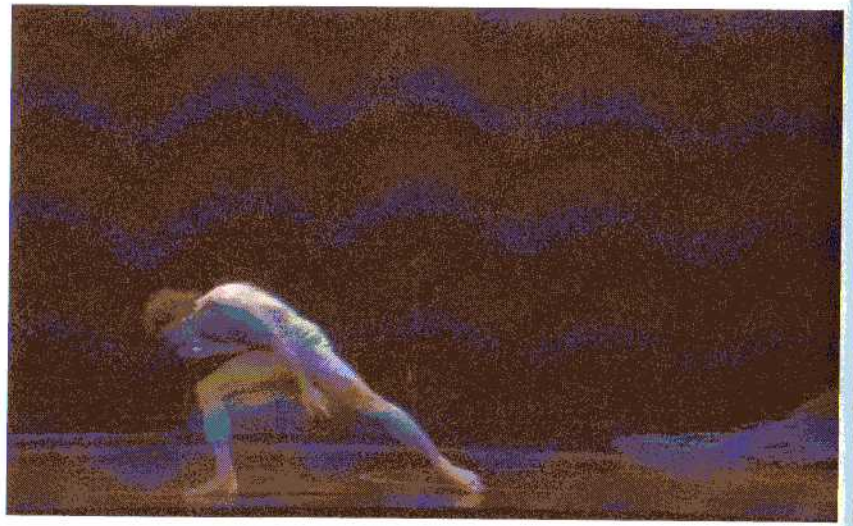
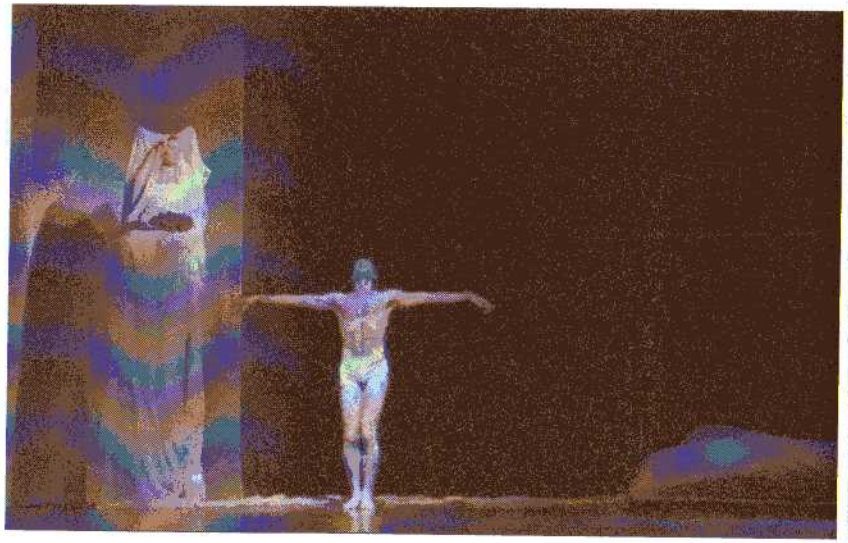


Figure 16: *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; Aria no. 7, the final movement of the second choreographic fragment of the first part. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

Figure 17: Aria no. 7, recapitulation of the opening choreography. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.





Figures 18, 19: Yann Bridard; *Orpheus und Eurydike*, dance-opera by Pina Bausch; movements taken from the recitative. Stop-motion, a film by Vincent Bataillon.

It clearly doesn't respect any more the formal subdivisions in groups and it's more and more 'contaminated' by movements taken from the recitative. The echo is no more a breath on place: it serves instead to bring Orpheus at the end of the stage to begin Recitative's no. 12 choreography, where despair is released: *Oh Gods, Cruel Gods* (*Grausame Götter Acherons*) differs from what precedes it in tonality (D minor, relative minor key) and character; it is in *concitato* style, with repeated notes and orchestral accompaniment in semi-quaver. Orpheus's dance movements are much more fragmented and full of contrasts, with frequent rapid changes of direction, contractions, unbalanced movements, jumps and hurried *deboulés*: Orpheus gesture looses its characteristic lyrical and continuative quality. Instead of closing the scene, this Recitative opens to the Recitative and the Amor Aria. But Amor, as we have seen, doesn't take to a happy ending, because Bausch eliminates her scene in the third act, thus marking the impossibility of a positive resolution of the man-woman conflict.

Les relations de la danse avec la musique au siecle des lumieres : point de vue des maîtres de ballet français

By Françoise Dartois-Lapeyre

L'union entre la musique et la danse, évoquée dès le premier traité de danse français par Arena[1] (qui recommande de respecter le rythme musical qui conditionne l'ordre des pas) semble si évidente que la question est souvent éludée par les maîtres à danser : « Il seroit inutile de rapporter l'union intime qui se trouve entre la Danse & la Musique, tout le monde en est convaincu »[2]. Lully devenu directeur de l'Académie royale de Musique, ne renonça jamais à composer des ballets, et Beauchamp, qui donna à la danse ses cinq positions, était excellent violoniste et compositeur de musique. Mais au XVIII[e] siècle, la danse de bal et la danse théâtrale suscitent un intérêt sans précédent, et les relations entre les deux arts évoluent. Le but de cet article est de comprendre, à partir des traités de danse français, quelle est la nature de ces liens, comment ils sont perçus et se transforment. Nous privilégierons le point de vue du *Maître à danser* de Pierre Rameau (1725), qui indique la manière de faire les pas des danses de ville, celui du maître de ballet Noverre, qui dans ses *Lettres sur la danse* (Lyon,

[1] Antonius Arena, *Ad suos compagnones... 1531, éd. par M.-J. Louison-Lassablière* (Paris, H. Champion, 2012), p. 187.

[2] Jean Guillaume, *Almanach dansant ou Positions et Attitudes de l'Allemande [...] Pour l'année 1770* (A Paris, Chez l'Auteur, s.d., [1770]), p. 3.

1760), traite de la danse théâtrale et renvoie à *La Danse ancienne et moderne* (1754) du librettiste Cahusac, « *nécessaire* »[3] aux danseurs. Nous analyserons les arguments historiques avancés en faveur de la complémentarité des deux arts, tout en dégageant les rivalités engendrées par leurs différences ; enfin nous montrerons que l'élargissement du public s'est accompagné de la revendication de relations plus égalitaires et plus complexes.

Ajustement de la danse sur la musique : arguments historiques

Référence antique et suprématie musicale

L'idée de la ressemblance et de la complémentarité entre la danse et la musique plonge ses racines dans l'Antiquité et s'exprime dans le récit d'une continuité fantasmée entre la chorographie des Grecs et la chorégraphie de Feuillet[4]. L'imitation constitue l'essence des deux arts : la musique « rend ses traits, par l'arrangement successif des sons », et la danse « par une suite cadencée de gestes »[5]. Expression naïve des sensations humaines, réponse corporelle au chant et langage universel antérieur à toute convention, la danse retrace aux yeux les affections de l'âme : la nature fournit les positions et l'art fixe les règles, qui développent ce don reçu. Les mythes d'Orphée, de Castor et Pollux, de Bacchus, d'Amphion ou de Momus sont invoqués pour justifier les liens entre musique et danse. L'origine des contredanses est rattachée par Jacques Bonnet, dans son *Histoire générale de la danse* (1723), à Homère, qui faisait danser Dédale avec la belle Ariane.

[3] Jean Georges Noverre, *Lettres sur la danse et les arts imitateurs* ([1760-1807], rééd. Paris, Lieutier, Librairie théâtrale, 1952), p. 260-261.

[4] S. Guillaume, *Almanach*, p. 3. Raoul Auger Feuillet, *Chorégraphie ou l'Art de décrire la Dance par caractères, figures et signes démonstratifs…* (Paris, chez l'Auteur, 1700), [7]-106 p.

[5] Louis de Cahusac, *La Danse ancienne et moderne, ou Traité historique de la Danse* (La Haye, J. Neaulme, 1739-1754, 3 t., Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1971), ch. IV, p. 165.

L'origine mythique est d'autant plus volontiers reprise par les maîtres à danser qu'elle valorise l'art de la danse, désormais cantonné au divertissement, en lui conférant une origine divine, reliée aux grands hommes (Platon).

Musique et danse partagent le statut d'art d'agrément, mais les traités de danse n'évoquent guère la singularité de la musique, art libéral qui occupe une place de choix dans le *quadrivium* des études universitaires. Affirmée par Quintilien et Saint Augustin, sa supériorité est remise en cause par Noverre, qui observe que « l'idée que nous attachons au mot musique, combinaison de sons simples et harmoniques », est différente de la « musique rythmique » des Anciens, simple division de temps ou « mesure » ; or une musique agréable peut exister sans elle et leur musique incluait en fait notre harmonie. En outre, le rôle de la danse est valorisé dans l'opéra depuis que le librettiste Quinault s'est aidé de cet art, autant que de la voix, pour faire progresser son action, pour l'embellir et la conduire au dénouement. Évoluant lentement, la danse peina à devenir théâtrale, jusqu'au temps de Noverre, où la danse *mécanique ou d'exécution*, partie matérielle, se distingue de la *danse pantomime ou en action,* qui en est l'âme, lui donne vie et expression, et constitue l'art. La danse simple, qui ne nécessite qu'une connaissance de la mesure, de quelques pas et les grâces données par la bonne éducation, se retrouve au bal et sur scène dans quelques grands tableaux de fêtes générales, alors que *la danse théâtrale*, plus variée, forme par elle-même une action suivie, à l'exemple du combat des soldats sortis du sein de la terre dans *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673). Elle nécessite l'enrichissement de l'orchestre pour communiquer, par la variété des instruments, la physionomie des personnages à interpréter.

Écriture et communication entre danseurs et musiciens

La mesure constitue une des principales préoccupations communes : il s'agit pour le musicien de la marquer suffisamment afin que le danseur puisse, sur elle, placer les pas. Pour communiquer, chacun des arts possède son écriture. L'écriture de la danse fait partie de la formation des maîtres, comme l'indique le contrat d'apprentissage d'Étienne

Domare, établi pour quatre ans afin de lui permettre d'apprendre « la danse, la musique et la coregraphie ou danser par écrit, le violon et le violoncelle, et tout ce qui [...] depend desd sciences et arts »[6] ; son maître lui fournit les livres et instruments nécessaires, et ils partagent les bénéfices résultant de la pratique conjuguée des deux arts. L'écriture chorégraphique, moins performante que l'écriture musicale, n'atteint ni sa précision ni sa longévité : un bon musicien lit « deux cents mesures dans un instant », mais un excellent chorégraphe « ne déchiffre pas deux cents mesures de danse en deux heures »[7], car les pas se sont complexifiés et le corps de ballet s'est étoffé au point qu'il est difficile aux maîtres de ballet de tout noter. Quant aux maîtres à danser, certains ont noté, comme Dezais, les contredanses, d'autres ont préféré les décrire, comme La Cuisse, « maître de danse et musicien de l'Orchestre du Théâtre Français »[8], qui renvoie à la partition, rejetée à la fin, et à des « figures démonstratives » comportant encore quelques signes conventionnels de l'écriture Feuillet.

S'il pratique la musique, le maître de ballet communique plus directement ses idées au musicien, et compose lui-même certains airs. S'il ignore la musique, ses airs, uniformes et mal phrasés, ne peuvent pas ajuster les mouvements de la danse à la mesure, et le ballet semble froid et languissant. De son côté, un danseur aux « oreilles fausses et insensibles »[9] combine mal ses pas et l'étude la musique peut seule remédier à ce défaut. La précision d'oreille, talent rare et inné, apprécié chez Louise Courtois, Lany et Auguste Vestris, vivifie les mouvements et permet, selon Noverre, de maîtriser le contrepoint. Excepté en Provence, Languedoc et Alsace, ce tact semble plus rare en France que dans les pays germaniques, où une quantité d'excellents

[6] Contrat d'apprentissage signé devant notaires le 14 octobre 1741, Archives Nationales, MC, ET/II/486.
[7] J. G. Noverre, *Lettres*, p. 223.
[8] De La Cuisse, *Le Répertoire des bals, 3e volume du Recueil des Airs et figures des meilleures et plus nouvelles Contredanses* (A Paris, Chez Mlle Castagnerie, 1765) ; Dezais, Sr, *II. Recueil de Nouvelles Contredances mises en Chorégraphie* (Paris, Chez l'Auteur, 1712, rééd., London, The Noverre Press, 2010).
[9] J. G. Noverre, *Lettres*, p. 121.

musiciens compte les temps avec exactitude, d'où il résulte « un ensemble »[10] qui rend leurs contredanses plus variées et animées. Le bon danseur sait « se servir avec aisance des ressorts du cou-de-pied »[11], dont l'élasticité permet de marquer les temps par des pas saillants, pris à l'extrémité de la mesure, qui rendent perceptible la justesse musicale. Il suit la mesure en comptant, mais ses temps ne sont pas exactement ceux du musicien, car son imagination doit devancer ses jambes et anticiper les mouvements. Chacun varie les temps à sa manière et certains, comme Javilliers et la Camargo, inventèrent des pas particuliers.

