

▣ **PANEL #6 – FRAMING MOTION**

The Close-up in dancefilm: Micro-choreographies

Erin Bannigan

“Micro-choreographies: The close-up in dancefilm” presents one concept from my research into the impact of dance knowledge’s and technologies on cinema, and the new choreographies – cine-choreographies – produced there. The notion of cinema as “the collapse of body and space” is finely articulated in dancefilms that consist primarily of moving bodies in close-up. The proximity to the performing body that transformed the dramatic language of early cinema has quite literally “witnessed” a similar transformation of the dancing body; a more intimate movement vocabulary has found its medium and has shifted from subtext in a live performance to text in a particular type of dancefilm. The close-up in dancefilm has thus instituted new cine-choreographic terrain. With examples from the historic avant-garde, Mahalya Middlemist, Anthony Atanasio and Walter Verdin and drawing on work of Hungarian film theorist Béla Balázs and the cinema books of Gilles Deleuze, I consider a specific cine-choreographic order that is achieved through attention to the performing body and its micro-movements, the smaller detailed movements of the body and its parts. A close reading of the film theories of Balázs and Deleuze reveal resonances with dancefilm beyond both writers’ privileging of the face in relation to the close-up. Both writers describe the micro-movements that the close-up reveals and which activate the shot’s capacity for expression and autonomy. Through cinematic strategies such as this, dancefilm institutes a bodily, dancerly model of the close-up which I call decentralised micro-choreographies.

Close-up as new terrain.

“Hands” – dancing, moving hands.

Attention to micro-movements -> decentralization.

Music video similar to silent movie -> movement emphasis is detailed expressivity, it is narrative.

Deleuze privileging facial closeup.

Suppression of the expressive potential of the body. Skin: receptive surface and articulate organ. Dance brings this back.

Dance film is not diageitic, movement as and for themselves

Emphasis on “micro-movements”

Tonic muscle as ancient to our bodies; they work against gravity, and by subverting this, we subvert a fundamental bodily property.

Tautology – Choreography – Geometry – Trope – Metaphor - Death

Fernando Quesada

This text refers to the performance project NSEW, realized together with 13 performers and premiered in La Case Encendida of Madrid, on the 19th of June 2006.

The title of this text proposes a crossing journey. It is a journey from the complete absence of meaning in an image to the absolute presence of that same meaning in the same image. The journey can take place in one direction or the opposite. In the course of that cumulative journey, deviations that mess up the sequence are inevitably produced. The sequence can turn into a working tool to propose variations, shortcuts, short-circuits, or changes. But let us imagine version 0.1, the most simple, the linear travelling from one point to the other, using a practical example.

Subjectivity of viewed image. Famous film shots taken, and interpreted according to the discourses of Tautology, Choreography, Geometry, Trope, Metaphor, Death.

Image becomes object of play -> stops consumption

Take original descriptions, and execute. Description based on cardinal signs (N, S, E, W)

One and Three Chairs, 1965, by Joseph Kosuth.



chair, n. hence v; chaise (doppel) and chary;
(sc) cathedra, cathedra (adj) and n; cathedrae;
stem: *Archaic*, *Archaic*, q.v. w.p.
I. *Gr* *Archaic*, a seat (*Gr* *Archaic*, to sit, and
ult. *W* *Archaic*), combines with *Archaic*, down (of the post-
class), to form *Archaic*, a backed, four-legged,
often two-armed seat, whence *L* *Archaic*, *LL*
bishop's chair, *ML* professor's chair, hence dignity,
as in 'to speak *ex cathedra*', as from—*or* as if
from—a professor's chair, hence with authority.
L *Archaic* has *LL*-*ML* adj *Archaic*—*see* w.p.
CATHEDRAL; and the secondary *ML* adj *Archaic*,
whence *E* legal *Archaic*.

Scales of Action

Jondi Keane and James Cunningham

This paper tracks Jondi Keane and James Cunningham's preparation for the performative presentation, Tuning fork: Drill Hall for the SEAM: Spatial Phrases symposium by focusing on the notion of "scales of action". The paper outlines the ways in which the objectives and processes of practice-led research align with research values found in cognitive science and ecological psychology, and influence our enactive/performative process. Insights drawn from the "procedural architecture" of artist-turned-architects Arakawa and Gins offer an exemplary model of interdisciplinary research that has convinced us of the importance of establishing, or performatively constructing, a "baseline of perception" in which scale plays a key role. Each performer offers a first-person account of his approach to performance and the purposeful shifting of perceptual focus and the movement across scales of actions. These include personal histories shaped by improvisation, athletics, martial arts, meditation, visual arts, architecture, old-school techniques and new technology, which inform the collaboration. Ultimately, collaborative decisions are made regarding where, how and to what degree we might apply pressure to points of communal understanding and shared experience. One of the goals of our collaborative approach is to de-emphasize the performing body in an effort to amplify the situated and distributed nature of perception (and cognition) shaped by a group of people thinking/feeling into the same event-space. The conclusion of the paper suggests the implications of rethinking importance of scales of action, and spatial and kinaesthetic intelligence for research design, particularly in light of the "enactive approach in cognitive science" and the common goal of increasing future possibilities for action.

