

A (MORE OR LESS (IN)ACCURATE) CATALOGUE THROUGH CHOREOGRAPHIC TURN #1, IZ OZADJA

'..jezik je vselej del snovanja, in seveda telesa.' Rok Vevar, introduction to Choreographic Turn #1

- a) Dance, maybe from Merce Cunningham on, has aspired to free the body from the narrative, the sign from the narration. Cunningham's work brings forth the non-narrative, the abstract performance in which all the parts operate separately. It's most important contributions to dance were that any movement can become material and any procedure can be a valid compositional method. His work conjures up a world in which what matters is not history, not the linear, not some story or another, rather the world as a process, a site of meeting, encounter, contact, proximity, distance, a site of interchange where possibilities are held. Not a place of limits or bounds, the world is an infinite one.

- b) I make landscapes, or cityscapes as the case may be to work out for myself what kind of picture (or photograph) we call a 'landscape' is. This permits me also to recognize the other kinds of picture with which it has necessary connections, or the other genres that a landscape might conceal within itself'
(J. Wall, 'About Making Landscapes', *Jeff Wall*, London, 1996, p. 140).

- c) Sit still. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath in through the nose, exhale slowly, out through the nose. Feel your eyes settling into the eye sockets. Soft mouth, soft palate inside the mouth, floating tongue.

- d) Romanesque statues of women begin their ceremony, slowly. A bit strange – they are holding bags or backpacks. From their icicle stillness, steady, building up some transformation to becoming the same people we might pass on the sidewalk, arms swinging next to torsos as they amble forward.

- e) Andreja says, 'Naceloma sta gib in beseda naravno skupaj, prideta v kompletu. Ampak, ko zacnes z gibom manipulirat, ko ga zacnes peljat v ples, potem lahko beseda vcasih ispade kot da je iz nekega drugega planeta....' Remember that (troubling? perplexing?) book, 'Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus: The Classic Guide' ? Followed by the bestsellers, 'Mars and Venus in the Bedroom: A Guide to Lasting Romance and Passion', 'Beyond Mars and Venus: Relationship Skills for Today's Complex World', 'Mars and Venus on a Date: A Guide to Navigating the 5 Stages of Dating to Create a Loving and Lasting Relationship', 'Why Mars and Venus Collide: Improving Relationships by Understanding How Men and Women Cope Differently With Stress', and of course 'Mars and Venus Together Forever: Relationship Skills for Lasting Love'. If we try, just for fun, with 'movements' and 'words' it goes like this – Movements are from Mars, Words are from Venus. For example! And what if, 'Why Mars and Venus Collide: Improving Relationships by Understanding How Movements and Words Cope Differently With Stress'. Relationship skills for lasting love. Relationship skills for today's complex world.
- f) Andreja says, '...izhajam iz sebe'. This statement can be understood in two ways, depending on where the stress (see above) or the emphasis is placed. One, '...IZHAJAM iz sebe' as in I come *outside* of myself, I am freed from myself and the very idea of a 'myself', so it is not my body object and certainly not a body-subject that matters here, not the staging of a 'myself'. And/or two, '....izhajam IZ SEBE' in the sense of drawing out, pulling out precisely *from within onself* (myself) what it is that I need or is needed in this situation. Though these two positions appear in contradiction, they are not, they might even function as two sides of the same coin. One - I am released and it is just *presence*. Not representation but a kind of exhibited body, a presence that is shared with (all) the other bodies present. Dance is then co-presence. It springs up and is articulated in this space between bodies. Two - I search out, I draw out from some hidden depths and limits of 'myself' in order to create the situation, or to manage it, or to keep going. In such a moment I touch some extreme limit of 'myself', the unfinished being, some incompleteness. The narrative (let's say) then becomes a constant revisioning, renewal, recommencement. In both of these directions – one and two – the body is in expansion, this supposed 'myself' is in expansion, approaching unexplored registers, asserting a form of thinking that is neither under the authority of, nor lesser than logos.
- g) HAM! said the wolf, and there was no more 'measuring in vain'.
HAM! said the wolf, and there was no more 'having doubts'.
And when the choreographer looked at what was left over all he saw was the satiated wolf, sleeping contentedly, snoring, hrrrrr, hrrrrr.
- h) Douglas Dunn, 'Talking Dancing', 1973 :

Talking is talking
Dancing is dancing

Not talking is not talking
Not dancing is not dancing

Talking is talking & not talking
Dancing is dancing & not dancing

Not talking is not talking & not not talking
Not dancing is not dancing & not not dancing

Talking is not dancing
Dancing is not talking

Not talking is not not dancing
Not dancing is not not talking

Not talking is not dancing
Not dancing is not talking

Talking is dancing
Dancing is talking

Dancing is talking
Talking is dancing

Not dancing is not talking
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Dancing is talking & not talking
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Dancing is dancing
Talking is talking