Nouveautés et rivalités entre musique et danse

Danses du répertoire et nouveautés méridionales

Né au siècle des Lumières, le ballet, supérieur aux gestes conventionnels des mimes, dicte ses exigences à la musique. La danse est devenue essentielle, observe Noverre, permettant à notre opéra de dépasser les spectacles tragiques grecs, où le chant et la danse n'entretenaient aucun rapport, et même l'opéra italien, qui proscrit la danse. Réunis par l'imagination et le génie, les talents de la musique et de la danse offrent des tableaux sentimentaux, qui affectent les sens ; ces images, portées jusqu'au cœur, se communiquent à l'âme où leur harmonie procure du plaisir. Sans équivalent dans l'histoire, cet accouchement du ballet, « frère cadet »[12] de l'antique famille des chefs-d'œuvre enfantés par la poésie et la musique, ne s'est pas fait sans heurts.

Procédant à l'analyse conjointe de l'écriture musicale et chorégraphique, F. Lancelot distingua quinze types de danses – de longévité variable – relevant de l'esthétique de la *Belle Dance*[13]. Les

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 220.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 219.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 220-221.

danses nobles et sérieuses de la vieille cour (bocanes, canaries, passepieds et duchesse) disparaissent, la gaillarde décline rapidement, tandis que se maintiennent le branle, la courante et surtout le menuet, où s'illustre le maître à danser Marcel, dont Malpied immortalise le célèbre pas, et la gigue, pleine « de Nottes pointées & sincopées » (Brossard), qui conserve sa popularité tout au long de la Régence, mais n'est plus en usage en 1767 (Rousseau). La bourrée, plus rapide mais moins fréquemment utilisée que la gavotte sur les scènes d'opéra, fut remplacée par le rigaudon, rapide et fort en usage en Provence. Le pas de rigaudon, très gai, se retrouve jusque dans les contredanses.

La musique du Midi, dansante, dopée par de dynamiques corporations de musiciens et fréquemment pratiquée en plein air sous la forme de farandoles, gagne la scène parisienne sous l'influence d'A. Campra, J.C. Mondonville, N. Dalayrac et J. Joseph Mouret. Associé pendant sept ans au maître à danser Bertrand Rang, à Avignon, Mouret se taille une réputation de musicien des divertissements dansés lors des Grandes Nuits de Sceaux. Ses « sons brillants d'allégresse »[14] le placent « au premier rang des compositeurs de ballet »[15] et son premier opéra-ballet, *Les Festes ou le Triomphe de Thalie* (1714), enthousiasme par ses rigaudons, une ravissante musette en rondeau, une forlane et une chaconne, suivis d'une gigue. Facile à fredonner, sa musique passe au théâtre de la Foire, et il associe souvent son talent pour les airs à celui de Pécourt et Blondy pour les danses. Distincts des violons et hautbois qui font danser les notables, galoubets, flûtets et tambourins renforcent la couleur locale[16]. Conditionnés par la culture

[13] Francine Lancelot (dir.), *La Belle Dance, Catalogue raisonné fait en l'an 1995* (Paris, Van Dieren, 1996), p. XI.

[14] Voltaire, *Le Temple du Goût*, 1733, cité *in* Renée Viollier, *Mouret, Le musicien des grâces (1682-1738)* (Genève, Minkoff Reprint, 1976), p. 23.

[15] R. Viollier, *Mouret, op. cit.*, p. 43.

[16] Jean-Christophe Maillard, « Existe-t-il une musique méridionale française au temps d'André Campra ? », *in* Jean Duron (dir.), *André Campra (1660-1744). Un musicien provençal à Paris* (Paris, Mardaga-CMBV, 2010), p. 187.

chorégraphique, les musiciens parisiens reprennent les formules mélodiques provençales et les divertissements de marins se multiplient.

Suprématie du chef d'orchestre et des musiciens

Les maîtres à danser et joueurs d'instruments incarnent la fusion entre la musique et la danse au sein de la communauté de Saint-Julien, mais les tensions entre musiciens et danseurs se sont avivées à la fin du XVII[e] siècle, même si le maître à danser fait régulièrement appel à un violoniste lorsqu'il n'accompagne pas lui-même son élève.

Certaines rivalités sont nées par la quête d'une position hégémonique. Ainsi, les maîtres de ballet estiment que le génie du musicien est surestimé : la danse théâtrale doit beaucoup au librettiste, pourtant l'honneur du succès revient au musicien, mieux considéré que le poète. Ainsi, pour la tragédie lyrique, les louanges revinrent à Lully et les critiques à Quinault, et la réussite de l'opéra-ballet fut attribuée à Campra et non à La Motte. Les danseurs de l'Opéra sont soumis à la toute puissance du « souverain de l'orchestre »[17], qui lève et abaisse son bâton de mesure, tel un sceptre réglant tous les mouvements. En outre, il est plus difficile pour le danseur de faire valoir ses talents de compositeur de ballets à l'Opéra, que pour le musicien de faire écouter ses compositions.

Collaboration au profit de l'expressivité théâtrale

Exigences de la nouvelle danse théâtrale

Le siècle est marqué par plusieurs accélérations du rythme musical et chorégraphique. Les airs de vitesse de Lully mirent fin à la lenteur des airs de ballet, au risque de corrompre le bon goût de la danse et d'en

[17] Charles Dufresny, *Amusements sérieux et comiques* [1699], éd. Jacques Chupeau, *in Moralistes du XVII[e] siècle* (dir.) Jean Lafond (Paris, R. Laffont, 1992), p. 1011.

faire un *baladinage*, mais grâce aux talents de Pécourt, sa danse devint la danse noble de référence.

Soixante ans plus tard, cette musique parut froide et « tranquille »[18], car l'opéra-ballet procura à la musique les moyens de se varier « & à la Danse des occasions heureuses de se développer »[19]. D'abord jugée excessive, la danse au rythme des doubles croches devint bientôt « la perfection de l'Art »[20]. Bien composés, les mouvements s'enchaînaient promptement, et en dépit de la routine des directeurs de l'Opéra, la danse, « applaudie et protégée »[21], finit par se défaire des « entraves que la musique voulait lui donner » : le maître de ballet Lany fit exécuter les airs dans le style nouveau et en ajouta de modernes aux vieux opéras. Ainsi, Berton composa des airs de danse pour la reprise de *Thésée* en 1765. Cahusac observe que les nouveautés ne mettent aucunement l'art en danger et qu'il faut oser « danser sur notre Théatre mieux que du tems de Lully, que du tems de l'Abbé du Bos, que du tems même de Dupré, sans craindre de se rendre ridicule »[22].

Le ballet, frère aîné des arts, au service du drame

Par sa musique savante, variée et harmonieuse, J.-P. Rameau réveilla la danse, qui lui « doit tous ses progrès »[23]. La manière du maître de la danse théâtrale s'imposa à partir des *Indes galantes* (1735), démontrant que « les oreilles se forment petit à petit »[24]. Selon Noverre, la musique dansante doit être, comme dans *Pygmalion*, le poème écrit qui fixe et détermine les mouvements du danseur, chargé de retranscrire l'action par l'énergie et la vérité de ses gestes, par l'expression animée de sa

[18] J. G. Noverre, *Lettres*, p. 122.
[19] L. de Cahusac, *La Danse ancienne et moderne*, t. III, p. 164-165.
[20] *Ibid.*, Avant-propos, t. I, p. 30.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 121.
[22] *Ibid.*, Avant-propos, t. I, p. 30.
[23] J. G. Noverre, *Lettres*, p. 123.
[24] Voltaire, « À Thieriot, 11 septembre 1735 », cité *in* Catherine Kintzler, *Jean-Philippe Rameau. Splendeur et naufrage de l'esthétique du plaisir à l'âge classique* (Paris, Le Sycomore, 1983), p. 113.

physionomie. En stoppant brutalement la danse du couple de paysans grotesques venus admirer la Statue (mesure 33), et en faisant danser J.-B. Lany et P. Sodi, alors qu'il n'y a plus de musique, Rameau combine les stratégies musicale et chorégraphique pour souligner l'étrangeté de ces « sourds »[25]. Ils contrastent avec la Statue, qui comprend instinctivement les liaisons musicales entre gavotte, menuet, chaconne, loure, rigaudon, sarabande et tambourin, que lui apprennent les Grâces. Loin de séparer chaque numéro, le musicien compose une série de danses, éludant par exemple la cadence finale de la gavotte pour faire commencer le menuet : la danse en action enchaîne clairement les idées musicales.

Renouvelée par les frères Gardel, la danse nécessite une musique originale : « La danse de nos jours est neuve, il est absolument nécessaire que la musique le soit à son tour »[26], constate Noverre. Trop souvent inexpressive, elle est responsable des défauts du corps de ballet, et les compositeurs ne peuvent plus se contenter de faire « des Passepieds, parce que Mlle Prévôt les courait avec élégance »[27], ils doivent abandonner leurs modulations pauvres et tenir compte de la constitution et des performances des danseurs de leur temps. Assembler les notes selon les règles ne suffit plus, il faut inventer pour varier l'exécution et mieux intégrer les danses, comme André Campra dans *Les Festes vénitiennes*, ou Jean-Ferry Rebel qui, au lieu de dissocier les danses, en fit des symphonies chorégraphiques dans *Les Caractères de la danse*. En enrichissant la musique, Gossec, Floquet et Le Breton favorisèrent la danse en action, puis Gluck, Piccini et Sacchini surent écrire des ouvertures en rapport avec l'intrigue, adapter les concertos, sonates et symphonies aux façons de se mouvoir, s'écartant parfois de la valeur des notes et du rythme, au risque de compromettre le principe de la régularité des danses. Si Gluck ne respecte pas les règles de construction des menuets dans la pantomime

[25] D'après Hedy Law, « Tout dans ses charmes est dangereux : music, gesture and the dangers of French pantomime, 1748-1775 », *Cambridge Opera Journal*, XX/3 (novembre 2008), p. 246.
[26] J. G. Noverre, *Lettres*, p. 129-130.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

de *Céphale et Procris,* il synchronise unités musicales et gestes pour souligner musicalement le danger que les pièges de l'amour font courir aux nymphes de Diane.

Stigmatisant l'amour-propre du musicien, persuadé que son art lui donne préséance sur la danse, et qui craint de déroger en consultant le maître de ballets, Noverre affirme l'égalité des arts : seule la supériorité du talent et non la nature de l'art mérite d'être distinguée. Frères sur la scène théâtrale, les arts, doivent se prêter mutuels secours. Le rôle du maître de ballets se limite trop souvent à distribuer des pas de danse, dont les caractères sont ultérieurement adaptés à l'oeuvre. La vieille méthode consistant à placer la danse du premier danseur au dernier acte est aussi néfaste que celle des musiciens habitués à jouer pendant les entractes une musique qui, par un brusque passage du pathétique à l'enjoué, détruit l'émotion. Pour que le danseur, longtemps spécialiste d'une danse, devienne l'interprète d'un type de rôle, les compositeurs doivent composer dans un genre plus élevé que la « Paysannade »[28], et les danseurs rechercher davantage d'expression dans les bras, les yeux, la physionomie et les pas pour faire « entendre le cri de la nature »[29], comme Dauberval et M^lle^ Allard qui, sur une musique de Berton et Trial, ressuscitèrent, dans *Sylvie* (1765), la pantomime, dans un pas de deux en forme de scène dialoguée.

Noverre loue les talents de Pierre Gardel, fort bon violoniste et tout puissant maître des ballets de l'Opéra à la suite du décès de son frère, Maximilien, en 1787, mais sa révolution dans la danse fut-elle aussi heureuse que celle opérée dans la musique ? Les frères Gardel supprimèrent les paniers, tonnelets et masques conventionnels, réalisant dans la danse « la même révolution que Gluck et Sacchini »[30] dans la musique ; mais libérant le mouvement, ils ont multiplié les pas compliqués, comme la pirouette, et ont exigé que les pieds opèrent « avec autant de dextérité que les doigts ont à frapper sur les notes »[31].

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 157.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 193.
[30] G. D... y, « Un Ballet de Gardel », *L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, XXXVI-XXXVII^e^ vol., n° 668-788, 10 février 1898, p. 199-200.
[31] J. G. Noverre, *Lettres*, p. 168.

Faisant fi de la nature et de la physique, P. Gardel n'a pas mis la musique au service des danseurs, ni respecté les repos nécessaires. Il a contribué à ébranler le temple de Terpsichore, renversé par Vestris fils, qui amalgama les trois genres (noble, demi-caractère et comique). Courses, entrechats et cabrioles rendirent perceptibles les efforts des danseurs. Cette « nouvelle manière »[32], proche des caricatures des boulevards où s'illustrait Fossan, eut du succès ; mais maladroitement imitée, elle laissa la danse dans un « état pitoyable »[33], n'offrant que des trépignements accélérés. Ambitionnant que le ballet devienne « le frère aîné des autres arts »[34] en réunissant leurs perfections, Noverre – oubliant l'ouverture à l'innovation recommandée par Cahusac – demanda à Gardel de chasser ces abus, au nom de l'esthétique.