Arakawa and Gins from the "Architectural Body"

Robust description of forming events through scale.

Baseline of perception; not posit fixed. Cognitive science to naturalize phenomenology. "first-person Science". Think "the man who mistook his wife for a hatstand" -> body image, external, liminal body extensions, phantom limb, etc.

"Inactive approach" in cognitive science

Architecture performing as "boxes for dying" Action needs architecture.

(Constructed architecture of stage/audience...)

PANEL #7 – BOUNDARIES

Performative Opportunities within the Parametric

Beth Weinstein

It is a common architectural exercise to map body movements akin to Etienne Jules Marey's chronophotographic images of a walking man. These mapping exercises are models for working with complex, dynamic information, and having the potential to accommodate internal and external forces/flows, temporal transformations, and responsiveness. Invariably the architectural translation of mapped information is frozen into a formally exuberant result, tailoring form to the mapped body like glove to hand but without the responsiveness of either.

Marey's and Muybridges' mappings are now accomplished through motion capture, providing content for manipulation by choreographers through various digital technologies. Similarly with parametric tools architects can map and manipulate the complex variables of a collective body, site, program or other architectural constraint into a highly functional response. In *From Control to Design*, Michael Meredith critiques "...the architectural field's current use of the parametric (as being) superficial and skin-deep... lacking a larger framework of referents, narrative, history, force." The advantage of the parametric project is not the "relentless malleability of form... but the complex... relationships that produce architecture."

As semi-reciprocal disciplines addressing the body and space, parametric tools are applicable at the scale of the component: movement and at the larger scale of spatial and temporal order. This ordering of the parts may be according to some preconceived structure: narrative or effect or open-ended process: Cunningham coin-tossing. The humanism of the work occurs where a participant in the production or use has leeway with either the smaller parts or larger order, opening possibilities for manipulation, play, customization, and adjustment and adaptation over time. This paper will attempt to reveal the loci of opportunities within both the dance and architectural parametric projects to escape a mere formal end goal, and to reinvest the work with dynamic, temporal and participatory performance qualities.

Interactive modelling of body as exploration of geometric.

Form is not the priority over performance for these studies. Problem.

Exploration Cunningham.

"DanceForms", "ballet" body type – opposite of motion capture; to 2D output. Allows impossible bodies: "nudescendence"

Can unlock parts. Assumptions of body. Ballet body is fixed, while contemporary dance body is totally open.

B.I.M software for parametric modelling -> relationship between info.

Puppet theatre -> acoustics also.

*SynchronousObjects again, with Forsythe: Interactivity -> parametric "6 flat things reproduced"
Loops in furniture output based on the motion information of the bodies.*

(Impasse: foam)

Richard Segal: If/then/the open source. Programming dance queues and forms.

Physical TV – Entanglement Theory

Karen Pearlman, Richard James Allen and Gary Hayes

Entanglement theory is a research project into dance, screen and mixed realities. It began with the question: what ideas, images or stories does a mix of Second Life and Real Life dancing ask for? Practical research by Karen Pearlman and Richard James Allen of Physical TV and Gary Hayes of MUVEDesign began at Critical Path in January 2009 with a range of processes for the mix of SL and RL being tested through improvisation and the development of intermediate choreographic ideas.

Fragments of that material were then developed by Richard and Karen into a live work and a screen work which propose the hypothesis that a mash-up of Vedic spiritual philosophical ideas of multiple states of consciousness, multiple forms of body, and multi-dimensional realities and the elemental beings that inhabit them, along with science fiction-like theories of quantum particle entanglement, can be explored with this mix of media. At the SEAM Symposium, Karen and Richard will present the screen work hypothesis, and discuss the research processes and the kinds of knowledge they threw into play.

Themes and ideas across dance and 2nd life.

Game: universe exists for play. ("Game" does not equal play: Game as escapist narrative)

(Elephant Dream)

Basis in spiritual philosophy.

Four stages of existence; waking, dream, deep sleep, "fourth".

Augment Me

Brad Miller

Opening: ArtSpace November 19th, 2009

"Memory machine" database of images. Relatively unconscious, as "found images" responsive to motion via video camera -> size speed audio.

Live soundscape created from micro-sound samples.

Could be controlled through Climate, Surveillance, Power usage -> these as inputs

"Hypertalk " scripting language

Material memories. Metaphor

Motion capture piped into "tile screens" horizontal bits.

"smaller subset of conceptual metaphor" -> pushing + pulling

Processing and OpenCV, uses Flickr

Augmentation -> look added to through digital media

Augmentation is ironic: resistance to others concept of augmentation.