

WHEN THE DANCERS STARTED TO TALK ON STAGE

Written component of the master thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Arts (MA)
At the University of Applied Arts Vienna,
Institute of Fine Arts and Media

by
Sergio Patricio Valenzuela Valdés
Registration Number: 1274055

In Vienna, June 2014

Program number: S 066 776
Study Program: Art & Science
Supervisor: Univ.-Prof. Virgil Widrich



1. ABSTRACT

My intention with the given title is how we can share our methods and communicate them to others using our body as a medium. Combining definitions and notions of knowledge and experience, the study attempts to figure out which knowledge is utilised to communicate relevant information. The theoretical discussion embeds collected literature and reflections from different fields and frames within the scope of human actions and behaviour studies. Furthermore, the study explores a selection of methods and techniques developed in the diversity of body art, performance and contemporary dance – observed as tools developed to share techniques and outlooks regarding the body as a medium of communication. The selection includes examples by Rudolph Laban, Trisha Brown and Stelarc, as leading artists and researchers in the use of the body as a tool. The theoretical discussion of notions to explain this reflection quotes ideas from Diana Taylor, André Lepecki and Richard Schechner from performance studies and Markus Peschl and Heinz Von Foerster from cognition studies, for reference. Finally, the research proposes to re-observe technology and communication tools in participatory performances with potential to share informal knowledge using the body with others, understanding the body as a portable compilation of knowledge itself, however not perceivably shareable with an audience, participants or observers. On the other hand, understanding knowledge as singularity and the possibility to communicate this archive as unique and not repeatable. An interview series was conducted in attempt to verify and explore the validity of this claim. Finally the text collects the most important examples about my methods applied between 2012 -2014 in the MA Art & Science program activities, as part of the axis topic development, which uses different approaches within inter/trans–disciplinary projects. An explanation of the diploma exhibition as a concrete example of these points of views, connected at the same time and space through one performance or installation. The performative–installation explores the sharing of methods and tools as portable knowledge. The main topics examined are body and text: each in relation to art and science, but also as a metaphor of the body as a book–object. Can the body, by itself, be enough as a medium to describe and make assumptions about reality? The conclusion attempts to explain a method to use the body as a medium to share singular and individual knowledge with others through performative experiences.

Keywords - Body, experience, knowledge, performance and body art, methods and techniques.

Performance studies and body art history are examples of how the human body has been used as a tool of communication of thoughts and an expressive tool for artist and cultures. There are numerous examples in art history how the body becomes an instrumental device to share some reflections about reality or as metaphors of the human behaviour, observing body as a mutable piece of reality. Nevertheless the body is used in arts as a sample of the humanistic struggle in a social context, as a cultural protest or a complex system with many layers (organisms, sexual objects, machines or bio computers, slave of the worker Systems, and many other examples). The body as a tool has been actively used and evolved since the human being begun, but the awareness about this potential tool of communication was left behind in the transmission of crucial knowledge, because verbal language and speech become the dominant tool for communicating ideas and information with others. After years, books and writing became part of the literature and the most important tool to share information, observations, explanations or whatever we want to teach and immortalise for others to find answers within. In our Internet culture the information and media becomes virtual and our hands and eyes are the most important sensory parts of our body. We have many ways to collect and generate our capacities, thus becoming self proclaimed experts in subjects previously unknown. The question that comes about is how we could use the body as a primary tool of communication? Which sort of experiences or situations is necessary to develop to make this mode of communication understandable, whereby creating a communication system? On another note, what knowledge becomes part of this experience? Perhaps all the answer are inherently linked with perception, but let us begin to reflect about the fundamental: knowledge and experience.

According notions: Knowledge, experience and cognition.

The term knowledge is something related to information and facts. The Oxford dictionary explain in one paragraph *"skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. The sum of what is known: the transmission of knowledge"*. [1] Following

this notion of the development of skills to acquire something relevant is necessary to ask which education and which type of experience is in context. Whatever the answer is, the word “sum” is the key to assume that knowledge is something that is necessary to accumulate and put in practice. Further more, there exists a classification of knowledge in some formal and informal way, we must make this distinction, in order to identify informal is part of non organized information to be observed as a tool, maybe the formal is something more concrete and common that is useful in solving problems in one environment. Here is a definition about that: *“The informal knowledge base is basically a collection of knowledge units and explanation structures. At this informal level, a first verification and documentation of the collected knowledge is performed. In a second step, the informal knowledge is translated from the cognitive to the representation layer and a formal knowledge base is obtained”*. [2].

On the subject of knowledge, Markus Peschl says: *“From an observers perspective, one could say that this structure represents: knowledge about the environment and has developed in a process of construction and adaptation”* . [3] *In this sense knowledge and/or theories become tools, which are used for predicting, controlling, and manipulating the environment. In the common sense domain we use representational entities, such as concepts, symbols, language, etc., as means for manipulating and influencing the environmental dynamics and/or the (representational) dynamics of other cognitive systems.... As an implication, scientific knowledge becomes some kind of “truth-tool”, which is not necessarily structurally equivalent or monomorphic with the environment”* [4]. He marks clearly a status of knowledge, from the scientific perspective, that the tool is not only to resolve a problem, it is also a sort of device to control and transform our environment, its means that has the power to switch and transform materials and language to generate information anew.

The notion of experience is part of a current process involving knowledge, but also how one is to communicate and transmit the information between persons. The Oxford dictionary about experience states: *“The knowledge or skill acquired by a period of practical experience of something, especially that gained in a particular profession”* [5]. Beyond this notion, the relationship between

Knowledge and experience is explicit. In this respect, Kevin Pugh explains about experience in the context of science: *"An experience is centrally defined by an expansion of perception and value. In an experience, a person comes to see some aspect of the world, which may include other people or oneself! In a new way, to find new meaning in this aspect of the world, and to value this new way of seeing.* [6] Experience becomes a new gathering to share some information, but also works as opportunity to exchange tools and observation of reality. In the fields of arts the notion of experience is quite similar, but the role of the audience involved has not only to be an aesthetic approach, but rather the experience becomes a tool for exploring creativity. Pugh remarks this reflection and quotes Dewey: *"In Dewey's language, artists convert ordinary materials into eloquent media. By analogy, we may hypothesize that teachers can engage students in transformative experience through a similar process of crafting ordinary materials.* [7] It is necessary to understand his words in the context of the transformative experiences, not in the context of non-important situations. The trigger point is how to observe and recognize those relevant experiences as an example of the transmission of knowledge, understanding that humans and environments are behaving at the same time, shifting constantly thus coexisting decade after decade.