Union de la pantomime et des chœurs

Noverre privilégia la *pantomime* noble, et après sa collaboration avec Gluck pour la création d'*Alceste* à Vienne (1767), il y développa les chœurs, placés dans les coulisses, pour soutenir l'action dansée et pour renforcer le pathétique : dans *Les Danaïdes ou Hypermnestre*, il fit entendre, en 1769, les cris plaintifs des fils d'Egyptus, massacrés par leurs épouses. Il imagine aussi des « silences dans la musique »[35], qui produisent beaucoup d'effet, à condition d'en user avec parcimonie : l'oreille cessant tout d'un coup d'être frappée par l'harmonie, l'œil embrasse plus attentivement les tableaux ; cette suspension de la musique fait ressortir les morceaux qui la suivent. L'attente suscitée met en valeur l'action pantomime, qui touche le cœur par la vue autant que par l'ouïe : « La musique bien faite, doit peindre, doit parler ; la danse en imitant ses sons, sera l'écho qui répétera tout ce qu'elle articulera »[36]. Le travail du maître de ballet ne se limite plus à composer des danses mécaniques (passepieds, menuets), ni à arranger

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 299.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 113-114.
[34] *Id.*
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 242.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 71-72.

des pas et former des figures géométriques, c'est pourquoi il a besoin d'une musique expressive et variée, qui enflamme l'imagination. Ainsi, *La Toilette de Vénus, ou les Ruses de l'Amour*, qui résulte de la collaboration de Noverre avec Granier, comporte surtout de la danse en action, limitant à quelques passages, vers la fin, le ballet symétrique.

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Les écrits des maîtres à danser et des maîtres de ballet, exprimant le fantasme d'une origine commune, ancrée dans une antiquité mythique aussi prestigieuse pour la danse que pour la musique, présentent l'idéal d'une parfaite collaboration, qu'il convient de réinventer, entre la musique et la danse théâtrale. Indirectement, ils soulignent le contraste entre cette harmonie rêvée des arts et les rivalités ressenties entre les praticiens de la musique et ceux de la danse, que ce soit au sein de la communauté des maîtres à danser et joueurs d'instruments – rarement évoquée – et surtout sur les scènes théâtrales, où l'art de la danse, tout en bénéficiant du soutien du public, souffre d'une situation d'infériorité par rapport à la musique, à la fois en raison d'une dépendance rythmique, d'une notation moins performante et du fait de la toute puissance des musiciens et chefs d'orchestre. Notons qu'à contrepied de ce point de vue, la notoriété du maître de ballet l'emporte parfois, en fin de siècle, sur celle du musicien, puisqu'en présentant *Les Petits Riens*, le *Journal de Paris* annonce, le 12 juin 1778, le « ballet-pantomime de Noverre »… sans nommer Mozart !

Inscrivant leur réflexion dans une histoire des origines, les maîtres perçoivent des mutations radicales. Celles-ci ne sont pas forcément concomitantes en musique et en danse, c'est pourquoi au siècle des Lumières ces arts connurent des moments de phases harmonieuses, au temps de Lully et Beauchamp, puis des moments de décalage perceptibles d'une part lorsque la vivacité de la musique de Rameau ranima un art de la danse assoupi, et d'autre part lorsque les progrès de la danse, au temps des frères Gardel, exigèrent une musique de danse plus dynamique et expressive. À la préoccupation de la précision de l'ajustement des pas à la structure musicale, succède la

quête de l'expressivité des mouvements musicaux et chorégraphiques, exigeant la collaboration des adeptes des deux disciplines pour la réussite des représentations théâtrales. La naissance du ballet d'action, ressentie comme une révolution, confère davantage de dignité à la danse, légitimant une nouvelle alliance entre ces arts, pensée en termes d'égalité et de réciprocité. Leur rapport, qui n'est plus exclusivement mimétique, conjugue les deux formes d'expressivité dans un jeu toujours réinventé de concordances et distorsions impliquant de renoncer aux régularités rythmiques et aux grâces de la belle danse pour brosser par des gestes musicaux une nouvelle esthétique du tableau mouvant. La question qui anima les polémiques fut de déterminer jusqu'à quel point il était possible de faire parler la musique et la danse. La solution ainsi formulée par Noverre : « La musique est à la danse ce que les paroles sont à la musique »[37], conditionne à la fois la théorie de la musique dramatique et celle du ballet pantomime, qui agit sur l'esprit et plus seulement sur les sens.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 122

Mark Morris and Lou Harrison, "trans-ethnicism" and "elastic form"

By Dr. Sophia Preston

Mark Morris (b. 1956) has made more dances to the music of Lou Harrison (1917-2003) than to that of any other composer. Both men grew up on the North West Coast of America and both have spoken about experiencing aspects of Asian culture as part of their daily lives. They also both went on not only to undertake serious prolonged study in certain Asian forms of music and dance but also to incorporate elements of these forms into their work – a process that Harrison termed "trans-ethnicism". Harrison studied with the ultra-modernist composer Henry Cowell who was born in California in 1897 and who introduced Harrison to playing and writing music for modern dance, which became the mainstay of his early career. In the 1930s Harrison worked very closely with choreographers, fitting his music to the dance as it was being made, working in close collaboration but always letting the dance be made first. At this time there was an assumption that letting the dance lead in this way would give it autonomy and an independence that it would lack if it "slavishly" followed the music.[1]

Mark Morris has been accused of fitting his dance too closely to the music. In response, he has suggested that audiences think of his dance

[1] Louis Horst 'Composer/choreographer' in *Dance Perspectives*, 16, New York, 1963, pp. 6-8.

as coming from another culture, one in which it is assumed that the music and dance fit exactly together, having been created together according to "very strict and super-sophisticated" rules.[2] Given these attitudes to choreo-musical relationships shared by the two men, it would seem reasonable to assume that they would have worked extremely closely together, especially when Morris (most unusually) commissioned a piece from Harrison. An examination of Morris's work to Harrison's music reveals, however, that the two men never worked in a studio together. The ways in which they did collaborate and the ensuing relationships between dance and music in do, though, shed an interesting light on just how, and why, Morris's dance always relates so closely to the music he is working with. They also suggest some perhaps surprising conclusions about what it is that gives either dance or music autonomy or "the lead" in a dance.

Between 1987 and 2003 Mark Morris made eight dances to the music of Lou Harrison. Harrison was fond of calling himself a composer of the "Pacific Basin" and he often talked of how, as a young man in San Francisco, he would go to the Chinese opera every week. He remembered that 'you could walk in off the streets for twenty-five cents. By the time I was mature I had experienced a lot more Chinese than Western opera – scads more, by astronomical units'.[3] Morris, too, recalls the Chinatown of his hometown, Seattle, saying: 'My friends when I was growing up were all Japanese and Samoan. It was great. [...] When I was in the 5th and 6th grade I would go to the Bon dances with my Japanese American friends."[4]

References to Morris's dances almost always include some comment about just how closely he works with music. Rachel Duerden notes that:

[2] Mark Morris,Interview with Gigi Yellen as part of 'Seattle on the Boards' available at the Mark Morris Dance Group website (2007/8 undated but Morris is 51) n.p.
[3] Richard Kostelanetz 'A conversation in eleven-minus-one parts with Lou Harrison about Music/Theater in *Musical Quarterley* 76, 3, Autumn 1992, p.406-7.
[4] Morris, Interview with the author , Brooklyn, N.Y. n.p.

> [...] While Morris is widely acknowledged as a musically sensitive choreographer, he is also, because of his detailed attention to the musical score, sometimes accused of creating a "predictable" relationship between his choreography and the music he uses (sometimes referred to as "Mickey-Mousing").[5]

Inger Damsholt[6] even includes the words "Mickey Mouse" in the title of her detailed analysis of *Gloria* but suggests that, far from being trivial or predictable in the way the dance matches every nuance of the music, Mark Morris's choreo-musical aesthetic 'can be seen as polemical rather than as reactionary or sentimental pastiche'. The work done by Sophia Preston and Stephanie Jordan on *Dido and Aeneas*[7] reveals the very sophisticated way in which what at first sight appears to be a simple, not to say crude, gesture-for-word, step-for-beat, matching between the dance and the music, enables Morris to employ cross-rhythms, and "cross-meanings" to play with layer upon layer of reference and meaning.

Morris has professed himself to be a big fan of 'Mr Mouse's oeuvre', but in response to the pejorative use of the term "Mickey-Mousing", he has suggested that a good way to look at his work is to watch it:

> [...] The way that I have learned over the last 25 years to watch and listen to Indian [...] performing arts. [...] It wouldn't occur to you to dance a rhythm that's against the one that you're listening to. Although it's super-sophisticated and improvisatory, it's within

[5] Rachel Duerden 'Predictability and inevitability in dance-music relationships in Mark Morris's *Falling Down Stairs*' in *Dance Chronicle*, 31-2, 2008, p.246.
[6] Inger Damsholt 'Mark Morris, Mickey-Mouse and choreo-musical polemics' in *Opera Quarterly*, 22, 1, pp.4-21.
[7] Sophia Preston 'Echoes and pre-echoes: the displacement of time in Mark Morris's *Dido and Aeneas'*, *Dancing in the Millennium: An International Conference* (*SDHS, CORD, DCA, NDA*) 2000 *Washington July 19-23*, pp.344-348, and Stephanie Jordan 'Mark Morris marks Purcell: *Dido and Aeneas* as danced opera' in *Dance Research*, 19, 2, pp.167-213.

very, very strict, very, very big and strict rules. It's like of course when it goes up, you go up, when it goes down, you go down.[8]

Morris's love, and long experience, of South Indian Karnatic singing and dancing is similar to Harrison's engagement with both Korean and Indonesian music and, in all three cultures, as indeed in most non-Western dance cultures,[9] the assumption is that the music and dance work very closely with each other, both in terms of being created and practised together and in the relationships between them. Lou Harrison certainly worked in this way[10] and Morris, who described Harrison as one of 'three composers who have meant the most to me', added that one thing he appreciated from Harrison was the assumption of 'music and dancing belonging together, as being part of the same thing'.[11]

In 1935 Harrison took an extension course at the University of Berkeley called "Music of the Peoples of the World" taught by Henry Cowell. Cowell, the first of the "ultra-modernist" composers,[12] had brought back from Berlin copies of Hornbostel's collection of recordings of music from around the world and Harrison remembers falling in love with the sounds of the Indonesian gamelan.[13] At the

[8] Morris, Interview with Gigi Yellan.

[9] Paul M. Mason 'Music, dance and the total art work: choreomusicology in theory and practice', *Research in Dance Education,* DOI: 10.1080 14647893.2011.651116 http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2011.651116 last accessed Feb. 23, 2012.

[10] Lou Harrison *Music Primer* (New York: C.F. Peters, 1972).

[11] Mark Morris, Interview with Charlie Rose and James Levine on the Charlie Rose Show available at the Mark Morris Dance Group website http://markmorrisdancegroup.org/resources/media/3-interviews/5-charlie-rose-show, last accessed 4 September 20131 n.p.

[12] David Nicholls 'Henry cowell's "United quarter"' in *American Music* 13, 2, 1995, pp.195-217.

[13] A gamelan is an orchestra of tuned metallophones and gongs arranged in a hierarchy from the most important, and deepest, gong (the *gong ageng*) which is the most revered instrument and plays most infrequently, through the sarongs (metal keys suspended over a trough) which play the *balungan* (literally "skeleton", the melody from which everything else derives), to the *bonang panerus* a series of small bossed gongs resting on ropes strung over a rack that play the fastest decorative patterns.

same time, Harrison also experienced gamelan music live at the Treasure Island World's Fair which he described as 'wonderful – this whole island of beautiful things' adding that he 'began to read articles and transcribe things from gamelan'.[14]

One of the attractions for Harrison in gamelan music was that it was not in Equal Temperament. Equal Temperament is the system of tuning most of us (in the West) are used to hearing, in which all the twelve semitones within an octave are equal in size, which more or less distorts all the pure intervals of a harmonic series. Harrison early on found these distortions to be an ugly compromise and all his life tried to find, and work in, tuning systems and scales that employed "just intonation" using low-integer ratios to create pure harmonic intervals. One of the ways he did this was to build (and therefore be able to tune) percussion instruments.

The first piece of Harrison's music that Morris chose to choreograph, the *Four Strict Songs* (1955), includes tuned water bowls as well as strings, trombone, harp and male singers, all working in just intonation. They are called "strict" songs because the tuning remains fixed, in what Harrison called "Strict Style" and from this tuning he selected a different pentatonic mode for each of the four songs. Marc Perlman argues that Harrison, like many other composers and musicologists, identified 'just intonation with nature, and equal temperament with the corruptions of civilization'[15] and Harrison's text for the *Songs* draws on Navajo poetry extolling the "holiness", "nourishment" and "splendour" of the natural world.

The dance Morris made, *Strict Songs* (1987), reflects both the mood and the references to nature in Harrison's music. There are many movements that can be seen as animal-like and/or bird-like such as a little two-footed jump with arms outstretched like wings and the body "dipping" in a sideways curve. At one point all the dancers follow each other in a canon, slowing down through a long phrase to end standing

[14] Kostelanetz, 'A conversation' p.406.

