

# Nordic Journal of Dance

– practice, education and research

Volume 6(2), 2015

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# Editorial

The *Nordic Journal of Dance*, Volume 6(2), consists of two research articles, two practice-oriented articles, two book reviews and one conference report. The authors are from Finland, Sweden and Norway, and in addition one—who has been living for many years in Denmark—from England. This shows Volume 6(2) as a «truly» Nordic issue. Education in dance seems to be a common theme in both the research articles and the books reviewed.

The research articles, amongst other things, question the terms «composition» and «dance technique», which are frequently used, but rarely defined. Professor of choreography **Kirsi Monni**, based at the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts, Helsinki, has written a philosophically inspired article in which she considers the ontological premises for tools in artists' education, and she specifically discusses «composition».

PhD candidate **Irene Velten Rotmund**, employed by the Norwegian College of Dance, Oslo, has conducted research on «dance technique» and interviewed students in modern and contemporary dance about how they define this term, and her work articulate the students' various understandings, and discusses her findings in relationship with relevant research material.

**Gjertrud Husøy**, lecturer, faculty of health education at Stord/Haugesund University College, has written a practically oriented article in which she is questioning the possibilities of positive health effects connected with practicing folk dance and social dancing. The *Nordic Journal of Dance* is happy to welcome this article on 'dance and health', which is a theme we until now scarcely have touched upon.

**Tanja Råman**, choreographer and artistic director of TaikaBox, has written an artistic reflection on a project in which audience, performers, technical team and choreographer are co-creating their performance, using unique tools for digital devices.

**Rasmus Ölme**, head of the Dance and Choreography programme at The Danish National School of Performing Arts, Copenhagen, has reviewed Kirsi Monni and Rick Allsopp's book *Practising composition: making practice*. Interestingly, Ölme's review is closely linked

with Monni's previously mentioned research article and the theme of composition.

**Mariana Siljamäki**, university lecturer at the University of Jyväskylä has reviewed *Dance education around the world; Perspectives on dance, young people and change*, edited by Charlotte Svendler Nielsen and Stephanie Burridge. Siljamäki writes how this anthology, written by 30 expert authors, shows dance as more flexible and adaptable than most people can even imagine, but also that it can serve as a catalyst for new ways of thinking for those who are not familiar with dance.

Former Head of Dance Partnership Education, Danish National School of Performing Arts, now MA student at the University of Manchester, **Sheila de Val**, has written a report from the 13th world congress held by the organization Dance and the Child International (daCi) which took place in Copenhagen this summer. This was a lively event where more than 800 people participated. The conference contained performances, workshops, keynote lectures, research presentations, and more. The overall theme was exploring identities in dance. The next daCi congress will take place in Adelaide, Australia in 2018.

To be editor of this issue has been exciting. When asked to be editor many questions came to my mind. How is the actual process of making a journal, will there be enough contributions, and who will the authors be? How does the editorial-board and Dans i Skolen work together, and will there be a sufficient number of peer-reviewers, book-reviewers, report-writers, etc. There is a surprisingly large number of people involved; Named and unnamed persons help the journal in its process of becoming.

The *Nordic Journal of Dance* aims at being interesting and inspiring, and as such a publication which will lead its readers to further questioning, discussion, reading, writing and research. Together dance researchers, dance practitioners and dance writers of all sorts, are responsible for making, upholding and developing the body of knowledge on dance, in the Nordic context.

Hilde Rustad  
Editor

## Considering the Ontological Premises for Tools in Artists' Education—on Poiesis and Composition

Kirsi Monni

### ABSTRACT

This article considers the ontological premises for tools in artists' education, specifically in choreography studies at the master-of-arts level. The topic has proven to be crucial in planning and executing a curriculum of study in the contemporary age of pluralistic aesthetic intentions as any tool, as habitually understood, is ready-to-use according to its disclosed purpose and thus has, in a way, already solved some aspects of the singular research question posed between the artist and the prevailing world. The topic of tools turns out to be a wider question of contemporary poetics (techniques, methods, knowledge) and of ontological considerations of the nature of poiesis and artwork.

The topic of contemporary poetics was extensively discussed in a 2011–2013 Erasmus Intensive project, which was an educational collaboration among six European master's programmes in dance and physically based performance in which the writer took part. This article reports some aspects of that discussion and elaborates on a traditionally widely used concept in choreography education—namely, composition. The article tackles the complex issue of poetics and tools by, firstly, discussing poiesis and the *causes* to which artwork is indebted and, secondly, by searching in some ontological premises for the notion of composition. The article presents a view of composition derived from Martin Heidegger's elaborations of *logos*: Logos is letting something be seen in its togetherness with something—letting it be seen as something. (Heidegger 1962, 56). Following this notion, I propose a view to composition as a certain *togetherness in relatedness* in which case the concept of composition might serve both as reflective knowledge of construction and as a deep research question in artists' creative processes.

### TIIVISTELMÄ

Artikkeli käsittelee 'työkalujen' ongelmallisuutta taiteilijan koulutuksessa, erityisesti MA tason koreografian opetuksessa. Aihe on osoittautunut oleellisen tärkeäksi moninaisten ja heterogeenisten esteettisten tavoitteiden nykyajassa, sillä jokainen työkalu, kuten se konventionaalisesti ymmärretään, on käyttövalmis jo aiemmin varmistetun päämäärän ja metodin mukaan, ja siten se on jo osittain ratkaisut yksittäisen ja erityisen taiteellisen kysymyksen taiteilijan ja maailman välillä. Kysymys 'työkaluista' taiteellisessa prosessissa näyttäytyy minulle laajempuna poetiikan (tekniikoiden, menetelmien, tiedon) kysymyksenä sekä *poiesiksen* ja taideteoksen ontologiaan liittyvänä kysymyksenä.

Poetiikan teemaa käsiteltiin laajasti kuuden eurooppalaisen esittävän taiteen MA ohjelman Erasmus Intensive -projektissa vuosina 2011–2013. Tämä artikkeli raportoi joitain aspekteja tuosta keskustelusta ja kehittää edelleen koreografian opetuksessa perinteisesti keskeisen *komposition* käsitteen analyysia. Voidakseni käsitellä poetiikan, työkalujen ja taideteoksen kompleksista suhdetta, pohdin ensin teoksen luomisen kysymystä *poiesis* käsitteen avulla ja sen jälkeen *komposition* ontologiaa erityisesti Martin Heideggerin *logos* käsitteen avulla. Esitän ajatuksen kompositiosta '*yhteenkuuluvuus suhteudessa*' -tapahtumana ja että tällaista näkymää vasten *komposition* käsite voisi palvella taiteilijan, erityisesti koreografian, koulutuksessa sekä rakenteellisena reflektiona että syvällisenä taiteellisena tutkimuskysymyksenä.

## Considering the Ontological Premises for Tools in Artists' Education—on Poiesis and Composition

Kirsi Monni

### Introduction

This article considers the ontological premises for tools in artists' education, specifically in choreography studies at the master-of-arts (MA) level. The topic has proven to be crucial in planning and executing a curriculum of study in the contemporary age of pluralistic aesthetic intentions as any tool, as habitually understood, is ready-to-use according to its disclosed purpose and thus has, in a way, already solved some aspects of the singular research question posed between the artist and the prevailing world. The topic of tools turns out to be a wider question of contemporary poetics (techniques, methods, knowledge) and of ontological considerations of the nature of poiesis and artwork.

The topic of contemporary poetics was extensively discussed in an Erasmus Intensive project, which was a 2011–2013 educational collaboration among six European master's programmes in dance and physically based performance in which the writer participated with MA choreography students. The project was initiated by the Masters of Arts in Solo/Dance/Authorship programme at the Inter-University Centre for Dance, University of the Arts, Berlin. This article reports some aspects of that discussion and further elaborates on a traditionally widely used tool in choreography education—namely, the concept of composition.

To tackle this complex issue of poetics and tools, particularly composition, in artists' education, I firstly think about poiesis and the causes to which the artwork is indebted and, secondly, search in some ontological premises for the notion of composition.

I present a view of composition derived from Martin Heidegger's elaborations of *logos*: Logos is letting something be seen in its togetherness with something—letting it be seen as something. (Heidegger 1962, 56). Following this notion, I propose a view to composition as a certain togetherness in relatedness in which case the concept of composition might serve both as reflective knowledge of construction and as a deep research question in artists' creative processes.

My approach is that of a dance artist whose research interests have long lain in ontological artistic issues; my expertise is not in art pedagogical discourse. In my doctorate on artistic research (Monni: 2004), I analyse the paradigmatic changes in dance ontology during the 20th century. I am especially concerned with elaborating the turn from modernistic aesthetics to postmodern approaches, which I define as linked to the larger phenomena of the critique of metaphysical ideals and the turn to post-metaphysical being-in-the-world. Hence arises my interest in the thinking of Heidegger, his fundamental ontology and the philosophy of art, which also inform this article. In several writings, Heidegger profoundly discusses the different aspects of poiesis, production and creation and the relationship between *techne* as knowledge and artwork (e.g. Heidegger 1935/36, 1999, 1977). I can touch on these issues only very briefly in this article. My main concern here is to spark discussion of the theme of tools in artists' education and to specifically address one topic: The concept of composition.

## Tools, knowledge and individual poetics

The dilemma of tools in artists' education is crucial in our times of pluralistic aesthetic intentions and goals as a tool, as mentioned, is habitually understood as ready-to-use according to its disclosed purpose. Thus, it has, in a way, already solved some of the singular artistic-research questions posed between the artist and the world. Teaching tools, as normative formulas, might lead to proceduralism if the singular creative process becomes institutionalised, the habitual or conventional modelling that the tool suggests overrides the specific artistic research question or theoretical representation overwhelms actual perception and fresh interpretation.

However, we cannot *make or create* anything without being informed by different conceptualisations, various modes of knowledge and the use of certain methodologies in the already-opened historical world. Therefore, the idea of tools in artists' education concerns a wider question of individual poetics which is intertwined with historical and cultural contexts and incorporates various methodologies, knowledge, skills, techniques, insights and personal ethos. My concern is directed at the use of such methodological and ideological tools and techniques that take the position of prescriptive directives, replacing the specific artistic research question. This trend happens easily in educational situations and under the pressures of the predictability in production in the art world. My question is how to search for educational knowledge and know-how and to keep the artistic research and creative process open and truly inventive. I attempt to approach a few aspects of this complex issue from historical and ontological perspectives.

### Poiesis–Poetics–Production

I start by thinking of what actually happens in the creative process, in the birth of something new,

something which was not there before. First, there has to be potentiality and a favourable situation for creation and production to happen, the potentiality for a plant to grow, cat to be born, car to be made and work of art to be created. In ancient Greek philosophy, this manifestation of being from non-being is called *poiesis*. How do I understand the term 'poiesis' today? What can it offer regarding our issue? I turn to Finnish philosopher Miika Luoto who discusses the terms 'poiesis', 'poetics', 'praxis', 'action' and 'production' in connection to contemporary poetics. In explaining the term 'poiesis', he starts with the Plato's statement that "any *cause* that brings into existence something that was not there before' is *poiesis*. This means simply that there is *poiesis* every time something comes from non-being to being. Every art (*techne*, that is, know-how, skill, technique) is *poietic*, whether it is the art of the craftsman producing the utensil or the art of the artist producing the work' (Luoto 2015, 37).

I am especially interested in Plato's statement about the notion of cause: 'Any cause that brings into existence something that was not there before' is *poiesis*. What is cause? How should it be understood in this statement? Luoto elaborates this by following the interpretation proposed by Heidegger in his reading of Aristotle. To be understood, the notion of cause has to be freed from the modern idea of causality. According to Heidegger, the Greek word for cause, *aition*, means that to which something else is indebted or that which is responsible for something else (Luoto 2015, 43; Heidegger 1977, 7). Heidegger takes his example from the sphere of handicraft: A silver chalice. Following Aristotle he finds four causes to which the chalice is indebted: The *matter* of silver, the preconceived *form* of a chalice and the particular end, or *telos*, of the sacrificial vessel, which are all gathered together under the fourth cause: The craftsman's careful consideration. Causes then *allow* something to *show itself* and so to be present

as *something*' (Luoto 2015, 44; Heidegger 1977, 6-8).

If we follow this line of thought, what makes an ordinary utensil or commodity, say a teacup, differ from artwork? Could this answer be thought of from the point of view of these motivating causes? If the questioning of the motivating causes has *come to its end* with the commodity (the teacup is manufactured from a suitable material by a capable manufacturer and formed to fulfil its intended purpose: The drinking of hot tea), the interplay of the motivating causes in *artwork* lies in the full investigation of the creative process. Here, I see, is the fine line between the tool (technique, knowledge, methodology) being not an instrument for commodity production, in the sense described but knowledge that opens potentialities and possibilities for creative work, research and reflection.

What may often happen in everyday educational practices is that the underlying ideologies, intentions or conventions of which each artistic tool is composed stay concealed or are only partially investigated. Therefore arises the need to try to disclose and keep open the intentions and causes to which each tool is indebted. If the four causes—matter, form, function and the considerations and actions of the maker—are all under intensive investigation in the creative artistic process, then why not approach the tools (techniques, knowledge) with the same questions? How are the tools composed, created or produced in terms of motivating and forming causes?

### Composition

I would now like to discuss one artistic tool—composition—which historically has been used frequently as a module in dance curricula. However, as Victoria Perez Royo states within the Erasmus Intensive discussions, the titles of many modules which used to be called 'Composition' have been changed to new terms, such as 'Research methodologies' or 'Introduction to problems of research', at least on the MA

level of choreography education in the European context. These changes are intended to avoid the 'danger of proceduralism or narrow understanding of composition as an application of ready-made procedures without any deep questioning of their pertinence in relation to the research processes' (Perez-Royo 2015, 91). When used as prescriptive formulas, the preconceived ideas of a dance composition can be applied by students even before they have identified an interesting research question or attractive problem to inhabit. In this narrow sense, composition can be an activity that hinders genuine questioning of the research materials, leading, without major resistance, to the fabrication of an artistic product (Perez-Royo 2015, 91).