Since some decades ago, disciplines are concentrated on human behaviour as bodies in constant adaptation and modification, within a deeper standardization of cultures, environments and social norms. As Clark and Chalmers in *The extended mind* (1998) speak about cognition and processes, some activities are playing different roles and a consciousness about those activities to be observed as a phenomena in the retrieval of memories, linguistic processes and or skill acquisition. Sometimes it is also a good skill to define the borders between which actions or activities implicate more deeper cognitive processes and a deeper knowledge that is transferable. Follow the ideas from Clark and Chalmers: *"Here, we are moved by a vision of what might be called the Naked Mind: a package of resources and operations we can always bring to bear on a cognitive task, regardless of the local environment... The true cognitive processes are those that lie at the constant core of the system; anything else is an add-on extra. Language may be an example. Language appears to be a central*

means by which cognitive processes are extended into the world...It may be that language evolved, in part, to enable such extensions of our cognitive resources within actively coupled systems” [8]. In our western philosophy the problem of language is the central question to explaining and making knowledge discoverable and abundant, with clear borders, defining real representations and observations. On the other hand they also observe, “In such cases the brain develops in a way that complements the external structures, and learns to play its role within a unified, densely coupled system. Once we recognize that the crucial role of the environment in constraining the evolution and development of cognition, we see that extended cognition is a core cognitive process, not an add-on extra” [9]. In summation, there seems to be more than one way to search, develop and recognise our system of learning, a sort of new escape to regard an extra or underlying language – another tool for sharing knowledge perhaps.

In her article, Karen Barad (2003) explains the current problems with language in the post humanistic frame of thinking about matter and non-matter: *“The linguistic turn, the semiotic turn, the interpretative turn, the cultural turn: it seems that at every turn lately every “thing”—even materiality—is turned into a matter of language or some other form of cultural representation...There is an important sense in which the only thing that does not seem to matter anymore is matter” [10].* In this manner, the conflictive idea here is how the matter of knowledge communication without borders of language and representations of the texts are approaching the involvement the body in matter of fact. In others words, it implies that the body’s understanding retains a very narrow field to conclude assumptions in some limitation process by language translation and transferral.

Transmission and communication of tools using body.

Continuing in this direction about transmission of methods, representations and innovation about non-embodied language, but involving cognition detection in some activities, back and forth from science to art. It would be necessary to explain some cases to comprehend techniques and methods that art uses to communicate and transmit information as technology related with body in

experience, however not without reason. Education in arts involves the body's presence in many ways, to teach and share tools. Rudolph Laban, related with notions knowledge, body and techniques, makes a good example of this.

To understand Laban's notation (Fig. 1), it is better to imagine a musician composing and drawing notes. Presenting those notations to others would then be read as music translated to signs. *"Laban exercises are based on the belief that by observing and analyzing movements, both conscious and unconscious, it is possible to recognize the objectives of the mover and to become aware of an inner attitude that precedes an action. Laban helps actors create momentary moods and long-standing personality characteristic through movement"* [11]

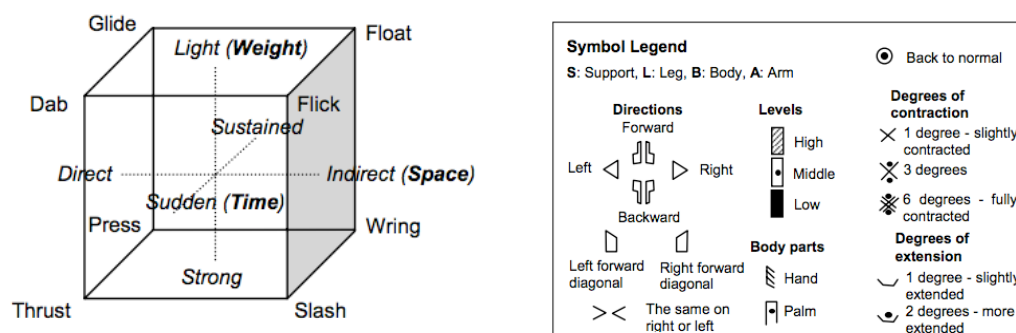


Figure 1. Effort cube and Labanotation [12]

Laban's claim as an educational tool, brings to someone the expertise to read the notation through the sigs and symbols. This knowledge allows people to read and translate his notations of movements, thus finding the steps and re-enacting the choreography. There are many different cases about body techniques in performance art, performing art and action art, but sometimes the body is an instrument to express select ideas. However, the body is also used as an art object to show concepts as well. Even more, artists use their bodies as a canvas to show some impressions or representations of reality as samples of actions or behaviours to be observed. In fact, this is the complexity that must be made understandable, that the body is making some actions or movements as a collection of samples of many observations.

Never the less, it reminds us of some reflections about the blurred borders between disciplines, methods and techniques. For instance it raises the questions: *"Where here lies the limit between body and text? Or movement and language?"* Some reflections that appear with the theory collected in the book 'Inscribing Dance' of André Lepecki [13]. Thought and meaning involved in the artwork since Duncan, Humphrey, Wigman, Graham, Cunningham to Forsythe and part of dance history and his development throughout the years, collaborating and cooperating with others in diverse disciplines to expand the boundaries of dance and change the limits of the process and choreography in a musician's score.