[15] Mark Perlman 'American Gamelan in the Garden ofEden: intonation in a cross-cultural encounter' in *Musical Quarterly* 78, 3, pp. 510-555.

downstage-right. There they balance on one leg, the other lifted in parallel with foot to knee and both arms raised and bent in front, hand-to-shoulder, all facing in exactly the same direction, as groups of animals do at a water's edge or facing into sunshine or wind. The gradual slowing down of the whole group to stillness matches the way the music is narrowing down to one pedal note as the male chorus sings of the "unscented faun." The first woman breaks away from the group (even before the last man has finished the previous canon and joined the group) as the music expands in pitches again. She is followed by the other dancers one at a time, all running gently into a sideways leap that seems to hover in the air for a second as though in lazy flight, before running to upstage-left. It is impossible to articulate just what the movements might "mean" but they are performed with the same feeling of inevitability as the rest of the dance, a feeling that this is what these creatures do, this is how they move.

Throughout *Strict Songs* Morris thus displays a deep empathy with both the music and text reflecting both what Wilfrid Mellers[16] identifies as 'the causes Harrison's music espouses – peace, the rights of all creatures and forms of Nature to respectful coexistence, the need simultaneously to foster life and to accept death' and a contemporaneous review of the music as 'building a carpet of sounds that is serenely active [... with] a mood of quiet rejoicing' (Anderson cited in Miller and Lieberman.[17] This is, though, an example of Morris following his usual practice taking an existing piece of music and making a dance to it. Harrison, in the 1930s, had been used to working in a very different way, accompanying dance classes and writing music for dances by Tina Flade and Carol Beals. He would attend rehearsals while a piece was being created and, having learned both how to dance and how to notate dance, he would go away and create music to fit the dance.

[16] Wilfred Mellars 'A new everlasting feeling' in *Musical Times*, 138, 1851, 1997, p. 35.
[17] Leta Miller, and Frederic Lieberman, 'Lou Harrison and the American Gamelan' in *American Music* 17, 2, pp. 146-178.

In this way Harrison was, of course, echoing Louis Horst's contention,[18] that 'music can enrich the dance, but should not influence its creation. Dance is an independent art, and its motivation should be the feeling of the choreographer, not of the music'. In the same 1963 essay Horst described the process of working on *Frontier* with Martha Graham, saying that she 'choreographed the entire routine to counts.[19] After she showed me the dance I wrote the music to the counts she gave me.' On the other hand, another of Graham's composers, Norman Dello Joio (1963 p17), was horrified at such an idea saying:

> I could not compose according to a plan that had been pre-set, for I would have had to follow arbitrarily a scheme conceived by somebody else, a scheme conceived without musical values. It would have made me feel rather like a typewriter, just filling in empty spaces.[20]

Henry Cowell had similar concerns about holding on to musical values, in particular holding on to musical structures. Cowell wrote music for Graham and he was prepared for her to keep changing her ideas about a piece until quite late in the process. His only concern was that, in making last-minute structural changes, a choreographer might damage the internal structures of the music in terms of the proportions of a phrase, for instance. Cowell therefore developed the idea of "elastic form" – kits consisting of a number of phrases of music, each of the same length, that were written for a number of instruments, with instructions that they could be combined in many different ways, with repetitions decided by the choreographer. This gave the choreographer the opportunity to determine the length and structure of the dance but without risking a loss of musical structure.

[18] Horst, 'Composer/choreographer', p. 8.
[19] Horst, 'Composer/choreographer', p. 6.
[20] Norman Del Joio 'Composer/choreographer , *Dance Perspectives No. 16* (New York 1963) pp. 16-19.

Lou Harrison embraced the idea of "elastic form" establishing with his choreographers the building blocks of a piece which he called 'melodicles' and 'rhythmicles': tiny fragments of melody or rhythm,[21] only 2-5 notes long, which can be transposed, inverted, put into retrograde or put through any combination of these processes. Using these building blocks, Harrison was prepared to follow dance in performance, working on whatever instruments he was able to collect about him in the space and taking his cues from the dance. This does not mean, though, that he was improvising to the dance. Harrison was no more a fan of improvisation than Morris is, saying that, with group improvisation, 'one has to wait too long for anything interesting or beautiful to happen (when with a little planning both can be made to happen)'.[22]

When Morris commissioned a work from Harrison in 1997, (one of only a very few times he has commissioned music), Harrison sent him an "elastic form" kit precisely as Cowell had developed in the 1930s. Partly because of his distrust of improvisation and so that, as he said, 'we knew what to do each night',[23] Morris immediately constructed a combination and order of phrases for cello, piano and percussion which he set and then choreographed. *Rhymes with Silver* (the title is Morris's) has become the definitive version of the kit and has been recorded separately. Thus, even when commissioning music – when Harrison was offering to let the music fit the dance – Morris made sure that the music structure was established and set before making the dance.

Cowell and Harrison both got the very notion of "elastic form" from their study of a range of non-Western musics. The variable number of repeats (and changing orchestration) of a phrase in a kit is very similar to the cyclical structures of Indonesian gamelan music, with the *balungan* being repeated as many times, and at whatever speed, the drummer signals. The "very strict" rules that Morris talked about in

[21] Lou Harrison *Music Primer*, p. 1.
[22] Harrison *Music Primer*, p. 41.
[23] Morris, 'Interview with the author', n.p.

Karnatic singing and dance also apply in gamelan music, with the melodomic instruments (the gongs of various sizes) knowing at which points they should mark out the structure, and the embellishing instruments knowing how to construct their delicate decorations of pairs of notes, all from rules set up by the type of *balungan* it is.

For *World Power* (made in 1995), Morris selected two parts of Harrison's *Homage to Pacifica* (1991) and the 1981 version of *Auburn Robert* with added trumpet. It is clear from the opening of the dance that Morris is working very closely with the music on the immediately audible level but closer analysis reveals that he is reflecting what Harrison is doing musically on every level. The music of the first section "In honor of the divine Mr Handel" is in Harrison's favourite Rondo form and Morris matches this with a similar repeated return to one phrase of movement with a developing and changing alternate phrase in between. This means that he also repeats a dance phrase each time the *balungan* repeats. At the same time, however, the dance also changes with the changing orchestration so that when the harp repeats the *balungan* as a solo, the dance phrase changes. The dance then changes again – more profoundly – when the harp, continuing its solo, starts to play new material. When that new material repeats exactly, so does the dance (on the other side), marking the repeat more clearly, visually, than is audible in the music.

At the same time Morris reflects the music on much more detailed, inner and almost hidden levels. The *balungan* is, most unconventionally, in fourteen *gatras* when most traditional Indonesian gamelan music is in 4, 8 or 16 *gatras* and two of the *gatras* only have three beats instead of four. The other radical change Harrison makes from traditional gamelan music is to use all seven notes in the *pélog* scale – instead of selecting the usual five to make a pentatonic scale. As well as reflecting the shifting metre of the *balungan* in two three-beat "flicks" of the leg and arm, Morris also reflects the sevens and fourteens in having seven dancers in this section, joined by seven more at the end.

The next section, "In honor of Mr Mark Twain", starts with another extraordinary departure from traditional gamelan music in that some of

the *gatras* are made of five notes and some of six (instead of a regular four), which is beautifully reflected in the dance creating the same type of "active serenity" so often talked about in relation to Harrison's music. This section contains Mark Twain's protest against the war in the Philippines and Morris sets this with the same very literal representation of words that he used in *Dido and Aeneas* which is both crude (reflecting the crude brutality of the "World Power") and "knowing" (like the text) at the same time. Thus the two male dancers "narrating" the text with literal, referential, gestures not only twirl long imaginary moustaches like Victorian businessmen but also, anachronistically, mime mobile-phone calls.

The final section of the dance is far more abstract being a series of arrangements of the same two phrases of dance repeated over and over (but never the same twice) to the repeats of the *balungan*. This creates a kaleidoscopic effect as the phrase, and floor patterns, shift and splinter with reflections suddenly emerging across the stage unexpectedly, which exactly complements what Miller and Lieberman (1998: 207) describe as Harrison's 'kaleidoscopic process that continuously varies the composite picture'.

As well as mirroring Harrison's compositional process and its resultant appearance, Morris also employs the same incorporation of elements of Indonesian culture in the movement. The dancers in *World Power* take up positions and movements from both Indonesian Wayang Kulit (the highly popular shadow-puppet drama) and Legong dance. Since both men were borrowing such isolated elements from other cultures in earlier works, before they had undertaken serious study, and both mixed them with western dance and music, it might seem that they could both be accused of Orientalism (in Edward Said's use of the term) or at least of cultural appropriation. Said's contention, however, is that Orientalism always casts the culture it is referring to as Singular, Other and Inferior (1978). None of these attitudes is true of either Morris or Harrison. Not only are they scrupulous about recognising that they only have an awareness of a small part of the complexity and plurality of the culture they are drawing from, they have also both genuinely found much about that culture to be superior to the West.

They don't even particularly think of Asian music and dance as "other", having grown up with aspects of it. (Harrison famously referred to Europe as "North West Asia").

There could be grounds for an accusation of cultural imperialism or at least cultural appropriation if either Morris or Harrison did the equivalent, in Harry Partch's words, of 'bringing an oriental melody home to crucify it "for violin and piano"'[24] (2000:183). Harrison does mix Western and Eastern instruments, but he retunes the Western instruments to fit with the Eastern ones and he is passionate about hybridity, saying emphatically in his *Music Primer*, 'don't underrate hybrid musics BECAUSE THAT'S ALL THERE IS'.[25] What both Morris and Harrison are doing (and this is one of the many ways in which Morris is in complete accord with Harrison's music) is (to use Harrison's phrase) 'laying out their toys on a wide acreage'.

In conclusion, then, there is sometimes an assumption that the closest form of collaboration between music and dance comes about when the choreographer and composer are in the same studio working together. Looking at Morris's work to Harrison's gamelan, or gamelan-inspired, pieces, however, it can be seen that the remarkably close collaboration between dance and music comes about through what was in fact a distant practical working relationship between the two men, for Harrison unusually so when working with dance. In terms of autonomy and structure, Morris even took the "elastic form" Harrison gave him and set it before embarking on the dance. The fact that both men were drawing on the music and dance of other cultures, and indeed in cultures where the two are generally considered to be practically indivisible, altered neither Morris's usual practice of making dance to a set piece of music nor the separation of the roles of each artist.

There was also an assumption, in 1930s modern dance, that if dance was made to existing music then it was somehow beholden to it – that the only way to give dance autonomy was to make it first and to let it

[24] Harry Partch, *Bitter Music* Edited with an introduction by Thomas McGeary (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), p. 183.
[25] Harrison *Music Primer*, p. 45.

determine the structure, focus and intention of the piece. Of course, if followed to its logical conclusion, this notion that working from an existing piece of music will shoe-horn the dance into a particular mould assumes that the music is determining the dance's response. Morris often speaks against this very idea, saying[26] (2007/8 n.p.):

> it's not like there's a dance in the music that someone just has to decode [...] "waiting to be unlocked", like that fake story about Michelangelo releasing something from a block of marble. [...] I always cite the case of my dances that I choreographed to the Brahms *Liebeslieder Waltzer* and *Neue Liebeslieder Waltzer*. Why aren't they identical to that same music choreographed by Mr Balanchine?

As often, and thoroughly, as Morris reflects every nuance of the music in his dance, so does he equally often pull away from it, playing with the deviation from expectations to make subtle and sophisticated points. He is in effect setting up 'very, very big and strict rules' so that he can work within them to 'make interesting and beautiful things happen'.

[26] Morris, Interview with Gigi Yellan, n.p.

Musicalising the Gesture

The Challenge of 'Executing the Movements to Elucidate the Music' in Choreographing the World-premiére of Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Mittwoch aus Licht / Wednesday from Light*

By Marie Louise Crawley

Last year, I had the enormous privilege of working as both Assistant Choreographer and dancer on the world-première of Karlheinz Stockhausen's 1997 opera, *Mittwoch aus Licht / Wednesday from Light*, which was presented in August 2012 in the vast halls of an inner-city warehouse, in Birmingham, UK, by the Birmingham Opera Company as part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad Festival. The opera was directed by Graham Vick, with movement direction/choreography by Ben Howell and musical direction by Kathinka Pasveer, Stockhausen's long-term collaborator. *Mittwoch* is often referred to as 'the helicopter opera', because one of its sections, the famous *Helikopter-Streichquartett / Helicopter String Quartet*, calls for the quartet's four musicians to each play from four separate helicopters flying above the performance space, with sound and visuals relayed back live to the performance hall; for those of us involved in choreographing and staging the production, this section, although an immense technical challenge, would be the least complex, choreographically-speaking, of the whole opera. Yet *Mittwoch* is much more than its helicopters: four other movements make up this epic five-hour piece – *Mittwochs-Gruss / Wednesday Greeting, Welt Parlament / World Parliament, Orchester-Finalisten / Orchestra Finalists* and *Michaelion* – all of which were to be staged with over seventy actors and dancers, in addition to the choirs and instrumentalists, and all requiring movement direction in accordance

with extraordinarily precise indications written in the score. As soon as we entered rehearsal, it became immediately evident that, due to the importance which Stockhausen assigned to spatial movement in his music, he often worked exactly as a choreographer would, materialising the music in space. The importance of the spatialisation of the music led to the composer notating very precisely gesture and movement in his scores – not only did he seem to be composing the music, but he was, quite literally, also writing the 'dance'. If this did indeed turn out to be the case with *Mittwoch*, what place would remain for the choreographer? What place for creating our own danced responses within the composer's precise framework while still adhering faithfully to what was already 'written' in the score.