How to avoid this problem? How to unravel and move the habitual understanding of composition, to open or think anew its premises? Or should we reject the term 'composition' and the accompanying terminology altogether and find new, more accurate ones? So far, I have been insistent on keeping the term. My main reason is that I cannot see how composition, in relation to *poiesis*, in relation to *any* production, can be avoided.

As understood in common language, the term 'composition' signifies the manner in which a thing is com-posed, put together, connected, arranged. It embodies the idea of a set of elements which, connected together, form a whole, showing properties which are properties of the whole, not of the component parts. Overall, this description is valid for all kinds of compositions, be they composed objects or dynamic systems. Therefore, I see that it is not the pure fact of composition but, rather, the manner of how something is composed and what is actually composed in terms of the causes, including material and contextual ones, that undergo constant evolution and investigation. Differently composed is still composed.

How then to think further with composition? To

what does it refer? What does it disclose as bringing something from non-being into being, as poiesis? Here, I want to raise what Heidegger says about *logos* in *Being and Time*: 'Logos is letting-something-be-seen-in-its-togetherness-with-something—letting it be seen *as* something' (Heidegger 1962, 56). This formulation comes quite near to Plato's statement on poiesis. For Plato, even nature is *poietic* insofar as it spontaneously allows something to become manifest. When Heidegger speaks about *logos*, he also refers to *both nature's* ability to bring forth *and* to human language and knowledge (*techne*). In both cases, a certain *togetherness in relatedness* shines through in all manifestations, in all compositions. I see composition as an *event* which happens in this act of manifested relatedness. As well, I see it as the potentiality to search and research within all possible relatednesses to bring forth new ones.

How then to approach composition as togetherness-in-relatedness from the perspective of poetics (knowledge, tools, techniques) and of causes? I see that, in every composition, there is a certain relatedness of the causes to which the composition is indebted. According to the singular artistic research process, each cause and its specific relatedness is scrutinised, whether intuitively, consciously, systematically or by chance procedures. What interests me here is that sheer knowledge of the ontology of *causes* and their *relatedness* might free the creative process from a habitual understanding of the constructional elements of composition. I especially like the position of the composing subject, the artist, as the *fourth* cause—not the first—as it recalls the necessity to ponder the material's own expressivity, meaning the material's own *togetherness-in-relatedness*, its own *logos*. This view also frees one's mind to openly think of the work's *telos*, the *end* (the compositional whole, the gestalt of the work) according to each specific artistic question. In the *interplay* of the four causes,

it becomes evident that the act of poiesis, the creation of the work, is not about and of the artist but of the world which speaks through the creative process of the artist. How the artist perceives the potentialities and materialities of reality and their relatedness informs all phases of the composition process. But it is the matter not only of the perceiving subject but also of how the *world* speaks to us in the composition process, how the world dispossesses and exposes us to what needs to be thought of and what calls to be composed anew.

### **Constructional elements of composition and togetherness-in-relatedness**

When one so approaches poiesis and composition, these kinds of ontological considerations are not handy tools or techniques which are quickly delivered, adopted and ready-to-use. They are ideas, thoughts and practises meant to support students in developing their individual poetics and the ability to identify and inhabit interesting artistic problems and research. But do these considerations help students in practice, in the actual process of making and producing? I say yes, precisely in how they demand wider reflection on the *how* and *what* of what is being composed. However, I admit that, to propose a solid educational approach, I would still bring forth reflection and discussion on the basic *constructional elements* of composition as compositional knowledge to accompany the idea of the interplay of the causes in a creative process.

By the constructional elements of composition, I mean such concepts as motive, repetition, variation, contrast, proportion, balance and transition. As I see it, these constructional elements are originally abstractions from the way our consciousness recognises and organises our everyday being-in-the-world. I mean that everyday life emerges as perceived and recognised motives (targets of attention, identified

things), patterns (collections of things, temporal and spatial structures), repetitions, variations, contrasts and transitions. We understand when and how a transition from one thing to another happens; we perceive and recognise a change and a difference. I see that most of these basic constructional elements exist in all possible compositions but in various proportions within different parameters, depending on each object of study and each process of creation, each poiesis as the interplay of the causes.

But in my opinion, I must emphasise that the relevance of these constructional elements in how or if they inform the composition depends on careful consideration of their function in each case. I believe that they are not necessarily linked to any aesthetic genre, style or ideology per se, but the consideration of their function and identity in each case points to the necessity to think about the causes to which the composition is indebted. In the example of the silver chalice, the causes are *matter*, *form*, *telos* and the considerations of the *artist*. In the choreographic process, the pondering of the causes might start with questioning what the matter or materiality of this choreographic composition might be. What could it be? What do the materials express as their own *logos*, their own relatedness? What kind of relatedness do they propose in the context of the research question?

In conclusion of this article, I present a few words about the evolution of contemporary notions of choreographic composition. As widely known, the fluxus event scores from the 1960s initiated a shift from '*pre-conditioned object*' (Cage's term) to choreographed composition as a latent 'framework within which something can take place, a transaction can be affected' (Allsopp 2015, 129-130). Since then, the evolution of the 'choreographic image' has expanded the notion of choreography to encompass the idea of the movement of materials toward indeterminate and open forms that manifest latency and reflect changes in wider political, social

and cultural attitudes, as Ric Allsopp accurately describes (2015,140, 148–152). When composition is understood not as an instrumentalising material practice but as 'distributive, open and generative agency', it remains a composition with a certain relatedness, proportion, balance and variation of materials which express the interplay of the causes to which the composition is indebted.

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## BIOGRAPHY

**Kirsi Monni** is Doctor of Arts (dance) and professor of choreography at the Theatre Academy of the University of the Arts, Helsinki. Kirsi Monni has worked extensively in the field of dance and pedagogy since the 1980s. Her research interests are dance ontology and the theory of performance. She is a founder and served as

a developer and co-director of the Zodiak–Centre for New Dance before accepting the professorship in 2009. She has received numerous grants and a national award for her choreographic work.

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### ABSTRACT

This article explores nuances in the meanings and applications of the term 'dance technique', by looking at how students in modern and contemporary dance articulate their understanding of the term, and by discussing this in relation to dance research articles on the theme. The article draws on a section of my on-going PhD project on the experiences in modern and contemporary dance of students at the Norwegian College of Dance. The project is informed by hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen 1997), based on students' logbooks and interviews. In one set of interviews, the students were asked to define the term 'dance technique'. I have analysed the answers and discerned five approaches to the term: *As a system, as knowledge or practical skills, as something set, as goal-oriented work* and *as 'only technique'*. The conjoining of students' experiences with dance research articles shows both similarities and differences in comprehension of the term. I suggest that there is an ambiguity in the understanding of the term, touching upon different dichotomies existing in dance, and with parallels to a change between a modern dance tradition and a contemporary dance tradition. Clarifying taken-for-granted concepts can be of value for both dance education and dance research.

### SAMMENDRAG

Artikkelen belyser nyanser i betydning og anvendelse av begrepet *danseteknikk*, gjennom å undersøke studenter i moderne –og samtidsdans sin forståelse av begrepet, og gjennom å diskutere dette i relasjon til ulike dansevitenskapelige artikler om temaet. Artikkelen er basert på mitt pågående PhD prosjekt om studenters erfaringer i moderne og samtidsdans ved Norges Dansehøyskole. Prosjektet er basert i hermeneutisk fenomenologi (van Manen 1997), og det empiriske materialet består av studenters logger og intervjuer. I ett sett med intervjuer ble studentene spurt om å definere begrepet *danseteknikk*. Svarene jeg fikk har jeg analysert og organisert i fem ulike, men delvis overlappende tilnærminger til begrepet: *Danseteknikk som et system, kunnskap eller ferdighet, noe fastlagt, et målrettet arbeid* og som *»bare teknikk»*. Sammenstillingen av studenters erfaringer med dansevitenskapelige artikler viser at det er både likheter og ulikheter i oppfattelse av begrepet *danseteknikk*. Jeg foreslår at det er en tvetydighet i forståelse av begrepet, som berører ulike dikotomier i dansefeltet og som kan ha paralleller til et skifte mellom en moderne dans tradisjon og en samtidsdans tradisjon. Dette viser også at klargjøring av tatt for gitte begreper kan ha en verdi for både danseutdanning og danseforskning.

**D**ance technique is a central term in dance, but one question is whether there exist different interpretations of the term in the theatrical dance field. My aim in this article is to shed light on the nuances in the meanings and applications of the term 'dance technique' by looking at how students in modern and contemporary dance articulate their understanding of the term, and by discussing this in relation to different dance research articles on the theme.

This article draws on a section of my on-going PhD study of students' experiences in various dance techniques and training practices during a three-year BA course in modern and contemporary dance at the Norwegian College of Dance. In this project, I seek to investigate the transformation of the students' experiences and understanding of modern and contemporary dance through their study, in order to understand more about the process of becoming a dancer and to shed some light on modern and contemporary dance as traditions. As part of the project, I am interested in clarifying and understanding certain central, but often taken-for-granted, terms relevant to the education of dancers. One such term is dance technique, which I will discuss in this article.

### Methodology

The project is informed by hermeneutic phenomenology, combining a phenomenological description of lived experience with a hermeneutic interpretation of experience (van Manen 1997), based on students' logbooks and interviews. Max van Manen describes

hermeneutic phenomenology as a philosophy for the individual, pursued against the background of an understanding of the communal (van Manen 1997, 7). The aim for phenomenological research is not to report on how individuals perceive something; rather, 'the aim is to collect examples of *possible human experiences* in order to reflect on the meaning that may inhere in them' (van Manen 2014, 313). I interpret this to mean that the examination of students' experiences in modern and contemporary dance can be of relevance for other actors in the dance field, such as dance students, teachers or researchers, and that the students' everyday experiences may say something of relevance about modern and contemporary dance. The emphasis is not on understanding something about the individual student, but on seeing how students' experiences can be regarded as examples of possible experiences for others.

It is central in both phenomenology and hermeneutics for the researcher to be aware of his/her own pre-understanding. I have a background as a freelance dancer and dance teacher in release-based technique for 20 years. For the last six years, I have been employed at the Norwegian College of Dance, having responsibility for the modern and contemporary dance major. Thus, my PhD project is being conducted in the institution where I work, a situation that offers both advantages and challenges. First, my background spurs my interest and curiosity in the project, and my knowledge of the field of study can make it easier to recognise and understand the students' specific experiences. However, it is also necessary to create a critical distance to the material,

to remain open and to be able to separate my different roles; I am both a teacher supporting the students in their learning process and a researcher investigating what this process consists of. For this article, I have specifically reflected upon my own conceptions of the term 'dance technique', and attempted to take a critical distance from them.

### Method and research material

The empirical material, generated especially for the project, has been gathered over a two-year period. Initially, all students majoring in modern and contemporary dance were asked in an electronic survey if they wanted to participate in the project. Eleven students from different years volunteered to participate, without any further selection by me. All participants are women, reflecting the small number of male students at the college. Three to four times during each semester, the students deliver logs detailing experiences from their daily training. This training involves modern dance techniques like Graham and Cunningham techniques, release-based and other contemporary dance techniques, as well as improvisation, contact improvisation and repertory. At the end of each semester, I conduct semi-structured interviews based on an interview guide (Kvale & Brinkman 2009), in which the questions are partially based on my research interest and partially on themes I have detected in the logs. In accordance with van Manen's view of a hermeneutic phenomenological interview, the aims for the interviews are to gather experiential material for a richer understanding of a phenomenon and to engage the students in a reflexive dialog about the meaning of their experiences, whereby they become co-investigators of the study (van Manen 1997, 67, 98). In the interviews, I have asked both phenomenologically oriented questions, in response to which the students are encouraged to describe certain moments, as well as more reflective questions that follow up themes from logs or earlier

interviews. The term 'dance technique' is frequently used, often in a taken-for-granted way. Therefore, one reflective question I posed to the students in the third round of interviews concerned how they would define the term. The answers I received on this specific question, and related follow-up questions, are the topic of discussion in this article.

### Analysis: Five approaches to dance technique

I analysed the answers to the questions concerning dance technique through a selective reading approach (van Manen 1997, 93). First, I searched for revealing statements about the individual student's meaning and application of the term 'dance technique', marking them with preliminary cues. Second, I searched for commonalities and emerging themes between the students' accounts. After several rearrangements of the statements, looking for overarching themes that could best capture the content, I discerned five different, but partially overlapping, approaches to the term. These approaches to dance technique are as follows:

- 1) As a system,
- 2) As knowledge or practical skills,
- 3) As something set,
- 4) As goal-oriented work, and
- 5) As 'only technique'.

Below are a number of statements made by students exemplifying these approaches. The quotations are condensed and translated by me and, to ensure anonymity, names are substituted by capital letters (A, B, C, etc.). Using these quotations, I will look at these five approaches more closely. In addition, to discuss the students' accounts within a broader academic framework, I have set them in relation to dance research articles on the theme, with a special emphasis on how the authors use and understand the term 'dance technique'.

### 1. Dance technique as a system

*It is quite big; there are so many different techniques. It is possible to explain it as a style as well, because the different techniques have a distinctiveness, a style and a quality that you can recognise.* (F)

*All techniques have emerged from someone thinking things through. By having a purpose and developing a system out of it, then you get a technique.* (E)

These quotations are in accordance with a common use of the term 'dance technique', as a thoroughgoing system with a defined vocabulary, method and aesthetic, like Graham technique or Cunningham technique. Several dance researchers use the term in this way: Dance phenomenologist Jaana Parviainen writes that traditional modern dance techniques embrace a personified movement vocabulary, skill and method, which are acquired in dance classes through imitation and repetition (Parviainen 2003, 160). Similarly, dance scholar Susan Foster describes dance techniques as systematic programmes for instruction, cultivating bodily strength, flexibility, shape and quality through highly regimented dance classes. She also points out that dance technique is more than just training; it shapes and cultivates the body, integrating aesthetic and culturally situated ideas about dance (Foster 1997, 238–41). Philosopher Graham McFee employs the term in the way one might when speaking of Graham technique or classical ballet technique. He emphasises the connection between technique and aesthetics; through physical training, the dancer's body is inscribed with certain skills, which have expressive consequences. This is because, 'technique typically involves not just a way of handling movement in dance, but also a way of understanding movement' (McFee 1992, 203). Returning to student F above, when talking about style and recognisable

qualities, she emphasises exactly these aesthetic traits of technique. Student E points towards the personified trait in dance technique by saying, 'someone thinking things through', and when she says, 'having a purpose and developing a system out of it', she sees technique as a systematic cultivation of the dancer, based on certain ideas about dance.