Another perspective on bodies and performance art as an experience exists as a recent study on the efficiency and effects involved in the mentioned action arts, but almost every position about performance becomes a conflict between perceptions, sometime contradictories and personal assumptions. One example about publications related with performance art and body is Phelan in debate with Derrida, as mentioned in Lepecki words: *"Peggy Phelan had already defined 'ontology of performance': that "maniacally charged present" announcing itself at the very moment presence plunges into disappearance." 'Documentation, in its optical-descriptive obsession provides a stiff body but for Derrida, dance must be improvised, must move before writing...Phelan wrote on the specificity of disappearance in dance to propose that dance's representational frame works from within a tension between presence, disappearance, and re-presentation"* [14]. Again, going back to figure out this disappointed moment when the dance supposedly shows and shares some ideas about re – presentations, but the body itself is present on stage and in the process of representing reality it is absolutely unclear as the anatomy of an overall human body. Instead it is to be understood as a particular body with individual capacities.

Taking the words from Derrida, has a body in movement nothing to do with written actions? In fact, when the dancer stops to dance and starts a new period of dance history, after the Judson Church movement in NY with NO manifesto of Yvonne Rainer that I want to describe further on in the text, some artists especially in the decade of 2000 started to develop a movement without special

resources or studios in the western hemisphere. The term coined from this strict position is known as the Non–dance period with Jerome Bel (France), La Ribot (Spain) and Jonathan Burroughs (UK) to name some examples. They asked: Why do we need to make movements and show virtuosity again? Changing the conventions about the performing arts became part of performance art’s problems in it self, along with shared questions beyond show and entertainment.

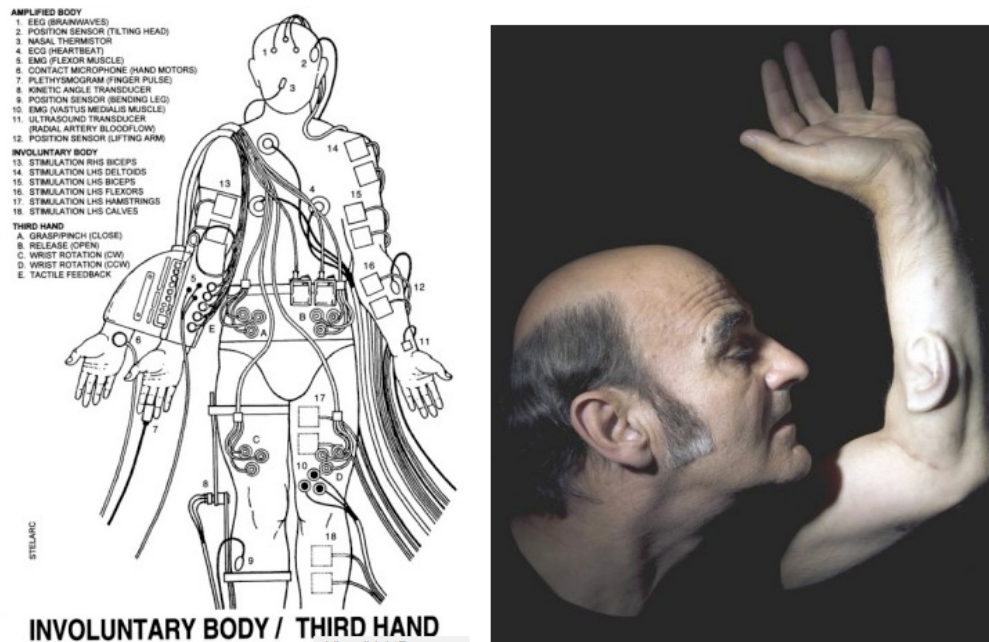


Figure 2. Stelarc

Connected with the body and the cooperation with technology, one of the best examples of art works today is the Australian artist Stelarc (Fig. 2). In one interview about the roles on his body research project, he says: *“The roles of science and arts are very different both in strategies and in outcomes. I think art is more about asking questions rather than the scientific approach that tries to answers questions.”* [15]. Reading into these differences about artist and scientist working in research, we want to ask which projects are going on a tangent or plain bad. On the other hand, which ideas using technology are establishing a good connection between the disciplines? Jane Goodall says about his work: *“As Stelarc observes, his research follows the assumption that ‘To be human is to be augmented, extended and enhanced by technology’, actively and critically attempting*

to explore the potential of unexpected kinds of performative interaction in situations where 'you have the choice' to define the performance situation" [16]. An interesting reflection on the option as an audience, we are expected to be watching and participating in his performances, like a form of ritual. It is expected that the participants and volunteers take part, understanding and reasoning by themselves. In this case, we could observe that Stelarc work is stressing the importance of a public „Understanding“, where the people take an active role and connect information beyond the devices development and play the performer's role, especially when they move the muscles in Stelarc's body through the internet, by sending impulses to the machines even if they don't know exactly what is finally the result of their input. They must imagine the future of the action and send this impulse to his body, as a body out of control, yet entirely controlled by others.

From another side Brian Massumi says this about Stelarc: *"Stelarc performs an alignment of matter and form that would avoid any metaphysical opposition. In some ways the logic of his work can be seen to have been anticipated in Kant's text, even if Kant was eventually unable to sustain the thought of the technological chimera" [17]. Concerning the comment about Kant and Stelarc, the experience itself is described as something in between machine and human, matter and non-matter. It is interesting to know how we could perceive and measure our cognition about this kind of art, body and robotics. When someone wants to embody and personify a meta-body, perhaps going in the opposite extremes in social sciences to observe humans in the natural environment.*

Another example of these convoluted meanings is presented in one documentary named "Intelligent body" directed by Markus Nylander with the choreographer Snježana Premuš, it shows a clear point of how the "Intelligence" is not located only in the brain but is deep-rooted and an integral part of the human being including its body. *"Our body has embedded evolution of millions of years of development, cultural-social experiences and knowledge. We show and interlink researches from art of dance, movement therapy, philosophy, cognitive science and neurology in order to support a clear visual journey into the body-mind relationship. The outcomes of the researches are expressed through the media of dance as an indispensable and fundamental way of expression" [18]. In the*

documentary they collect some ideas around the physical manifestations that we could relate with the Goldstein experiments about stimulus and perception. The difference between physical demand and the stimulus is clear in one instance, for the “Intelligent body” of the choreographer attempts to be non-codified and free to make movements without any reference. In this case the assumption from Goldstein’s experiment tries to discover how to measure and classifying stimuli and reactions, making and testing methods to discover the measurements and restrictions of physical manifestations.