When asked in a series of interviews with journalist Mya Tannenbaum in 1981[1] of what dance meant to him, Stockhausen replied that:

> Dance is everything that a human being is able to do musically with any part of the body [...] Every gesture of the body must be made consciously, since it connects with a musical layer, articulated rhythmically, which the instruments represent. Nothing to do with a choreography created on the spot; the movements connect directly with the musical adventure. The body of the gifted person, besides having all the technique necessary for dancing, is able to 'musicalise' the gesture in a visual form that is truly valid. And this is dance. What I mean is that dance expresses musical structure in a fundamental way. It expresses it for the joy of the eyes.

Stockhausen is of course not the first composer to suggest the potential for musicalisation of the gesture in a visual form. Indeed, as Katarzyna Marczak observes[2], Igor Stravinsky, in his *Poetics of Music*,

[1] Mya Tannenbaum, *Conversations with Stockhausen*, trans. by David Butchart (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), pp.58-9

[2] Katarzyna Marczak, 'Theatrical elements and their relationship with music in Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Harlekin* for Clarinet' (doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, 2009), p. 29

makes similar observations to those expressed by Stockhausen, where he writes:

> I repeat, one sees music. An experienced eye follows and judges, sometimes unconsciously, the performer's least gesture. From this point of view one might conceive the process of performance as the creation of new values that call for the solution of problems similar to those which arise in the realm of choreography. In both cases we give special attention to the control of gestures. The dancer is an orator who speaks a mute language. The instrumentalist is an orator who speaks an unarticulated language.[3]

As Marczak goes on to explain, for both Stravinsky and Stockhausen, a very active 'consciousness of movement is implied by any musical performance.'[4] Furthermore, for Stockhausen, movement arises out of the musical structure itself or is added to it for further expressive clarification or emphasis. This is the primordial lesson for any dancer or choreographer working on a Stockhausen piece: body motion and music are absolutely, intrinsically interconnected, and movement / gesture is 'an additional means of clarifying and emphasising aspects of musical structure and meaning, exactly as tempo and dynamics do in more traditional music.'[5] To use Stockhausen's own words, one must 'execute the movements so as to elucidate the music.'[6]

[3] Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*., trans. by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970) p.17

[4] Katarzyna Marczak, 'Theatrical elements and their relationship with music in Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Harlekin* for Clarinet' (doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, 2009), p. 30

[5] Ibid, p. 31

[6] Eggebrecht, Hens Heinrich, ed. Karlheinz Stockhausen im Musikwissenschaftlichen Seminar der Universität Freiburg. Br. 3. bis 5. Juni 1985. (Murrhardt: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlag-Gesellschaft, 1986), p. 51

Already by the early 1970s, Stockhausen incorporated dance and movement in his compositions for instrumentalists – which were very precisely notated – such as *Harlekin* for clarinet, *Der Kleine Harlekin* and *Inori* for orchestra and two dancer-mimes, where seventy minutes of exactly notated prayer gestures are composed with precise notation for the pitches, gestures and dynamics of all the movements. *Inori* is an exercise for the soloist (the dancer) in physically becoming the music – in becoming its rhythms, dynamics and pitches. The *Vortrag über Hu* (*Lecture on Hu*), which accompanies *Inori*, explains the notation of gestures for it, but the same notation also applies to many of the later works in the *Light* cycle, where most actions and movements for the instrumentalists, dancers and singers are notated, and often in minute detail. In the score of *Examen* from *Donnerstag aus Licht / Thursday from Light,* for example the dancer's part is notated in three different staves – one line for the feet, one for the right arm and one for the left arm. All rhythms, pitches and dynamics are prescribed – and, as Kathinka Pasveer pointed out to me, 'it is very difficult for a dancer to learn this precision as very often dancers cannot read musical scores.'[7] The stage is divided in a "grid" for the dancer so that every position of the dancer corresponds to a pitch in the score and to the prescribed dynamic.

The same is true for *Vision* from *Thursday from Light* for dancer, trumpet and tenor, where every opening of the gestures, level of the gestures, placement of both arms (polyphonic) or placement for the interpreters on stage is exactly notated *Mittwoch* is no exception to this. Gestures for the singers and the instrumentalists are clearly notated in the score, and on a first reading, choreographer Ron Howell and myself realised that our primary job in choreographing the piece would have to be to ensure that these prescribed gestures were absolutely adhered to and very present within the work. The *World Parliament* section, the scene where a United Nations-style council debates the nature of love

[7] Personal email correspondence between the author and Kathinka Pasveer, September 2012

a capella, was a prime example of this. In our staging of this section, thirty-six singers and thirty-six actors sat perched atop yellow ladders in an oval with the audience seated on the floor in the middle. The restriction of the ladders meant that in this section all movement direction would of course concentrate on the gestures written in the score. For example, at measure 221[8], the basses mark their pitch changes by lifting and lowering the left hand, while the tenors mark their dynamic changes using a different set of specific gestures with their left hand – the scales of hand and body here mirror the structure of the music, a phenomenon first pioneered in *Inori*. Such gestures are clearly indicated in the score; the gesture is part of the musical structure to be adhered to by any choreographer or director staging the opera. This is just one example of many. Yet in this section, we went on to develop this mirroring of sound with gesture beyond what was written in the score. For example, at measure 106[9] we asked the sopranos to mirror their vocal modulations with related gestures, creating a sustained gestural movement that directly reflected what they were doing with their voices, and which then developed further into writing the words 'love', 'amour', 'liebe', or even drawing a heart in the air. This was an attempt to develop Stockhausen's prescribedgesture and give it our own choreographic stamp.

Adhering to prescribed gesture and movement continued in the climactic *Michaelion*, a choral and orchestral scene, set in an intergalactic parliament where delegates wait for the coming of the Operator, who emerges from the skin of a dancing camel, to interpret messages from space via a short-wave radio and transmits them to singers who take the messages, in various dialects, out into the world. Again, the movements of the instrumentalists and the chorus (entrances and exits, positions, orientations in the performance space) were already very clearly notated in the score. In the *Bassetsu-Trio*, where a trio of trumpet, trombone and basset-horn are required to revolve

[8] Stockhausen, Karlheinz, 1995, *Welt-Parlament* [*World Parliament*], [Score for choir *a capella* / sound proj.], Kürten : Stockhausen-Verlag, 1995, p.72
[9] Ibid, p. 37

around the space, the direction 'moving in a stylised choreography'[10] is notated in the score. In addition, part of the musical score at this point is a series of diagrams explaining the prescribed movements in direct correlation to the music. In staging the trio, we of course had to adhere to what was written but rather than have the trio simply walk around the space, we placed all three musicians on their own revolving platforms which were then manipulated by other moving performers, designed to give the effect of revolving spheres of music. This motif of revolution also prefigured the sextet that concludes *Michaelion*, where six singers take their messages received from the Operator out into the world, rotating around the space, singing of 'the sound of the galaxies, music of rotating tones'.[11]

So far, so prescribed - but the part of *Michaelion* which presented us with quite a challenge was the afore-mentioned dancing camel, on first view a glorified pantomime camel but who has ten minutes of complex movement. The part of the camel is performed by two dancers inside a large puppet. The general movement and arc of this section, *Luzikamel*, is indeed once more prescribed, but we seemed to be being given greater choreographic freedom as the precise movement directions in the score were much looser than elsewhere. We soon learned however that there was a caveat to this freedom – for the camel is not just a dancing one, but a singing one, the embodiment of the voice of the Operator (the bass) who is singing offstage until, by theatrical sleight of hand, he emerges from the camel. Our greatest challenge then – not only did the dance have to be comic and entertaining· it also had to be perfectly synchronous with the musical structure of the bass part, in mood and in tempo.

Rehearsals of *Luzikamel* began with intense study of the score, noting down exact musical references for the perfect timing for every

[10] Stockhausen, Karlheinz, 1997, *Michaelion* (4th scene of *Mittwoch aus Licht*), [Score for choir / bass with short-wave receiver / flute, basset-horn, trumpet, trombone / a synthesizer player, tape / 2 dancers / sound proj.] , Kürten : Stockhausen-Verlag, measure 387, p. 94

[11] Ibid, measures 519-22, p. 120

gesture, gestures meticulously notated by the composer in the score from the camel's very entrance at measure 110[12] – at what point musically the camel's head is visible, then its forequarters etc. – to precise instructions for hoof-stamping, leg extensions and changes in profile. In the camel's first moments on stage, these directions are very precise: when to lift the hind left leg, when to turn, when to stop motionless – and all are absolutely connected to the music, for the movement is designed by Stockhausen to enhance what is happening musically. After the camel defecates seven planets, has its hooves polished to gold and drinks some champagne, follows the camel's big 'dance' section, the *Kamel-Tanz* (measures 194-250[13]), and here Stockhausen's directions become looser and more general. General moods are prescribed – 'an artful dance of three minutes' duration, until ecstatic'[14] with the camel 'proud, like a prancing horse'[15], 'suddenly supple like a ballerina'[16], 'snappy like an automaton'[17] – but actual moves are not, and the same is true of the following section, the Tierkampf (measures 251-262[18]), where the camel performs a bullfight with the trombone player, which is musically demonstrated, with the trombonist playing the matador and Luzikamel the bull. The camel dance and bullfight sections were where, choreographically, we could really begin to play. Within the camel dance, the dressage section saw camel become horse, performing Graham-style prances with neck lifted high in the air; in the ballet section, Luzikamel dutifully performs her pliés and battements before going into a series of bourrés complete with fluttering eyelashes and tail fluttering for *Swan Lake* arms; the 'snappy' movement was inspired by hip-hop movement vocabulary and ankle/foot isolations. We even tried a moonwalking camel in

[12] Ibid, p. 29
[13] Ibid, pp. 46-60
[14] Ibid, measure 202, p. 48
[15] Ibid, measure 226, p. 53
[16] Ibid, measure 231, p. 54
[17] Ibid, measure 235, p. 56
[18] Ibid, pp. 60-62

rehearsal, but despite feeling choreographically freer, when we left the studio and started rehearsal onstage with the trombonist and the bass singer, we recognised immediately the absolute connectivity between sound and movement that had to be established, between camel's voice and camel's body. The dance had to match the bass voice absolutely, especially rhythmically – a challenge for the dressage section which had to be re-choreographed accordingly. The Graham prances stayed, but their rhythmical pattern was modified to better match the bass' rhythm. Similarly, the automaton section had to be pared down and the moonwalk had to go. The challenge continued further in the *Stierkampf*, the bullfight 'duet' between trombone and bass (or between trombonist and camel). Each party, whether dancer, singer or instrumentalist, had to know each other's part absolutely. While we relished the theatrical freedom to choreograph the bullfight, again choreography had to absolutely match the musical structure with the bull-camel's charges directly matching the trombone's *glissandi*. As choreographers and dancers, our job was to enable all the movement to happen as Stockhausen prescribed without the music being compromised in any way.

So far it would seem that, despite the occasional moment of looser prescription on the part of the composer, we were essentially dealing with a work that seemed on the surface to be affording us very little choreographic freedom. We could not dispute Stockhausen's vision of the connectivity to music and gesture, but I would like to conclude by looking at the other side of the coin – moments where movements were not prescribed by the composer, but where, whilst staying mindful of the important lessons we were learning from Stockhausen about how absolutely connected any movement had to be structurally to the music, we could begin to apply his vision to our 'own' choreography – moments such as *Wednesday Greeting*, an electronic sound-tape, which Stockhausen originally requested to be played in the foyer prior to *World Parliament*, but which we performed as part of the opera, as its opening section. Here there was no movement notation in the score to be adhered too, and we had full reign choreographically – within the proviso of only having movement if it elucidated what was happening

musically. As the opening to the piece, we wanted to introduce the spectators to themes governing the whole of the *Light* cycle and of *Mittwoch* specifically – rather general images of air, flight, ascension, harmony/discord, transmission/reception of sound – as well as brief allusions to the archetypal characters of the cycle – Eve, Lucifer and Michael the archangel. The production was to begin in complete darkness, with sudden illuminations and flashes of light revealing highly-charged tableaux – a boy running through the space flying a kite, a young woman opening a box out of which floated a balloon, a multitude of pregnant women walking inexorably to men with outstretched arms, free-runners running up walls and clambering around the urban space of the warehouse, along pipes and ledges, archangels looking down from on high. There was the striking image of thirty performers, either alone or in pairs, manipulating huge upended umbrellas, transformed into satellites, tuning in to the sound world all around them. This transmission/ reception image was designed to point the audience towards the sound universe that the opera they that were about to watch inhabits. For me, here the 'tuning-in' gesture did, quite absolutely, elucidate the musical universe unfolding.