Dance scholar and philosopher Chris Challis discusses dance technique in a similar way, using the term 'system', understood as the identifying features of a training method that encompasses both the style and the implicit rules and conventions that users of the system take for granted. When learning such a system, the dancers take on all its features (Challis 1999, 145–46). She argues that:

[T]echnique is not a system of training, but a system of education through which a dancer acquires not only bodily shape and facility but also learns the traditions, conventions and values which underpin the concept of dance being taught: The artistic body is thus skilful, intelligent and expressive of that form. (Challis 1999, 145)

This resonates with Tore Lindholm's discussion of tradition. Building on Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, Lindholm argues that tradition entails a taken-for-granted repertory of practices like skills, competencies, rules and opinions, which newcomers have to acquire to become part of the tradition (Lindholm 1985, 105). Thus, dance technique as a system can be seen as a tradition into which the dance student is being initiated. The student in the quotation below describes how her view of modern and contemporary dance has changed during her study. This can be seen as an example of a personal discovery of dance technique as a tradition, as well as the experience of becoming part of the tradition:



*At first, I thought it was just another way to move, but now I understand how big it actually is. Now I see it more like a whole world. It is creation and cooperation, arenas for expression and places for inspiration. It is a place to thrive. (J)*

## 2. Dance technique as knowledge or practical skills

*Specific skills or knowledge making it possible to jump higher or melt into the floor. (C)*

In this quotation, technique is seen as the best way to execute a specific movement task. This corresponds with a common definition of the term 'technique', namely, as practical skills (SNL 2009). Discussing knowledge in dance, Parviainen refers to Ryle's concept of 'knowing-how', which is characterised by experts acting without reflecting on the principles involved (Parviainen 2002, 18). She criticises this split between practical skills, or know-how, and theoretical knowledge, and stresses that bodily knowledge encompasses both. 'Bodily knowledge does not involve a mere technique or the production of skill; together with the body's reflectivity it offers possibilities to choose ways to move' (Parviainen 2002, 19). Dance technique seen as knowledge involves both physical skills and an ability to use these skills in different situations. In this view, technique can be seen as foundational work, not connected to specific systems or styles. The students quoted below use the term in this way:

*Technique is just technique, like knees above toes. It is the same in many styles because it is about what is best for the body. It is more like injury-preventing technique. (G)*

*Technique lies in your body, in the way you can do different things without getting*

*injuries, in what is most appropriate and good for your body. (F)*

Technique is here viewed as basic, anatomically correct work independent of style. This resonates with a more contemporary view on technique, where the dancer trains in different styles and systems to be able to execute any movement; technique is considered invisible and style-less, as a facilitator for dance (Parviainen 2003, 161). Dance scholar Sylvie Fortin provides one example of this view in a study of three dance teachers who worked on integrating somatics (a term Fortin refers to as idiosyncratic body-mind practices) into dance; the three teachers were all interested in developing a generic, basic technique, independent of specific style (Fortin 1998, 50, 56). However, this understanding of technique stands in opposition to the views of Challis and McFee referred to above that technique and aesthetics are closely connected.

The students in the quotations above are focussing on getting to know their own body through exploration and individual understanding. This corresponds to dance pedagogue and scholar Wendell Beavers's view that the goal for dance technique today is to gain deeper self-knowledge through listening to the body. He defines technique as 'the principles of organisation which underlie mind/body response' (Beavers 2008, 129). Similarly, the goal for the teachers in Fortin's study was to make students experts of their own bodies, through exploration and analysis of their own experiences (Fortin 1998, 65). On the basis of this discussion, I would argue that the goal of dance technique has shifted from the mastery of specific movements to the understanding of the dancer's own body in movement, thus making the conjoining of practical and theoretical knowledge more explicit, as exemplified by the quotation below:

*Knowledge in dance is to understand movement and the body and its function. And especially my body's function, because it is different from others' bodies. (G)*

For this student, the understanding of her own body in movement is knowledge. This view of knowledge relates to the discussion above on technique as bodily knowledge, which in Parviainen's view encompasses both practical skills and bodily reflexivity.

## 3. Dance technique as something set

*Technique is set. It must be the same. A plié is a plié wherever you are. (A)*

*In modern dance, you are trained to master a specific technique and a specific expression. You have to fit in; you don't have much free rein. (D)*

*Technique in dance is a way to execute a movement in a correct way, according to the teacher you have. (B)*

Technique is here defined as something pre-determined or set. There is a norm for what is right or wrong and there is little freedom for the dancer's own contributions. However, the three quotations above have somewhat different understandings of *how* technique is set. This can be related to dance pedagogue and scholar Becky Dyer's discussion of dance teaching in relation to three metaphors for movement: Movement as a universal experience, as a foreign language, and as a private code (Dyer 2009, 111–13). The first student quotation can be seen as an example of the first, of movement as a universal experience: A plié is the same everywhere. To assume that movement means the same in all cultures is problematic, however, and the student may not have

meant it literally in this way. However, by choosing the ballet term *plié* as an example, the student touches upon what Challis describes as a widely held belief that ballet is a basis for all other art dance forms. Challis rejects this assumption, arguing that technique and meaning are closely connected and that there are no general principles of moving (Challis 1999, 144–45). The second student quotation relates to movement as a foreign language that has to be learned in order to master and understand the technique. Dyer writes that central to this learning process is the understanding of the underlying 'contexting rules' of the technique (Dyer 2009, 112). This is consistent with Challis's view of technique as a whole system of education. The third quotation can be seen as an example of movement regarded as a private code, in which the individual teacher defines what is right or wrong, independent of a larger system. This relates to the tendency in dance techniques today for teachers to develop their own individual, eclectic styles (Bales & Nettle-Fiol, 2008). This third quotation can also be seen from a more everyday perspective: The student meets different teachers with what appear to her to be opposing or incompatible ideas of right and wrong. The teachers may have different focusses, and the student does not understand what lies behind their messages. For this student, the underlying 'contexting rules' may still be hidden.

Technique understood as something set is often contrasted with improvisation, which is seen as more free and individual than technique is. However, in response to a direct question about whether improvisation and contact improvisation can also be seen as technique, some students' discussions make the distinction less clear:

*Contact improvisation is also technique; what is set is not the result, but the way of doing it, where to put the weight. I feel that is also technique. Improvisation is also about*

*structure and a technique for understanding the structure. (A)*

*Different structures are a sort of technique; they give you frames to relate to. A choreographer, who sets a structure, may also have an idea about how it should look. Even if there is room for individuality, there is something set. (C)*

By discussing whether improvisation can be included into the term 'technique', the students mention themes like structure, frames and something pre-determined or set.

#### **4. Dance technique as goal-oriented work**

*We strive to get better. That is somehow technique, to work towards a goal. (E)*

*In technique, we work all the way towards a goal, a kind of ideal, something right. You strive for the perfect, but there is always something that is wrong. (F)*

Here, technique is associated with goal-oriented work in which the dancer strives for improvement and perfection. Dance phenomenologist Gediminas Karoblis, following Heidegger, discusses several possible definitions of technique, one of which is technique as a means to a goal. This is an instrumental understanding of the term, and in dance it would mean that 'the body becomes a tool that is «Ready-to-hand» for attaining intended goals' (Karoblis 2005, 366). Such an instrumental understanding of technique is criticised by several dance researchers; some suggest using improvisation or somatics as a way to avoid this tendency (i.e. Fortin 1998, Parviainen 2003). Parviainen warns against having a schematic

relationship between cause and effect independent of meaning. Dance then becomes 'a mere art of achieving, a calculating technique functioning according to technical rules' (Parviainen 2003, 162). Susan Foster describes dance technique in a way that can be seen as instrumental: 'The dancer pursues a certain technique for reforming the body, and the body seems to conform to the instructions given' (Foster 1997, 237). She argues that the dancer works hard to copy the teacher and avoid mistakes; she must endure pain to correct the body's deficits, and the prevailing experience is of loss and failure, of not reaching the goal (Foster 1997, 237–40). The view of dance technique that Foster is drawing here is one that I do not really see in the students' experiences. Several students have the experience that there are certain ideals, but they consider it positive to have a goal towards which they can work. They also emphasise that the ideals have to be adjusted to their own bodies and, through this, stress their own individual contribution, as exemplified below:

*One always has idols to look up to, and movements one wants to master, but I know that I haven't got 180-degree turnout, so I will never get that. There is a sort of struggle to get better, but even a prima ballerina needs to keep on working. I think it is positive, because you focus on development. To see change gives me motivation. (F)*

Parviainen, also following Heidegger, introduces the term 'dance *techne*' as a way to avoid the goal-oriented or instrumental understanding of technique. *Techne* is practical knowledge, but it also means 'to be at home' or 'to dwell' in something. She uses improvisational exploration as an example of how to dwell in dance, where movement is not an object for calculating thought but a way of letting be and of reaching a state of dancing (Parviainen 2003, 167–74). Is it possible to

reach this kind of dwelling in dance in set movement material as well? Some students have been talking about freedom in dance, of being in the moment or in a state of dancing. These themes can be seen as examples of dwelling in dance, and the students connect these experiences both to improvisation and to set movement material. Here is one example:

*I feel freedom when I don't think, when I just am; when you come into this little bubble and afterwards you ask what has happened. It can happen with set material as well, but mostly when I am on stage, when I am in the moment, because on stage you normally have reached your goal, you can just have fun and enjoy. In class, you often work towards something, focussing on getting better and doing things right. (J)*

This student can experience freedom both in improvisational and in set material, but she needs to go beyond dance technique as a means to a goal. After reaching the goal, she can be in the moment. She does not think, or she has let go of calculating thoughts, and she can let the dance be an example of dwelling in dance.

#### **5. Dance technique as 'only technique'**

*There are dancers who are really good technically yet with totally empty faces; they don't succeed in drawing me into their world at all. They are just copying the material, not adding something of their own. (G)*

This student is criticising some dancers for being purely technical, without expression. This is a common critique, of technique as 'only', as something less than expression. McFee explains this critique as

referring to dancers who are using their technique, or physical skills, without engaging their own feelings and thoughts. Such an understanding means that the difference between a technical and non-technical performance lies in what the dancer thinks, rather than what he or she does. However, McFee argues that the potential for an expressive performance lies in the technique itself (McFee 1992, 213), as exemplified in the student quotation below:

*In modern and contemporary dance, expression lies more in the body, and then it is connected to technique. You have to understand how things look, to know how they will be expressed. Thus, you need technique to be able to express things. (E)*

Another student discusses the connection between technique and expression in this way:

*Expression asks more of you as a person. You need a personal motivation and you have to give something of yourself. You have to dance it, and not just do it; you must put your soul into it. This happens mostly on stage, when I have an audience. (F)*

For this student, expression is connected to personal involvement and motivation, which is easier to reach on stage, where she can 'dance it' and not just 'do it'. Does this mean that before she reaches this point, she is not dancing, but rather preparing to dance? Karoblis discusses this as one possible, albeit problematic, definition of technique: 'A dancer prepares for the scene like a soldier prepares for the war. In both cases, they just exercise. The exercises are not reality, but imitations of it' (Karoblis 2005, 385). This understanding of technique reduces it to an 'only', to something less, and other, than the dance itself. Does this mean that it is impossible to exercise dance and to

dance at the same time? No, Challis argues. The dance class 'is not a goal in itself, but neither is it a rehearsal for something else [...] dancers do not merely mark steps, they dance them' (Challis 1999, 147). And, I will add, merely marking steps can also be seen as dancing. Karoblis also goes against this reductive understanding of technique as just preparation: 'Technique cannot be renounced in dance as the profanation of the sacred pureness of dance. On the contrary, dance technique is the mode of revealing and belongs to the essence of dance' (Karoblis 2005, 390–91).

Nonetheless, when talking about freedom in dance, several students touch upon a distinction between 'only' working on technique and 'really' dancing, or being in a state of dancing:

*I feel that I dance when I don't have to think about what to do or what is important in the exercise but when I just do it. When I know the material very well, so that I feel that: OK—now I can dance! (H)*

*I feel freedom when I don't have to think about the movement material, when the body remembers and everything flows together. Then I can just enjoy it. (C)*

These students want to free themselves from thinking about technique, to be able to be in the moment. They are not liberated from technique as 'only' technique. Rather, they are mastering the technique; it is integrated into their bodies, and that gives them the feeling of being in a state of dancing. This connects to themes I have touched upon earlier: To have reached a goal, not having to strive for perfection, the feeling of freedom, of being in the moment and of dwelling in dance. These are themes that do not necessarily need to stand in opposition to dance technique.

## Conclusion

By analysing students' statements in relation to dance research articles, I have discussed possible meanings and applications of the term 'dance technique'. The first two approaches presented—dance technique as a system and dance technique as knowledge or practical skills—can be viewed as two opposites, with parallels to the differences between a modern dance tradition and a more contemporary dance tradition. This may be related to what Dyer describes as two distinct paradigms in dance teaching, one focussing on an aesthetic vocabulary within a style, the other a generic approach emphasising sensing and understanding the body (Dyer 2009, 119). The other three approaches—dance technique as something set, as a goal-oriented work, and as 'only technique'—are closely connected to the first two, touching upon several dichotomies existing in dance, such as free/constrained, improvised/set, normative/individual, and technique/non-technique. Rather than confirm the dichotomies, the students' experiences and reflections give examples of negotiations between opposites: One does not exclude the other; rather, they can be experienced as useful complements and as belonging together.