The perception and observation notions in art and science approaches.

A discernable example of an art and science collaboration today is a short documentary by David Bickerstaff, 'Thinking with the Body' [19], co-created with Wayne McGregor at Random Dance. They made a project named 'Atomos' at Sadler's Wells, which offers a glimpse into this interdisciplinary research process and the impact it has in the rehearsal studio. They were trying to find out more about the process of choreography and how mind, body and movement interact in each of us. They initiated collaboration between dance artist and physicists, developing methods to use the body as a translation of the particles in space-time through the dancers movements.

Avoiding philosophical questions, those answers are related with our relationship between our external bodies, the inner fragments and components. Maybe the answer lying in our relationship with the external environment and our inner composition are a composed of many layers of micro organizations. *“For example, to learn, to remember, to perceive to recall, to predict, etc, are seen as various manifestations of a single, more inclusive phenomenon, namely, cognition”* [20].

Introducing our idea about our perception of reality as an integral part of knowledge within experiences, from Wittgenstein even today, the language becomes more and more strong as a codification of our perceptions and new question appear around how to communicate this new knowledge in the future with an awareness of the past. We use our perception as means for

organization, identification, and interpretation to represent and understand the environment we inhabit. When understanding perception, it is impossible to avoid the Gestalt psychology as an important theory built of complex interactions through various stimuli. Gestalt reflects and proves that our senses generate whole forms, with the visual recognition. The theory attempts to show crucial observations using only simple examples as lines, curves or points to show how our perception about reality is perceived and names only some shapes using our common sensibility.

Observation involves many topics and definitions, some topics are constantly interlinked with experience itself as errors and residuals, sampling percentage, random sample and systematic testing, measurement uncertainty and parameters. Perhaps in science those steps are part of the accidental invents. Art and science response is more connected with the aim to break the boundaries of definitions – *“Indeed, pioneering scientists have always challenged the status quo, operating through guesswork and intuition sometimes more than through deductive logic. But both are valid, neither is exclusive. Stay alert, stay contrary. And think of evolution, which has advanced at random, and without any vision or goal.”* [21]. This approach about evolutionary ideas, refers to the notion of accumulation as a sum of knowledge and development, as a tool to share it.

Another example about this scientific approach applied in the art process that has become a tool, is Trisha Brown (Fig. 3) with 1978's *“Accumulation with Talking plus Watermotor”*, a complex solo combining elements of three other pieces, she demonstrated a mental and physical virtuosity seldom seen in the dance world, then or now. Brown's rigorous structures, combined with pedestrian or simple movement styles and tongue-in-cheek humour brought an intellectual sensibility that challenged the mainstream “modern dance” mindset of this period [22]. Brown changes the process body of work, involving methods as an example, to appropriate science development and merge or apply concepts in the art process. The result is a visualisation in the middle of facts from science and drawing from art. The reason to observe is to understand that the process in art becomes a laboratory of knowledge itself, designing experiments with body, and finally a technique or method to teach and facilitate learning.

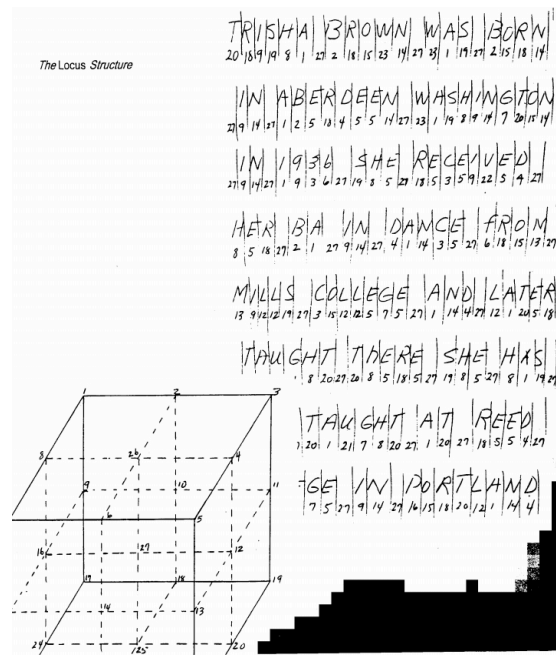


Figure 3. Trisha Brown [23]

Back to the past, the beginning of occidental performance and transmission of myths and verbal education was founded by Dithyramb, Aristotle and Plato, who used this term to name the beginning of the communication of knowledge involving not only speech, but also the movements of body and embodied experience. *“Dithyramb is a choral song in honour of the wine god Dionysus. The form was known as early as the 7th century BC in Greece. The performance of dithyramps was grandiose and spectacular: after a prologue spoken by the group’s leader, two choruses in expensive apparel—one of 50 men and the other of 50 boys—sang and performed circle dances around the altar of Dionysus. Auloi (wind instruments with double reeds) provided the instrumental accompaniment.”* [24]. It was the origin of theatre, tragedy and everything in between architecture, rituals and after. As we well know, education and religion for Greek culture, spilled over into entertainment in the Roman Empire and forbidden in the middle ages. Finally the official rituals were conserved in religious institutions and sports, as food and folklore, but it was very relevant to distil the old rituals as an experience to exchange knowledge; a tool to communicate some body of knowledge, involving other human competences before and after the contemporary.

Performance art and rituals as possibilities to re-observe and research methods.