In *Wednesday Greeting*, we also worked on several more pure contemporary dance, contact- work tableaux – and here the task was more complex. Images were more sustained, the musical time given to these moments was longer, so the challenge was all the greater. Dancers had to absolutely inhabit the musical world structurally and we lost a rather beautiful contact duet at a late stage in rehearsal, because suddenly we saw that the movement was doing nothing to reflect or amplify what was happening musically. At such a moment, there was no real connection between the music and the dance, and the duet, although beautiful on its own, seemed suddenly superfluous, having no place within the music. At that point, we realised that the music alone in the darkness was enough. This episode sums up the precarious balancing act that we had to achieve throughout the whole choreographic process – knowing when to introduce gesture and movement to elucidate the music, and for that we often but not

exclusively had Stockhausen's own prescriptions as a guide, but also knowing when to steer away from movement when that movement was not, or could not, be wholly connected to the musical universe. Overall, I think we achieved this balance, and the process certainly taught me as a dancer and choreographer how to truly listen so that movement can properly inhabit a musical structure. It was indeed a challenging process of fine-tuning, of taking on board Stockhausen's prescription whilst letting one's choreographic imagination take flight within his wider vision of the absolute interconnectedness of music and gesture. Above all, for myself as a dancer, it was a valuable lesson in what musicality actually means for the performer. It is not about being *on* the music, but rather being *within* the music, and yet more besides; it is about *becoming* the music.

Soundpainting: navigating creativity[1]

By Dr.Helen Julia Minors

In discussing and creating theatre works which utilise both music ande dance there is a division, not only in the type of language we apply which can formk both a 'struggle' and a 'problem',[2] but also in the sensory divide, in that we hear music and see dance. The creative language known as Soundpainting, developed by Walter Thompson since the 1970s, exposes, I propose, many of these intermedial problems by utilising them at the very core of his artistic philosophy. These problems are not seen here as a negative construct but as a challenge to reflect upon the nature of the art forms and the ways in which we as

[1] I owe thanks to Walter Thompson for allowing me to film an interview with him (2011) and for answering an extensive questionnaire (2010), both of which are forthcoming at http://www.sounpainting.com. I am grateful for his support since accepting an invitation to be an artist in residence at Roehampton University in October 2008, and for accepting an invitation to bring the International Soundpainting Think Tank to Kingston University in July 2013. The movie, shot during the Think Tank, involving the author and Thompson alongside another 30 Soundpainters, is forthcoming in October 2013 and will be available via open source portals including http://www.soundpainting.com, a two-day conference on the relationship(s) between theatre dance and music held on 9th-10th November 2012 in Paris for inviting me to present this paper accompanied by audio-visual examples and demonstration.

[2] Stephanie Jordan (2000), *Moving Music: Dialogues with Music in Twentieth Century Ballet* (London: Dance Books), p. ix.

artists are able to communicate across disciplines, specifically within this creative method. Soundpainting sets out a series of propositions, in which the Soundpainter (who embodies the role of the composer, the choreographer and the director) requests something of the performers. It is then the performers' responsibility and duty to respond with some content: in order to offer a response the performer must first interpret the Soundpainters proposition, consider what would be a suitable response via the medium of their art form, and then put that response into action within the context of the performing group. The group could encompass any range of artists in any number and any layout.

Soundpainting is an interdisciplinary sign language which is intended to be read by any art form, in which signs are read across disciplines (for example, the style gesture 'Minimalism'[3] is interpreted by all the arts), although there are art specific gestures within the language to identify particular performers and art specific features (for example, 'Dancer 1'). The method constructs a work in the moment: the length, style, structure and complexities of the piece are not predetermined (though short passages can be prepared to use within the piece, known as 'Palettes'). Rather the unknown and the risk of attempting to guide musicians, dancers, and by extension actors, comedians and visual artists, in real time, are acted out for all to see and hear. The problems are not rehearsed out of the performance; rather, they are shared to foster malleable performative relationships.

By surveying the potential divisions between music and dance, I aim to explicate how the Soundpainter (using the Soundpainting language) works with dancers and musicians to actively navigate the divisions, namely across their medial, language and sensory domains. Previous publications has explained how the syntax of the language functions,[4] the role gesture plays when communicating across and

[3] Names of Soundpainting gestures are presented in quotation marks and are capitalised. The main 15 gestures which are referred to are listed in Appendix one, to illustrate the language syntax and to define the specific gestures.

[4] Helen Julia Minors (forthcoming), 'Gesturing across the divide: unities and disunities in creating music-dance pieces', ed. Ashanti Pertlow, *Congress for Dance Research Proceedings 2012.*

between music and dance in Soundpainting[5] and the ways in which Soundpainting uses notions of space and embodiment (after the philosopher Certeau) as central philosophical devices.[6] Here I explore how a Soundpainting (the work) is created. What issues must a Soundpainter utilise to navigate across music-dance in order to create a piece?

'One of the wonderful aspects of Soundpainting is that an ensemble may comprise any number of musicians [or other artists].'[7] The 'universal live composing sign language',[8] Soundpainting, is accessible to any artist, in any combination; as such it breaks down traditional divisions and binaries. It aspires to be all inclusive, and although there are standards to be upheld, as in any performance, the method allows for anyone of any background, level, or any artist with any art medium to become involved. It can allow professionals, amateurs and beginners to work together with knowledge of only a handful of signs which can be taught while performing together. In many performances the audience is signed towards the end of a work, to incorporate them into the piece. Interactivity is all-important.

Christopher Small's work on the meaning of performance bears affinity with the Soundpainting approach, in that it reassesses the role of music within a larger art context. Specifically, Small claims that music is a verb, and that as musicians of any level, experience or skill we are 'musicking' together: 'To music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening by rehearing or practicing, by providing material for performance..., or by

[5] Helen Julia Minors (2012), 'Music and movement in dialogue: exploring gesture in soundpainting' *Les Cahiers de la société québécoise de recherche en musique,* 13 (1-2), pp. 87-96.

[6] Helen Julia Minors (2013), 'Soundpainting: Space and Embodiment', in *Composer/Choreographer/Performer Collaboration,* edited by Osvaldo Lorenzo Glieca and Marilyn Wyers (Cambridge:Cambridge Scholar Publishing).

[7] Walter Thompson (2005), *Soundpainting: The Art of Live Composition, Workbook 1,* [with DVD] (New York: Walter Thompson Orchestra), p. 9.

[8] Ibid., p. 2.

dancing.'[9] In a similar vein, Walter Thompson urges Soundpainters (the people who lead the Soundpainting ensemble) to work across artistic media 'in the moment.'[10] Soundpainting is a process whereby we make art, we perform, we listen and watch each other in order to from relationships, some of which are directed by the Soundpainter, but this is all rehearsed and edited in the moment, bearing all aspects of the creation of a work, its initial ideas, edited moments and overall nurturing, in the live performance space, in front of an audience. As Thompson notes though, in Soundpainting there is 'no mistake'[11]: the performer is 'liberated' from the concept of an inaccurate rendering of a score or choreographic direction as the responsibility for editing the piece remains with the Soundpainter. It is intended to 'keep it alive' and to ensure 'creativity is never stifled.'[12]

This philosophy is a complex one as the signs can be misread by a performer but whatever they offer they must continue playing/dancing. Once they enter the performance they must remain unless directed to 'Change', 'Modify' or to end, 'Off'. Moreover, if the signs are not seen by the performer (as when a dancer has their back to the Soundpainter) they should not respond and continue with what they were doing. Thompson clarifies in his third Workbook (which focuses on signing dancers and actors) that it is a 'challenge to learn to compose when the performers moving see you sign and when they don't. It is very important [the Soundpainter] become[s] comfortable making composition choices knowing one or more of the performers cannot see [the Soundpainter] sign the phrase.'[13]

[9] Christopher Small (1998), *Musicking: The Meanings of Performance and Listening* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press), p.9. Original emphasis.
[10] Walter Thompson, 'Questionnaire: Written and Conducted by Helen Julia Minors', Kingston University, London.
[11] Thompson, *Soundpainting, Workbook 1,8.* Ibid., p.2.
[12] Walter Thompson, 'Interview: 25th June 2011, conducted by Helen Julia Minors' at the Union des Musiciens de Jazz, Paris; Ibid. Questionnaire 2010.
[13] Walter Thompson (forthcoming October 2013), *Soundpainting: The Art of Live Composition. Workbook 3* (New York: Walter Thompson Soundpainting Orchestra). Thanks to Walter Thompson for sending extracts by email (October 2012).

It is representative of the ways in which this sign language functions. The Soundpainter uses coded signed gestures (which principally use the hands and arms but relies on the location of the legs and feet to denote the point of reaction) which are interpreted in music, dance, movement, speech or visual art. But the gestures rely on metaphor and analogy. High and low 'Long Tones' for example are interpreted as pitch by the musicians but as height indicators by the dancers.

The language of Soundpainting allows time for the performer without the interaction of the Soundpainter: the Soundpainter is not constantly signing. The Soundpainter signs a phrase and then waits for the response, listening and watching, before choosing to adapt and develop the material. The Soundpainter should 'impose, then compose', in a way that 'guards' the dialogue and acts as a catalyst for further dialogue between the artists. 'Soundpainting is a kind of give and take' where everyone has the opportunity to impose within the ensemble, even though the role of the Soundpainter is one of a composer, choreographer, director, but also one of a guardian of interart dialogue.[14]

The directions of the Soundpainter, which start and end phrases while occasionally offering adaptations mid phrase, contrasts to the potential continuous performance of the musicians and dancers and the continuous beating of a conductor. Thompson noted that Soundpainting acts like a 'conversation', but in many ways it is far more complex.[15] Verbal/Textual language names the gestures and provides some essence of meaning while gestural language projects the signs. The performers use a variety of artistic gestures to respond, but moreover and of significance, they are frequently asked to 'Relate To' one another, in a variety of ways, as such they not only interpret verbal and coded gestural languages but also the un-coded bodily and musical gestures of each other. The conversation becomes much more akin to a

[14] Thompson 'Interview: 25 June 2011': 00.22.20-00.23.15.
[15] Walter Thompson (2009), *Soundpainting: The Art of Live Composing. Workbook 2* (New York: Walter Thompson Soundpainting Orchestra), p.12.

debate, a group dialogue or even an argument. Small is likewise aware of the complexities of language and posits that a 'paralanguage'[16] when is created when musicking due to the reliance on sight and sound, gesture and verbal language — to take action within this context.

All forms of language 'bring into existence a set of relationships'[17] which are varied and often causal. The Soundpainter and performer relate via the reciprocal dialogue as proposition is delivered a respond. Likewise another direction as to how to develop or treat the material being performed is imposed. The Soundpainter must relate to the individuals, to sub groups and to the group as a whole. The performers must relate to the Soundpainter, but also their stage neighbours, their sub group member (for example, 'Brass Player', 'Female' 'Dancers', 'Male' 'Actors'), across groups and to the whole ensemble. If musicking is an active doing of music (and by extension the other arts), Soundpainting is an activity, a way 'to music' (to borrow Small's verb). It is by doing in a collective setting that we 'learn' and 'explore' the language.

It is interesting to bring to bear Descartes' philosophical assertion that there is a split between mind and body, not to interrogate his philosophical stance which has hotly been contested, but rather to open new questions and insights into Soundpainting. The Cartesian split, which denotes the separation of mind (thought) and body (material substance, in a place and space), suggests that there is an inner personal dimension which works in parallel to the external world.[18] Although Descartes did not detail how these worlds communicated, it suggests that the performer, here in Soundpainting, is a divided individual. The thoughts and ideas of the Soundpainter are not displayed in their entirety to the group, but there is an active-bodily presence, and likewise the same for each performer. These internal thoughts, in the

[16] Small, *Musicking*, p.62.
[17] Ibid., p.50.
[18] Gordon Baker and Katherine J. Morris (1996), *Descartes' Dualism* (New York: Routledge), p.7.
[19] Thompson, 'Interview:25 June 2011): 00.03.28-00.03.38.

realm of the mind, are where we ask ourselves as Soundpainters 'W[illegible] we make certain choices in imposing-composing in the moment.

Thompson is very clear about the Soundpainter's role: 'it is one person up there, making the choices, setting the framework... Performers play within that framework. Then, the Soundpainter decides what to do next.'[19] During a filmed interview in June 2011, held in Paris, I asked a number of questions of Thompson, regarding how musicians and dancers communicated. There is a persistent consideration in his responses to the external seen gestures and the internal interpretation, between that which is actualised and seen, and that which is thought and private.

In the 2013 International Soundpainting Think Tank,[20] which I convened, this mind-body spilt became an experiment: each Soundpainter (30 people from 8 countries including musicians, dancers, actors and comedians) stood in the middle of the performance space ready to sign themselves (in their mind) and to physically respond to their own gestures. The result was not a random spattering of sounds and movements as might be expected: it was clear which performers had signed for themselves to 'Relate To', or 'Match', the performance of other artists, as small groups of activity developed. The performed content was not constant, artists entered and departed, as they chose a length, duration and framework for their performance. The process of thinking the Soundpainting activity, to which the performers themselves responded, put in practice Anthony Kenny's definition of the mind-body split, in his discussion of Descartes: that 'Man is a thinking mind; matter is extension in motion'.[21] The mind remains

[20] There is an annual Soundpainting Think Tank which brings about 30 Soundpainters from around the globe to discuss particular issues. I organised the Think Tank held at Kingston University 17th July – 23rd August 2013. http://fass.kingston.ac.uk/activities/item.php?updatenum=2511. This Think Tank Composed-Choreographed a new Soundpainting which has been filmed and edited as a movie about how Soundpaintings are made and what they are. This Soundpainting Movie is forthcoming in Winter 2013 via open access sources and via http://www.soundpainting.com.
[21] Anthony Kenny (1989), *The Metaphysics of Mind* (Oxford:Oxford University Press), p. 1.

internal but mind manipulates the body to externalise itself (at least in part).