By conjoining students' experiences with dance research articles, I have shown that there are both similarities and differences in the comprehension of the term 'dance technique' as it appears both in the students' experiences and in the dance research articles. This can be interpreted to mean that there has been a change in the understanding of the term 'dance technique', which, as I suggest in this article, has parallels to a change between a modern dance and a contemporary dance tradition. However, as individual students use the term in several different ways, it seems that different meanings and applications exist simultaneously. These usages can be seen as concrete examples of how different traditions are at play at the same time; that there

has not been a total breach between a modern and a contemporary understanding. As can also be seen in the material, there is also a kind of ambiguity in the understanding of the term 'dance technique', which can have implications for both teaching and learning dance. Clarifying concepts that are taken for granted can be of value for both dance education and dance research.

Returning to van Manen (2014), the aim for hermeneutic phenomenology is to collect examples of possible human experiences that can be of relevance to others. In this article, I have discussed the experiences and reflections of a number of particular students in a particular time and place. By conjoining the students' accounts with a larger body of academic work on western theatrical dance, I have shown how individuals' experiences resonate with others' experiences, and through that, they can be seen as possible experiences for others in the dance field. Van Manen also stresses the importance of being attentive to seemingly trivial dimensions of our everyday lives, and of being aware of the significant in the taken-for-granted (van Manen 1997, 8). Looking at the students' everyday experiences and reflections on a seemingly straightforward term, 'dance technique', has revealed the complexity involved in understanding the term, which points to some significant themes of relevance to both dance as art in general and to the education of dancers specifically. Some of these themes are related to epistemology, aesthetics, ideas about teaching and learning and the negotiations between certain dichotomies within dance training.

## Endnotes

1 A first draft of this article was presented at the 12th international NOFOD conference in Reykjavík, May 2015. Since then, the text has been expanded and revised.

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## BIOGRAPHY

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## Dans er mer enn trim – dans sett i et kulturelt og helsefremmende perspektiv

Gjertrud Husøy

### ABSTRACT

The relationship between health and physical activity is well documented through research, but we know less about the health effects of cultural activity. The background for this project is a passionate interest in dance in general and especially folk dance. Many questions have emerged such as: What do we know about the connection between dance and health? Can social dance promote health and prevent disease? This article will present folkdance in a physical, psychosocial and cultural view.

### SAMMENDRAG

Sammenhengen mellom helse og fysisk aktivitet er godt dokumentert gjennom forskning, men vi vet mindre om helseeffekten av kulturell aktivitet. Bakgrunn for prosjektet er en lidenskapelig interesse for dans generelt og folkedans spesielt. Mange spørsmål har meldt seg som for eksempel: Hva vet vi om sammenheng mellom dans og helse? Kan sosial dans være med å fremme helse og forebygge sykdom? Denne artikkelen er en anskueliggjøring av folkelig dans ut fra en fysisk, psykososial og kulturell dimensjon.

## Dans er mer enn trim – dans sett i et kulturelt og helsefremmende perspektiv

Gjertrud Husøy

**E**t avisinnlegg vakte min interesse spesielt: Den 25. januar 2014 kom det et innlegg i VG HELG av Wasim Zahid titulert som lege, forfatter og blogger. Han forteller at han har meldt seg på salsakurs fordi forskning viser at dans gir ulike typer helseeffekt. Han skriver:

*Du får sterkere muskler og bedre kondis. Skjelettet styrkes og risikoen for beinskjørhet reduseres. Dessuten får du bedre kondisjon og balanse, og på dansegolvet fremstår du som grasiøs og selvsikker. Men visste du at dansing også gjør deg mer intelligent?*

Han viser til en studie gjort ved Albert Einsteins College of Medicine i New York City, og skriver videre:

*De som danser regelmessig hadde hele 76 prosent lavere risiko for å utvikle demens enn de som ikke gjorde det.*

Da undres jeg, hva er det med kultur, fysisk aktivitet og dans spesielt som gir slik helseeffekt?

### Dans og helse

Dans kan forstås som noe naturlig, noe som har utspring i mennesket selv. Dansepioner Isadora Duncan (1877-1927) skriver i *The Art of the Dance* (1928) at all bevegelse har utspring i kroppens sentrum, at kroppen skal være i harmoni med tyngdekraften og at dansen skal utvikles fra naturlige bevegelser. I følge Duncan må en for å forstå dans også ta i betraktning både rytme, relasjoner,

imitasjonen, fokus og pust. Dans er også ritualer der det foregår spennende samspill med mennesker en har rundt seg, det utveksles informasjon og det knyttes bånd til andre mennesker. Dansekunstner Martha Graham (1894-1991) hevder at dans er kroppens sang. Graham hadde et sterkt behov for å uttrykke emosjonelle følelser gjennom dansen, noe som gjenspeilte hennes pedagogikk (Hernes, Horn, Reistad 1993). Når en danser er en kroppslig til stede og samtidig aktiv. I den folkelige dansen er en i tillegg sosialt deltagende, og høyst frivillig til stede. Ser en på hva Verdens helseorganisasjon (WHO 1991) fremhever som helsefremmende arbeid (Health Promotion), så bygger det på følgende prinsipper:

- Helsefremmende arbeid må rette seg mot helsepåvirkninger i folks hverdagsliv og ikke spesielt mot høyrisikogrupper
- Helsefremmende arbeid skal bidra til å redusere ulikhetene i helse mellom folk
- Helsefremmende arbeid må kombinere forskjellige tilnærminger og metoder
- Helsefremmende arbeid må stimulere til aktiv deltagelse fra befolkningens side

Videre hevdes det at helsefremmende arbeid dreier seg om forandringsprosesser hvor målet er å tilrettelegge forhold som har betydning for helse, livskvalitet og trivsel (WHO 1991). Her kan den sosiale dansen være et aktivum i så henseende.

### Tidligere forskning på dans relatert til kultur og helse

Ved artikkelsøk med nøkkelordene dans, helse og kultur fant jeg tre artikler som kan belyse det valgte



*Kulturelt arrangement i Spania.  
Foto: Finn Arne Ottesen.*

emnet. I en forskningsstudie gjort i Australia på eldre personer, spesielt kvinner i alderen 50-80 år (Connor 2000), kom det fram at folkedansgrupper tilfredstilte de nasjonale helsefremmende kriteriene i Australia, kalt *Healthy Older People (H.O.P.)*. Grunnen til det spesielle fokus på kvinner er at levealder er høyere for kvinner, og at mange eldre kvinner lider av osteoporose og trenger vekt bærende aktiviteter. Folkedansgrupper for eldre, eller seniordans som vi kaller det i Norge, skaper nettverk for deltagerne, aktiviteten gir bedre fysisk og mental helse, og reduserer sosial inaktivitet og isolasjon. Seniordans er en stor bevegelse både nasjonalt og internasjonalt. Som et av organisasjonens formål står det at:

*Gjennom organisert seniordans skal en ha fokus på dans som helsefremmende tiltak, og gjennom lystbetont fysisk aktivitet skapes nye sosiale arenaer for eldre mennesker (Seniordans 2015).*

Folkedans kommer i kategorien lett aktivitet og det er den gjentatte øvingen på deler for å få til mønster i dansen som resulterer i forbedret mentalt velvære hevder Connor (Connor 2000).

Musikk og dans er uløselig forbundet. Myskja (2004) har gjennomgått forskningslitteratur fra 1979 til år 2000 og fant ut at musikk kan ha effekt ved behandling av blant annet angst og depresjon, videre kan musikk lindre smerte. I *Tidsskrift for Den norske legeforening* kom det en oversiktsartikkel skrevet av Knutsen, Holmen og Håpnes (2005) med tittel: «Hva vet vi om kulturdeltagelse og helse?» Der skriver de at vi i dag har mye kunnskap om sammenheng mellom livstilsfaktorer som røyking, matvaner og helse, men mindre om folkehelse og ulike typer kulturdeltagelse. Oversiktsartikkelen tar for seg musikk, dans og bevegelse, samt drama, litteratur og andre kulturelle uttrykk.

Når det gjelder dans skriver de:

*Dans kan fremme helse gjennom trening av aerob utholdenhet og utvikling av koordineringsevne. Dansen har et sosialt aspekt gjennom atspredelse og sosial samhörighet og en psykologisk side ved at den kan vekke til live og bearbeide følelser samt utvikle kroppsbevissthet og kroppsbygge.*

Knutsen m.fl (2005) anbefaler at det må gjøres flere studier på effekten av kulturopplevelser og deltagelse hvor de fysiologiske, psykologiske og de psykososiale sidene ved deltagelsen analyseres. De påpeker også det forholdet at den generelle folkehelsen er blitt bedre, men at det fortsatt er skjevheter når det gjelder ulike sosiale lag i befolkningen. Med dette som bakgrunn ønsker jeg å anskueliggjøre noen danse miljø sett ut fra et helseperspektiv.

### **Metodisk tilnærming til tema**

I denne artikkelen er det fokus på dans som kulturdeltagelse sett i et helseperspektiv. En kvalitativ tilnærming er valgt der tidligere forskning, utsagn og opplevelser basert på tre utvalgte avisoppslag, samt egne observasjoner vil bli presentert. Her vil det være blick på aktiv deltagelse og tilstedeværelse på ulike dansearenaer. Forsker har vært aktiv deltager i tre ulike danse miljø i perioden 2006 frem til dags dato. Den ene gruppen er en mindre gruppe på 20 deltagere som driver kurs og oppvisning i folkedans. De to andre gruppene har om lag 50 til 60 deltagere hver på sine arrangement, og driver tradisjonell folkedans og selskapsdans. Som forsker og deltager i en prosess er det en utfordring både å ha tilstrekkelig nærhet til prosessen og ha den avstanden som kreves i en forskningsprosess. Wadel (1991) sier at som deltagende observatør må en være bevisst sin egen rolle. Dette innebærer at en har kunnskaper om sin egen kultur og informantens kultur, for å kunne tolke dataene rett,

men samtidig kan denne nærheten føre til at forskeren ikke har den nødvendige distansen til funnene.

Den 19.11.2014 ble det gjort et digitalt søk i lokalavisen for å finne avisinnslag som omhandlet dans i de aktuelle danse miljø. Søket gav ni treff for perioden 2006-2014, derav var det bare tre lengre avisartikler med beskrivelse av danse miljøene og intervju med deltagerne. Disse tre artiklene danner grunnlag for datasamlingen. At kildene er få kan kanskje kritiseres, men innholdet i artiklene gav gjenklang hos meg som forsker, og ved hjelp av en Foucault-inspirert diskursanalyse vil jeg se på tekstene som representasjon for den aktivitet og de handlinger som foregår i fellet. På den måten er teksten både et resultat av, men også en formende kraft i diskusjonen. Ved å velge å skrive denne artikkelen i et sosialkonstruktivistisk lys gjennom en diskursanalyse, ønsker jeg å medvirke til debatt og økt bevisstgjøring av dans som helsefremmende aktivitet. Neumann (2001) beskriver tre skritt for å gjennomføre diskursanalyse, der første skritt er å avgrense diskursen, som her er dans og helse. Neste skritt er å finne representasjonene som finnes i teksten, det vil si de tema som gjentar seg og danner meningsmønster. I skritt tre skal representasjonene analyseres, se på hvilke trekk som forener og differensierer, og se etter «point of differation» i henhold til Foucaults terminologi. De representasjonene som her fremkom var:

- (I) dans som kultur og tradisjon,
- (II) den psykososiale dimensjonen og
- (III) dans som fysisk aktivitet.

Det kan slås fast at dans er mer enn trim. På nettsiden <http://www.levoglykkes.no> den 03.12.2014 kunne en lese følgende:

*Dans er fysisk og psykisk helse, idrett, kunst og kultur. Dans er selvtilitt og glede over egen kropp i bevegelse. Dans er mestring, musikk, rytme, opplevelse, bevegelse, berøring, glede, kroppsbeherskelse, kontakt, samspill, suksess og selvutvikling. Dans er livsbejende nærhet til livet, rytmen og pulsen.*



*Øving i Argentinsk tango.  
Foto: Gjertrud Husøy.*

Med dette som bakteppe vil diskursen handle om dans og helse, representasjoner fremkommet i avisartikler, tidligere forskning og de erfaringer jeg bringer inn.

### Dans som kultur og tradisjon

Dans er en vanlig form for rekreasjon i store deler av verden. Folkedans med sine varierte formasjoner og ringdanser kan passe for grupper og for par. Danser fra ulike land gir variasjon i rytme og form og gir auditiv stimulans (Connor 2000). Dans gir derfor utfordringer både fysisk og mentalt. I pardansen holder to og to hverandre i hendene, og når musikken starter kommer danseparet sakte men sikkert inn i et samspill med hverandre, dansen og musikken. Et fascinerende samspill ved hjelp av non-verbale kommunikasjon. Musikken gir rytme og løft, slik at dansen blir lett. I *Sunnbordland* kunne en lese: «Om vi hadde truffet de som ukjente på gata - ville vi aldri tiltrudd den spensten og vedvarende driv de legg for dagen på dansegolvet» (Bjørkum 2013).

### Den psykososiale dimensjonen

I et avisinnlegg 23.01. 2009 kunne en lese følgende: «Da blir det ikke noe krangling, ler de, mens de prøver å bli enige om hvilken vei dama skal svinges» (Myklebust 2009). Her er det henvist til et ungt ektepar i trettiårene som skal lære seg å danse swing. Et poeng i dansen er at det som regel er mannen som fører, dama må lære seg å tolke signalene som blir gitt for å få flyt i dansen. Mannen på sin side trenger å øve på å gi tydelige signal. Dette kan i noen parforhold være en utfordring som en øvet danseinstruktør er oppmerksom på, slik at han kan føre paret videre i dansen.