Maybe the answer is partially the performance studies in itself. Richard Schechner, is a representative theorist of rituals and how knowledge of performative situations communicate and observe the body as a compilation of samples with relevant value. He explain native rituals regards to animals rituals: "From the ethological perspective, rituals are actions designed to improve communication during encounters that could be trouble: hierarchy, mating, feeding, and turf. Where is each animal in the ranking? Who mates with whom? How is food found, hunted, and distributed? Who controls the territory and determines its boundaries? [25] His remark on rituals as encounters between persons, exchanging individual memories and abilities, can prove to be important to bringing one person or a community to tread through some important experiences in specific contexts and sites that would otherwise be ignored. *"Rituals are performative: they are acts done; and performances are ritualized: they are codified, repeatable actions. Rituals emphasize efficacy: healing the sick, initiating neophytes, burying the dead, teaching the ignorant, forming and cementing social relations, maintaining (or overthrowing) the status quo, remembering the past, propitiating the gods, exorcising the demonic, maintaining cosmic order... Rituals are performed on schedule, at specific locations, regardless of weather or attendance. They mark days and places of importance; or are hung on life's hinges where individual experience connects to society: rites of passage send people through birth, puberty, marriage, induction, resignation, and death". [26]*

With regards to the above reference, the observation of rituals is that of a device that is examining the behaviour of body movements and how to relate them as tools of exchanging carnal knowledge. Maybe the answer is closer than we imagine. In fact, the experience in performance art that involves body and a participatory audience is one the example of the exchange of ideas as involuntary responsiveness. The conclusion I draw is how one is to detect and develop an observational method to research the origin of rituals, and practices and tools to preserve. Both, procedures and techniques are relevant, but not missing the freedom that matters.

Perhaps rituals are the active particles in the notion of performance.

In terms of the epistemology of performance, Diana Taylor says: *„The many uses of the word performance point to the complex, seemingly contradictory, and at times mutually sustaining or complicated layers of referentiality. Victor Turner bases his understanding on the French etymological root, parfournir, to ‘furnish forth’, ‘to complete’ or ‘carry out thoroughly.’ From French, the term moved into English as performance in the 1500s, and since the 16th and 17th centuries has been used much as it is today. For Turner, writing in the 1960s and 1970s, performances revealed culture’s deepest, truest, and most individual character... Part of what ‘performance’ and performance studies allows us to do, then, is take seriously the repertoire of embodied practices as an important system of knowing and transmitting knowledge.“* [27]

Development in art & science 2012 -2014

The initial point of my art & science research was presented through a sort of lens of observation in performance art and action art. The main idea was to attempt organising certain factors involved in one instance of activity. I named the project presented as a model called ‘Effect/ Affect + Attractor factor’. The explanation behind this model described selected topics involving time–space, as a tool that pinpoints the moment when the audience shares a live experience. The model as a tool is intended to be used as an observational prototype to analyse action and performance in one parameter: effect, affect, efficiency and context. The conceptual map (Figure 4) shows the complexity of topics concerning the shared experience in performing arts, especially in Action art. The conceptual map showed how topics create a new “factors-network” to analyze time’s notion. Further more, it showed how one “Strange Attractor factor” could disturb the audience’s awareness during the play. The theoretical background to develop this critical model was based on nine models from semiotics, linguistics, mathematical grammar, rhizome model, aesthetics, architecture, performance studies, paint analysis and chaos theory, all of them detected as actors inside of the play.

create a question making sense.

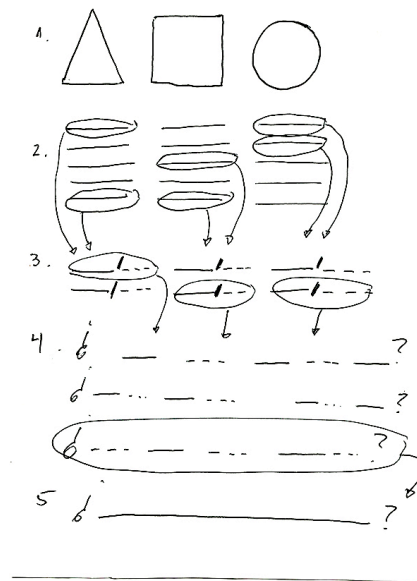


Figure 5. Drawing the method.

One example of how this method acts in manifesting supporting knowledge behind the art as a result, is connected with the process work. When I was collaborating with Robert Bucker, a PhD in Quantum Physic Mechanics from IQUIS Vienna, we were talking about observations of systems and variations in time-space theory, how the repetitions of some particle behaviors were observed to claim this phenomenon. In response, I have been using the same observations of the movements, observing the small variations discovered and their impact on the structure of steps in the choreography as a similar system. Having observed the movements as a system with many small but distinct variations, through videos of improvisations around this broad topic, and making sense of the flow of system becomes chaotic. The process is very long, because in one improvisations, only some seconds became relevant. In my post process, I put together the possibilities of connections, which became the starting point to create and combine the final sequence of movements. It was all about the observation of variations and sampling of movements to create choreography. The difference between the Bucker process and my process was the final result, namely the fact that I am not attempting to prove anything, but rather isolate the value of sharing methods as a utility of translations in different works between people. Perhaps the underlying question is how to enrich our common methods on both ends in our research.

The final outcome of this collaboration was a performance named 'No Cover – Vienna', presented in NHM - Museum of natural history of Vienna. 'No Cover' was inspired by the geometric form of a

dodecahedron. Conceptually, it is based on the study of the temporal and spatial observation of phenomena under the laws of quantum mechanics. The work is composed of six different geometric costumes, which allow the development of six choreographies. The result was an experience performed in front of an audience. The central idea revolves around the experiment of the performance itself, where failure in execution was observed in relation to costume appropriation. The eighteen-month long research project comes to a close at the time and space of the Mise-en-scène.



No Cover – NHM. Photo by Max Kropitz.