The mind-body spilt seems to allow a way for us to theorise how a Soundpainter creates a piece: it requires the Soundpainter to ask not only how we, as the composer-choreographer, are doing something within the piece, but fundamentally, 'Why' we are doing it. The Soundpainting language is structured according to a syntax.[22] The language is signed in phrases which denote 'Who' will perform (e.g. 'Saxophones'), 'What' they will perform (e.g. 'Melody' 'With' a 'Swing Feel'), 'How' they will perform it (e.g. 'Volume Fade': Loud, 'Tempo Fader': Fast), and 'When' they will begin (e.g. 'Slowly Enter'). If signing a location or asking 'Where' something is to be performed it must be signed under the 'How' category. But 'Why', the fundamental question of both creativity and most philosophical ideas, is not signed and remains internal to the Soundpainter. As Thompson notes, 'Why is the last and most important part of the Soundpainting syntax'.[23] It requires the Soundpainter to transfer their internal ideas into physical gestures. The process continually connects mind and body.

The nature of Soundpainting fostering a dialogue between Soundpainter and performers which requires both sides to question. They must question what they wish to offer and how they offer it, but also how what they offer effects the group. The roles require what the philosopher Bateson has referred to as a 'double reciprocal questioning.'[24] Any question must be asked in reverse into order to understand the first question. Put another way, in order to understand the Soundpainter's proposition, the performer but ask of themselves and of others, in their mind, in the moment, before they respond in physical action.

A poignant gesture to illustrate this questioning process is the 'What' gesture 'Relate To'. This asks a specified performer(s) to make

[22] I have outlined this syntax in detail in Minors, 'Music and movement in dialogue'. pp.87-96.
[23] Thompson, Soundpainting Think Tank Discussion, 20 July 2013.
[24] Gregory Bateson, cited in Small, *Musicking*, p.51.

a relationship with another performer(s), but that relationship is open to the performer's choosing. As such similarity, contrast, or a variance of these may result. In a recent performance by the Kingston Soundpainting Ensemble, as part of the Improvisation and Digital Arts Festival 2013, I had brought a small group of performers into the middle of the stage, in a static cluster, stood facing the audience.[25] I then asked 'Group 1' to 'Go Onto' 'Minimalism', to progress their ideas into something which has a minimalistic repetitive motion. Most began to sing or create rhythmic patterns, but two performers began to move up and down, bending legs and arms. With this contrast between the audio and visual I choose to sign 'Relate To' to the remaining musicians. But 'Why' did I do this? As there was different content issued by the current performers, the 'Rest of the Group' were now in a position to make a choice as to 'Who' they related to and 'How' they were going to relate. 'Why' a Soundpainter makes a choice is, in other words, can dependant on their willingness to be surprised by the result. If a Soundpainter imposes constantly there will be less freedom in the work. By searching for chance elements the Soundpainter [illegible] the language to the full by ensuring that have to develop the [illegible] the moment working with the unknown responses of the [illegible].

Audio-visual and film theory has questioned whether the [illegible] ear is dominant. Notably the film theorist Claudia Gorbman [illegible] that 'hearing is less direct than visual perception.'[26] She suggested a process of 'mutual implication' in which one art form [illegible] something (and vice versa) on the other in a continually changing context.[27] When signing 'Relate to' to musicians it has become clear across many ensembles that the musicians offer similarity most of the time: they tend to offer similarity to the visual component if there is

[25] Helen Julia Minors dir. (2013), *Kingston Soundpainting Ensemble* [illegible] and Digital Arts Festival 2013, Coombehurst, Kingston [illegible] hytp://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYDUA8JYb2A:00:19:40-00:[illegible]
[26] Claudia Gorbman (1987), 'Narratological Perspectives on Film [illegible] *Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Indiana, 1987), p. 11.
[27] Ibid.

one. In this case, the musicians chose to utilise the rhythmic pattern created by the actors' up and down movement at the front right of the small clustered group. Actor 1's steady contained movement was matched with legato articulation and mezzo forte dynamics. The equivalence between media is constantly acted out: in signing a pitch or dynamic the dancers/actors must decode this in terms of height and intensity. In reverse the musicians read the dancer/actors' movement accordingly, as though they were a graphic score.

As Small notes, in response to Bateson and Descartes, the mind has 'the ability to give and respond to information.'[28] The Soundpainter provides the directing information but they, like the performers, are shaped as much by that physical direction as they are by the context, the other performers' decisions and their own mind-body negotiations. The patterns which performers note in others' actions, to which they relate, bears affinity to Bateson's assertion, as explored by Small, that every individual is connected — it is a 'pattern which connects.'[29]

Conclusions

Although Soundpainting is a coded highly refined language, which has been developed over the last four decades, it offers a certain freedom of the performers. The performers are required to make personal choices and to question how they construct and offer material, in a way not otherwise fostered in pre-composed/choreographed pieces, but also not as liberated in free improvisation, as there are no guidelines to foster multimedia communication. The musician/dancer has many roles within Soundpainting: each may be called upon to be a musician, dancer or actor, and each may be ascribed different solo/accompaniment roles. But each will be asked to offer something of their own choosing, whether it is deciding how to 'Relate To' another performer, or how to 'Match' their material as closely as possible. The Soundpainting language is meant to 'elicit performer-performer

[28] Small, *Musicking*, p. 53.
[29] Small, *Musicking*, p. 53.

communication'.[30] The 'problem of language', artistic analogies and individuals' interpretations of the gestures allow for much variety in response and understanding. These potential problems become a catalyst with which the Soundpainter works as s/he questions 'Why' they make certain choices, with a view to the direction of the pieces and the character/quality of its creation. 'Why' choices are made formulates a Soundpainters creative manner: of what we might refer to as their own compositional/choreographic style.

The essence of Soundpainting is to foster interaction in the moment, which closely resembles Small's case for musicking: 'The receiver creates the context in which the message has meaning, and without that context there can be no communication and no meaning.'[31] Navigating a performance using Soundpainting aims to bring musicians and dancers, and the director (the Soundpainter) together on an equal footing: each are asked to question their own role and that of the other artists. The Soundpainter and performers must assert their ideas in action and continually adapt their ideas in meaningful connection to the entire ensemble, all the time asking themselves 'Why' they are making certain choices to aspire to be continually aware of their own creative agenda.

Appendix: Selective Soundpainting Gestures

Syntax	Gesture Category	Sign and Definition
Who	Function	Dancer 1: denoting individual performers within particular art forms.
		Group 1: identifies a collection of performers within the larger ensemble.
		Rest of the Group: selects those performers who are currently not contributing material.

[30] Thompson, 'Guestionnaire'.
[31] Small, *Musicking*, p. 54.

Syntax	Gesture Category	Sign and Definition
What	Sculpting	Minimalism: denotes the style of content to be created, a repetitive, continuous short idea.
		Swing Fell: denotes a manner with which to perform particular content, e.g. Minimalism with a Swing Feel.
		Long Tone: a single note or continuous movement.
		Change: to significantly adapt the material which is currently offered.
		Relate To: to form a relationship, of the performer's choice, with a another performer.
		Match: to perform exactly the same content as another performer(s).
		Palettes: pre-composed material which is inserted into the performance.
		Modify: to adapt the material which is being performance but in a way which continues the essence of the material already offered.
		Melody: to offer a continuous line of movement or a continue line of pitches which have a recognisable structure. For an actor this content gesture asks for a narrative.
How	Sculpting	Tempo Fader: the speed of the performance.
		Volume Fader: the dynamic of the performance.
When	Function	Off: stop offering content and return to a neutral position.
		Slowly Enter: begin to offer content within 5 seconds.
		Go Onto: move from the previous material onto the next material at a time of your choice.

Movement in Sound / Sound in Movement

By Elo Masing

As this is a presentation by a musician and not a dance historian, I would like to begin my paper with a quote from Igor Stravinsky:

> I said somewhere that it was not enough to hear music, but that it must also be seen. [...]
> An experienced eye follows and judges, sometimes unconsciously, the performer's least gesture. From this point of view one might conceive the process of performance as the creation of new values that call for the solution of problems similar to those which arise in the realm of choreography. In both cases we give special attention to the control of gestures. ... For music does not move in the abstract. Its translation into plastic terms requires exactitude and beauty: [...][1]

It is from this perspective that I myself approach composition, being not only acutely aware of the physical nature of music-making, but casting the physicality of instrument playing as one of the basic starting

[1] Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the form of six lessons*, trans. by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), p. 128.

principles of my work. In my composition *Planes*[2] for string quartet and dancer I, like many other composers and choreographers before me, have been looking for ways to express the inherent connection between music and movement, to show how closely and organically they are linked.

My collaboration with Korean choreographer Jean Lee started in 2010, when she invited me to participate in her partly structured, partly improvised dance performance *Impromptu: for Yolande*[3], created for showing at the *Crossing Boundaries* conference held at Roehampton University. My role in the performance was that of an improvising violinist. Creating *Impromptu* was of tremendous importance for me as a musician as the process made me discover how I could relate to dancers in a much more tangible and organic way than I had thought it possible before. I saw the focal point of my work on the project as being the correct positioning of myself as a musician when collaborating with dancers, aiming at producing a coherent work of art. This collaboration provided the core concepts for our future work on creating a piece for string quartet and dancer.

Whilst rehearsing *Impromptu* I often assumed the role of a spectator that enabled me to focus on the activities of the dancers. I turned my attention to a very basic principle: what does one hear when one watches dancers rehearse without music? The dancers' bodies make sounds that are a 'by-product' of movement – in fact, they make music themselves. As Valerie Preston-Dunlop and Ana Sanchez-Colberg point out: 'Breath and footfall may be an aural layer of the work, either live or recorded during rehearsal, with or without musical score.'[4] What does a musician add to that aural layer – the sound of the dancers' feet, hands or bodies on the floor, the rustle of their clothes, etc.? Should he or should he not add a sound to all this, and if he decides to

[2] Elo Masing, *Planes* (published by the author, 2012), musical score.

[3] Jean Lee & Elo Masing, *Impromptu: for Yolande* (premiered at Roehampton University on 15 June 2010), dance performance.

[4] Valerie Preston-Dunlop & Ana Sanchez-Colberg, *Dance and the Performative: A Choreological Perspective: Laban and Beyond* (London: Verve Publishing, 2002), p. 53.

add a sound, what kind of a sound should it be and how does it relate to what the dancers do?

Making a sound is always a physical act, to some extent even in electronic music. When a body moves in space and enters into contact with its surroundings, it consequently makes a sound. The same happens when we play musical instruments – physical movement results in sound. For the purposes of this paper, sounds that musical instruments produce can be divided into two:

1. Intentional sounds – sounds that the instruments were constructed to produce
2. Unintentional sounds – sounds that the instruments were not specifically designed to make, many of them the so-called 'by-products' of playing (bow crackles, key clicks, air sounds, etc.).

Aesthetics and musical languages based on sonic 'by-products' which are themselves the result of the physicality of instrument playing have a substantial tradition in 20th-century concert music, especially after the 1950s. Young American composer Aaron Cassidy pushes this approach even further by stating, for example, in the programme notes to his piece *The Crutch of Memory* for indeterminate string instrument:

> As in a number of my recent works, here it is physical states, the interface between the body of the player and the body of the instrument, and physical gestures that drive the sonic surface. I am interested in the ability of these corporeal actions to be present as musical material in their own right and not simply as means to an aural end. […] I have long been interested in generating sonic relationships through physical action, as have, of course, a number of predecessors and colleagues. However, I have grown increasingly frustrated with the tendency of these composers (myself included!) to initially generate material through physical, choreographic systems but then, in essence, erase (or at least conceal) these structures in the notation (which, in the end, still seems to prioritize pitch as a primary parameter). In this work, I have endeavored to strip away the pretense of

pitch in an effort to more directly prioritize the performative actions in the notation.[5]

Out of these reflections came the two main ideas that my work on *Impromptu* as well as *Planes* with Jean Lee became based on:

1. A musician working with dancers needs to define himself a role equal to that of the dancers'.
2. A musician should find a common ground with the dancers, he should integrate music with dance by finding the lowest common denominators.

In *Impromptu* as well as *Planes*, by treating sound as a 'by-product' of movement – still a relatively uncommon approach for a musician – I was able to place my work onto a shared foundation with that of the dancers'. In the course of the rehearsals for *Impromptu* I began creating a new sonic and movement language on the violin. I attempted to become a dancer on the instrument, seeing the strings and the body of the instrument as the dance floor and my bow and left hand as the dancer's body. I began to think like a dancer.

Work on creating a new movement-based sonic language simultaneously with determining a set of closely associated choreographic principles continued on the *Planes* project. We conducted several interdisciplinary improvisation sessions with Jean Lee in which we developed our respective vocabularies side by side.

My new musical language for string instruments investigates how certain unconventional bow movements result in sound and how different positions of the left hand can change the timbre of the sounds produced by the bow. I see bowed string instruments as constituting of different planes – the four strings form four different horizontal planes, having a vertical as well as horizontal relation to each other. A string from tailpiece to pegs forms a long horizontal surface with a large amount of possibilities for to-and-fro and left-to-right movement. Both types of motion can be used on their own and in combination with each other. There is a large number of linear, angular and circular

[5] http://aaroncassidy.com/music/crutchofmemory.htm [accessed 30 August 2013]

movements possible on the four strings. By adding left hand motion along the string, one enriches the timbral possibilities of the sounds that result from right hand movements.