Fritidsaktiviteter som kan passe for par, slik som dans, er få. Når man har små barn må en ofte finne aktiviteter hver for seg for å få timeplanen til å gå opp på hjemmebane. Og når en er blitt riktig gammel

er mange blitt alene fordi ektefellen er gått bort. Likevel finnes det ulike danselag for voksne par. Fra et avisinnlegg kunne en lese om et av de eksisterende folkedanslag: «Det er høg gjennomsnittsalder, de begynner ved 50 og ender ved pluss minus 80. Frafallet skyldes ikke interesse men sykdom og død» (ibid). Dette sammenfaller godt med det de fant ut i Australia (Connor 2000) at voksne mennesker har stor glede og nytte av danseaktivitet. I samme avisinnlegg (Myklebust 2009) roser deltagerne dansemiljøet og sier de føler seg vel sammen med kjekke folk, og at prestasjonsangst er et ukjent ord i det fine, sosiale miljøet. Dette samsvarer med hva Knutsen m. fl. (2005) fant i sin studie om at dans, med sine sosiale aspekt er mer enn trim. De påpeker også de psykologiske sidene der den kan vekke til live og bearbeide følelser ved den kroppsbevissthet som dansen krever.

I 1946 kom WHO frem med følgende definisjon på helse som «fullstendig fysisk, mental og sosial velbefinnende». Denne formuleringen er i følge Mæland (2002) blitt kritisert for å være utopisk; men begrepet velbefinnende betyr ikke nødvendigvis et fravær av sykdom og plager, men kan forstås utfra opplevelsen av velbefinnende til tross for sykdom. I tillegg gir dans i sin beskaffenhet både glede, sosialt samspill, samt god fysisk aktivitet, og kan derfor gi utøveren/deltageren robusthet og motstand mot ulike sykdommer og plager. Dette samsvarer med de erfaringer jeg intuitivt har fått når dansen går. Dans er uten ord og en mer føler enn vet hvordan den andre har det, gjennom en non-verbal kommunikasjon.

### Dansing som fysisk aktivitet

«Dansing er god trim og det sosiale sammen med dansere fra mange steder skaper trivsel» (Sunnhordland 2007) Men dans er ikke bare fysisk trim men også trimming av hjernen. Å lære en dans er en syklisk prosess der hvert trinn og hvert «vek» som en sier på dansespråket, blir repetert slik danselærer

viser. Når de enkelte delene er automatisert settes hele dansen sammen. Når musikken starter begynner dansen, og da skal hvert trinn og hvert «vek» passe. Danseparene hjelper hverandre og ser på de andre danserne til alle gjør likedan, da først kommer flyten og gleden i dansen. En følelse av mestring brer seg i dansegruppen. En dansekveld i en slik folkedansgruppe varer i 3-5 timer inklusiv en pause. Det er mulighet for den enkelte å stå over en dans for å kvile seg litt, men de fleste blir både varme og svette. At festene og øvingskveldene er alkoholfrie er også et poeng i Noregs Ungdomslag (NU). Følgende sitat er hentet fra et avisinnlegg: «Både festene og de vanlige dansekveldene er alkoholfrie. Svært sunt er det også. Vi kjenner det på kroppen dagen derpå» (Danselag med godt driv). At en er stødig på foten og har god balanse er viktig når en danser, spesielt når mange danser sammen. I en folkedansring kan en ofte være over 60 personer. Blir det flere på dansegulvet pleier en å lage to ringer, det vil si en mindre ring inni den store ringen. Danserne blir svært ivrige og tøyser sine grenser både fysisk og mentalt, dette i tråd med Myskja's funn i forhold til musikkens virkning (2004). Musikerne følger nøye med om alle får det til, og det hender at de stanser musikken når for mange gjør feil. Da er det et par som viser trinnene og de mest utfordrende «vekene» i dansen. Så kan dansen begynne igjen!

### Oppsummering og veien videre

Denne artikkelen har hatt hovedfokus på å anskueliggjøre folkelig dans ut fra den fysiske, psykososiale og kulturelle dimensjon. Dansemiljøene som er vist til har aktive deltagere fra ulike lag i befolkningen i aldersgruppen 20 til 80 år, dette i tråd med WHO's råd for forebyggende arbeid. Følgende spørsmål ble stilt ved prosjektets start: *Hva vet vi om sammenheng mellom dans og helse? Kan sosial dans være med å fremme helse og forebygge sykdom?* Ved å velge diskursanalytisk

tilnærming til forskningsspørsmålene har jeg belyst noen områder hvor dans kan sees som helsefremmende aktivitet. Denne diskursen kan gi en bedre forståelse av sammenheng mellom dans og helse, der dans med musikk gir glede og løft i kroppslige bevegelse. Folkedans spesielt gir stimulans til både fysisk aktivitet og mental oppmerksomhet for å gjennomføre ulike ringdanser og pardanser med sine ulike «vek». Dans gir øvelse i non-verbal kommunikasjon, gir kjennskap til ulike kulturers former for folkelig dans gjennom endring i dansen og rytmer i musikken. Jeg har derfor tro på dansens betydning og muligheter både som egen aktivitet, og som bidrag til gode liv og bedre helse for utsatte grupper. Dette i tråd med Stortingsmelding 29 (2012-2013) *Morgendagens omsorg* kap. 5.2.1 som setter søkelyset på kulturtiltak i omsorgen.

Men ulike spørsmål dukker opp. Kan for eksempel personer med hukommelsesproblemer dra nytte av slik aktivitet? I fenomenologien sier vi at «kroppen husker», og jeg har ved ulike anledninger sett hvordan personer med hukommelsesproblemer både kan synge og danse. Jeg har også erfart at altfor krevende aktiviteten kan føre til fortvilelse. For å få bedre forståelse for sammenheng mellom hva som fremmer og hemmer god helse i ulike faser av livet trengs mer forskning. Dette fordi vi lever lenger og flere vil dermed leve med aldersrelaterte og kroniske sykdommer. Norges forskningsråd foreslår derfor økt satsing 2016 i et program de kaller: *Flere aktive og sunne år*. Inntil da er det bare å danse videre!

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## BIOGRAFI

**Gjertrud Husøy** er sykepleier med videreutdanning innen psykisk helsearbeid, ledelse og pedagogikk. Er cand. san. fra Universitetet i Bergen fra 2001. Hun har ledererfaring fra sykehus, aldersinstitusjon, psykiatrisk sykehjem og mange års erfaring som lærer og veileder i helsefag både i videregående skole og høgskole. Hun har hatt fokus på forskning innen IKT, læring, forebyggende helse og mestring, og publisert artikler innenfor de ulike emnene. Arbeider nå som førstelektor i helsefag ved Høgskolen Stord/Haugesund.

## BIOGRAPHY

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## ABSTRACT

This article is an artistic reflection of a research project called Please Switch On Your Mobile Phones (PSOYMP) that took place in three venues in Wales in 2014. The aim of PSOYMP was to develop new tools for audience interaction with on-stage dance, with the intention of developing new audiences. The project utilised an action research model to create a flexible choreographic and digital hybrid system that enabled the audience to collaborate in real time with the creative team—a choreographer, five dancers, a digital artist and a technologist—using mobile phones and tablets.

The project resulted in the creation of an hour-long performance event. This was developed through three stages that included a week-long residency in each stage and a public performance event with a feedback session at the end of each residency. The final event was streamed live via YouTube and a web-based application, which allowed the online audience to participate in the event and to collaborate with the creative team in a similar way to the in-house audience. This article focusses on the creative process and discusses the nature and the development of the collaboration between the creative team and the audience.

## TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämä artikkeli keskittyy kuvailemaan Please Switch On Your Mobile Phones (PSOYMP) – nimisen tutkimusprojektin taiteellisesta prosessista. PSOYMP järjestettiin Walesissa vuonna 2014 ja sen tarkoituksena oli kehittää uusia digitaalisia työkaluja, jotka mahdollistaisivat ja edistäisivät yleisön ja esiintyjien vuorovaikutusta ja sitä kautta toisivat uusia katsojia tanssin pariin. Projekti hyödynti toimintatutkimuksen periaatteita ja pyrki luomaan joustavan koreografi-digitaalisen hybridi järjestelmän. Järjestelmän tarkoituksena oli mahdollistaa yhteistyö yleisön ja taiteellisen tiimin välillä reaaliajassa mobiililaitteiston avulla. Taiteelliseen tiimiin kuuluivat koreografi, viisi tanssijaa, digitaalitaiteilija ja teknologi.

Projektia kehitettiin vaiheittain kolmessa teatterissa eri puolilla Walesia vuoden 2014 aikana. Lopputuloksena syntyi tunnin mittainen interaktiivinen esittävä tapahtuma. Jokainen vaihe sisälsi viikon mittaisen residenssin, julkisen esityksen sekä yleisökeskustelutilaisuuden residenssin lopussa. Viimeinen tapahtuma lähetettiin myös suorana lähetyksenä YouTube Liven välityksellä. Varta vasten kehitetty verkkosovellus mahdollisti tapahtumaan osallistumisen ympäri maailmaa ja yhteistyön taiteellisen tiimin kanssa samalla tavoin kuin itse tapahtumassa. Tämä artikkeli painottuu esittelemään PSOYMPin luovaa prosessia sekä yhteistyön kehittymistä taiteellisen tiimin ja yleisön välille.

This article is an artistic reflection on a research project called Please Switch On Your Mobile Phones (PSOYMP) that took place in 2014. PSOYMP was created by TaikaBox (a Wales- and Finland based dance and digital art company) and Moon (a Wales-based digital studio) with the aim of creating a digital and choreographic system that allows in-house and online audiences to interact with the creation and performance of a dance show in real time. The project was one of seven selected for the pilot Digital R&D Fund for Arts in Wales funded by Nesta, Arts & Humanities Research Council and public funding by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Wales.

## Background

Over the past ten years, TaikaBox has integrated dance and technology to various degrees to create works for stage, screen and site. In recent years, the company has been developing more interactive and immersive experiences that allow interaction between the performer and hit/her audio-visual environment and audience participation in the performance or the creation of new dance work. The audience has become a strong focus in the company's research and production processes, encouraging a shift from the role of a passive consumer to an active participant and—in some projects—to become a creative collaborator. During PSOYMP, TaikaBox explored the use of mobile technology for the first time. In contrast, Moon is an established digital company. Over 15 years, Moon has crafted interactive products and experiences for the changing landscape of web,

mobile, tablet, TV and other connected devices. However, this represents the first time Moon has created digital tools for live performance.

PSOYMP was created out of frustration and curiosity. TaikaBox shares the frustration of poor audience attendance for dance with many other artists and companies in the Welsh arts sector. The company felt that traditional marketing strategies were not reaching or engaging with new audiences for dance in appropriate ways, and touring in Wales was commonly plagued with near-empty auditoriums. It was also considered that the theatre experience is perhaps viewed as an irrelevant and even scary and alienating experience by non-theatre goers. The unspoken code of behaviour in theatres is usually out-moded in relation to the contemporary society in which we are living. Audience members are generally expected to sit quietly in a dark auditorium, switch off their mobile devices and not interact with others (unless especially invited to do so by the performers) to avoid interfering with the 'art'.

The last two decades have shown an explosion in the use of technology in dance performances worldwide, with an array of audiovisual and interactive environments to accompany the dancers. Artists have also questioned the relationship between the performer and the audience and increasingly explored technology as a tool to engage audiences in the creative process. One of the most renowned companies blurring the boundary between technology and the moving body in choreography is Troika Ranch (2015). In this company, the use of technology is driven by an attempt to stay relevant for the audiences in contemporary

society, in which live theatre is competing fiercely with broadcast media.

In PSOYMP, TaikaBox was curious to investigate how interactive technology could seep deeper into the audience engagement and 'glue' the audience more firmly and more intimately into the artistic content. Could we build a system that extended interactivity to include the audience as part of the creative process? Could we take a step further and do this in real time?

### The aim of the project and research questions

PSOYMP explored the creation of new digital tools that could be integrated into a new production model that would break out of the time- and place-limited audience of a standard theatrical performance. Using mobile platforms, the project sought to connect with the audience through the two following aims: 1) to engage more deeply with the audience in the venue and 2) to simultaneously involve a global audience, expanding the geographic limits of theatrical performance, and creating a way for new audiences to feel more connected with a dance performance.

The research focussed on questions like the following 'How can the creative disruptions of new technology redraw the relationship between audience and performance in contemporary dance practice?' 'Does the system created manage to introduce non-theatre and a non-dance audience to contemporary dance?'

### Research framework

As one of the aims of the research was to develop new digital tools, the research team considered it important to design a research framework that allowed time to design these tools, test them out and—more importantly—develop them over time. A cyclical action research model was adopted; action research is commonly used to solve problems and develop ideas in education, social sciences and business development. It can also be used as a reflective

practice to improve one's own practice—learning by doing (O'Brien 1998).

The digital and choreographic elements of PSOYMP were built hand-in-hand through research cycles that enabled the team to test, learn from mistakes, re-develop and refine the system three times over the course of eight months. PSOYMP took place in three locations in Wales, each including a week-long residency and a public performance followed by programming and studio-based practice.

### Discussion

Each of the three research cycles is presented separately to shed light into the progression of the project and the learning that came from this research process. The presentation of the research cycles is followed by more general discussion of co-creation and post-digital tendencies in dance. The steepest learning curve came at the start of the project, during the first public test.

#### Stage 1 – Cardiff

The first residency included a group of dance students from the dance degree course at Cardiff Metropolitan University. These students worked alongside five TaikaBox dancers to build a choreographic system based on the principles of a simple choreographic workshop following the idea of generating initial movement material based on stimuli, developing it further with tasks and then performing it at the end.