My own art work attempt to discover some out-of-control movements as behaviors in some selected bodies under some criteria to reflect about our perceptions and points of view about this object without rules and laws. The bodies are a selection of bodies and movements as cases of experiments observed in special settings to collect some correspondence between behavior, movements and his possible translation to language and new visual vocabulary.

Going into some depth on the subject of “art and science” to their field of action, methods and output, the next step proposes a comparative point of view as a new personal approach. Even if in the field of arts the knowledge that artists produce is constantly evaluated, it isn’t subjected to the rigid parameters, which are prevalent in the case of judging scientific data. Showed as a map of topics, it is used an analogy in the way both artists and scientists use certain methods, experiments and communicate their results (the first via publications and the second via exhibitions). Both use visualization tools to show data, in addition to mapping a comparison between a scientist’s format of a scientific study and my own body. As Taylor says: *“The dominance of language and writing has come to stand for meaning itself. Live, embodied practices not based in linguistic or literary codes, we must assume, have no claims on meaning. The dominance of language and writing has come to stand*

for meaning itself. Live, embodied practices not based in linguistic or literary codes, we must assume, have no claims on meaning” [28]

As previously mentioned, normally my role in my development process is importing and exporting different methods from a wide range of disciplines. Collecting methods and techniques that could be applicable to other fields, to create and discover new developments, produces, outcomes and visualizations. My current aim as a researcher is to make this compilation of methods a valuable technique for many to apply, whereby creating a process that focuses on the involvement and awareness of the bodily perception, observation in variation in behavior and the human within as part of my art spectrum. As a by product, I am also making a representative evaluation of the processes and observations in the skills necessary for collecting and applying this methodology in other experiments and ideation. Overall, my role in the creative process is designing experiences that are sampling activities that make embodied information collectable and tangible criteria for analysis within set parameters.

So far in my experience as an artist, I tend to be composing by sampling observations. However, as a researcher, my challenges lie in the context of communicating and sharing my experiences with other researchers. For instance, within the field of sciences, the acknowledged mode of sharing these ideas would be through publishing, written texts and research papers. The collective knowledge base in science is a very strong one that requires a degree of legitimacy within its respective community. This is why I am proposing the definition of media connecting and communicating these complex structures of knowledge as a researcher for others alike, sharing ideas by using other media.

How to publish my body or the body publishing me?

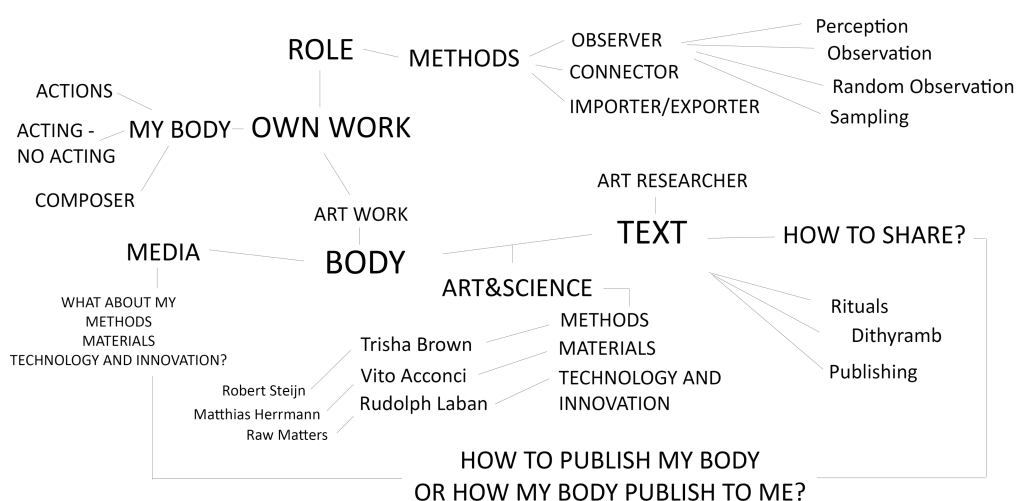


Figure. 6

As we read in the mapping topic in Figure. 6, the central idea in the final project is revolving around the topic of 'publishing' as a means to communication that is made available in a public sphere. Content developers are using this medium to spread and deliver information. The publications are strictly in the hands of libraries, companies, distributors, printers, business and independent publications. The electronic resources of the Internet expands the limits of the books as an object into a virtual scope. With digital publications, information along other media like music or films for example, have affected and shifted the speed of shared information through technological channels and networks.

"The Publication is also important as a legal concept:

1. As the process of giving formal notice to the world of a significant intention, for example, to marry or enter bankruptcy;
2. As the essential precondition of being able to claim defamation; that is, the alleged libel must have been published, and
3. For copyright purposes, where there is a difference in the protection of published and unpublished works." [29]

As a researcher, it is necessary to answer some questions. Namely: How can I transform my work within reason to make the body explicit in terms of the knowledge? Perhaps the answer is using different media. My next reflection is to question how text can be transportable, when different objects and media communicating ideas only exist as text, yet very clear, legible and comprehensive? My final project revolves around becoming an artist/researcher in the domain of dance and performative art, trying to communicate through the body and publishing it with the body at its core substance. There is no finite conclusion to the main question of how I am to publish my body or whether my body is publishing my person.

DIPLOMA PROJECT: PORTABLE BODY KNOWLEDGE

The performance installation attempts to show how people can alternatively share methods and transfer relevant tools to others as portable knowledge. The main topics are body and text. Each one is related to art and science respectively, as a metaphor using the body as a book-object. The questions I pursued to answer are: Can the body be enough itself as a medium to describe and make assumptions about reality? The theoretical background lying in the core of this project is the result of a dialogue between cognition, performance studies and body art. The exhibition invites the audience

to experience "the body as a type of knowledge". In the manner of a scientist performing his "daily ritual" with samples in a laboratory, the audience is invited to create a collage with the information and read what they find out inscribed on the skin by scanning the skin of the artist and printing it out. Finally, the outcome is a possibility to post them in the exhibition space or leave them on the gallery floor. These „body copies“ would be portable, shareable and deliverable. The exhibition presents microscope photos of the printed skin, along with a book of the body without text as the primary medium in 100 pages. In addition, a video shows the microscope camera scanning through the surface of my printed skin to experience the process on the micro level, as a counteraction to the scanner making live copies of my body throughout the performance.