The dancer in this piece has also very basic movements at the core of her choreography – linear, angular, circular – only her scope is larger. She can combine more different planes and cover a wider area. The musician can 'dance' only on his instrument, the dancer can move in the entire performance space. Music and dance get built up together, sharing the same basic concept.

As a composer, in addition to sound and movement, my medium is also notation. In order to structure material I need to be able to write it down. And for the new movement-based sonic language I had to invent a movement-based notation system for string instruments.

The notational symbols here are an almost direct reflection of the movements the musicians are required to make. The system has borrowed elements from dance notation and is consequently much easier for dancers to understand and read without prior musical education. Music notation that has acquired characteristics of movement notation can give the dancer an idea of the music even before he hears it. In ideal conditions, the dancer could start work on the piece simply by reading the score like a musician. That was possible for Jean Lee.

As for musicians, they can sometimes best understand the unconventional techniques they are required to perform on their instruments if they are primarily instructed with respect to the movements that should produce the unorthodox sounds the composer has imagined. This approach enables unusual techniques to be notated coherently and self-explanatorily.

As the parts of the string instruments had to be written down, for the sake of artistic coherence, the choreography of the dancer seemed to require notating as well.

But while working together with Jean Lee I became acutely aware of the enormous difference between what notation means for a musician and what it means for a dancer. For most dancers, it is rather a memory aid, a way of recording something that already exists in order

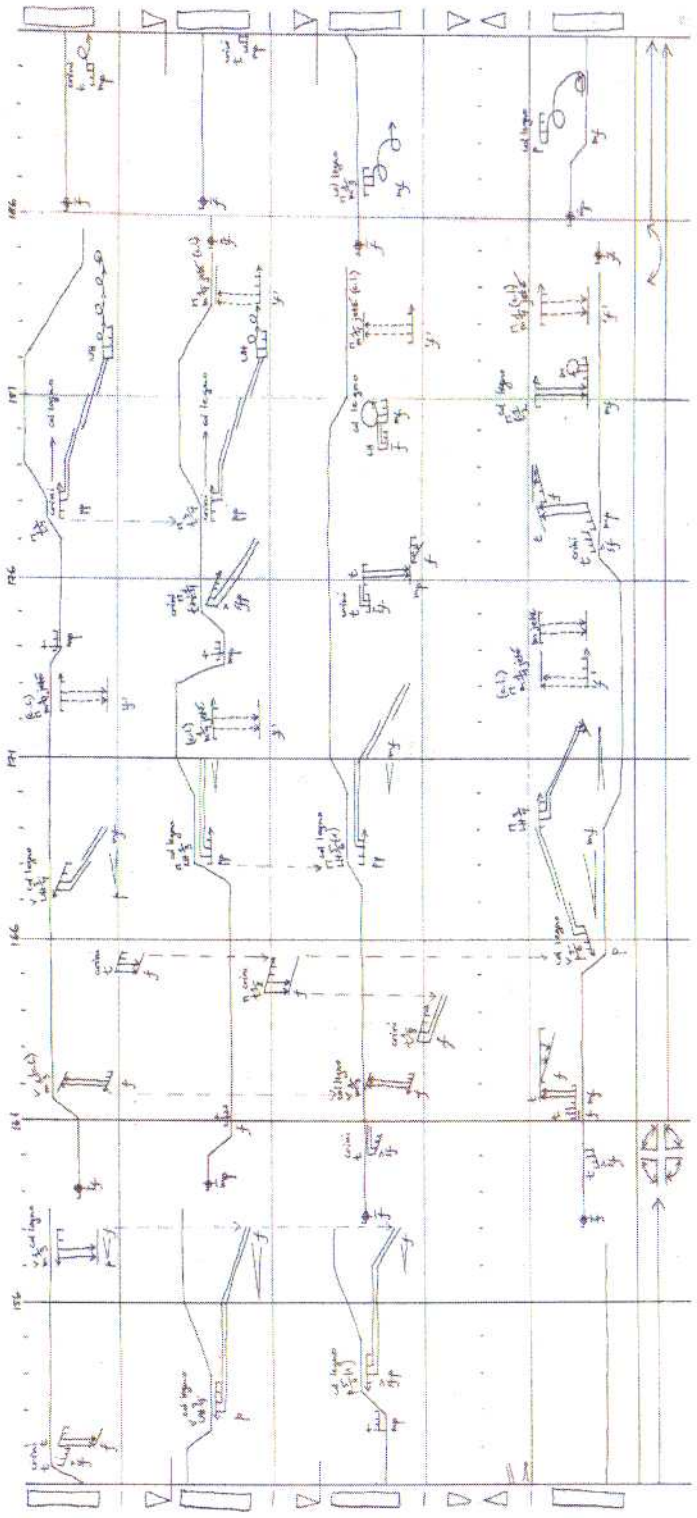
to be able to recall it more easily – much like medieval music notation. Dance notation derives from the specific needs of the notator, a new approach is invented every time somebody wants to write down a sequence of movements. I am not speaking of Benesh Movement Notation or Labanotation, but of the innumerable ways of recording movement that contemporary choreographers use in their everyday work.

For composers, on the other hand, notation is a means of creating new work, and when it comes to performers, a score should enable them to learn a new piece without any contact with the author and with no pre-existing performance traditions.

In fact, notation always seems to have a dual nature – it is a facilitator as well as an obstructor. Detailed notation helps us in indirect communication with the performers, when there is no possibility of live demonstration and no established performance traditions; at the same time it complicates the process, because the physical phenomena the composer has coded into writing have to be decoded again into sounds and/or actions.

Although the concept for *Planes* envisaged dance to be notated simultaneously with the music, reality proved otherwise – choreography was created in parts parallel with and, at instances, after the completion of the music, but it was not written down prior to the performance. Even though we had devised a system that could be used for notating Jean's movement language in quite accurate detail, Jean preferred not working her choreography from a previously fixed dance score or writing it down during its creation, so we completed the project without recording the choreography in advance. At the time, this made us question the practicality of the whole concept of notating dance in that piece.

By now we have managed to record the choreography in such a way that it leaves the choreographer a lot of room for interpretation. We believe that every contemporary choreographer should be free to create his own version of the work as long as the ground principles that are manifested in the notation are reflected upon. In the future, we hope to



Elo Masing, *Planes*, page 10

test the score with other choreographers and dancers to see whether the approach to notation we've currently settled for enables the piece to be satisfactorily performed without the composer or the original choreographer being present.

Writing the piece, I often had in mind the physical movements Jean had come up with in our joint improvisation sessions. Although, I did not envisage any dance movements in detail, nor did I structure Jean's material. I did not compose a part for her, even though her choreography employed ideas that I had suggested to her for different sections.

Planes exhibits a polyphonic approach to the musical as well as movement material. The dancer adds another layer of movement to the four layers of the string instruments, an independent layer that is nevertheless deeply connected with the four string parts because of the movement-based nature of the musical material. The dancer's part is for most of the time not coinciding with any prominent events on the aural plane, e.g. loud taps on the body of the instrument; she is not mimicking the string sounds in her movements. The aural material is also layered – all four instruments are treated as individual voices; sometimes the unintended as well as the intentional sounds the dancer makes enter into the texture and become the fifth voice.

On a performative plane, a quasi-narrative could be followed: the dancer makes a journey from embodying an audience member to being a dancer and then a musician – she begins her performance from among the audience and starts humming towards the end of the piece – until she disappears as the instrumentalists emerge as 'musicians proper'. The players, in turn, undergo a transformation from quasi-dancers to conventional musicians.

To conclude, I would like to point out that by incorporating a dancer into the string quartet and making the quartet a quintet we have, on a certain level, created something much like, for example, Mozart's or Brahms's clarinet quintets. The dancer is an equal chamber partner to the musicians and has her unique role interacting with the musical and movement material of the string instruments, her material being deeply interrelated with what the instruments do. But at the same time, *Planes*

is in fact subtly confronting genre norms by blurring the borders between a theatrical performance and a chamber music concert.

Valerie Preston-Dunlop and Ana Sanchez-Colberg have said about musical theatre choreographer Jerome Robbins:

> "Robbins' idea was to challenge the very nature in which he was working, namely, the musical. [...] Robbins' ideas concerned the codes of musical theatre; that is, the expected and agreed, but usually unstated norms of how things should be. This confrontation of norms and codes is a frequent idea found in dance works."[6]

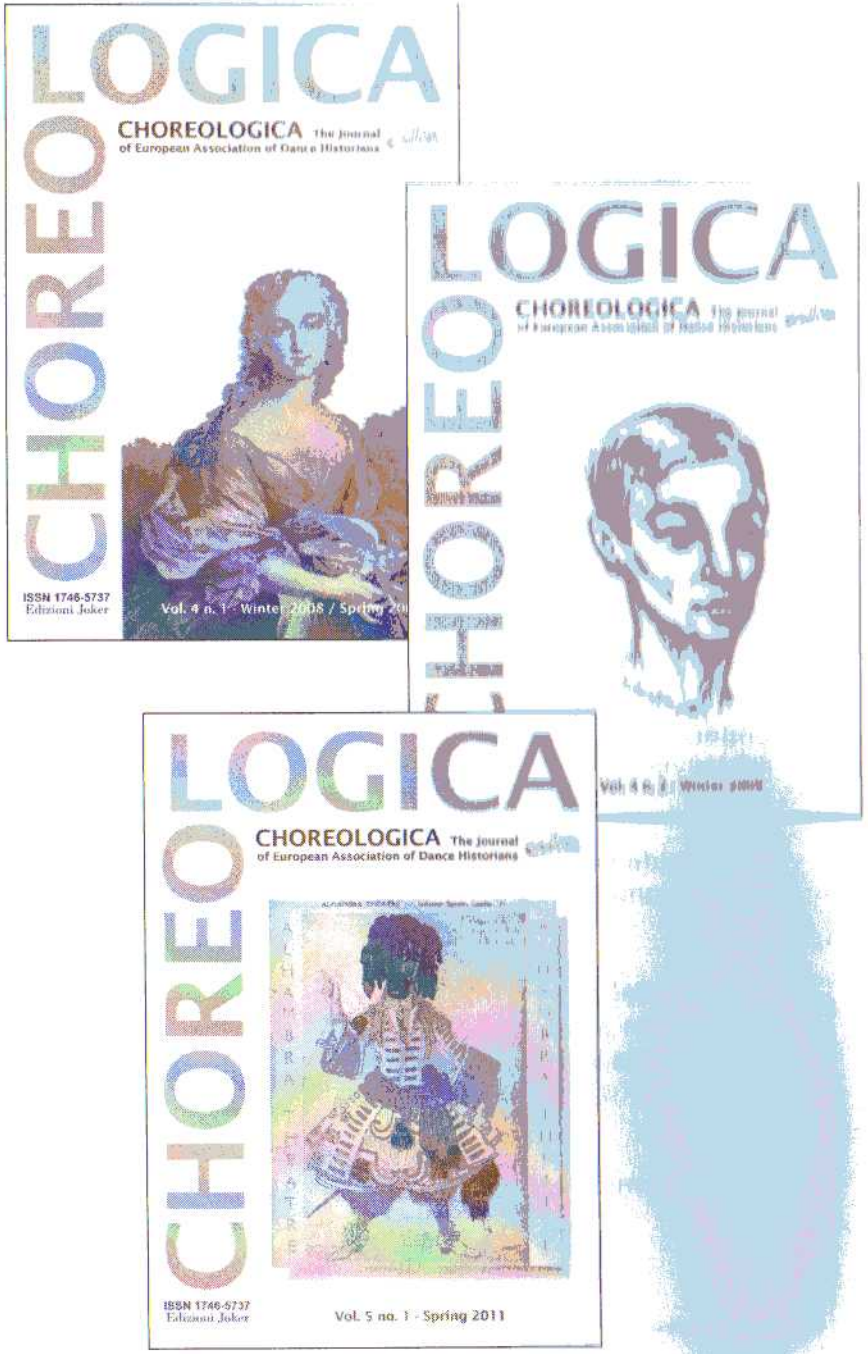
This is also what *Planes* is doing, although remarkably differently from Robbins. *Planes* could be described as a piece of concert music for string quartet and dancer as I conceived it foremost to be experienced in a concert situation – it was premiered in a traditional concert hall. On the other hand, the rendering of the score clearly deviated from the norms of a typical concert performance.

Most noticeably, Jean decided to start her performance in the midst of the audience. She got up with the first sound and movement of the cellist, but by then the piece had already been going on in silence for six time units during which the dancer had been 'disguised as' or embodying a regular audience member.

Her getting up from her seat and joining the musicians on the stage added a strong performative element to the piece with even the potential of some audience reaction to the incident that somebody from their midst had suddenly transformed into a performer.

We are therefore presented with a fascinating difficulty in defining the genre of the work, which leaves us with the following dilemma: where is the right place for *Planes*, in a dance theatre or in a concert hall?

6 Valerie Preston-Dunlop & Ana Sanchez-Colberg, *Dance and the Performative: A Choreological Perspective: Laban and Beyond* (London: Verve Publishing, 2002), p. 19.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