The students were split into five groups, each led by one TaikaBox dancer. Each group was allocated a colour to make it easier to differentiate the groups onstage. The idea was that the audience submits short (Twitter-size) stories with their mobile phones and tablets. From the list of stories that were projected onto the back wall, each group chose a story to process into their initial movement material. To avoid the dancers miming the stories, a mathematical formula was introduced where each word was allocated to

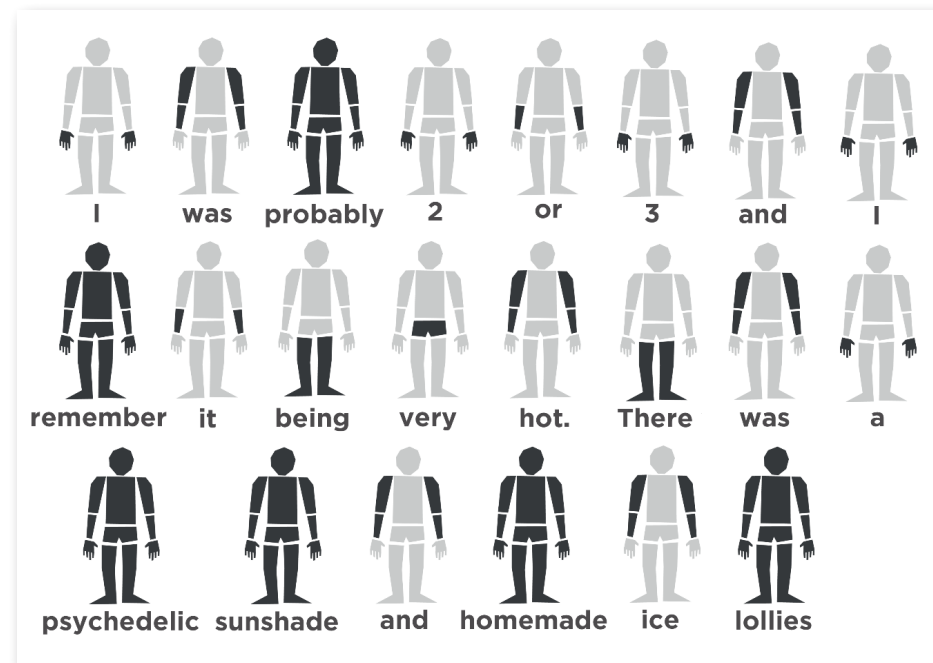


Figure 1. Processing a short story into movement. Image by Moon.

a different body part depending on the length of the word from one to seven letters. For example, one-letter words referred to a hand gesture, three letter-words to arm movements and so on.

This resulted in a rich movement vocabulary. The emotional content of the stories, however, was instantly lost. After the groups had created their initial movement material, the audience voted with mobile devices on how the movement was to be developed further by connecting each group with an icon, such as a compass or road. Each icon had a meaning, such as changing directions, travelling or doing movements with a certain speed or quality.

Although the system worked very well as a residency, the first public test was a 'brilliant, spectacular failure', as noted by one of the audience members. There is no better way to describe it. The system had been tested in a pilot with positive outcome, but the pilot differed too much from the first public test to prepare the team for their first encounter with the

general public as reflected in this blog post about the first beta test:

Server crashing and people getting frustrated. Audience members feeling left out and betrayed as only 5 stories were selected and the stories were chosen for their length rather than their meaning... the audience felt helpless as a collaborator... (Râman 2014)

The system that we had initially created did not work. It did not allow me, the choreographer, respond to or steer the situation when needed. The digital user interface did not provide enough guidance and clarity for the audience to replace verbal communication. The event was set up in a traditional theatre environment, creating certain expectations for audience behaviour that hindered the research. Smaller factors, such as the venue announcing: 'Please switch OFF your mobile phones', did not help the situation. Although the humiliation of public failure was initially difficult

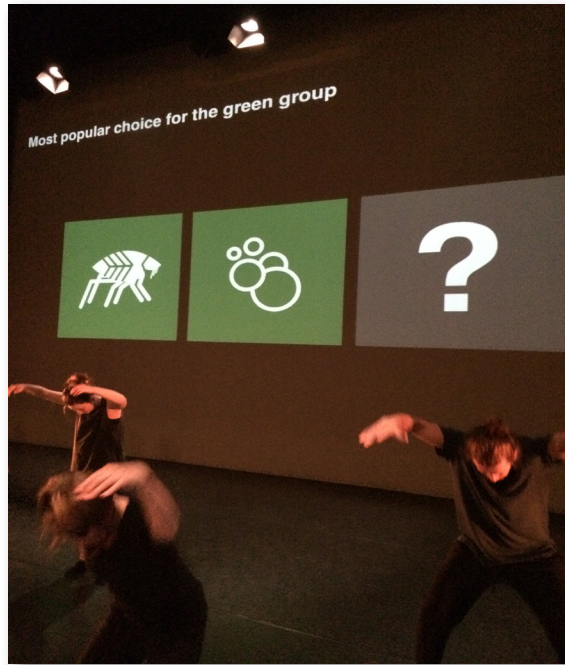
Figure 2. PSOYMP rehearsal during the first residency in Cardiff. Image by TaikaBox.

to deal with, it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened.

The public was generous in the post-show discussion, explaining what they had hoped for and what they missed. We realised that the digital tools were needed to solve problems rather than provide elaborate and irrelevant gimmickry. At this stage, although the audience members actively used their mobile devices to interact, they could not understand what to do unless they were already dance-literate. What was unfolding in front of them was alienating rather than engaging. Controls, such as changes in lighting and sound, were passed to audience members, but the responses were too subtle for them to feel that they had any influence on what was going on on-stage.

## Stage 2 – Aberystwyth

The failure of the first PSOYMP stage represented a crucial turning point. Only the very essence of the project was kept—the creative process would be based on stories that the audience members submitted and then the audience would vote on how the choreography should be. We agreed to find a better balance between human and digital communication, and verbal communication was re-introduced to guide the audience through the event. This was part of the pilot but was excluded in the first public test. The key for the re-development of the digital tools was to enable the audience to communicate with us through a user interface that was easy to understand without diverting their attention away from the stage. The aim was to create flexible tools that would allow us to respond spontaneously and instantly to respond



to any given situation. This would mean creating tools that could improvise as fluently as the dancers. The digital mechanics were simplified to create a solid foundation that could be tested in the second research stage. We re-thought the choreographic system and adopted a more improvisational approach. The aim was to change the dynamics, and through a guided creative process, audience members changed from passive to active participants. However, the audience was still not collaborating.

The public failure made us more aware of the importance of collaboration. A lot of the work that had taken place up to this point was done through web-based tools (Trello, Google Docs, Basecamp) with which the digital partner Moon was familiar. Most of the re-development from this point onwards took place in a dance studio, in which we could all combine physical doing, discussing and coding as a group.

During the second stage of PSOYMP, we simplified the user interface and the process. After submitting

stories, the audience members could favourite the stories they would like to see developed into movement. Although we did not manage to work with more than four stories in an hour, the audience seemed content. The dancers focussed on one story at a time, creating four short performances throughout the event. This meant that we developed more improvisational and task-based approaches and used specific tools, such as 'flocking', to create an impression of unison without needing to spend time on learning and rehearsing. The second test gave us confidence in the idea that we had created a foundation for the system that works—and on which we could continue building more complexity.

## Stage 3 – Llanelli

The third stage saw the addition of live streaming via YouTube, which enabled a global audience to take part in the creation of the work in (almost) real

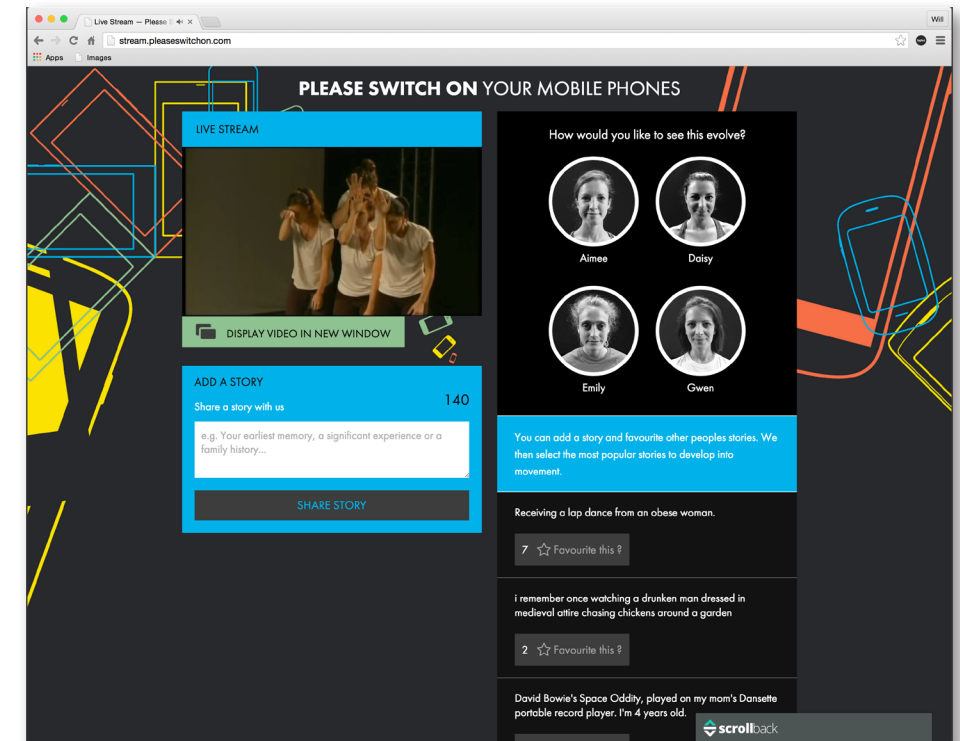
time. The online audience was provided with a user interface that had similar functions and design to the user interface on the in-house audience members' mobile devices.

The online audience had a chat room function to connect with individuals and to encourage discussion.

One of the challenges was how to combine live streaming with interactivity and encourage participation rather than passive observation. There was an approximately 40-second delay before the online audiences perceived the action that had taken place in the studio. Live sync became refined improvisation and communication between me and my technical team.

The final residency focussed on finding a balance

Figure 3. Live streaming of PSOYMP in Llanelli. Image by TaikaBox and Moon.



in physical, verbal and digital communication amongst all parties involved. With the digital aspects of the system responding more dynamically and flexibly, it was necessary to re-evaluate our perception of the choreographic process and the overall flow of the event. I had to explore creating work from a new perspective. We invited groups to play with the system in the studio and online, and the event evolved stylistically and became snappier in pace than TaikaBox's usual work for stage. During the last event, eight stories were transformed into mini-performances in an hour, and one of the stories was revisited to finish the event. Based on feedback from the first stage, we added the in-house audience's ability to digitally connect with the outside world and use social media. This was a way to create a more contemporary environment where the public could enjoy the performance as a non-restricting experience.

### Co-creation

During the final stage, the audience become a collaborator. We provided the tools and knowledge, and through communication with the audience, we made the performances together. The event became a social—as well as an artistic—experience, and the last performance, marked by humour and playfulness, was unlike anything TaikaBox has ever made before. This raises questions about ownership.

Was this a co-creation? I would argue that it was, as the last PSOYMP performance felt shared, blurring the boundary between performers and audience. For a co-creation to take place, there needs to be a shift of power to allow audiences to make meaningful decisions about what is being created. Although co-creation can be seen as all parties working together from the beginning of a project, Govier (2009), argues that focussing on power as a central aspect in co-creation can be counterproductive. According to Govier (2009) co-creation does not necessarily mean that the project is about a specific community group's agenda or that the power is equally shared within the

community. Govier supports a more open and dynamic approach to co-creation, where performers work with audiences to create something new depending on the people involved and the project itself.

I occasionally asked dancers to explain to the audience what they were doing. This provided insights into dancers' thinking and creativity, offering sometimes unexpected and amusing discoveries. This created a relaxed atmosphere and gave the audience ways to be more comfortable while watching contemporary dance. Maintaining a continuous dialogue fostered a friendly atmosphere that helped the audience to become part of the team and play with the dancers without needing to know anything about dance or choreography. The smooth operation of the digital system allowed people to voice their choices regularly, and the human interaction made the system work.

### Post-digital tendencies in dance

Many performances in the last event were rough, with little time to polish movements or ideas. The event relied on the dancers' ability to perform and on everyone's spontaneous judgements. Human error was an important, integral part of the performance. My argument is that the artistry did not arise from the actual dancing or choreography but rather from the act of co-creation. I would urge a shift in our focus from viewing to experiencing and from product to process to value PSOYMP. My view is that there is value in each individual audience member experiencing creativity and play, connecting with others and being part of something bigger or—for a fleeting moment—feeling a satisfying sense of 'this is it' or 'this works' whilst also scrabbling through try-outs and dead-ends.

PSOYMP does not easily fit into the aesthetics of typical digital work created in dance. The digital in dance is often associated with a sense of being clinical, cold and non-human; thus, it is often used to contrast with the softness of the human body. Post-digital art,

however, takes a different stance, drawing from the notion of imperfection and failure due to overloaded or manipulated digital systems, creating something new and more organic out of the failings (Cascone 2000). It also seems to comfortably combine analogue with digital and break the linear time-based view of old and new. Furthermore, it emphasises open process that the audience can easily witness and follow (Andrews 2002). I would suggest that the last PSOYMP event represents an example of what post-digital work could look like in a dance context. Moreover, in my view, it takes a step further to contribute to the general understanding of the post-digital condition. In PSOYMP, dancers and audience merge with the system itself, and this blurs the boundaries between the digital and the human.

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### BIOGRAPHY

**Tanja Råman** is the artistic director of TaikaBox, a dance and digital art company based in Wales and Finland. She is a multi-award-winning choreographer whose signature movement tends towards process-led, multilayered abstraction. Tanja's choreographic practice integrates her knowledge of dance science, specifically the dancer's physical and mental preparation.

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TaikaBox is dedicated to creating new ways for people to experience dance, making innovative and emotionally resonant work that is a hybrid between technology and the moving body. The company is engaged in ongoing research into defining the post-digital condition in dance.  
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## Practising Composition: Making Practice. Texts, Dialogues and Documents 2011–2013

**Authors:** Kirsi Monni & Ric Allsopp (ed.; 2015): KINESIS 6 2015  
ISBN 978-952-6670-60-7, ISBN (pdf) 978-952-6670-61-4

The publication *Practising Composition: Making Practice* results from—and documents—an Erasmus Intensive Project (IP) with that same title. Initiated and coordinated by Masters of Arts in Solo/Dance/Authorship (SODA) programme at the Inter-University Centre for Dance and the University of the Arts, Berlin, the project consisted of three 2-week long meetings among participating educational institutions during 2011–13.