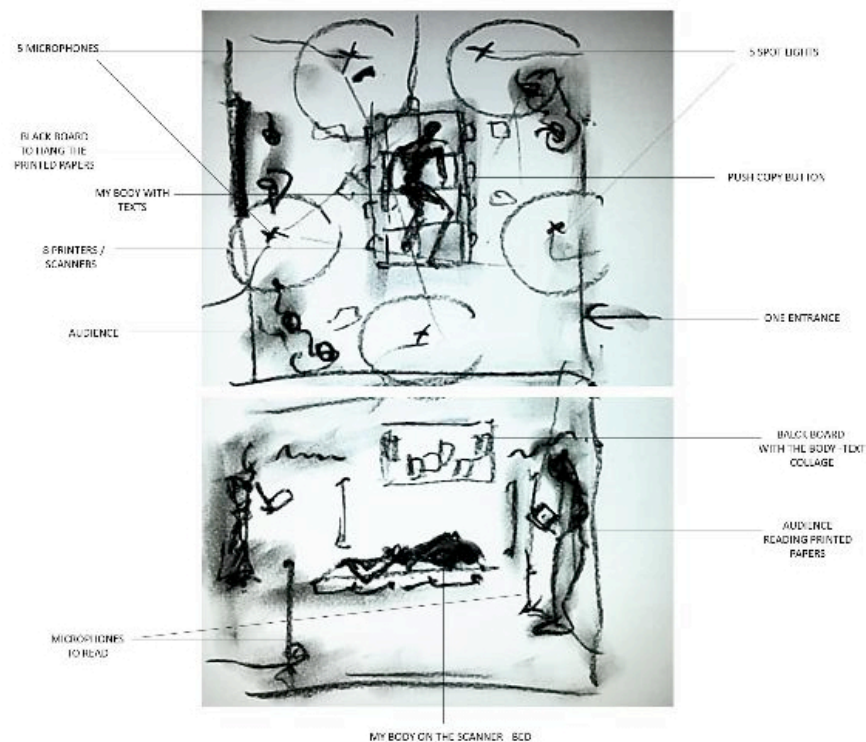


Figure 7. Objects and organisation plan for gallery.

7. INTERVIEWS

I made two separate interview segments in order to collect proof, on one hand about the body as a medium and on the other hand to identify how the interviewees connect my reflection on the thesis, to clarify the notion of experience, methods and the body as a compilation of transferring information.

Mathias Hermann is using the body as a medium to communicate ideas in his daily life as a political object within the gender theory. Meanwhile Robert Steijn is using his daily life experiences as a

method of creating projects related to contemporary dance and performance. The result of the interviews became examples of current creative outlets of artists working with the human body.

“Robert Steijn worked as a dance critic for seven years, and later on as a curator for dance and experimental theatre in Amsterdam for seven years. Now he tries to bring the magic back in life and in the theatre. In that sense he considers himself more and more a magician. His assistant is a deer, who appears in many of his texts and dances” [30]

1. How do you describe your method within the activities and process that you developed for your artwork?

Most of my practice to develop my artwork is connected with defining and training the mind. I do some imagination exercises daily, like imagining that my body is dying, imagining that it will be cut in slices, buried, cremated etc. it is a method to disconnect myself from my body because in my work I try to let the body speak, without any artistic intervention of the mind. When I am on stage I don't want to be aware of my own personality, of being Robert Steijn. I would become too self-conscious to move freely, without shame. So a lot of my daily exercises concern a spiritual attempt to diminish my ego awareness. Daily, or better say nightly I take some time to awaken the area around my pelvis and lower back, I rock with my hips, pelvis and pelvic floor to awaken the *kundalini* energy in my body, most of the time I do this in a lying position, so my bed is an ideal place. Because I work with three totem animals in my work: the deer (the heart, the eyes, compassion), the snake (the spine, the tongue, the neck, life and sexual energy) and the eagle (the mind, the air, wisdom, spirituality), I must keep these three areas alive, by reflecting them daily, deepening them, understanding them, this knowledge is infinite. My task is to get soft in mind and body so I can receive all these different energies on stage to dance, for this I must become open, and not blocked, so I must analyze my desires and fears, so I must discover who I am, and what is inside me, therefore I make notes in my diary, make drawings, poems, and observe myself throughout the day. I call these activities cleaning the instrument. Every day I watch my breath for at least thirty minutes, to train my physical awareness. Every day I do nothing, for ten minutes, I am passive, just observe. Meditation with open eyes. It is a training to open myself for whatever appears. Whenever I have a dance studio, I will practice authentic movement, dancing from your impulses with closed eyes. To get free with impulses in the body on stage. I do a lot of relaxation practice in mind and body, because only when I am relaxed, my intuition starts to speak, and creativity can appear. I follow the news, read newspapers, like everyone I suppose, but also from a perspective how my work can relate to what I read, and why it is necessary to do such a work in this time. finding content for my work is a response

on how i perceive the world, not so much on a personal level (like in intimate relationships), more how I perceive the society.

2. How do / did you share those methods and techniques with others?

I give workshops, teach at dance schools and also when I collaborate I share my practices, but most of all I like to talk, I prefer talking about why we do all these things, how we see dance, for instance how we think about control in dance, and what it means when we say that we let the body speak. With others I always try to get in a relaxed mood, a lot of my work is about de- stressing. The sharing is also showing the power of not being ambitious, the power of devotion to what your do, and the power of love for your own body, the body of the other, and the love for the work.