- i) Improvisation includes error.
- j) 'Grazing', as a state of presence - battenning, biting, champing, cropping, eating, feeding, foraging, gnawing, masticating, munching, nibbling, pasturing, ruminating, uprooting.
- k) To 'be present' demands an unwavering and ongoing commitment to the position one finds oneself in. Whatever this may be. Maybe like an obligation to stop the war, and not only once but over and over and over again. Thoughts, reactions, observations, sensations, are always emerging, always multiplying, always taking us away, propelling our attention in myriad directions, really anywhere but here. So 'grazing' as one possible state of presence offers an interesting image of a soft way to be involved with what one is doing. Picture a cow (obviously) in her green field with her benevolent, long-lashed eyes, reaching down with her mouth towards the grass, lifting it up to chew.. the dreamy, lazy, sensual cow and her grass.
- l) Dance is a very dangerous practice. We speak sometimes about complicity between the people and their bodies, between the bodies that are off on an expedition of a score, a task, a game. It turns out that the Cambridge English dictionary defines the word 'complicity' in the following way: 'involvement in a crime or some activity that is wrong' or 'involvement with others in a crime or in another activity that is wrong'. Dance is a very dangerous practice.
- m) The space is dark and quiet except for the soft whirring of the machines on stand-by. Each one of them has at least a few tiny lights that flicker, some are so lit up they appear like a rocketship's command board, confirming that they really are awaiting only the touch of a human finger. The air is cool, the temperature 19 degrees. Though it is not outside, the ventilation blows air that feels like wind. But not at the white curtain. The curtain is still.
- n) Anja, Tina, and Barbara talk about resonance as a principle applied to stepping into the work environment. Things resound – objects, walls, spaces, empty places, bodies, voices, forests,

cathedrals. The white curtain. 'Rezonance med nami, okoljem, prostorom.' To make something concrete and corporeal that would otherwise remain invisible to the eye, unnoticed by the mind. Like some kind of recognition of life all around, an awareness and sensibility to the most subtle of movements taking place - a metamorphosis in alertness and cognizance of perception.

- o) The lion, the goat, and the snake. A Chimera. A single organism made up of cells from several beings. The liquids and membranes, and the act of listening that takes as a trajectory pulling the outside inwards. And then back out again, hearing wide and into the distance, letting sound pass into body once more. Wave patterns ripple and oscillate, simultaneously moving towards and away.

- p) 'Really there's nothing here. It's like a place where you live. The only useful thing about the studio is that after some time you can imagine something. A forest, for example: I walk in it. Today it is nothing for me, but perhaps in two weeks it will become something.' Christian Boltanski, 'Studio Visit', *Tate Magazine*, no. 2, Summer 2005.

- q) Things take time. To arrive from perception to reaction one must stay for some length of time in the in-between place – post-perception or mid-perception, but pre-reaction. A moment of uncertainty. This receiving can be passive (sometimes 'very passive', says Barbara), while the inner space is changing and condensing into a recognition of the answer.

- r) To enter. To 'air out.' To 'open the door for growth.'

- s) What is in a touch? Communication. Channeling, or becoming a channel of something. Hearing, sensing, not hearing, not sensing. Sending information, receiving information. Noticing. Understanding something and not understanding it. Temperature. Frontiers, perimeters, and peripheries. Feedback and reaction. Contact with the other, contact with oneself through the other.

- t) Intersubjectivity, negotiation, memory, and surprise. In speaking about the process of making 'Samo za danes', Maja identifies a cyclic process in her method: 'ubesedovanja – gledanja – izvajanja – izkusanja – ponovnega pogajanja – ubesedovanja...'. How does this work when we are dealing with materials that are changing and deviating perceptually? Dance is not a stable medium. What does putting dance material through such a cycle, over and over again, produce?

What does it do / how does it alter (does it alter?) the scores or 'inventory of tools' with which (through which?) the dance material is being produced? The conversations are the occasions to share in words the experience of the dance, to hear another's experience, to establish agreements that will hold it together, to articulate through words what has been discovered, to 'name things', to formulate out of an individual understanding a collective or shared one. In the context of a rehearsal or the work process, watching as others are working on something starts to give one the possibility of an exterior point of view, even as the interior one remains – and vice versa. Inviting the external position in, can suddenly provide a frame to one's actions. In the cycle that Maja describes, following some sedimentation, the next step is to execute or implement or 'put into action', which again provides experience in the form of new understanding or new questions, observations of mutations and deviations. To help organize and regulate this experience, one goes back to renegotiation, conversation, reflection (in whatever form) on what is taking place, what is available, what is missing, etc.

- u) Maybe more interesting than the negotiations that take place verbally are the ones that occur physically, or to say it better, within the dance or the dancing. Maybe this is where 'poskusi ne misliti z besedi' or 'artikulirati z besedami' really transpires. This looks like (or feels like) observing and listening, to some inner world as well as the outer environment. Responding and having an awareness of the variety of perspectives that are present, letting this information edify what will next take place, what will be initiated and what will be discounted.
- v) And to the things mentioned above - there is a flow and a circulation, a construction and accumulation, a disappearance and dissolution.
- w) '[...] In most cases, however, scores are fundamentally characterized by the contiguity and metonymy of tools and aids: they are a trace of and a reroute back to a praxis, whether directly or indirectly, mimickingly or mockingly, revered or reversed. Metaphorically, linking us back to the body and its modes of enactment, one could say that they are neurological centres of determinancy in a larger synaptic network where information fires. [...]' Myriam Van Imschoot, *Rests in Pieces: Scores, Notation and the Trace in Dance*, Multitudes, no. 21, 2005
- x) The body enters the space, it makes impressions and imprints or leaves traces behind. The body exits the space - the appearance of Absence, Absence coming into view, the arrival of Absence.
- y) And here is some empty space:

z) In lieu of a conclusion:

„That should be enough material now. There’s really nothing to be done. Except for those of you who are not finished, go ahead and finish up. And the rest of you can sit back and enjoy it.“

Trisha Brown, Skymap. Banes, Sally. (1980) *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance*, Hanover, NH., Wesleyan University Press. pg. 95