Instead of reporting events in chronological order, the publication is organised into four sections related to sets of perspectives on the overarching subjects of the entire project: 'Poetics and [the] composition or dramaturgy'. The four sections are:

1. 'Poetics, ontology',
2. 'Form, open form',
3. 'Framing reality' and
4. 'Interruption, action'.

Overall, the book is a combination of keynote speeches, workshop documents and texts developed after one or several meetings. The editorial choice made by Kirsi Monni and Ric Allsopp to topically categorise and balance different forms of textual materials creates a good dynamic for reading as one can revisit topics and time periods without being presented with a linear report of the proceedings. Instead, one is dropped into an area of questions and interests related to the concerns of

participants. Although the text in its entirety presents a large and diverse array of interests and perspectives, there are some questions that emerge as predominant:

What are the poetics in which the art field concerned engages and produces?

What is the current understanding of the terms 'composition', 'dramaturgy', 'practice' and 'production' within the expanded field of choreography, and how are these terms placed in relation to each other?

In the introduction, the initial objectives of the IP are stated as «(...) to identify and reflect innovative approaches to and assumptions about recent cross-disciplinary compositional tools (aesthetic, cultural, contextual) strategies within the field of contemporary

dance/body-based performance work». The publication was put together after the IP, so it has a different focus, a shift, which shows how the process itself is a re-articulation of a question instead of an answer to it. The focus of the publication is expressed as «(...) a question of contemporary (individual) poetics, of the ontology of work, composition, production,

product, process, performance, performer and performing'. We thus can see how the initial focus on 'compositional tools' unleashed an entire battery of crucial questions related to performing art's production. There seems to have been a real need to (re) open the discussion on composition.

### From composing to practising composition

There are two particular items I would like to highlight as they reveal the publication's handling of the term 'composition' and effort to reshape its common understanding:

1. The absence of *composition* as a subject in any of the education programmes involved; and
2. The title *Practising Composition: Making Practice*.

That none of the education programmes specifically teach the subject composition reveals how practitioners in dance and choreography (or 'dance/body-based performance work', as stated in the objectives of the IP project, quoted here above) have come to distance themselves from the term and its understanding as an ordering of materials/components in time and space. In the conceptual development of Uniarts in Stockholm, there was a process of identifying the fields of research in which the institution would engage. I remember that the term 'composition' appeared as a subject and was rather strongly resisted by practitioners of choreography and dance (including myself). In the end, this field of research was entitled 'concept and composition', and André Lepecki, in his first seminar during a brief stint as a professor at Uniarts, mentioned that *composition* allows for a different understanding of production than *creation* does. *Practising Composition: Making Practice* engages in a similar effort to reclaim the term 'composition', however in quite a different way. Lepecki emphasised the ready-made aspect of materials where nothing is

created, but instead everything is composed, whereas this book underlines how the making of materials is always compositional. In a contribution, Emilie Gallier describes this concern in a straightforward way, noting that '[w]e usually think of composition as a final or late stage of the process. I have never been quite satisfied with that'. Instead of being understood as the finalising activity of ordering created materials, composition is put forward as a continuously present aspect within art production. Every choice in the process has an effect on the resulting material, and consequently, the agency of contextual matters is given recognition.

Although the different educational programmes involved are not specifically geared towards composition, they are drawn into it, and interestingly enough, the publication embraces the term in an affirmative way. It is refreshing to see the lack of resistance in the book. Two examples of this effort to engage with this term instead of resisting it are the dialogic contributions between Kirsi Monni and Victoria Perez Royo and between Sergiu Matis and Mila Pavi evi. In the first example, Monni probes Perez Royo's resistance to the term 'composition', and together, they stretch its definition and applications in artistic work. In the latter, the dialogic format can be understood as a metaphor of the affirmative approach, as Matis and Pavi evi start every enunciation by saying 'Yes and ...'. This agreement before addition might be an empty gesture as the following sentence could contradict the previous speaker/writer, turning the affirmation into a rhetorical trick. However, the attempt to not let oneself get caught up in polemics gives space for different perspectives to co-exist without becoming binary.

Now to the second particular: The title. To place the term 'practice'—which has had such constitutive power in the performance field over the past 5–10 years—in relation to the term 'composition' is a



performative act. The terminological questioning brought about by this write-act is a strong manifestation of one of the fundamental questions that has emerged at the intersection of academic research and artistic education (i.e. artistic research), namely, that of the relation process/product. The expansion of artistic research in European arts education surely is not the only cause of this emergence. In the book, we can find reference to not only Heidegger's dealing with the question of the artwork and Arendt's analysis of work and labour but also, continuing further up the line of Western philosophical tradition, the Greek philosophers and their dealings with *poiesis*. Perhaps the expansion of the field of artistic research has contributed to placing the process/product problem back onto the agenda.

The two opening contributions by Luoto and Allsopp signal the field with which the book engages and provide the reader with a beautiful set of questions and filters through which to approach the rest of the book. Through the etymological analysis of Greek terminology, Luoto attempts to translate Heidegger's thinking concerning artwork into contemporary concerns about the subject. Allsopp proposes a vast picture of how we can understand poetics in contemporary choreography. This list arches between vague categories, such as 'fluid intersection' and 'experiencing experience', and extends to the brink of confusion but provides all the needed perspectives for a reader to move on through the different contributions.

Although not specifically addressed by any of the contributions, there is yet another current that feeds into the questioning of the artist's work within which the book places itself: The more recent questions of the artist's work within the paradigm of performativity and immaterial labour. In this way, the book situates itself within several of the most burning questions in contemporary performance

work, which, as we have seen, was also the goal of the project.

### Unsecuring composition

In the initial keynote address, Luoto shows, citing Samuel Weber, how Heidegger translates, or translates, the Greek *poiesis* to the German *Entbergen*. *Entbergen* means revealing, but the combination of *bergen* (meaning harbour/conceal/rescue/recover) and *ent* (meaning forth/out) points to the movement of leaving a safe harbour. This term reveals the unsecure characteristic of *poiesis*. By showing the relatedness of creation and composition that *poiesis* achieves, the entire book becomes an attempt to unsecure the term 'composition'. Through a non-linear account and through diversity in 'text-texture', the publication reveals how the process of the IP project itself harboured compositional aspects that caused the published result. In that sense, the book walks its talk. Just like Goran Sergej Pristaš's contribution on the term 'post-hoc dramaturgy', the book stands as an example of how re-thinking the term 'composition' and its relation to meaning making can be a way to undermine the poor understanding of time as linear.

Rasmus Ölme.

## Dance Education Around the World; Perspectives on dance, young people and change

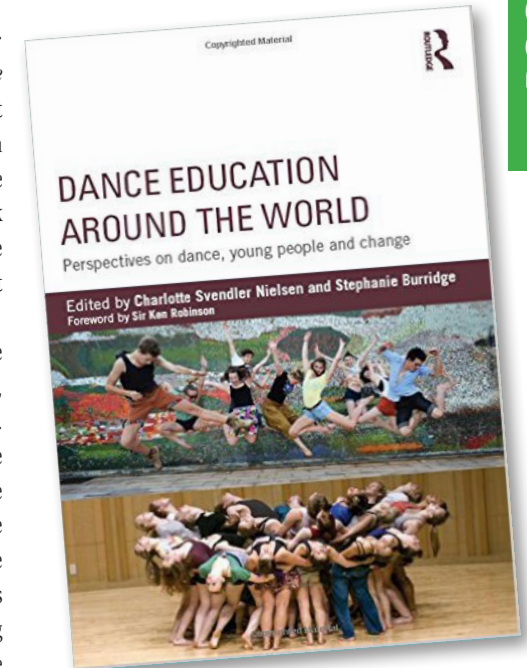
**Authors:** Svendler Nielsen, Charlotte & Burrige, Stephanie (Eds). London and New York: Routledge, 2015.

**D**ance Education Around the World; Perspectives on dance, young people and change reviews dance from several different perspectives. As editors, Charlotte Svendler Nielsen and Stephanie Burrige have made a valuable contribution to dance education through this book that treats dance in a comprehensive manner. Dance education is seen as an essential part of life and not as an isolated area.

The title not only expresses the content of the book, but also informs readers about the authors, who come from different continents and countries. The majority of the articles were written by native English-speaking and Western authors, but the perspectives come from worldwide sources. The different cultural and professional backgrounds of the authors bring diversity and different kinds of theories and pedagogical approaches to the book. Among the 30 authors, there are experts from many dance education areas, such as professors, lecturers, writers, dance educators, researchers and choreographers. Many authors are both teachers and researchers, which is quite common in the field of dance. Sir Ken Robinson wrote an interesting foreword to the book. Although there are numerous articles within the book, I have limited space in this review. Therefore, I have chosen to describe the different sections in general terms rather than in detail.

The book is divided into five sections. Each section includes chapters and case narratives on a key area:

- 1) Curriculum developments worldwide,
- 2) Empowering communities through dance,
- 3) Embodiment and creativity in dance teaching,



- 4) Exploring and assessing learning in dance as artistic practice and
- 5) Imagined futures for dance education.

These sections are interconnected in many ways and some themes recur, such as reflective discussions on the new role of teachers and on the objectives of current dance education. Whereas the different issues and themes concerning dance education are discussed on a more theoretical level within the chapters, the case narratives offer concrete examples of pedagogical cases within different social, cultural, philosophical or sociological frameworks in different countries. The theoretical chapters and case narratives work together to form a whole by complementing each other.

**Section I, Curriculum developments worldwide,** leads the reader to ponder the place of dance in curriculums and schools. The authors of this section are *Susan R. Koff*, *Jeff Meiners*, *Robyne Garrett*, *Adrienne Sansom*, *Sharon Friedman*, *Liz Melchior* and *Lim Mei Chian*. In the first chapter, *Susan R. Koff* asks a relevant question, «Who shall decide what to teach?» This question is also discussed in the other articles within this section. It is interesting to read about the current state of dance education and the place of dance in curriculums in different countries. For example, in several countries, dance is taught in schools as part of physical education. It would have been interesting to learn more about the subject and also about the positive aspects and challenges associated with dance when it is taught as part of physical education in schools.

In the first section, the articles highlight what kinds of educational change are going on in different countries and what kinds of possibilities dance education can offer to diverse learners. The authors critically reflect on whether dance curricula can offer access to meaningful dance content and practices for everybody. They also concretise how strongly local history, for example the history of Indigenous people in Australia, is related to dance education. Social justice in dance curricula is open for discussion within the field of dance education.

**Section II, Empowering communities through dance,** shows how dance practices can be adapted to many kinds of environments, including extremely difficult circumstances. *Mary-Elizabeth Manley* describes a project that explores links between arts education, rights education and indigenous pedagogy as they relate to the empowerment of First Nation's children. Reading about the impressive community project in the occupied Palestinian territories by author *Nichola Rowe* left me in awe. Politics are also strongly present in *Rosemary Martin's* text about

dance education in Cairo. *Beatrice Ayi* discusses the significance of dance in Ghana, including how dance constructs national identity and is at the centre of life. Also *Catherine Limbertie* emphasises that dance plays an important role in helping Torontonians embody their diversity.

**Section III, Embodiment and creativity in dance teaching,** focuses on the appreciation of dance as a creative practice and a personal and subjective experience. Collaboration and dialogue are also significant pedagogical approaches for the authors. *Eeva Anttila* introduces a long-term school project related to embodied learning, and she also discusses topical concerns related to the increasing physical passivity of children. Based on her research project, the next writer, *Alba Pedreira Vieira*, also highlights the centrality of the body in dance. *Isto Turpeinen* describes «the raw-board», which is his working method of teaching boys, and how love is the basis of his pedagogy. Dance as an educational tool to empower young people is the focus of *Carolyn Russell-Smith*, who writes about various possibilities to use dance in a child-centred way in Jamaica. Finally, *JuanAnn Tai* illustrates how the annual workshops in dance education for children organized in Taiwan, give confidence to local student teachers and dance instructors to focus on the creative process instead of the product. In these workshops, the knowledge and experience in creative dance are linked between the Eastern and the Western world.

**Section IV, Exploring and assessing learning in dance as artistic practice,** includes reflective thinking on how and why we assess dance and dancers. In the first chapter, *Susan W. Stinson* focuses on standards and assessment in dance education. It is easy to agree with her that assessment is very much an ethical question that inevitably challenges us as dance educators. In the next chapter,

*Svendler Nielsen* writes about the role of the body in education and about excessive sitting during school lessons. Her thoughts are closely related to *Eeva Anttila's* article, which was presented in the previous chapter of this review. According to *Svendler Nielsen*, our ways of thinking about learning in schools are gradually changing. In the future, we will hopefully be increasingly aware that learning does not only take place in our heads, *Stinson* writes. In the case narratives, *Kristen Jeppsen Groves* and *Marin Leggat Roper* focus on empathic pedagogy, and *Marc Richard* describes how learning could potentially be made visible in creative dance education through documentation. The considerations of *Liesbeth Wildschut* on how children can discover new things and enlarge their worlds by watching dance conclude this section, and like the previous case narratives, the author offers pedagogical examples for educators.

**Section V, Imagined futures for dance education,** *Ann Kipling Brown* explores what kinds of possibilities digital technology offers when integrated in dance education. The examples highlight how technology can enhance learning in the twenty-first century as an integral part of dance education. *Kerry Chappell* and *Veronica Jobbins* outline their concerns about diminishing art education offerings and about the current political education climate in the United Kingdom which is dominated by core skills. Based on their research, they also introduce principles for creative partnership practices. *Ralph Buck's* article offers personal, life-tasting reflections on the future directions of dance education. The author reviews dance education, the role of the teacher and the role of dance communities through his own experiences. Dance education is introduced by *Maria Speth*, who highlights the *Twimming* project, a concept that started in a dance context in 2006. The *Twimming* project brings people together from different countries to create

dialogue and new kinds of knowledge. *Cynthia Ling Lee's* case narrative concerns a web-based coalition of women dance artists from different countries who are engaged in South Asian dance; her narrative shows how the Internet can be a tool for bridging geographical isolation.