3. Will the body be enough itself, as a medium, to describe and make assumptions about reality?

Being in the body, letting the body react, act or respond, feeling also what happens inside the body, is for me the closest approach towards perceiving reality. Also touching another body comes very close. In the same way as people say, "I keep it close to myself", I like to say, "I keep it close to my body", it takes a certain training of the mind to keep the perception of reality close to the body.

“Matthias Herrmann earned a diploma at the Heinz Bosl Foundation for Dance in Munich. From 1986, Herrmann was at the Vienna State Opera operates. In 1988, he ended his career as a dancer and began studying at the University of Applied Arts Vienna . 1993, in his senior year, he had his first exhibition at the Vienna Secession . In his works he makes his homosexuality on the topic and go into them with the male sexuality apart. In 1999 Herrmann was president of the Secession and in 2006 received a professorship at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, from 2013 he is in Unirat the Academy of Fine Arts in acting. In 2003 he was awarded the prize in 2005 with the City of Vienna Prize for Fine Arts.” [31]

1. How do you describe your method within the activities and process that you developed for your art work?

I have been using my body as tool for projecting onto it and with it (often both at the same time) ideas I wanted to convey, which deal with identity, body politics and the private versus the public versus the political

2. How do / did you share those methods and techniques with others?

Photographs (never life since I stopped my dancing career in 1986...) and those are shown in exhibitions, but above all also in artist books ... the book is a perfect medium to transport my work I find.

3. Will the body be enough itself, as a medium, to describe and make assumptions about reality?

It sure will be if you want it to and treat it properly/accordingly... of course only ONE aspect of reality... (But what is reality anyway...)(Memories is a reality, too – isn't it, so: yes, the body is enough!)

REFERENCES

[1] Oxford Dictionary. Available on: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/knowledge>

[2] A. Bernardi, H. Boley, Ph. Hanschke, K. Hinkelmann, Ch. Klauck, O. Kühn, R. Legleitner, M. Meyer, M. M. Richter, F. Schmalhofer, G. Schmidt, W. Sommer. (1991) "ARC-TEC: Acquisition, Representation and Compilation of Technical Knowledge". Published by DFKI GmbH. Germany.

[3] Peschl Markus F. (1996) "The development of scientific concepts and their embodiment in the representational activities of cognitive systems. Neural representation spaces, theory spaces, and paradigmatic shifts". *Philosophica* 57. P.152. University of Vienna. Austria.

[4] Op. Cit. P. 164.

[5] Oxford Dictionary.

[6] Pugh, Kevin J. (2002) „Teaching for Transformative Experiences in Science: An Investigation of the Effectiveness of Two Instructional Elements“. *Teachers College Record* Volume 104, Number 6, September. P. 1102. Columbia University. USA.

[7] Op. Cit. P.1105

[8] Clark, A. and Chalmers, D. (1998) "The extended mind" Published in *Analysis* 58:10-23, 1998. Reprinted in (P. Grim, ed) *The Philosopher's Annual*, vol XXI. Available on: <http://consc.net/papers/extended.html>

[9] Ibid.

[10] Barad, Karen. (2003) "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter". *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 28, no. 3. Available on: <http://humweb.ucsc.edu/feministstudies/faculty/barad/barad-posthumanist.pdf>

[11] Campana, Jillian (2011) „Laban Movement Analysis: A Tool for any Actor“. Hong Kong. Available on: <http://www.ista.co.uk/downloads/LabanMovementbyJillianCampana.pdf>

- [12] Loke, L., Larseen, A., and Robertson, T. 2005. Labanotation for design of movement-based Interaction. Interactive Entertainment, P. 2 -6. University of Technology Sydney, Australia. Available on: http://research.it.uts.edu.au/idhup/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/Loke_IE2005.pdf
- [13] Lepecki, André (2004) "Inscribing Dance." *Of the Presence of the Body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory*. Ed. André Lepecki. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- [14] Ibid.
- [15] Stelarc (2009) "Stelarc's Extrabody: The Technologic Chimera". Interview by Serena Cangiano. Digimag vol 49. November. Milan, Italy. Available on <http://www.digicult.it/digimag/issue-049/stelarc-extrabody-the-technologic-chimera/>
- [16] Goodall, Jane (2005) "The Will To Evolve" Stelarc: The Monograph, Edited by Marquard Smith, MIT Press. Available on: <http://stelarc.org/?catID=20314>
- [17] Massumi, Brian (2002) "The Evolutionary Alchemy of Reason" from *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*, Duke University Press. Available on: <http://stelarc.org/?catID=20314>
- [18] Teaser available on: <http://vimeo.com/84478684>
- [19] Available on: <http://vimeo.com/74889724>
- [20] Heinz Von Foerster, Heinz. "Understanding understanding". *Essays on cybernetics and cognition*. P. 172. Available on <http://www.alice.id.tue.nl/references/foerster-2003.pdf>
- [21] Ede, Siân (2005) *Art & science*. I. B. Tauris. P. 194. NY, U.S.
- [22] Battcock, Gregory and Nickas, Robert (1984). "The Art of Performance. A Critical Anthology" Edited By: UbuWeb Edition edited by Lucia della Paolera. Available on: http://anticlimacus.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/battcock_the-art-of-performance_19841.pdf
- [23] Available in: <http://www.danceceres.org/trisha%20brown.pdf>
- [24] Available on: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/166307/dithyramb>
- [25] Schechner, R. A Ritual Seminar Transcribed. Interval (le)s II.2-II.1. 2008-9. P. 778. NYU Articles. Available on: http://www.cipa.ulg.ac.be/intervalles4/71_schechner.pdf
- [26] Schechner, Richard. (1988). "Performance theory". Chapter 22 *Ritual and Performance*. P. 613. Routledge. NY, USA.
- [27] Taylor, Diana. (2003) *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke UP.
- [28] Ibid.
- [29] Oxford dictionary online.
- [30] Available on: <http://www.unitedsorry.com/biographies>
- [31] Available on: [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthias_Herrmann_\(Fotograf\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthias_Herrmann_(Fotograf))