

Sharing with the dancers two

How do I experience time while I am moving in the present moment?

Lia Vasdari: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jY9ocs-thS0&feature=youtu.be>

In Mearlau-Ponty's view we are embodied beings that constitute space and time; we are part of the world in the sense that we are 'of' space and time. Our bodily presence in the reality of space enables us to perceive the world. Our perception creates reality. In this sense, through a phenomenological approach of existence, the subject creates time, since it constitutes time from their own perspective. (Ponty, 1962)

So, I reject this question. It doesn't matter how I experience the present moment, because I experience it. I am part of the present moment; I create time while I am moving.

I focused on my body moving in the present time, shaping lines in by body and in space as well. Also, I tried to move diverse points of my body parts in the space, creating straight and distorted lines.

Vicki Chatzi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vixvbO4CeoE&feature=youtu.be>

I played a lot with gravity- reaching edges, being always at a risk-, by suddenly changing my body's leaning. The way we use our weight could inform diverse qualities of time. I also explored a variety of temporalities, like sudden stops, climaxes of speed, sustained tempo, deceleration, acceleration, rhythmic motifs, repetition.

Considering memories and future projections, it has been mentioned:

Lia Vasdari:

Recalling memories or making dreams for the future while I am moving in the present time, distracts my attention from the moment. Thus, I am not in the present time; I am thinking. Similarly, whenever I am observing the memories or thoughts

for future actions that arise in the present through what I am doing at the moment, I feel that I am not present to my experience of the moment.

Time is passing. Each moment is preceded by another moment. Now consists of before and after. We can't bring the past and the future into the present. They exist within the present moment.

The only memories that could emerge in the present moment are those that make us recall emotions and feelings e.g. jumping reminds me of happiness in childhood. That's all; if I try to represent that image, bringing it in the now, I am not in the present moment.

However, while I was improvising today, I made a move that reminded me of Vicky. It was a bodily memory in the present moment. I did something with that and then I moved to something else.

Vicky Chatzi:

I can't recall memories or make plans for the future and represent them while I am moving in the 'now'. For me time is energy that operates a route consisting of diverse repetitive rhythmic motifs and various repetitive qualities and climaxes of speed.

Despina Kapoulitsa:

By using the words memories and future projections, I don't mean to bring them into the present as they are; to represent them in the 'now'.

According to Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy, Maurice Merleau Ponty we are embodied beings situated in the world; the present has priority over past and future, as the subject perceives, acts, and exists in the present. (Ponty, Phenomenology of perception, 1962). Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the priority of the present depends mostly on his prioritizing of perception and the acting subject. (Tapinc, 2014, p.163)

"A lived memory is recalled if it makes sense for the present. The past is not an unconscious past, and it would not exist if the subject did not already have the significance of the past's presence (Ponty, *ibid*, 412). The perception will be new without any need for the synthesis of the present with the past; memories do not by themselves project themselves upon sensations but that consciousness compares them with the present data, retaining only those which accord with them, then one is admitting an original text which carries its meaning within itself, and setting it over against that of memories: this original text is perception itself". (*ibid*, 21).

Regarding 'wide- now' experience, I refer to a kind of expansion of the present moment. I could describe it as a subtle process that takes place in the present time,

while we are in the process of producing here and now. I imagine that it needs daily practice in order to be able to observe this process which in turn could expand our horizons of perception, providing us with innumerable possibilities for action in the present moment. In this sense, while our body is moving in the present moment, we observe the ways memories and thoughts for our next moves emerge, what we do with them at the moment, how they are integrated into what's already there. It could possibly make us sense the duration of time: we are perceiving and acting in the present time, carrying our past and future within.

French philosopher Henri Bergson, considers perception in a relation to memory and present in a relation to duration, thus he emphasizes the possibility of organization and dis-organization of habit-world through varying degrees of repetition of useful memory-images. By showing duration as the condition of possibility for the experience of intuition, Bergson reveals the possibility of reversing habitual ways of perceiving things. (Tapinc, 2014, p. 163).

" In this sense, I hold Bergson's explanation of the dynamical relationship between memory and perception paves the way for creative perception, as it is possible in Bergson's philosophy to violate and reverse the habitual perception through expansion of memory"(Tapinc, 2014, p.164).

According to Bergson, the duration of the subject includes the present and the infinite past. The latter unfolds a multiplicity of memories that have not generalized into thoughts, definitions and concepts; they haven't actualized before, and they can become a creative source for the future (Tapinc, 2014, p. 176). Except for actions and reactions that correspond to our senses, there exist numerous unconscious memories that affect the way we act even if we are not aware of them. In complex organisms like humans, perception is not merely a reaction to stimulus (Tapinc, 2014, p. 168). The human body has the capability to act in varying degrees of slowness which enables it to act beyond its impulses, bringing into surface unconscious memory (Tapinc, 2014, p. 169).

What's next

I asked the dancers to keep on reading and practicing on what they've been exploring on their own until now. I also proposed that they should continue researching the questions. They could approach them through an expanded or creative-poetic approach. I told them that it's not necessary to answer them literally. They could see them as rhetorical ones. This in turn might expand their ways of perceiving or provide them with an extra layer of movement sensation while practicing. In this sense, I asked them to keep on observing past and future while improvising under the prism of 'wide-now' experience.

Following that I chose to move forward towards more technical bodily tasks, because I thought that they are essential in order to intensify their attention to their body moving in the present moment.

So, I sent the dancers an email with all my insights as well as the following text:

Creating lines
in the present moment

straight lines, curves, twists
now consists of before and after

playing as you wish with the motif 2-1-1, 1-2-1, 1-1-2, 3-1-1, 1-3-1, 1-1-3 and leave
it
pastpresentfuture

'hearing' my qualities of time
moving in time

creating time in the now
start negotiating with duration

I also gave them some Key-words in order to explore the ways they negotiate with duration: expand, change, oppose, combine- isolate.

An extract from our discussion concerning the text:

Lia: I don't think that we will intensify our presentness if we follow the motifs 2-1-1, 3-1-1...

Despina: You can see it as a game, do not stick to it. You play with it as you wish, whenever the moment brings such a need and as long you wish.

Lia: So, is it a score?

Despina: You could see it as an open form. It's mostly a note, an extra layer of observation, an added information you could explore.

Another extract from our discussion concerning the text:

Lia: What really concerns me is why should I change the duration of my movement?

Despina: I think it's the moment, what you do at the moment that will bring the need or desire for change. For example, watching you and Vicky at your videos, I felt a kind of relief when you changed from slow to fast motion, as if the body needed to change something at that moment. Moreover, as we've said before, we, humans create time. In that sense, we could create diverse qualities of time while producing here and now in instant composition. It is also a choice to provide the audience with

a slow / expanded temporal quality, taking under consideration that daily life is on the contrary busy and noisy.

References

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945). Translated by C. Smith. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Tapınç, M. R. (2014). Perception and Time-Experience in Merleau-Ponty and Bergson. *Kaygı. Uludağ Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Felsefe Dergisi*, 0(23), 163-184. <https://doi.org/10.20981/kuufefd.87428>