*Dance Education Around the World; Perspectives on dance, young people and change* is a book that I would recommend to people who work with embodiment, creativity and bodily expression in schools or elsewhere. The book offers readers thoughts on how dance is an area that can contribute to learning in many ways and can offer everybody useful skills, such as body consciousness. *Dance Education Around the World; Perspectives on dance, young people and change* can also be a catalyst for new ways of thinking for those who are not as familiar with dance. Dance is more flexible and adaptable than most people can even imagine.

*Mariana Siljamäki.*

## Dance and the Child International–13<sup>th</sup> International Congress held in Copenhagen from 5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> July 2015

In July 2012 Copenhagen was announced as the host for the 13<sup>th</sup> Dance and the Child International Congress. Dansehallerne, as the national competence centre for contemporary dance; The Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports–NEXS, University of Copenhagen and the Dance Partnership Education, The Danish National School of Performing Arts, took up the challenge and collaborated on the planning of the event. Three years on we were able to welcome over 800 international participants from 22 different countries, to Tivoli Gardens, who sponsored the opening event, to Copenhagen.

Dansehallerne and The University of Copenhagen, NEXS, physically hosted the many workshops, Dance Flavours, Creative Meeting Points, Youth Forums, Keynote speeches, lectures, panel discussions and performances with the theme of *'Twist*

*and Twin'–Exploring Identities in Dance*. The idea of 'twinning' was encompassed and expressed in a multitude of methods and ways—culturally, pedagogically, across age groups and between professions, institutions and communities. Some twinning started before the Congress with virtual 'Twin Labs'; during the Congress in the form of collaborative workshops and meetings between researchers, professionals and practitioners, and we hope, after the congress with partnerships and friendships initiated during the twinning process, continuing to flourish.

*Site specific showing - daCi 2015*  
Photo: Jens Hemmel



### Exploring identities in dance

Exploring identities in dance was the overall theme for the work presented by researchers, teachers and the many Young People's Performances. Over 500 young people and children registered for the congress with 35 groups from 15 different countries presenting their choreographic works during the weeklong congress and offering performances of high quality. Researchers and workshop holders had topics ranging from gender issues to empowerment and wellbeing, from assessment and evaluation to embodiment and learning.

During the five days the participants could enjoy taking Dance Flavours, a selection of warm-up classes in the mornings, ranging from Yoga and Gaga to House and Waacking, followed by their own rehearsals or Creative Meeting Points in the mornings. In the afternoons the participants had the possibility of taking two workshops from the over 90 possibilities that were offered. In the evenings, performances by the young people themselves or professional performances from Denmark were offered and enjoyed by all.

### Keynote presentations

The opening keynote speech *Moving Together: Dance in a Shared World* was given by Francois Matarasso, freelance artist and Honorary Professor at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland. In his speech he discussed the concept of twinning as a framework for artistic exploration and mutual understanding in a globalized world. Following the keynote a panel of speakers shared their experiences and contributed to deepen central aspects of twinning from various perspectives.

On the following day, under the sub-theme of *Assessment, research and evaluation tools*, Susanne Keuchel, Professor, Dr., Director of Remscheid Academy for Arts Education, Germany and Michael Wimmer, Dr., Head of Educult, Institute



*Creative Meeting Point–daCi 2015*  
Photo: Jens Hemmel

for Cultural Policy and Management, Vienna, Austria, held a keynote speech entitled *The Art of Stepping Aside–Chances, Potentials and Deficits in Arts Education Research*. Following the keynote there were roundtable discussions for participants to consider and discuss what could be significant new directions for researchers in dance education and potentially how each could influence this change.

The first of the final keynote speeches under the sub-theme of *Embodiment, learning and education*, was presented by Mark Schram Christensen, Associate Professor, Dr., Department of Neuroscience and Pharmacology, University of Copenhagen, and Kirstie Simson, Associate Professor, Department of Dance, University of Illinois. Entitled *What Moves Us and Why? A Neurophysiological Investigation of Movement Perception Twinned with a Thirty-Five Year Exploration of Dance*





*Closing event and hand over to Australia.  
Photo: Jens Hemmel*

*Improvisation*, the two presenters complemented each others contributions from their respective areas of expertise. With words from Mark Scram Christensen, Kirstie Simson, offered physical input enhancing and offering an insight into her beliefs that dance improvisation can be a powerful source of embodied intelligence that can heal and empower individuals. The final keynote under the sub-heading, *Empowerment, well-being and policy making*, was presented by Ralph Buck, Associate Professor, University of Auckland, New Zealand and Erica Rose Jeffrey, MA in peace and conflict studies, University of Queensland, Australia, and PhD candidate. Their presentation was entitled *Empowering Dance in Our Communities: Making the Connection Visible*. Through profiling their own experiences in policymaking and well-being, the speakers made a call for the bold empowerment of dance in our communities across ages, disciplines and organizations.

### The 'Copenhagen Declaration'

As part of this strategy for heightening the profile of dance, Ralph Buck and Erica Rose Jeffrey presented the 'Copenhagen Declaration'. During the preceding week Ralph Buck and Erica Rose Jeffrey had been in dialogue with children, young people, researchers and teachers regarding the formulation and content of this important document. The document outlines how the artistic subject areas, including dance can contribute to education, in its broadest sense, in terms of sustainable development and contributing to a sense of global community. The document was then presented to Jens Dalgaard, general secretary for the Danish UNESCO national commission. He, in turn, will bring this document further in UNESCO's organisation to enlist their support in promoting the on-going international work to strengthen children

and young peoples meeting and involvement with the arts during their education. The declaration is a prime example of how research and practice can enrich and inspire each other in relation to developing new knowledge and future political strategies, where this new knowledge can then be implemented in practice.

The broad spectrum of topics and depth of knowledge presented by the international speakers provided the participants with an insight into the many 'twinning' that dance can have and the far-reaching consequences that these collaborations can initiate.

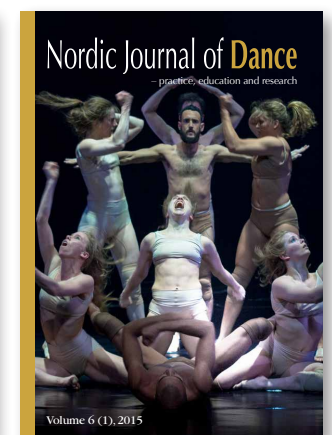
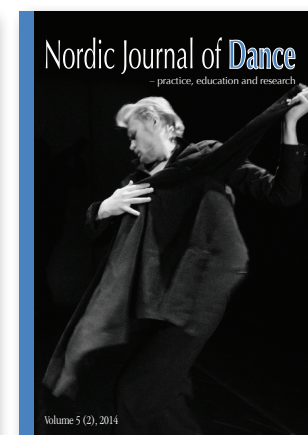
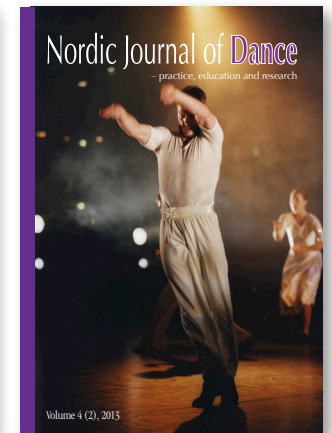
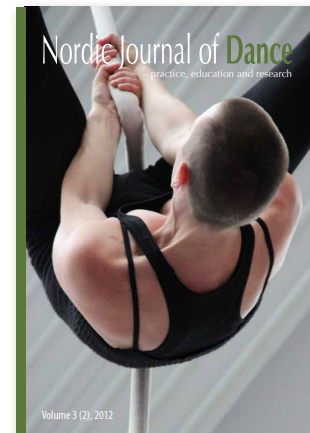
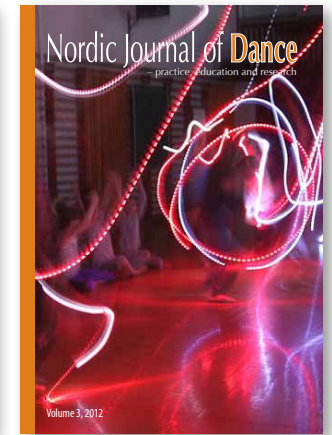
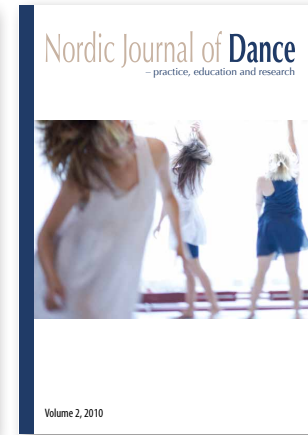
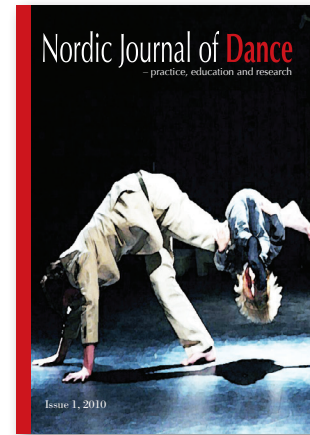
### New initiatives- SpringBoarders

A new initiative for this daCi Congress was the establishment of the daCi SpringBoard which was initiated to involve recently qualified dance graduates, teachers and professionals who have a particular interest in working with young people. The SpringBoard is designed to bridge the gap between the young people who participate in the congress and the daCi members who participate as presenters and facilitators. Applicants for this new initiative were invited to apply from the host country and other member countries and the successful candidates were then funded to attend the daCi Congress. 10 candidates were chosen, 5 from the host country Denmark and five from other countries. The SpringBoarders were responsible for facilitating the Youth Forums, setting topics of common interest and initiating discussions in groups for the young people participating. The SpringBoarders also designed 'Pop-up Meeting Points' so that the young participants could also take part in informal gatherings and events that were most pertinent to their age group. The SpringBoarders will continue to be in contact and eventually have responsibility for mentoring the next generation of SpringBoarders for the 2018 Congress.

Another new initiative for the Congress was to create a "twinning space" to facilitate the possibility for longer standing dance friendships between the participants. With a relatively short congress it is a challenge to create the basis for expanded and sustainable dance exchanges between the young dancers. As the host we created a virtual meeting space for the participants on the website. Here they could meet virtually, many months before the congress, in what we called the «twinning space» to exchange dance ideas and maybe find a partner for a twinning project. During the congress 3 of the twinning projects were offered studio space every day to continue to work and develop their joint project. Their process and product were shared with other participants at the end of the week. We hope the experiences from the twinning projects in Copenhagen will survive and be further developed through to the next congress in Australia.

The vibrant closing event took place outside Dansehallerne where the 'torch' for the next international Congress was given over to Adelaide, Australia, where the University of South Australia will be hosting the event in 2018. You can become a daCi member and follow the planning on <http://www.daCi.org>. Come and join us at this fantastic event!

*Sheila de Val.*



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**Nordic Forum for Dance Research (NOFOD)** is a non-profit organization that promotes diverse forms of dance research and practice in the Nordic region by organizing a biannual international conference and local events. A membership in **NOFOD** offers you one yearly issue of the Nordic Journal of Dance, newsletters and reduction rates for international **NOFOD** conferences.

For further information and membership fees see <http://www.nofod.org>.



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# Nordic Journal of Dance

Call for contributions—Nordic Journal of Dance, 7(1), 2016

Present your work in *Nordic Journal of Dance: practice, education and research*.

Volume 7(1) will be published in June/July 2016. The deadline for submissions is February 1, 2016.

*Nordic Journal of Dance* invites practitioners and researchers to submit a variety of texts in two categories:

### Research Articles:

NJD expects these articles to present methodology, findings and theoretical argumentation related to diverse dance practices and artistic processes as well as learning and teaching dance/movement in the Nordic context. The maximum length of the submitted article is 5 000 words including possible endnotes and references. Please include two abstracts of a maximum length of 200 words: one written in the language used for the article and the other in a Nordic language (for articles in English) or in English (for articles written in native language), and a 100 word biography.

### Practice Oriented Articles:

NJD expects these articles to document and reflect upon practical work being done within dance and education in the Nordic countries in different artistic and educational settings as well as with different age groups. The purpose is to introduce the experiences and conceptions of dance practitioners and educators. The maximum length of a submitted article is 3 000 words or less including footnotes and references. Please include two abstracts of a maximum length of 200 words: one written in the language used in the article and the other in a Nordic language (for articles in English) or in English (for articles written in native language), and a 100 word biography.

### General Guidelines:

Articles can be written in English or one of the Nordic languages. In creating the document, type text and headings use 12 point font size and line-spacing 1,5. Mark references using Chicago Manual of Style (author-date system, see: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)). **Choose author-date (click on the box)**. For specific details on formatting and other guidelines please contact Dans i Skolen (DiS) at [dis@dansiskolen.no](mailto:dis@dansiskolen.no).

Send submission to [dis@dansiskolen.no](mailto:dis@dansiskolen.no)  
with subject heading «Contribution to Nordic Journal of Dance Vol. 7(1)

## Volume 6(2), 2015

### Research Papers:

Considering the Ontological Premises for Tools in Artists' Education—  
on Poiesis and Composition

*Kirsi Monni*

Dance Technique—Meanings and Applications

*Irene Velten Rothmund*

### Practice Oriented Paper:

Dans er mer enn trim – dans sett i et kulturelt og  
helsefremmende perspektiv

*Gjertrud Husøy*

Systems of Co-Creation. Artistic reflection

*Tanja Råman*

### Book reviews:

Practising Composition: Making Practice

*Rasmus Ölme*

Dance Education Around the World;

Perspectives on dance, young people and change.

*Mariana Siljamäki*

### Review:

Dance and the Child International—13th International Congress  
held in Copenhagen from 5th-10th July 2015

*Sbeila de Val*

## Nordic Journal of Dance: practice, education and research

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